

## HE WAS BORN MORTAL, BECAME A MIGHTY KING OF KINGS

MADONA MARTIROSYAN

*Armenian State Pedagogical University after Kh. Abovyan, RA, Yerevan*

*E-mail: [madona.martirosyan.94@list.ru](mailto:madona.martirosyan.94@list.ru)*

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### ABSTRACT

Armenian king Tigran the Great was one of the most powerful kings in our history. Descriptions of his life and work have been passed down from generation to generation and have reached our days. His royal and human virtues, which found their expression in the historical and philological works of Armenian and foreign historians and writers, have been wonderfully praised. And today we are trying to bring up those works from a historical perspective.

The article highlights the historicization of the image of Tigran the Great in literature using the historical-comparative method. All the royal and human qualities of Tigran the Great were praised in the presented works, which found their expression in the historical-philological works of Armenian writers. We have made an attempt to bring up these works and record the presence of historical facts under an artistic template. Giving the reader the opportunity to simultaneously interrelate the fiction play, poem, poem in the historical context, making it observable from a multi-faceted perspective. These works of art come to complete the knowledge and ideas we have in raising the image of the Armenian king and presenting it to the public.

**Key words:** *Tigran the Great, Perch Zeytuntsyan, Arshak Azaryan, Armen Malkhasyan, poem, play.*

### INTRODUCTION

One of the most prominent and influential rulers in Armenian history is Tigran the Great. His life and state activities have been transmitted from generation to generation. The

political, military, and diplomatic achievements of Tigran the Great significantly influenced the development of the Armenian people. His accomplishments are documented in numerous historical sources. Both Armenian and foreign historians have particularly praised his personal and royal virtues. The figure of Tigran the Great has been depicted in various literary works, including poems and plays. These works possess not only artistic value but also contain precise historical references. The present study aims to systematize the facts recorded in both literary and historical texts. This article seeks to emphasize the historicization of Tigran the Great's image in literature. In literary works, his character is often idealized, yet the main historical events are preserved. The general objective is to enable the reader to compare historical facts with artistic representations. The article highlights Armenian authors who have addressed the life and achievements of Tigran the Great. Their works reflect both his personal qualities and royal attributes. The primary observation is that literature can serve as a medium for transmitting historical facts. This study complements the knowledge of Tigran the Great and contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of his historical significance.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study is based on the historical-comparative method, which allows the integration of literary and historical sources. The method focuses on the comparative analysis of works by different authors. Particular attention is given to the parallel examination of the formation and representation of Tigran the Great's image. Poems, plays, and historiographical texts are analyzed. The relationships between historical facts and artistic depiction are identified. The selection of literary sources was based on authorial authority and historical awareness. This method enables the identification of how authors from different periods reinterpret the image of Tigran the Great. The purpose is to document historical realities and assess their representation in literary works. Comparative analytical approaches were applied, both parallel and sequential. Consequently, a multifaceted scholarly and literary representation of Tigran the Great's image has been constructed.

### **DISCUSSION**

The study demonstrates that literature can preserve historical accuracy. Poems and plays present the image of Tigran the Great in an idealized manner, yet grounded in historical facts. Armenian authors emphasized his strategic and political skills. The works also address

his personal qualities, such as benevolence and intelligence. The historical-comparative method revealed the distinctive approaches of different authors. By analyzing these works, the reader can juxtapose historical realities with artistic representation. The study shows that literature complements historical knowledge. The reinterpretation of Tigran the Great's image contributes to an understanding of his significance within the public consciousness. These works provide a broad scholarly foundation for further research. Ultimately, the image of Tigran the Great becomes both a historical fact and a literary value, serving as a subject for multifaceted analysis.

Perch Zeytuntsyan's play "The Twelve Days of God".

Armenian novelist, dramatist, publicist and translator Perch Zeytuntsyan was very moved by the powerful historical figures and the fate of our nation. And that is the reason why Zeytuntsyan's reflection on the historical theme had a dual manifestation: first as the drama "The Myth of the Lost City" and then as "Arshak the Second" a novel (Dolukhanyan, 2014). Then Zeytuntsyan referred to Tigran the Great. This was a more difficult problem, because at the time of the creation of the play, the worship of the greatest Armenian king had not yet taken root in terms of becoming an essence and including the power of power from him (Dolukhanyan, 2014). What we are going to talk about is called *"Twelve Days of God"* (1977-1978). At first glance, this title does not give us the idea that this work could be about the Armenian king Tigran the Great, but come and see that it is so. This tragedy consists of three parts and is represented by the motifs of Armenian history, has twenty images, a prologue and an epilogue. Perhaps "Twelve Days of God" is due to the fact that the entire plot of the play takes place during those twelve days, and the word "God" is the name of the Armenian king. is the best description of the times, not that Tigran the Great was deified like the pharaohs in ancient Egypt. The Armenian king was embodied as a man-god among the Armenian people and bore the title of "God" in addition to the title of "King of the King".

The author managed to present the Armenian king as a patriotic ruler, a man who is concerned about the fate of his people. *"You don't exist for me separately-separately. There is only one crowd for me folks ..."* (Zeytuntsyan, 1987).

