

AREVIK-MEGHRI IN THE HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL  
EVOLUTION OF ARMENIA\*

ASHOT MELKONYAN

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*Introduction*

Each historical-geographical region of Armenia has had its own place and role both in regional developments and in the social and cultural life of Armenians. From that point of view, Syunik province of the kingdom of Greater Armenia is not an exception either. Together with Artsakh, it has been the eastern gate of the Armenian land for centuries, one of its military-political and civilizational cornerstones<sup>1</sup>.

It is no coincidence that Syunik had a special status in the kingdom of Greater Armenia. In Arsacid Armenia, the military forces under the ruling Syunik (Syuni) ministerial dynasty were among the most numerous<sup>2</sup>, that is, they were ministers of the nobility and bore the titles of Prince of Princes or Crown Prince. Perhaps, this should also be explained by the fact that after the fall of the Arsacid kingdom in 428 AD, in Marzpanic Armenia, which assumed the status of a semi-independent state, the minister of Syunik was appointed as the Marzpan. The Marzpan subsequently served as the guardian of the Armenian world before the Persian court<sup>3</sup> and, alongside the princely troops, commanded a contingent of 19,400 soldiers<sup>4</sup>.

Syunik, the ninth province of Greater Armenia, had 12 cantons: Tsghuk, Vayots Dzor, Gegharkunik, Sodk, Aghahetchk, Haband, Baghk, Kavsakan,

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<sup>1</sup> About the military-political and historical-cultural role of Artsakh and Syunik in Armenian history, see ՄԷԼԿՈՆՅԱՆ. 2021, 4–17, ՄԷԼԿՈՆՅԱՆ. 2022, 22–33:

<sup>2</sup> See ՀԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆՆԵՐ. 2013, 43–44:

<sup>3</sup> Հայոց պատմություն. 2018, 167:

<sup>4</sup> Աղունց. 1987, 294: Cf.: ՀԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆՆԵՐ. 2013, 38–44:

Dzork, Yernjak, Goghtn and Arevik<sup>5</sup>. Due to its exceptional geopolitical position, the ninth of these cantons that stands out is Arevik, situated in the southern region. The territory of this canton has been inhabited since prehistoric times, with artifacts from the Bronze and Iron Ages being uncovered.

*Arevik canton in historical sources*

Historian Stepanos Orbelian, well-versed in history and geography of Syunik, writes about Arevik that in his time, at the end of the 13th century, "... it was called Tashton and Meghri"<sup>6</sup>. In another edition of St. Orbelian's "History of the Province of Syunik", the toponym Tashton is referenced as Dashton. Father Ghevond Alishan suggests that the final toponym, believed to be derived from the word "field" and denoting a small "mountain plateau", was specifically associated with the region near the sources of the Meghri River. In his renowned publication "Sisakan", he states: "In the upper part of the valley of the Meghri River, where there are many ravines and the terrain is cut by tributaries, in the northeastern part is the Dashton canton... Above it (to the north) from all the villages and above the valley is the homonymous village, which is also written (called) Tashton and Dashtuni; it is assumed that there was a large settlement"<sup>7</sup>. The region was also known as Meghradzor<sup>8</sup> due to the location's toponyms associated with honey, signifying sweetness, particularly evident in the vicinity of Kartchevan, one of the canton's ancient settlements.

The compact area of Arevik canton is primarily situated within the Meghri River basin and presently aligns largely with the Meghri sub-district of Syunik marz in the Republic of Armenia.<sup>9</sup> The canton's terrain is predominantly mountainous, with its eastern section encompassing several small valleys.

Arevik-Meghri is bounded by the Araks River to the south, adjacent to the Parspatunik canton of the Vaspurakan province (later Sevsar-Gharadagh canton), with Kavsakan to the east, Goghtn to the west, and the mountainous Dzork canton to the north.

