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THE CITY OF YEREVAN AT THE EPICENTER OF THE TURCO-PERSIAN WARS FROM THE LATE SIXTEENTH TO THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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Introduction: Yerevan at the Epicenter of the Turco–Persian Wars in the sixteenth Century

Yerevan¹, the capital of the Republic of Armenia, is one of the oldest cities in the world, where the preserved archaeological material allows us to trace the formation of the city to the era of the state of Urartu (between the ninth and sixth centuries B.C.). However, especially in the Middle Ages, the city had already undergone many changes, as a result of which a new environment was formed in it. Even during the period of the Arab invasions (seventh century) it was mentioned as an urban-type settlement with a fortress². Byzantine source of the first half of the tenth century (1047) mentions the Khelidonion fortress³, that is,

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¹ In sources, Yerevan is mentioned in several different writings: Yerevan, Erevan, Revan, Irivan, Erivan, Irovan. The earliest mentions of Yerevan are preserved in the Armenian primary sources, where the city is mentioned as “Yerevan”. For example, about the mention of Yerevan in connection with the events of the seventh century, see **Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc’i** 1987, 106.

² “The Armenian History attributed to Sebeos” 1999, 110.

³ **Skylitzes** 2010, 413–14.

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Tsitsernakaberd in the center of modern Yerevan⁴. Based on the results of archaeological excavations, Tsitsernakaberd did not lose its significance until the seventeenth century⁵. From the early fifteenth century, when the territory of Yerevan expanded and its importance increased, in 1405 it was mentioned as the "capital"⁶.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, a struggle for dominance in the region began between two powers – Safavid Iran and the Ottoman Empire. In the first years of the reign of Shah Ismail I (1502–1524), the founder of the Safavid state, he conquered all of Iran, Mesopotamia, Atropatene–Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia. The power he created bordered on the northwest with the Ottoman state, which extended to the Euphrates River. Bloody wars began between them, lasting for many decades. During this time, the capital of Armenia, Yerevan⁷, which had an important strategic position, passed from hand to hand several times, undergoing significant changes⁸.

The Safavid armies took control of Yerevan in 1502 after defeating the army of Agh Qoyunlu tribe. Khan, the first Iranian ruler of Yerevan, is referred to as Revan khan, which means "khan of Yerevan". It is interesting that, according to the Ottoman author Evliya Chelebi, Yerevan was built in 1412 by order of Shah Ismail of Iran by one of his generals, Revan Kul khan, who built it in seven years and named it after himself: Revan or Yerevan⁹. Obviously, this story is not true, since Shah Ismail I, who ruled in 1502–1524, could not order the construction of the fortress a century heretofore. And Evliya Chelebi simply made a mistake when he tried to connect the name "Yerevan", which existed from ancient times and had been attested in the primary sources¹⁰, with the name of the aforementioned

⁴ Ibid., 414, n. 80. See also **Grousset René** 1973, 584.

⁵ **Babayan and Zhamkochyan** 2015, 6.

⁶ "Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts", XV century, p. I (1401–50), 1955, 51.

⁷ Yerevan is mentioned as the capital of Armenia by several European authors: "Relation des Grandes Guerres et Victoires Obtenues par le Roy de Perse Cha Abbas Contre les Empereurs de Turquie Mahomet et Achmet Son Fils. Par le P. Fr. Anthoine de Gouvea", 1646, 225. See also "Voyages du chevalier Chardin en Perse et autres lieux de l'Orient", nouvelle édition, de notes, etc. par L. Langlès, tome deuxième, 1811, 128.

⁸ "The Cambridge History of Iran", volume 6, "The Timurid and Safavid Periods", edited by P. Jackson and L. Lockhart, 2006, 266, 267, 284.

⁹ **Evliya Efendy** 1850, 150–51.

¹⁰ For example, Yerevan mentions Armenian Catholicos Hovhannes Draskhanakertsi (Catholicos of all Armenians in 898–925). **Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i** 1987, 106.

khan. It should be noted that the construction of Yerevan by the order of Shah Ismail by the so-called Revan khan is not confirmed by any primary sources¹¹.

At one of the hot stages of the Turco–Persian war, at the end of the sixteenth century, the fortress of Yerevan was built and subsequently underwent many reconstructions, around which the Turco–Persian conflict took place in the South Caucasus. This happened in the 1580s. Archaeological excavations in the area of Yerevan fortress show that the period of construction of the fortress was really the end of the sixteenth century¹². As we see, the ancient fortress of Yerevan Tsitsernakaberd existed until the seventeenth century, having actually lost its significance at the end of the sixteenth century due to the construction of a new fortress.

As in medieval Europe, so in Armenia, the city extended next to the fortress, which was sometimes called a suburb. This process existed in Armenia at the end of the ninth century¹³.

Construction and Subsequent Expansion of Yerevan Fortress

Under the Turco–Persian peace treaty of 1555, most of Eastern Armenia, including Yerevan, remained under the rule of Safavid Iran. However, already in 1578, the Ottoman army, led by Lala Mustafa Pasha, invaded Georgia and from there crossed into the Eastern Caucasus. In 1579, Hussein Pasha from Erzurum moved to Yerevan with an army of forty thousand. Although the Ottoman army succeeded in invading the city, it retreated to Erzurum due to the fierce resistance of Muhammad khan's garrison. In one day, the Ottoman army inflicted great destruction on the city. A mass deportation of the population of Yerevan and the surrounding villages was organized. In one of the Armenian chronicles we read: "The inhabitants of the city of Yerevan and eighteen villages were captured and scattered throughout the world"¹⁴. According to the Armenian author deacon Zakaria, the Turks captured sixty thousand people (Armenians and Muslims) from the city and the surrounding villages¹⁵. According to the Armenian author David of Baghesh, thirty thousand people were captured in the city of Yerevan only¹⁶. This

¹¹ Aydoğmuşoğlu 2018, 10.

¹² Ghafadaryan 1975, 96–97.

¹³ Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i 1987, 131.

¹⁴ "Small Chronicles of the XIII–XVIII Centuries", volume I, 1951, 172.

¹⁵ "The Chronicle of Deacon Zakaria of Kanaker", volume I, 1870, 13.

¹⁶ "Small Chronicles of the XIII–XVIII Centuries", volume II, 1956), 355.