*In this tragedy, the wife of King Tigran is not the daughter of Mihrdat Pontatsi, but his sister, who is older than the king and does not shine with her beauty, but she is very intelligent,*

*and the king's sons, Tigran, Zareh and Artavazd, were born from the same mother from Mihrdat Pontatsi's sister, who is the Armenian queen. The writer was not guided by purely historical truth, in which Tigran's wife is Mihrdat's daughter, Cleopatra, whose sons were Zareh, Tigran and Tigran the Younger. And Artavazd is Tigran's son born from an Armenian woman. The author was guided by his desires, which sometimes contradict the historical reality and give the reader a reason to think, but he did not take us too far from the historical past, remaining faithful to the events of the past, not forgetting to color them with his imagination.*

The following scene of the play speaks about the strictness of the Armenian king and never being weak and not giving up the high position he had taken. *"Artavazd - My sympathies are those who become bait the side, father. At any rate, there is something more human about the one who becomes food than the one who eats»* (Zeytuntsyan, 1987).

After Artavazd's answer, the king orders Artavazd to be given ten lashes so that the prince will understand the importance of being an eater. However, it later becomes clear that the Armenian king was betrayed by his two sons, Zareh and Tigran. And that expression of Artavazdi was not so great evil compared to the conspiracies they made. Artavazd used to write and very well. This is how the Armenian king expresses himself when he reads the writings of Artavazd. *"I read it, I admired it, I was captivated and proud... And I hated you..."*. The king explains his act of hatred in this way: as a writer, you cannot tolerate even the slightest injustice. *And the king is often obliged to do injustice, do you understand is obliged to. For the sake of a different, greater justice. For example, to sacrifice his ally, his wife's brother for the interests of the motherland"* (referring to Mihrdat) (Zeytuntsyan, 1987).

In the entire play, in addition to the main characters, other characters play a small but important role: the king's concubine, Sosi, the clown, and the priest, whose detailed descriptions color the play. After deification, the king invents punishments and banishes them from his life only because they did not allow the king to make a right decision about whether or not to hand over Mihrdat Eupator to the Romans. One said to hand over, and the other one did not hand over, that is why the king sets punishments for them, so that later he can make the decision alone, without anyone's influence, to hand over Mihrdat and not to hand over. In this way, the author weakened Tigran the Great for the reader from the real role of a king

dictating his will to the world as an independent political figure. Maybe he wanted to show the Armenian king's human, rather than royal, weaknesses, giving the play sensitivity, but a man who could not make decisions on his own, therefore, would not be able to create a country whose borders reached from "sea to sea". In the end, the Armenian king makes a decision not to hand over Mihrdat Evpator, the author does not justify Mihrdat's stay in Armenia, when Mihrdat's presence in Armenia is seen from a historical point of view as an opportunity for the Romans, not a reason, when Rome did not tolerate the fact that they would have Tigran the Great in the east. such a powerful ruler who is difficult, impossible to defeat. The author brings to the reader's attention an important reality that has always accompanied our nation throughout the centuries. And with the mouth of the storyteller he says: "All the forces disappeared from the face of the world, there is neither Babylon nor Assyria. There will be only the one who is guided by morality. It will not be the attacker, but the defender, because he is the one who carries the morality" (Zeytuntsyan, 1987).

*About Perch Zeytuntsyan's creations and Tigran Mets created by him, Guj Manukyan said, "Each actor has something to say and is looking for an opportunity to convey it to the audience through an ideological hero." Such were Tigran Mets, Daniel Varuzhan and Robert Stroud, whose stage incarnations are related to the pen of Perch Zeytuntsyan. The roles I played have a common feature, which the author himself is not exempt from, that is, to think about the highest categories of human morality"*(Zeytuntsyan, 2010).

*Armen Malkhasyan's historical novel "Tigran the Great".*

The novelist *Armen Malkhasyan* touched on the character of Tigran the Great in his historical novel *"Tigran the Great"*. The book is dedicated to the 2150th anniversary of the throne of Tigran the Great.

That book is a description of the life of Tigran the Great, it presents historical events and real people, but the details, for example, servants and surroundings, are fictional. There, Tigran the Great is presented not as a historical figure, but as a person made of flesh and blood," said Armen Malkhasyan, the author of the novel "Tigran the Great" ( Հայոց արքա Տիգրան Մեծի 2150-ամյակի կապակցությամբ, 2021). The author's original interpretation of the historical material gives an opportunity to enter the circle of life of the heroes, to live their adventures, to relive the dramatic events, to recognize the process by which our greatest king,

with exceptional state thinking, diplomatic genius and military talent, created the Armenian empire (Malkhasyan, 2010).

"Tigran the Great" is a novel not only about the power of Armenians, but also about permanence. The heroes of the novel never come to terms with even the thought of defeat, and peoples who cannot come to terms with defeat live on. This is, perhaps, the key thing to say, which Armen Malkhasyan's historical novel "Tigran the Great" succinctly and accurately proves (Atabekyan, 2021).