Arevik was initially incorporated into the Goghtn canton in ancient times. Subsequently, it was detached from this administrative division and evolved into a separate canton. Its name originates from ancient Aryan-Indo-European roots. It comes to complete the numerous list of Ararat, Arax,

<sup>5</sup> *Երկրագրություն. 1963, 109, Օրբելիան. 1986, 70:*

<sup>6</sup> *Օրբելիան. 1986, 70:*

<sup>7</sup> *Ալիշան. 1893, 300.* According to a material in Father Alishan's possession, the settlement of Tashton is mentioned in 1684 as the birthplace of a certain Galust, "bookbinder" of the Monastery of Saint Thaddeus (see *Ալիշան. 1893, 300*).

<sup>8</sup> *Ալիշան. 1893, 300–305:*

<sup>9</sup> According to the calculations of Acad. S. Yeremyan, the territory of Arevik canton was 625 square kilometers (see *Երկրագրություն. 1963, 39*):

Aragats, Artsakh, Artos, Areni, Areguni, Arteni, Archesh, Artske, Ardzni, Aruch and finally, Armenia and other place names indicating the Indo-European origin of the Armenian highlands with the root “Ar”. The root of the word presents the Indo-European “ar”, that is: “arevayin” (solar), “ari” (brave), “aznvazarm” (highborn), “ararchasteghts” (creator) and other similarly expressing positive meanings. In this case, the meaning of the name Arevik is primarily related to the geographical location of the canton: it is located in the northern latitude of Armenia’s warm, subtropical climate zone, in the lowlands, at an altitude of 600 m above sea level. The highest peak is Baghatssar, 22 km from Meghri city, north of Shishkert village, with a height of 3256 m, which is the confluence of the homonymous river with other peaks of the Meghri mountain range and the basin of the Voghji river extending north of it.

In “Ashkaratsoits,” there is a vivid portrayal of the fruits cultivated in Syunik region, particularly highlighting the pomegranate, renowned by its noble name and recognized in Greco-Roman literature as *Malum punicum* or *Malagranatum*. Undoubtedly, in this instance, we are referring to the renowned pomegranates of Arevik-Meghri. In “Ashkaratsoits” we read: “It is a spherical fruit with a crown on the head, red skin, red seeds with plump pearly kernels, sweet or sour, as a useful and refreshing fetus”<sup>10</sup>.

As a part of Syunik, Arevik was part of all ancient Armenian state formations: Ararat, Yervandid, Artaxiad and Arsacid kingdoms. It is mentioned in connection with the preaching activity of the apostle Bartholomew at the beginning of the 1st century. Stepanos Orbelian testifies that “when Bartholomew returned from Persia, he began to preach in Vordvat village”<sup>11</sup>, Arevik and Goghtn cantons. Accepting the preaching of the Gospel, these were enlightened through the baptism by immersion, thanks to the holy apostle Bartholomew”<sup>12</sup>.

### *Settlements and monasteries of Arevik*

Kartchevan is famous among the large settlements of Arevik canton. St. Orbelian testifies that Smbat I Bagratuni (890-914) “the king donated to the holy church (Tatev monastery – A. M.) the great village of Kartchevan in Meghradzor, Arevik canton, which he acquired by purchase”<sup>13</sup>. That famous monastery of Syunik always remained in the focus of care of the Bagratid dynasty. After the renovation of the monastery in 906, the Armenian court and various princely houses made new donations to the monastery. During the reign of King Gagik I (990-1020), almost all cantons of Syunik, including

<sup>10</sup> See *ԵՐԵՄՅԱՆ. 1963, 97. Cf.: Մատենագիրք Հայոց. 2003, 2153, 2172, 2188:*

<sup>11</sup> Vordvat is part of the present-day Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic, with the distorted name of Ordubad.

<sup>12</sup> *ՕՐԲԵԼՅԱՆ. 1986, 76–77:*

<sup>13</sup> *ՕՐԲԵԼՅԱՆ. 1986, 210:*

Arevik, were officially transferred to the Tatev Episcopal Diocese by the circular of Armenian Catholicos Sargis I Sevantsi in 1006<sup>14</sup>. After the creation of the Syunik kingdom in 987, Tatev monastery was also patronized by the Syunik kings. The latter, in their turn, donated other villages from Arevik canton to the Syunik metropolitanate among the new lands<sup>15</sup>.