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is confirmed by the information of an Ottoman source that more than twenty thousand women and children were captured from the city of Yerevan alone¹⁷. The English traveler and merchant J. Newbery, who visited Yerevan in 1581, mentions that in 1579, during the one-day siege of Yerevan, a large number of Christians from the city and other places were captured by the Ottoman army. Only the inhabitants of Arsingam (Armenian Erznka, today's Erzincan in Türkiye) bought seven thousand captives¹⁸.

Yerevan was again captured by the Ottoman army in 1583, during the hostilities of 1578–1590. According to a chronicle, Turks “took Yerevan and captured the people”¹⁹. Sultan Murad III (1574–1595) sent Farhad Pasha to capture Yerevan, who, according to sources, built a new fortress in Yerevan. The Iranian khan of Yerevan, Tokhmakh, having failed to organize resistance, left the city. By order of Farhad Pasha, the construction of a new fortress was quickly started in Yerevan, also using the stones of the destroyed churches. Armenian author Arakel of Tabriz reports that in 1583, by order of the Sultan, his commanders came with an army, captured and destroyed Yerevan. Having also destroyed many churches, they moved their stones to build a fortress²⁰. Then, in one report of 1588, the author calls Farhad Pasha the “conqueror and builder of Erevan”²¹, from which it follows that in 1583 the fortress was built by his order. Then he writes that “in 1583 the fortress of Erevan was built”²².

Another Armenian source (1584) says: “... Farhad Pasha went to capture the city of Yerevan with three hundred thousand cavalry. The Lord, who was sitting there, ran away, and [the pasha] built a great and wonderful building there, destroying many churches and taking tombstones and cross-stones into the fortress. And the Christian people were completely robbed”²³.

¹⁷ **Peçevi İbrahim Efendi**, c. II, 1982, 53.

¹⁸ **Purchas**, volume VIII, 1905, 469.

¹⁹ “Small Chronicles of the XIII–XVIII Centuries”, volume I, 1951, 159.

²⁰ **Arak’el of Tabriz** 2010, 488–89.

²¹ There is an error in the English translation of the story of Arak’el of Tabriz. Although the original says “build[er]”, it is translated “rebuilt” (**Arak’el of Tabriz** 2010, 491).

²² **Arak’el of Tabriz** 2010, 525.

²³ “List of Manuscripts Recently Received by the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin”, “Etchmiadzin” journal, 1950, volume 11–12, 87.

An Armenian medieval author writes that “Yerevan was conquered, the inhabitants were taken prisoner and a new fortress was built, which still exists today”²⁴.

In fact, Armenian sources unanimously attribute the construction of Yerevan fortress to Farhad Pasha. In this regard, information from Ottoman sources is also interesting. The Ottoman historian Pechevi-Ibrahim writes that Farhad Pasha, the commander of the Ottoman army, captured Yerevan in 1583 and ordered the construction of a fortress there around the khan’s palace. The construction of the fortress was completed in forty-five days²⁵. The fortress had two walls: “inner” and “outer”²⁶.

The same story is told by another Ottoman author, Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali, who adds important details. The inner part of the Fortress, in which the khan’s palace was located and where the mosque was built, consisted of seven towers and 725 ramparts, and the outer wall consisted of forty-three towers and 1726 ramparts. The works were completed in forty-five days, and 5601 soldiers were left there as a garrison. The khan’s Palace became the residence of the Beylerbeins (governors)²⁷. Thus, Yerevan became the administrative center of the province of the same name.

Evliya Chelebi, who visited Yerevan, describing the fortress of Yerevan, gives details about the walls built by Farhad Pasha and Tokhmakh, who was the Iranian khan of Yerevan until 1583²⁸.

Iranian author Eskandar Monshi, describing the siege and capture of Yerevan in 1603–1604 by the Safavid army, writes that the fortress of Yerevan consisted of three walls, the oldest of which was built by Farhad Pasha²⁹.

In fact, Ottoman authors report that there was a khan’s palace on the site of the future fortress, and the construction of the new fortress began with its walling. However, the testimony of Evliya Chelebi states that there was also a wall in the area, built by the Iranian khan Tokhmakh.

Historian T. Hakobyan, proceeding from the fact that the construction of the fortress lasted forty-five days, believes that it is actually about the reconstruction

²⁴ **Samuel Anetsi and Continuator** 2014, 321.

²⁵ **Peçevi İbrahim Efendi**, c. II, 1982, 79.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 245.

²⁷ **İsmail Hami Danişmend**, c. 3, 1972, 69.

²⁸ **Evliya Efendi** 1850, 153.

²⁹ **Eskandar Beg Monshi**, volume II, 1930, 834.

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and reinforcement of the already existing fortress³⁰. Archaeologist K. Ghafadaryan is convinced that a completely new fortress was built outside the city, where there were no fortifications before³¹. Most likely, work was carried out to build new walls and partially restore the old ones, as happened years later, to repel the invasion of the ruler of Iran, Shah Abbas I (1587–1629)³². The information of Evliya Chelebi says that the inner fortress was built by Tokhmah khan, and the outer one – by Farhad Pasha. It can be assumed that the khan's palace in the area of the future fortress had certain fortifications, which Evliya Chelebi also mentions, but the construction of the main walls took place by order of Farhad Pasha in 1583. It is no coincidence that J. Newbery, describing Yerevan as of 1581, does not mention the fortress, but only that there was a stone bridge about a mile from the city inhabited by Christians³³. There is a point of view that after Farhad Pasha encompassed part of the city with walls, the city was actually divided into two parts, the Turks remained in the fortress, and the non-Muslims, that is, the Armenians, remained in the suburbs³⁴.

Important information about the city of Yerevan was preserved in the Ottoman tax lists of the end of the sixteenth century. According to them, Turks lived in the fortress, and Armenians lived in the districts of the city. As of 1590, there were twenty-nine taxpayer Muslims with their families in Yerevan fortress, a total of 145 people³⁵. The Christians (mostly Armenians and Boshas – a small ethnic group in Yerevan) of the city lived in six districts: Mardiros, Mirza, Kuchuk Kayki, Isalu, Byorekchi Ohan, Derekoy (Armenian Dzoragyugh) in a total of 1855 people³⁶. It is clear that the sharp decrease in the number of Armenians in the city compared to the pre-war situation was due to the fact that most of them had been deported. However, even in such a situation, Armenians constituted an absolute majority in the city. Altogether, Turks made up seven percent of the city's population³⁷.