*Arshak Azaryan's poem "Tigran the Great".*

In this poem, the author compares Tigran the Great with a strong, winged, sharp-eyed eagle, who is a friend of the oppressed, a builder, but at the same time, he is uncompromising towards his enemies and stands against them as an equal. The author describes the king like this. *"None glorious mighty Tigran, you are the god of war to the Armenian land."* During the reign of Tigran, Armenia lived its golden age, which has passed thousands of years, but his name and glory have been remembered and will be remembered forever, and it is clear that conspiracies against such greatness were materialized by relatives and enemies, and the author characterizes the situation in this way:

*Against him powerful bow are stretch*

*And pitfalls to win for,*

*The light of many has gone out on this road...*

*There is a glory that remains inextinguishable forever*

*The author writes that he is looking for at least a trace of the king's relics and wonders where the king's crown is kept. Dreaming that one day Tigran the Great will return, and his star will shine in the Armenian blue sky. "And triumphant flag will wave In the Biblical New Golden Age"* (Azaryan, 2010).

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the image of Tigran the Great in Armenian literature is presented not only as a historical figure but also as a cultural and ideological symbol. The historicization of his image in literary works enables a comparative analysis of documentary sources and artistic representation. The application of the historical-comparative method revealed both common features and distinctive approaches among different authors. The

findings indicate that literary texts preserve the core framework of historical events while incorporating artistic generalization. This synthesis contributes to a multidimensional interpretation of Tigran the Great's image. The study confirms that literature functions as an essential medium for preserving and transmitting historical memory. Consequently, the image of Tigran the Great emerges as a national value that integrates historical fact with literary interpretation.

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## ԱՄՓՈՓՈՒՄ

### ՆԱԾԵՐԷԼ Է ՄԱՀԿԱՆԱՑՈՒ, ԴԱՐՁԵԼ ՀԶՈՐ ԱՐՔԱՅԻՑ ԱՐՔԱ

#### *Մադոնա Մարտիրոսյան*

Հայոց պատմության ամենահզոր թագավորներից մեկը Տիգրան Մեծն է, որի կյանքի ու պետական գործունեության մանրամասները սերնդեսերունդ փոխանցվել են և հասել մեր օրերին: Նրա թագավորական ու մարդկային առաքինությունները բարձր են գնահատվել հայ և օտար պատմիչների ու գրողների ստեղծագործություններում: Հոդվածը ներկայացնում է Տիգրան Մեծի կերպարի պատմականացումը գրականության մեջ՝ կիրառելով պատմահամեմատական մեթոդներ:

Ներկայացվող ուսումնասիրություններում ընդգծվում են նրա բոլոր արարչագործ ու անձնական հատկությունները, որոնք արտացոլվել են հայ հեղինակների պատմա-բանասիրական աշխատանքներում, մասնավորապես Պերճ Զեյթունցյանի, Արշակ Ազարյանի, Արմեն Մալխասյանի ստեղծագործություններում: Մեր նպատակն է ոչ միայն վեր հանել այս աշխատությունները, այլև արձանագրել պատմական փաստերը գեղարվեստական ձևաչափի ներքո, ընթերցողին հնարավորություն տալով դիտարկել պիեսը, պոեմը և պատմական համատեքստը միաժամանակ:

Այս ստեղծագործությունները լրացնում են գիտելիքները, խթանում Տիգրան Մեծի կերպարի վերախմաստավորումը և թույլ են տալիս գնահատել նրա կարևորությունը բազմակողմանի տեսանկյունից:

*Բանալի բաներ՝ Տիգրան Մեծ, Պերճ Ջեյրունցյան, Արշակ Ազարյան, Արմեն Մալխասյան, բանաստեղծություն, պիես:*

## РЕЗЮМЕ

### ОН РОДИЛСЯ СМЕРТНЫМ, СТАЛ МОГУЩЕСТВЕННЫМ ЦАРЁМ ЦАРЕЙ

*Мадона Мартиросян*

Один из наиболее могущественных царей в истории Армении-Тигран Великий, чьи жизненные и государственные деяния передавались из поколения в поколение и дошли до настоящего времени. Его царские и личностные добродетели высоко оценивались как армянскими, так и зарубежными историками и писателями. Статья рассматривает историческое осмысление образа Тиграна Великого в литературе с применением историко-сравнительного метода.

В анализируемых исследованиях выделяются все его творческие и личностные качества, отражённые в историко-филологических трудах армянских авторов, включая Перча Зейтуняна, Аршака Азаряна и Армена Малхасяна. Цель исследования заключается в систематизации этих трудов и фиксации исторических фактов в художественной форме, предоставляя читателю возможность сопоставлять пьесу, поэму и исторический контекст одновременно.

Данные произведения дополняют знания о Тигране Великом, способствуют переосмыслению его образа и позволяют оценить значение царя с многогранной научной точки зрения.

**Ключевые слова:** *Тигран Великий, Перч Зейтунян, Аршак Азарян, Армен Малхасян, поэзия, пьеса.*

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*Հորիզոնն ուղարկվել է գրախոսման՝ 19.09. 2025*

*Հորիզոնը երաշխավորվել է տպագրության՝ 02.11.2025*