During the period of Syunik kingdom (987–1170), Arevik, which almost always remained part of it, experienced a significant rise. It was also helped by the development of copper mines in the canton<sup>16</sup>. The central settlement of Meghri turned into one of the major military-political and economic centers of both the canton and the whole province and Armenia. It was already mentioned as a fortress, where various officials used to reside. The latter, following the tradition adopted in the Middle Ages, continued to donate large estates to the church, in this case, to the Tatev monastery. We read about such a regular donation in St. Orbelian's work. One of the governors of Syunik, "a certain Abusahl, the owner of the Meghri fortress, gave the large garden of the Berdavagians of the Meghri valley in the year of five hundred and thirty-five"<sup>17</sup>, that is, in 1084. St. Hovhannes monastery, located east of the Meghri settlement, became one of the spiritual centers of the canton.

As it is known, in the High Middle Ages, Syunik was distinguished by numerous settlements and famous monasteries and churches, which became the owners of rich land estates due to the extravagant donations they received. Thanks to St. Orbelian, we have received the tax lists given to the Tatev monastery according to the cantons and settlements of the province. The eleventh of those lists refers to Arevik, which gives a certain idea about the 13th century settlements of the canton and their economic situation. In that list, the following 24 villages and monasteries are mentioned, indicating the corresponding tax rate to be paid<sup>18</sup>.

Aghvi's Monastery 7	Vordisho Monastery 20
Mayri 8	Kholavank 12
Karati 15	Kartchavan 12
Abkavank 8	Tashtun 12:
Malunu 8	Agarak 8
Meghri's Monastery 20	Mel 6
Koreknek 10	Moloshon 12
Khoz Village 6	Kuravank 8
Tapyar 8	Managhu 8
Lshavank 30	Tehi 8

<sup>14</sup> Հայոց պատմություն. 2014, 142:

<sup>15</sup> Օրբելյան. 1986, 262–263:

<sup>16</sup> Григорян. 1990, 176.

<sup>17</sup> Օրբելյան. 1986, 276:

<sup>18</sup> Օրբելյան. 1986, 402–403:

Luska Vank 12  
Zvark Monastery 12

Teghamayri 6  
Vardanadzor 6

Of course, the topography of a significant part of the above-mentioned settlements and monasteries is not specified, which is unforgivable, especially at present, in the conditions of increasing Azerbaijani fraud and open encroachments on the Republic of Armenia. Undoubtedly, many of these toponyms were forgotten, distorted, or renamed over time, among foreign dominions. Therefore, their study and restoration of the once Armenian names of Armenian settlements is a highly topical issue and has scientific, political and vital importance. It is noteworthy that father Ghevond Alishan had always been concerned about the issue of restoring the distorted and foreign names of the Armenian toponyms of Arevik-Meghri and the whole Armenia. Referring to the issue of about 60 Armenian-sounding toponyms of Arevik, he wrote: "Some of the above 60 villages in Meghradzor are partially familiar both by their names and their location. Perhaps they are in the valleys of smaller rivulets, only few of which have foreign names..."<sup>19</sup>.

After receiving their primary education in medieval Arevik's educational centers, the local youths continued their education mainly in Syunik's famous cathedrals: Gladzor, Tatev, Hermon monastery, Harants hermitage, as well as in other educational centers of Armenia<sup>20</sup>.

In the Ancient and Middle Ages, Arevik canton experienced a great economic boom due to its favorable climatic conditions and its location on trade routes. A large amount of fruits, especially pomegranates, were exported from the canton to various cantons of Armenia and different countries. However, that rise soon stopped along with the weakening of the Syunik or Baghik kingdom. It started from the beginning of the 12th century as a result of repeated destructive raids by foreign conquerors.