Until 1604, Yerevan remained under the rule of the Ottoman Empire.

³⁰ **Hakobyan** 1971, 21–22.

³¹ **Ghafadaryan** 1975, 96–97.

³² “Ta’rīḥ-i Na’īmā: Rauḍat al-Ḥusain fī ḥulāṣat al-ḥabār al-ḥāfiqain”, c. I, 1863, 353–54.

³³ **Purchas**, volume VIII, 1905, 469.

³⁴ **Aydoğmuşoğlu** 2018, 7.

³⁵ “Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi”, Tapu Tahrir Defteri, 633, 24.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 24–34.

³⁷ **Babacan** 1995, 44–51.

Shah Abbas I, the ruler of Safavid Iran, launched a war against the Ottoman armies in 1603 to regain lost territories. The Ottoman troops retreated from Tabriz to Yerevan, which was soon besieged by the Safavid army. Arakel of Tabriz testifies that the soldiers who fled from Nakhichevan fortress "On the southern side of Erevan fortress, by its wall, they made a fence and built yet another fortress. There, together with their military equipment, they locked themselves in"³⁸. According to the Ottoman historian Naima, having received news of the advance of the Iranian army, the Ottoman rulers of Yerevan realized that they could not accommodate their retreating soldiers in Yerevan fortress, so they decided to build a new wall in the area of Muslim houses, adjacent to the wall on the southern side of the fortress. As a result, they built new and higher walls on the southern, eastern and western sides of the fortress³⁹. Eskandar Monshi reports that in order to accommodate the retreating ten thousand strong army in Yerevan fortress, a new wall is being built on its southern side within three weeks⁴⁰. Before that, two walls were built in 1583, now, in fact, new ones were being built. It is no coincidence that J. Chardin, describing Yerevan fortress, testifies that "this fortress is surrounded with three walls"⁴¹. According to Eskandar Monshi, the fortress of Yerevan consisted of three castles⁴², probably referring to the three walls of the fortress.

The increase in the number of Muslims in the city as a result of the construction of new walls was recorded as early as 1604, when in June, after an eight-month siege, the fortress of Yerevan was captured by the Iranian army. In addition to the enemy garrison (five – six thousand soldiers⁴³), the Shah also released three – four hundred Turkish families from Yerevan⁴⁴. In fact, compared with 1590, the number of Muslims in the fortress increased by more than ten times. After the capture, according to an Ottoman source, the Safavid army destroyed and burned Yerevan fortress⁴⁵. Describing the events of 1604, Naima

³⁸ Arak'el of Tabriz 2010, 45.

³⁹ "Ta'riḥ-i Na'imā: Rauḍat al-Ḥusain fī ḥulāṣat aḥbār al-ḥāfiqain", c. I, 1863, 353–54.

⁴⁰ Eskandar Beg Monshi, volume II, 1930, 833.

⁴¹ "The travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and the East Indies", volume I, 1686, 245.

⁴² Eskandar Beg Monshi, volume I, 1930, 540.

⁴³ Naima, volume I, 1832, 264.

⁴⁴ Peçevi İbrahim Efendi, c. II, 1982, 245–46:

⁴⁵ Ibid., 246.

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writes that at that time Yerevan was a well-fortified and powerful fortress, under the walls of which a river flowed⁴⁶.

The control of Yerevan and the surrounding provinces (in Iranian sources – Chukhūr Sa'ad⁴⁷, in Armenian sources the region of Ararat⁴⁸ or region of Yerevan⁴⁹) was transferred by the shah to Amir Guna khan, who distinguished himself in battles. His army was moving forward when the news came that a large Ottoman army was preparing to march on Yerevan. After that, the retreat of the Safavid army began. Under those conditions, the khan complied with the shah's order to deport the population of the regions subject to him (Yerevan and the surrounding territories)⁵⁰.

Meanwhile, the Ottoman army, which had occupied Yerevan and the surrounding territories, was exhausted and retreated to Van for the winter. According to Arakel of Tabriz, Shah Abbas sent Amir Guna khan with an army to Nakhichevan, ordering him not to allow the enemy to fortify in these areas. Khan managed to defeat the Ottoman grouping of troops and keep this region under the rule of the Shah⁵¹. But Yerevan remained occupied by the Ottoman troops, where they were preparing for war with the Iranian army.

In 1606, the Safavids managed to defeat the Ottoman army in a decisive battle, after which they took control of large areas of Armenia and Georgia, including Yerevan. By order of the Shah, the fortress was restored again. According to Iskandar Munshi, the Shah ordered Amir Guna khan to repair Yerevan and provided people for this purpose, but, having received the news of the attack of the Ottoman army, he decided to postpone the repair of the fortress⁵². It was finally renovated in 1607⁵³.

In 1607–1610, Amir Guna khan was engaged in the restoration of Yerevan and its environs and partially populating it with his subjects. According to Deacon

⁴⁶ **Naima**, volume I, 1832, 248.

⁴⁷ "Persian Documents of Matenadaran", Decrees, volume III (1652–1731), by K.P. **Kostikyan** 2005, 297, 300.

⁴⁸ **Arak'el of Tabriz** 2010, 58, "The Chronicle of Deacon Zakaria of Kanaker", volume II, 1870), 59.

⁴⁹ "The Chronicle of Deacon Zakaria of Kanaker", volume I, 1870, 46.

⁵⁰ **Arak'el of Tabriz** 2010, 58–59. **Eskandar Beg Monshi**, volume II, 1930, 859.

⁵¹ **Arak'el of Tabriz** 2010, 80.

⁵² **Eskandar Beg Monshi**, volume II, 1930, 879:

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 911.

Zakaria, Amir Guna khan gave impetus to the reconstruction of the city and the increase in population⁵⁴, as a result of which Yerevan soon became a populous city again. According to Iskandar Munshi, Amir Guna khan deliberately did not develop Yerevan province, because he first wanted to strengthen the Iranian power in Azerbaijan (south of the Araks River). Yerevan with the surrounding territories was completely destroyed by wars at that time. Khan settled in the fortress of Yerevan with his loyal subjects, and deployed the army in the vicinity, in the city and in the devastated villages. By his order, Turkmen tribes from Azerbaijan were also resettled in Yerevan province⁵⁵. He also settled a large number of Armenians from Western Armenia in Yerevan, especially in the settlements outside the fortress⁵⁶.

According to Evliya Chelebi, after the capture of the city by Iranian troops in 1635, new walls were built on the eastern side of Yerevan fortress⁵⁷, and according to Katib Chelebi, the fortress was completely rebuilt⁵⁸.

Yerevan under the Rule of Iran: the appearance of the city in the seventeenth century according to the descriptions of travelers

As it was said, since the beginning of the fifteenth century, Yerevan has been mentioned as the "capital". In order to get a general idea of the city outside Yerevan fortress, enough information has been preserved in the primary sources.

First of all, it should be noted that the Ottoman attacks of the early 1580s, although damaged the development of urban life, they did not stop it. For example, J. Newbery mentions trade in Yerevan in 1581⁵⁹.

It is noteworthy that in 1608 Yerevan, for the most part, overcame the consequences of wars and restored its former condition. According to Antonio de Gouvea, the delegate of the king of Spain, in 1608 Yerevan was the most important city and "capital of all Greater Armenia", it was completely populated

⁵⁴ "The Chronicle of Deacon Zakaria of Kanaker", volume I, 1870, 45.

⁵⁵ **Eskandar Beg Monshi**, volume II, 1930, 930–31.

⁵⁶ "The Chronicle of Deacon Zakaria of Kanaker", volume I, 1870, 46.

⁵⁷ **Evliya Efendy** 1850, 153–54.

⁵⁸ "Cronologia storica scritta in lingua Turca, Persiana, & Araba, da Hazi Halifé Mustafâ" (Taqwīm at-Tawārikh), E tradotta nell'Idioma Italiano, Da Gio: Rinaldo Carli, 1697, 161.

⁵⁹ **Purchas**, volume VIII, 1905, 469.

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by Armenians, the land was fertile and rich in all kinds of products⁶⁰. Here, in addition to the presentation of the situation, it is important that Yerevan at that time was inhabited by Armenians, that is, from the point of view of demography, the consequences of the great deportation were significantly overcome in the city. However, the population of Yerevan significantly decreased, which was recorded by the Italian traveler P. Della Valle (1586–1652), representing the geography of Safavid Iran in 1624–1628. He wrote that “Irovan, though it is the residence of a chan, is less populous than before”⁶¹.

In 1635 Yerevan was first captured by the Ottoman army and then reconquered by the Safavids⁶². According to the Ottoman author Katib Chelebi, at that time the fortress of Yerevan was heavily fortified. It had two gates: the southern gate of Tabriz and the northern gate of Shirvan. The city was surrounded by orchards and vineyards, and the soil was fertile. There was a market, a mosque and a palace overlooking the river⁶³. In fact, the author described only Yerevan fortress.

Travelers' information about the situation and population of Yerevan in the first half of the seventeenth century is very important. French traveler J.-B. Tavernier, who visited Yerevan in the 1630s and later and presented various illustrations of the city [figure 1], provides valuable information about the fortress (according to the author, the city) and its environs. According to him, Yerevan “lying upon the frontiers of both empires, has been taken and retaken by the Turks and Iranians, several times. By which he means that the old city has been ruined (probably referring to the destruction of Yerevan fortress in 1604 by the Safavid army – A.Y); they have built a new one, 800 paces on this side, upon a rock, at the foot whereof, upon the west-side runs a rapid stream”⁶⁴. The fortress had two rows of walls with towers. Khan lived in the fortress with his officers and

⁶⁰ “Relation des Grandes Guerres et Victoires Obtenues par le Roy de Perse Cha Abbas Contre les Empereurs de Turquie Mahomet et Achmet Son Fils. Par le P. Fr. Anthoine de Gouvea.” Traduit de L’original Portugais, 1646, 225.

⁶¹ **Brentjes, Schüller** 2006, 192.

⁶² “The Cambridge History of Iran”, volume 6, 2006, 284–85.

⁶³ “Gihan Numa, Geographia Orientalis”, ex Turcico in Latinum versa, Matth. Norberg, pars prima, 1818, 555.

⁶⁴ “The Six Voyages of John Baptista Tavernier, a Noble Man of France Now Living, Through Turkey into Persia, and the East-Indies, finished in the Year 1670”, made English by J.P., 1678, 13.

soldiers. To the northwest of the fortress was a suburb where twenty times as many people lived as in the city (the author means the fortress). All merchants and artisans lived in the suburbs; it was a settlement of Armenians who had four churches and one monastery there. Shortly before the first arrival of J.-B. Tavernier (1630s), a hotel was also built in the suburbs⁶⁵. On the first map of Yerevan he compiled, it is emphasized that "the suburbs, were inhabited by the Armenian Christians"⁶⁶. In another case, the author again writes: "Yerevan is inhabited exclusively by Armenians"⁶⁷. Similar information is reported by J. Struys: "Yerevan is mostly inhabited by poor Armenians"⁶⁸.

Two depictions of Yerevan made by J.-B. Tavernier are very important, where, in addition to the information received by the author during his six travels, the realities of the city of the 1630s are also reflected⁶⁹. In front of Yerevan fortress, on a hill on the other side of the Hrazdan (Zangu) river, there was a defensive fortification, which J. Chardin also mentioned, calling it Queutchi-cala⁷⁰. According to J.-B. Tavernier, it was built by Shah Safi I of Iran (1629–1642) to defend the city. Between the fortress itself and the suburbs was an uninhabited space where markets were located. Dzoragyugh and other districts of Yerevan, where residential buildings were mostly two-story or three-story, were clearly delineated. In the center of the suburb (the city itself) a church was drawn, and behind it, on the outskirts of the city, a monastery⁷¹. As for Yerevan gardens, they were depicted on both banks of the Hrazdan River, in particular, in the area mentioned by Arakel of Tabriz, around monastery of St. Anania⁷². Interestingly, at the

⁶⁵ "Les Six Voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier, écuyer baron d'Aubonne, qu'il a fait en Turquie, en Perse, et aux Indes", 1, 1679, 38. "The Six Voyages of John Baptista Tavernier", 1678, 13–14.