#### *Arevik-Meghri in the focus of encroachments by Turkic tribes (12th century)*

In 1103, the Seljuk-Turks attacked the kingdom of Syunik and a year later captured its capital Kapan, and then Bghen. St. Orbelian regretfully tells about the disaster that hit the country, while not forgetting to emphasize that the enemy, however, did not manage to take control of the entire

<sup>19</sup> ԱԼԻՇԱՆ Գ. 1893, 299:

<sup>20</sup> According to father Alishan, the sources mention numerous educated spiritual and worldly figures from Meghri. It is no coincidence that while also talking about the educational life of the same region in the period he lived in, in the 19th century, he regretfully recorded the existing unsatisfactory situation: "The educational life in Meghri is not in a good condition, nor are they trying to improve the condition of the people in the cultivation of cotton, silkworm and orchards, in which red wine is commendable" (ԱԼԻՇԱՆ Գ. 1893, 303):

territory of the kingdom and numerous famous fortresses and settlements, including Arevik canton, continued to remain under the rule of King Grigor of Syunik and his brother Smbat. The eyewitness historian writes: “Many Christians were put to the sword. The land of Baghk was completely destroyed. Heavy darkness enveloped the Armenian people. All the churches and Christians of Armenia fell into severe mourning. But Baghaberd, Geghi, Kakavaberd, Shlorut, Kartchevan, Meghri, Grham remained under the right of Ashot’s grandsons, King Grigor and Smbat”<sup>21</sup>. In fact, thanks to the resistance battles of the aforementioned fortresses, a part of the kingdom of Syunik, together with Arevik, preserved its sovereignty. However, the ring around the kingdom was getting tighter.

The twenty-year peace around the region was broken in 1126, when Emir Haron, invading Kapan and Arevik, carried out a terrible massacre of the population and looted a large amount of gold, sacred relics, and church utensils kept in the Baghakatskar monastery of Dzork. A quarter of a century later, in 1151, the kingdom of Syunik was once again subjected to destruction. In 1157, as Orbelian writes, the Seljuk-Turks “robbed Meghri in the year of six hundred and six”<sup>22</sup>, and in 1170, by capturing the famous Baghaberd, they destroyed the last Armenian kingdom in the homeland itself.

Even after the fall of the Syunik kingdom, the region continued to preserve certain elements of its sovereignty thanks to various princely houses, especially the Orbelians and their dynasties. It is noteworthy that this relative independence became most noticeable in the south of Syunik, within the borders of Arevik canton, where Prince Burtel, descended from the Orbelians, settled and performed activities<sup>23</sup>.

During the long-term foreign rule, Arevik canton, like other cantons of Armenia, was not spared from periodic massacres and emigration of the population. Thousands of people who left their homeland joined the ranks of Armenians in Armenian colonies. In the first half of the 17th century, a group of people from Meghri settled in Smyrna<sup>24</sup>.

### *Spiritual-ecclesiastical life in Meghri*

The research of the primary sources leads to the belief that among the people of Meghri, a significant number of churchmen were engaged in spiritual service, as well as in church construction in various cantons of Armenia and Armenian settlements. The historian Arakel Davrizhetsi tells with great enthusiasm about the activities of such a clergyman from Meghri, who was appointed by Philipos I Aghbaketsi (1632–1655) as the abbot of the famous

<sup>21</sup> Օրբելյան. 1986, 279:

<sup>22</sup> Օրբելյան. 1986, 279:

<sup>23</sup> Григорян. 1990, 203–204.

<sup>24</sup> Հայոց պատմություն. 2014, 703–704:

St. Karapet monastery of Aprakunis in Yernjak canton, and carried out fundamental construction activities there. The historian writes: “From the village called Meghri, archimandrite Yesayi himself started the renovation of the same Saint Karapet monastery, revived (raised) the previously destroyed buildings: the church, houses, cells, walls, then he put (erected) wide and spacious, thick and high walls around it and built houses and a mansion inside for themselves and their guests. And most of all, he renovated the old church in its place, with wide and spacious and high arches and the cathedral, with chamfered monolithic rocks resting on four pillars, everything was built perfectly from the foundation to its dome with tireless work and great expenses”<sup>25</sup>. Then, in October 1653, the priest’s consecration ceremony took place with great solemnity<sup>26</sup>. The same historian mentions another clergyman of Meghri, Reverend Stepanos, who in Constantinople witnessed a three-day terrible fire broke out on July 14, 1660, as a result of which, among many districts, the Armenian districts also became a source of fire<sup>27</sup>.

In the late Middle Ages, Saint Astsvatsatsin (17th century) and Meghri monastery (15th–18th centuries) were among the famous churches built in Meghri.