⁶⁶ "Les Six Voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier", p. 1, 1679, 40–41, "The Six Voyages of John Baptista Tavernier", 1678, 15.

⁶⁷ "Les Six Voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier", p. 1, 1679, 40–41, 623.

⁶⁸ **Struys** 1741, 229–30.

⁶⁹ "Les Six Voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier", p. 1, 1679, 40–41, "The Six Voyages of John Baptista Tavernier", 1678, 15.

⁷⁰ "The travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and the East Indies", volume I, 1686, 246.

⁷¹ In 1810, an atlas of maps by J.-B. Tavernier was published containing a rare image of Yerevan [figure 2]. See "Atlas des voyages de Tavernier", contenant La Carte d'Asieetvingt - trois Planches, gravées par Tardieu, aîné, "Bibliothèque portative des voyages", tome XLIX, 1810, pl. V.

⁷² **Arak'el of Tabriz** 2010, 235.

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beginning of the seventeenth century, St. Anania monastery, according to Arakel of Tabriz, "was located on the outskirts of the city"⁷³. The picture also indicates that a large caravan road came to Yerevan along a stone bridge from the western side, and two large highways from Yerevan went to Tiflis and Tabriz⁷⁴.

J-L. Arnaud, referring to two images of Yerevan made by J-B. Tavernier, expressed the opinion that although there were significant differences between the images presented in the 1676 and 1679 editions of his work, the author obviously, based on his detailed observations, and possibly on information taken from other authors, tried to clarify the image of the city. Moreover, despite the significant differences, there were similarities in the two images, which indicated that the second image was based on the first⁷⁵.

The description of Yerevan in the 1640s by the Ottoman author Evliya Chelebi contains significant additions to the structure of Yerevan in the first half of the seventeenth century: "[Fortress] situated on the bank of the Zenghi (Hrazdan river – A.Y), extending from the south to the north, having so little breadth . It has three iron gates; to the south, the gate of Tabriz; to the north, the gate of the Meidan called YailaKapüssi...; to the west, the gate of the bridge. The town consists of two thousand and sixty elegant houses covered with earth⁷⁶; the best is the palace of the Khân much embellished by Emîrgüneḥ. Near it is the mint. The suburb outside of Yaila Kapüssi is called the old town; at the head of the bridge is the khan's garden, and a suburb with mosque and bath"⁷⁷.

From the information of Evliya Chelebi, one can erroneously conclude that 2060 houses are located in the old city or suburb outside the fortress. In fact, Evliya Chelebi describes those houses not in the old city or in the suburb, but in the city, where, by the way, the khan's palace and the mint were also located. So, under the city, unlike the old city, he means a settlement inside the fortress. Further, the author talks about the old city, unfortunately without giving information about either the number of houses or the population. Therefore, it should be noted that those 2060 houses were not in the old city (suburb), but in the fortress. And the number of people living in the fortress has never been

⁷³ Ibid., 188.

⁷⁴ "Les Six Voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier", p. 1, 1679, 40–41.

⁷⁵ **Arnaud** 2000, 99–100.

⁷⁶ The English translation incorrectly states 1060. See **Evliya Efendy** 1850, 153.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

studied before. If the soldiers (about five or six thousand⁷⁸) guarding the fortress are perceived as residents, then the number of Armenians in the suburb of Yerevan or in the old city should have been about hundred thousand people, since, according to J-B. Tavernier, twenty times more people lived there than in the fortresses. But such a number of inhabitants of the old city is unbelievable. Most likely, Evliya Chelebi had in mind only the civilian population of the fortress. It should be noted that the fortress was mainly inhabited by Muslims, and the old city – by Armenians. The same situation was in 1700. The German traveler F.C. Schillinger, who visited Yerevan at that time, says that only Persians lived in the fortress, and there were ten times more Armenians in the suburbs than them⁷⁹.

A detailed description of the situation in Yerevan in the early 1670s (1672) is preserved in the travel notes of the French traveler J. Chardin, who mentions Yerevan (Irivan) as “the capital of Greater Armenia”⁸⁰. In the description of Yerevan, the author presents an illustration of the city in detail [figure 3]. According to him, Yerevan was a great city but ill-favored and dirty. Only Yerevan fortress looked like a small city and included up to eight hundred houses. “Natural Persians” lived there, while the Armenians had only shops where they worked and traded during the day, and in the evening, they left for the city. The fortress stretched along the edge of the dreadful precipice, in the northwestern part, consisted of three rows of walls with gates⁸¹. The khan’s palace was located in a fortress, on the brink of the precipice. Not far from the fortress was a small fort called Queutchi-cala. According to J. Chardin’s valuable information, the city of Yerevan itself was at a distance of a cannon-shot from the fortress. In the center of the city there were markets and dilapidated buildings. One of the main churches that operated in the city was the episcopal see and was called “Irkou-ye-rize or two-faces”⁸², and the other – “Catovike”⁸³. According to the information received by the author, those churches were built during the time of the Armenian kingdom, and the rest – later. Next to the Episcopal Church stood an old tower built of hewn stone with inscriptions similar to Armenian. Next to the Episcopal See was a

⁷⁸ **Naima**, volume I, 1832, 264.

⁷⁹ **Schillinger** 1707, 118.

⁸⁰ “Voyages du chevalier Chardin en Perse et autres lieux de l’Orient”, nouvelle édition, de notes, etc. par L. Langlès, tome deuxième, 1811, 128.

⁸¹ “The Travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and East Indies”, volume I, 1678, 245–46.

⁸² Most likely, this is the church of St. Paul and Peter (“Two-faced” in Armenian sources).

⁸³ Cat’oghike in Armenian or Cathedral.

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large market-place, in front of which stood an old and mostly decayed mosque. Not far away was a large square surrounded by trees. There were many baths and inns in the city and the fortress. The most beautiful inn was located in the fortress, not far from the khan's palace. Shops were located along the entire length of the gallery and in the main building of the inn. In front of it was the market-place, surrounded by food shops, and next to it was a mosque and two coffee-houses. According to J. Chardin, Yerevan's land was fertile. Two rivers flowing along the outskirts of the city, and Lake Kiagar-couni-sou (lake Gegharkuni or Sevan) provided the inhabitants of the city with fish. J. Chardin talked to Armenians and said that, in their opinion, Yerevan was the oldest settlement in the world, because Noah and his family lived there. The Armenians also claimed that the earthly paradise was located there⁸⁴.

Shortly after the description of J. Chardin, in 1679, a terrible disaster befell Yerevan and great damage was done. The earthquake, known as Yerevan or Garni earthquake⁸⁵, began on June 4, 1679 and was regularly repeated for several days. The most powerful and destructive shocks were the first and last. According to an Armenian chronicle, "The city and fortress were destroyed by the force of the earthquake, houses and beautiful palaces, churches and monasteries were destroyed, springs dried up. There were countless dead"⁸⁶.

The Restoration of the City of Yerevan after the Earthquake of 1679

According to deacon Zakaria, three churches were destroyed in Yerevan itself, as well as a church in Dzoragyugh district. And "... the fortress of Yerevan was destroyed to the ground". Due to the earthquake, sources supplying Yerevan with water were blocked⁸⁷.

The Armenian author Zakaria of Agulis describes in detail the damage caused by the earthquake and the loss of life. "Two churches in Yerevan, Yerevan monastery, the church of Dzoragyugh were destroyed. ... The fortress of Yerevan, the houses of the khan ... everything was destroyed. Within eight – nine days, the

⁸⁴ "The Travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and East Indies", volume I, 1678, 246–48.

⁸⁵ Ambraseys 2009, 519.

⁸⁶ "Small Chronicles of the XIII–XVIII Centuries", volume II, 1956, 279, n. 65.

⁸⁷ "The Chronicle of Deacon Zakaria of Kanaker", volume II, 1870, 104.

dead were taken out of the ground. There were houses where five, eight, nine people died. Across the country, seven thousand six hundred people died”⁸⁸.

But soon, also with the support of neighboring khanates, the fortress was restored “stronger than before”. “And the bridge that was under the fortress, on the Hrazdan River, called Zanki, was rebuilt. The blocked streams were restored, and the water reached Yerevan”⁸⁹.

It should be noted that, despite the catastrophic consequences of the 1679 earthquake, the structure of the city did not change, as can be seen from the detailed descriptions of Yerevan left by European travelers, which refer to the situation before and after the earthquake.

Information from sources shows that after the earthquake, the structure of Yerevan did not change significantly. J. P. Tournefort, a French traveler who visited Yerevan on August 8, 1701, mentions it as “a considerable city and the capital of Persian Armenia”. The city was located on a small hill and was full of vineyards and gardens. The houses had only a ground-floor, without stories above, each of which was surrounded by a wall. The fortress in the highest part of the city had three rows of walls. This oval fortress contained over eight hundred houses, inhabited by Muslims. The Armenians worked there and returned to their homes in the city at night. The fortress was garrisoned by two thousand five hundred soldiers. The northern side of the fortress was completely impregnable, as it was on the brink of the precipice. The gates of the fortress were plated over with iron. The author suggests that the old city also had strong defenses, but was subsequently destroyed during the Turco–Persian wars”⁹⁰.

The South of the city, about a mile from the fortress, was the fort Quetchyala. One could approach the fortress through a three-arched bridge. J.P. Tournefort then describes the fortress of Yerevan. The khan’s palace made a special impression on him with its size and structure. The area of the fortress was lined with beautiful trees. The market, bathhouses and caravanserais located in the fortress looked good; especially the newly built caravanserai near the fortress was very nice. When entering the fortress, it felt like you were at a fair or a market, because when you passed through the entrance, different products were lined up everywhere.

⁸⁸ “Diary of Zakaria of Agulis”, Yerevan, 1938, 143 (Armenian edition).

⁸⁹ “The Chronicle of Deacon Zakaria of Kanaker”, volume II, 1870, 105.

⁹⁰ **Tournefort**, volume III, 1741, 178–79.

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Then, describing the old city, the author notes that the churches were small and half underground. The Bishop's palace and the Catovique (Cathedral) were rumored to have been built during the time of the last kings of Armenia. Near the Bishop's palace, there was an old tower, which had a beautiful structure. Local residents did not know either the purpose of its construction or the time. As for the city mosques, according to the author, there was nothing particular. After touring the city J.P. Tournefort visited the Armenian Patriarch, who was staying at an old monastery outside the city⁹¹. It was probably monastery of St. Anania. Obviously, J.P. Tournefort's description is reminiscent of J. Chardin's story about Yerevan, from which it is clear that the structure of the city did not undergo significant changes as a result of the earthquake of 1679.

Important information about the situation in the city of Yerevan at the beginning of the eighteenth century was preserved in the book of the Armenian author Abraham of Yerevan. According to him, during the invasion of the Ottoman army in 1724, a general mobilization was carried out among the Armenians of the old city of Yerevan and districts. Four thousand soldiers were gathered from the old Yerevan district, 955 people from the district of Juhair. 234 soldiers gathered Christianboshas⁹² of Kond, about four thousand soldiers – residents of Dzoragyugh and refugees who had taken refuge there⁹³. In fact, Yerevan consisted of the districts of old Yerevan, Juhair, Kond and Dzoragyugh (Dzoragegh). The latter was located near Kond, on the left bank of the Hrazdan River, to the north of the fortress. The remaining districts extended from Dzoragyugh to the east. The city ended in the north with the ancient cemetery of Yerevan, located on the northwestern outskirts of Kond district⁹⁴. On the east side, the city was surrounded by dense gardens that protected and sheltered it⁹⁵.

According to an Ottoman author, a contemporary of the events of 1724, the suburbs of Yerevan fortress were steep on both sides, and a river flowed below⁹⁶. According to Chelebi-zade's detailed description of the battles for Yerevan in 1724, Yerevan was "surrounded by two strong walls, thirty-five steps apart from

⁹¹ Ibid., 180–82.

⁹² A small ethnic group.

⁹³ **Abraham of Erevan** 1999, 25.

⁹⁴ **Ghafadaryan** 1975, 47.

⁹⁵ **Abraham of Erevan** 1999, 26.