#### *Arevik-Meghri Canton within the Syunik Melikdom (18th century)*

In the 18th century, Arevik-Meghri canton played a significant role in the regulation of relations between the sovereign Syunik principality and the Persian state. The fortress of Meghri and Kaler village were among the residences of the Melikdom. At that time, the famous St. Astvatsatsin church of Meghri village was built.

Due to its strategic location, Arevik canton was at the center of the liberation struggle led by Davit Bek and Mkhitar Sparapet in 1722–1730. His role in that struggle increased especially after the heroic defense of the Armenian population of Meghri fortress and the warriors of Stepanos Shahumyan who came to help from Kaler village against the local muslim tribes in 1724<sup>28</sup>. That circumstance was important for the recognition of Davit Bek’s rule by Persian Shah Tahmasp II. Since then, Arevik canton had turned into the southern gate of Davit Bek’s rule and a unique bridge for the settlement of Armenian-Persian interstate relations.

Among the battles waged by Davit Bek against the Turkish troops on Syunik, the Battle of Meghri in 1726 has its own place. After capturing Ordubad and Agulis, Turkish troops invaded Meghri in the spring. A year

<sup>25</sup> Դավիթ Բեկի. 1990, 282:

<sup>26</sup> Դավիթ Բեկի. 1990, 282:

<sup>27</sup> Դավիթ Բեկի. 1990, 424:

<sup>28</sup> See Հայոց պատմություն. 2010, 46:

later, Mkhitar Sparapet and Ter-Avetis, together with a detachment of people from Meghri, penetrated the fortress of Meghri, receiving military help from the allied Persian Duzali Khan. It became possible to push the enemy out of the fortress with joint forces and defeat it in Meghri gorge<sup>29</sup>.

During the 18th century, among the various cantons of Eastern Armenia, Arevik was subjected to the conquests of foreign conquerors. The town of Meghri, which has a hard-to-reach location, was also destroyed<sup>30</sup>.

### *Arevik-Meghri during the period of Russian rule (1810–1918)*

The capture of the strategically important Meghri castle borough in 1810 by a Russian military unit led by Colonel Kotlyarevsky was of great importance in Russia's victory in the Russo-Persian War of 1804–1813.

At the beginning of the 19th century, during the period of historical Arevik annexation to the Russian Empire, the canton quickly recovered its once prosperous state. Father Alishan writes especially about the prosperous state of Meghri, the center of the canton: "About two miles from the northern bank of the great Yeraskh River is the beautiful settlement of Arevik canton homonymous to the Meghri River... among orchards, mulberry and cotton fields (cultivated land ?) and fruitful gardens. Thus, those historical sites are called Meghri"<sup>31</sup>.

Frederic Dubois, a Swiss archaeologist who visited Meghri in April 1834, after seeing the blooming gardens, compared them to a real paradise. "After a terrible road, we find ourselves in the narrow valley of Migri (Meghri – A. M.)," he writes, "as if we were transported to heaven. The swaying willows, flowering brambles, vines planted in the plains, earthen houses, steep cliffs crowned with old castles create a picturesque picture. Migri-chai flows from here, which is quite abundant in water. Migri is inhabited by Armenians"<sup>32</sup>.

In 1849, the Meghri region became part of the Yerevan province, then in 1867, as a part of Zangezur district, it was joined to the newly created Elizavetpol Governorate. At the beginning of the 20th century, protests were held there against the infamous decree of June 12, 1903 signed by Nicholas II regarding the confiscation of the property of the Armenian Church. During the 1905-1906 Armenian-Tatar wars, Armenian defense squads operated in Meghri under the leadership of two outstanding figures of the liberation struggle: Hunchakian Paramaz (Matteos Sargsyan) and ARF member Keri (Arshak Gavafyan).

<sup>29</sup> See Հայոց պատմություն. 2010, 49. For details about Meghri district and the battle, see Մեքսոնյան. 1992, 30–31, 41–45, 62–67, 94–99:

<sup>30</sup> Frédéric Dubois de Monpéroux. 1840, 45.

<sup>31</sup> Ալիշան. 1893, 301:

<sup>32</sup> Frédéric Dubois de Monpéroux. 1840, 46.