⁹⁶ **Aktepe** 1970, 46–47.

each other”⁹⁷. According to the Ottoman author’s information, “the siege of Yerevan fortress was necessarily connected with the capture of varosh (suburb). Important is also the statement that the Ottoman soldiers “razed the houses near the walls of varosh and adjacent to them to the ground, and the surroundings of the walls were turned into a free area”⁹⁸. It should be clarified that a small suburb located near the outer of the two walls of Yerevan fortress, was inhabited by Persians. Evliya Chelebi’s description of Yerevan in the 1640s contains very important information about the suburb. As mentioned above, he reports that the suburb or varosh, which was located beyond the northern gates of the fortress, was called the “old city”. The author also mentions a second suburb near the fortress walls and bridge. It was the suburb that the Ottoman army invaded after the capture of the Armenian districts. “The rocky nature of both sides of varosh and the Zangi River flowing in front of it with a very strong current made it difficult to conquer and capture the suburb (varosh)”⁹⁹. According to T. Krushinsky, the Ottoman army, marching in the direction of Yerevan, captured it from the first attack¹⁰⁰. However, it is known that the old city itself and the fortress of Yerevan were defended for about two months¹⁰¹. On the other hand, the fact that this suburb was located next to the fortress walls also confirms that it had no connection with the old city, which, according to J. Chardin, was within a cannon-shot from the fortress. That’s right, J. Chardin’s information refers to the beginning of the 1670s, after which, in 1679, Yerevan earthquake occurred, but, as we have seen, there were no particularly significant changes in the structure of the city after the earthquake.

The information mentioned above makes it possible to clarify the geographical position of Yerevan fortress and two suburbs. On the steep left bank of the Hrazdan River, to the east, there was a walled fortress, and behind its northern gate, adjoining the outer wall, a suburb mentioned by Evliya Chelebi was, and it was populated by Muslims, whereas the other larger suburb, which was the old city of Yerevan, was populated by Armenians, and this is borne out by the fact that

⁹⁷ “Târih-i İsmâil Âsim Efendi (Çelebizâde)”. See “Târih-i Râşid Mehmed Efendi”, c. VI, 1865, 202–21.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ “The History of the Late Revolutions of Persia”, taken from the Memoirs of Father Krusinski, Procurator of the Jesuits at Ispahan, the Second Edition, Volume II, 1733, 178.

¹⁰¹ **Abraham of Erevan** 1999, 21–29.

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during the self-defense of the old city of Yerevan, all Armenians gathered there¹⁰². The old city extended at a distance of a cannon-shot from the fortress to the north and consisted of the aforementioned districts.

It is known that in 1724, after the capture of Yerevan, the Ottoman army massacred thousands of Armenians of the city¹⁰³, as a result of which the number of Armenians in the city notably lessened. From the Ottoman tax lists of 1727, it can be seen that there were four districts in Yerevan: Eskishehir (Old City), Temir Bulak [Iron Spring or Karahank (Stone Mine) in Armenian], Derekent (Derekoy, Armenian Dzoragyugh) and Depebashi (or Tepe-bashi, Armenian Kond)¹⁰⁴. It is interesting that the districts of old Yerevan (Old City), Kond and Dzoragyugh are also mentioned in the work of Abraham of Yerevan, describing the events of 1724, and the fourth district of Yerevan, according to him, is the district of Juhair¹⁰⁵. Comparing this information, TemirBulak can be identified with the district of Juhair. After the capture of Yerevan by the Russian army in 1827, the city had the following districts: Shahar (Old City, which occupied the northeastern part of the city), Tapabashi (occupied the western part of the city) and Demirbulag (occupied the southeastern part of the city). Dzoragyugh (Dara-kend), which was then uninhabited, was part of Tapabashi district¹⁰⁶.

As we have seen, Tavernier reports that there were four churches and one monastery in Yerevan. Most likely, these four churches were: the Katoghike (according to J. Chardin–Catovike, that is Cathedral) or Church of St. Astvatsatsin (St. Holy Mother of God), built before the thirteenth century¹⁰⁷, the Church of St. Paul and Peter, built between the fifth and sixth centuries¹⁰⁸, the Church of St. Hovhannes in Kond (the old church was destroyed by an earthquake in 1679, after which a new church was built¹⁰⁹) and the Gethsemane chapel, built between the 12th and 13th centuries¹¹⁰. As for monastery, it was built in ancient times on the border of the city of Yerevan and named after St. Anania. Monastery, as testified

¹⁰² Ibid., 24–27.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 29.

¹⁰⁴ “Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi”, Tapu Tahrir Defteri, 901, 24–32.

¹⁰⁵ **Abraham of Erevan** 1999, 25.

¹⁰⁶ **Chopin** 1852, 464–465.

¹⁰⁷ **Ghafadaryan** 1975, 24, 26.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 32.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 46.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 45.

by J. P. Tournefort and Arakel of Tabriz, was located in gardens and was cut off from the city¹¹¹.

Conclusion

The study allows to determine the process of the development of the city of Yerevan during the long Turco–Persian wars from the late sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries. At the end of the sixteenth century, when a new fortress was built in Yerevan, the old fortress of the city – Tsitsernakaberd gradually lost its significance. The new fortress of Yerevan underwent many buildings, destructions and reconstructions during the Turco–Persian wars from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, after which it became one of the strongest and most important fortresses in the region. At the end of the sixteenth century, Muslims and later also Armenians lived in Yerevan fortress. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, part of the Muslims of Yerevan lived on the outer side of the southern wall of the fortress, whose houses, in the conditions of the expansion of the fortress, became part of it. To the north of the fortress stretched the city of Yerevan, which in various sources, where the fortress is called a city, is referred to as a suburb or varosh; that was Yerevan itself, the regions of which were inhabited mainly by Armenians. From the information of Ottoman sources, it can be concluded that during the seventeenth century, another Muslim (probably Persian) suburb was formed behind the northern wall of the fortress, which was captured and destroyed by the Ottoman army in 1724.

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¹¹¹ **Tournefort**, volume III, 1741, 182, **Arak’el of Tabriz** 2010, 188, 235.