*The strategic importance of Meghri district for the sovereign Syunik and the whole of Armenia*

After the 1917 February Revolution, in March, a local body of the Transcaucasian Special Committee under the Provisional Government was formed in Meghri. In 1918 After the declaration of independence of the Republic of Armenia at the end of May, the district was under the control of the sovereign Karabakh-Zangezur provincial government, first under the control of Andranik and then under the control of Arsen Shahmazyan and Garegin Nzhdeh. In order to fight against the Turkish-Tatar encroachments on the territory, Garegin Nzhdeh was able to create a unique defense region in the south of Syunik and southeast of Nakhijevan, in the area of Kapan, Arevik and Goghtn, under the name Kapargoght, and take over its command<sup>33</sup>.

Meghri had an exceptional role in the life of Autonomous Syunik, established on December 25, 1920, and Mountainous Armenia, which was proclaimed on April 27, 1921, after the Sovietization of Armenia. Until the middle of July 1921, it was, in fact, the last center of non-Soviet statehood in the territory of both Armenia and the entire Transcaucasia, where the Armenian intelligentsia, military and other strata of the population were able to cross to Persia and be freed from the persecutions and reprisals of the Soviet government.

The liberation struggle led by Garegin Nzhdeh in Syunik was of great importance in July 7, 1921 meeting of the Caucasus Bureau of RC(b)P to leave Zangezur within Soviet Armenia.

*Conclusion*

Both in the Middle Ages and in modern times, Syunik province and its southern Arevik-Meghri canton were of exceptional importance for Armenia both in terms of military politics and historical and cultural aspects. It is not a coincidence that even during the years of Soviet power, within the USSR, a state with a single totalitarian system, Azerbaijan tried many times to become the owner of the Meghri region. However, it received a worthy reprisal. Having no success, the belligerent leadership of Azerbaijan continues its aggression against both the Meghri region and the whole of Armenia at the current stage, with the aim of achieving the abolition of Armenian statehood step by step. Therefore, in the fight against the Turkish-Azerbaijani anti-Armenian cooperation, the imperative to reinforce and strengthen Meghri and Syunik in particular should be one of the main directions of Armenia's strategy.

*Ashot Melkonyan – Academician of the NAS RA, Dr. of Sci. in History, Professor, Director of the NAS RA Institute of History. Scientific interests:*

<sup>33</sup> For details on Syunik's liberation struggle in 1917–1921, see Միսնյան, 2017.

*historical demography of Armenia, history of Western Armenia, history of Armenian Genocide, history of Armenian statehood. Author of 18 monographs and around 450 articles. ORCID:0000-0002-2579-0286; ashamelk@yahoo.com*

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## ԱՐԵՎԻԿ-ՄԵԴՐԻՆ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՊԱՏՄԱՔԱՂԱՔԱԿԱՆ ՀՈԼՈՎՈՒՅԹՈՒՄ

ԱՇՈՏ ՄԵԼՔՈՆՅԱՆ

Ա մ փ ո փ ու մ

Բանալի բառեր՝ Սյունիք, Արևիք գավառ, Մեղրի, Սիսական, Ստեփանոս Օրբելյան, Տաթևի վանք, Սյունիքի թագավորություն, Դավիթ բեկ, Զանգեզուրի շրջան, Գարեգին Նժդեհ, Լեռնային Հայաստան:

Հայաստանի պատմաաշխարհագրական յուրաքանչյուր երկրամաս իր ուրույն տեղն ու դերն ունի ինչպես տարածաշրջանային զարգացումներում, այնպես էլ՝ Հայոց Հասարակական ու մշակութային կյանքում: Այդ տեսանկյունից բացառություն չէ նաև Մեծ Հայքի թագավորության Սյունյաց աշխարհը: Այն Արցախի հետ դարեր շարունակ եղել է Հայոց երկրի արևելյան դարպասը, նրա ռազմաքաղաքական ու քաղաքակրթական անկյունաքարերից մեկը:

Սյունիքի աշխարհաքաղաքական բացառիկ հոլովությունը առանձնանում է նրա պատմական 12 գավառներից ամենահարավայինը՝ Արևիքը (նաև՝ Արևիկ), որը հիմնականում տարածվում է Մեղրի գետի ավազանում և ներկայումս համընկնում է Հայաստանի Հանրապետության Սյունիքի մարզի Մեղրու ենթաշրջանին:

Հին և միջին դարերում Արևիք գավառն իր բարենպաստ բնակլիմայական պայմանների շնորհիվ տնտեսական մեծ վերելք է ապրել: Ուշ միջնադարում այն զգալի դեր է ունեցել ինքնիշխան Սյունիքի մեկիջություն և Պարսից պետության փոխհարաբերությունների կարգավորման գործում: Արևիք գավառն իր ռազմավարական դիրքի շնորհիվ եղել է 1722–1730 թթ. Դավիթ բեկի և Մխիթար Սպարապետի գլխավորած ազատագրական պայքարի, 1804–1813 թթ. ռուս-պարսկական պատերազմի կիզակետում:

XIX դարի երկրորդ կեսին Մեղրիում են ծնվել բազմաթիվ ազգային գործիչներ, որոնք ժամանակի ընթացքում դարձել են Հայ ազատագրական պայքարի առաջնորդներ: Արևիք-Մեղրին աչքի է ընկել նաև որպես Հայ մշակույթի և գիտության կենտրոն:

Սյունիքի, այդ թվում՝ Մեղրու նկատմամբ վերջին հարյուրամյակի ընթացքում թուրք-ադրբեջանական տանդեմի ոտնձգությունների դեմ պայքարը կազմել և կազմում է Հայաստանի ռազմավարության գլխավոր ուղղություններից մեկը:

Աշոտ Մելքոնյան – պ. գ. դ., պրոֆ., ՀՀ ԳԱԱ ակադեմիկոս, Պատմության ինստիտուտի տնօրեն: Գիտական հետաքրքրությունները՝ պատմական ժողովրդագրություն, Հայոց ցեղասպանություն, Արևմտյան Հայաստանի պատմություն, Հայոց պետականության պատմություն: Հեղինակ է 18 մենագրության և շուրջ 450 հոդվածի: ORCID:0000-0002-2579-0286; ashamelk@yahoo.com

## АРЕВИК-МЕГРИ В ИСТОРИКО-ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОМ КОНТЕКСТЕ АРМЕНИИ

АШОТ МЕЛКОНЯН

### Р е з ю м е

*Ключевые слова: Сюник, провинция Аревик, Мегри, Сисакан, Степанос Орбелян, монастырь Татев, Сюникское царство, Давид-бек, уезд Зангезур, Гарегин Нжде, Горная Армения.*

Каждый историко-географический регион Армении имеет свое особое место и роль как в региональном развитии, так и в общественной и культурной жизни армян. С этой точки зрения не является исключением и Сюникский наанг (область) царства Великой Армении. Сюник и Арцах на протяжении веков были восточными воротами Армянского государства, одними из его военно-политических и цивилизационных основ.

В уникальном геополитическом контексте Сюника выделяется самая южная из 12 его исторических провинций – Аревик, которая в основном простирается в бассейне реки Мегри и в настоящее время совпадает с Мегринским подрайоном Сюникского марза Республики Армения.

Благодаря благоприятным климатическим условиям провинция Аревик в древние и средние века пережила большой экономический подъем. В эпоху позднего средневековья она играла значительную роль в регулировании отношений между суверенным Сюникским княжеством и Персидским государством. Провинция Аревик из-за своего стратегического положения в 1722–1730 гг. оказалась в центре освободительной борьбы под руководством Давид-бека и Мхитара Спарапета и русско-персидской войны 1804–1813 гг. Во второй половине XIX века в Мегри родились многие национальные деятели, которые со временем стали лидерами армянской освободительной борьбы. Аревик-Мегри также выделялся как один из центров армянской культуры и науки.

На протяжении прошлого столетия борьба против посягательств турецко-азербайджанского тандема на Сюник, включая Мегри, была одним из основных направлений стратегии Армении.

*Ашот Мелконян – д. и. н., проф., академик НАН РА, директор Института истории НАН РА. Научные интересы: историческая демография, Геноцид армян, история Западной Армении, история армянской государственности. Автор 18 монографий и около 450 статей. ORCID:0000-0002-2579-0286; ashamelk@yahoo.com*