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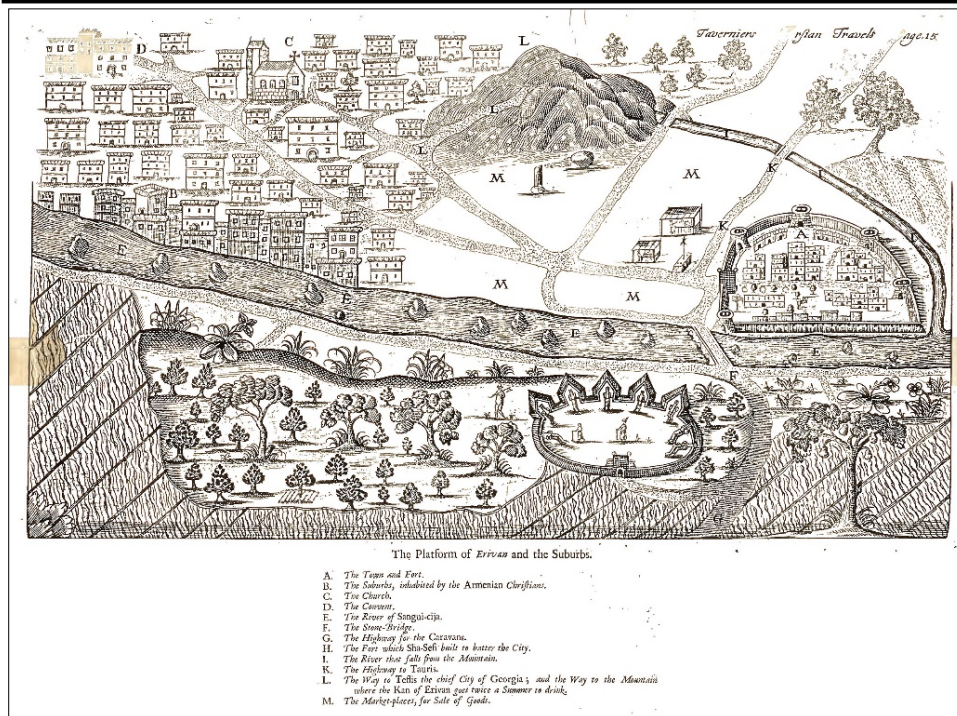


Figure 1. Illustration of Yerevan from the 1678 edition of J-B. Tavernier's book



Figure 2. Illustration of Yerevan from the atlas of J-B. Tavernier's voyages (1810)



Figure 3. Illustration of Yerevan from the 1686 edition of J. Chardin's book

ԵՐԵՎԱՆԸ XVI Դ. ՎԵՐՋԻ – XVIII Դ. ՍԿԻՋԲԻ ԹՈՒՐԲ-ՊԱՐՍԿԱԿԱՆ ՊԱՏԵՐԱԶՄՆԵՐԻ ԷՊԻԿԵՆՏՐՈՆՈՒՄ

ԵՂԻԱԶԱՐՅԱՆ Ա.

Ամփոփում

Քանալի բառեր՝ Երևան, թուրք-պարսկական պատերազմներ, բերդ, ճանապարհորդներ, Սեֆյան Իրան, երկրաշարժ, հայկական աղբյուրներ:

Երևան քաղաքը թուրք-պարսկական երկար պատերազմների ժամանակ (XVI դարի վերջ – XVIII դարի սկիզբ) ենթարկվել է նշանակալից փոփոխությունների, որոնք հետաքրքրական են ոչ միայն պատմագիտության, այլև պատմական աշխարհագրության, ժողովրդագրության և քաղաքագիտության տեսանկյունից:

XVI դ. վերջին, երբ կառուցվեց Երևանի նոր ամրոցը, Ծիծեռնակաբերդը աստիճանաբար կորցրեց իր նշանակությունը: Երևանի նոր ամրոցը թուրք-պարսկական պատերազմների ժամանակ բազմաթիվ կառուցումների, ավերումների և վերակառուցումների ենթարկվեց, որից հետո դարձավ տարածաշրջանի ամենամուր և կարևոր ամրոցներից մեկը: Այնտեղ XVI դ. վեր-

ջին բնակվում էին մահմեդականներ, իսկ հետագայում՝ նաև հայեր: Ամրոցի հարավային պարսպի արտաքին կողմում XVII դ. սկզբին բնակվում էին մահմեդականներ, որոնց տները ամրոցի ընդարձակման պայմաններում ընդգրկվեցին դրա մեջ: Ամրոցից դեպի հյուսիս տարածվում էր Երևան քաղաքը, որը տարբեր սկզբնաղբյուրներում, որտեղ ամրոցը կոչված է քաղաք, հիշատակվում է որպես արվարձան կամ վարոշ: Դա բուն Երևանն էր, որի թաղամասերում բնակվում էին գլխավորապես հայեր:

Օսմանյան սկզբնաղբյուրների տեղեկություններից կարելի է եզրակացնել, որ XVII դ. ընթացքում մեկ այլ՝ մահմեդական (հավանաբար, պարսկական) արվարձան էր ձևավորվել ամրոցի հյուսիսային պարսպի արտաքին կողմում, որը գրավվեց և ոչնչացվեց օսմանյան զորքի կողմից 1724 թ.:

ГОРОД ЕРЕВАН В ЭПИЦЕНТРЕ ТУРЕЦКО-ПЕРСИДСКИХ ВОЙН КОНЦА XVI – НАЧАЛА XVIII ВЕКА

ЕГИАЗАРЯН А.

Резюме

Ключевые слова: Ереван, турецко-персидские войны, крепость, путешественники, Сефевидский Иран, землетрясение, армянские источники.

Город Ереван в ходе длительных турецко-персидских войн (конец XVI века – начало XVIII века) претерпел множество изменений, интересных не только с точки зрения исторической науки, но и исторической географии, демографии и политологии.

В конце XVI века, когда в Ереване была построена новая крепость, старая крепость города – Цицернакаберд, постепенно утратила свое значение. Новая городская крепость подверглась разрушениям во время турецко-персидских войн XVI–XVIII веков и была перестроена, в результате чего стала одной из самых укрепленных и важных крепостей в регионе. В конце XVI века в Ереванской крепости жили мусульмане, а позднее и армяне. В начале XVII века часть ереванских мусульман жила на территории, расположенной по внешней стороне южной стены крепости, и их дома при расширении крепостных стен стали частью крепости. Город

Ереван находился к северу от крепости, и в разных источниках, где крепость называется городом, Ереван упоминается как предместье или варош, где главным образом жили армяне.

Исходя из данных османских источников можно заключить, что в XVII веке за северной стеной крепости образовалось еще одно мусульманское (по всей вероятности, персидское) предместье, которое было захвачено и разрушено османским войском в 1724 году.