

A-DO AND ARMENIANS IN THE OTTOMAN PROVINCE OF VAN ON THE EVE OF WWI

Ara Sarafian

A-Do (Hovhannes Ter Martirosian) and His Report on Armenians in Van, 1915

In 1917, A-Do (Hovhannes Ter Martirosian) published a report on the momentous developments that had occurred in the Ottoman province of Van at the beginning of the First World War. This report was primarily about the Ottoman entry into the war and the events that followed in the Van region. The report, entitled *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*, included a demographic profile of the Armenian population of Van province, with a listing of 450 Armenian-inhabited settlements and their (Arme-

nian) inhabitants.¹ A-Do had good credentials to prepare such a report, given his earlier publication, *Vani, Erzeroumi yev Bitlisi Vilayetneru* (Yerevan, 1912), a book based on a study-trip he had made to the Ottoman Empire in 1909.² As the title implies, that study focused on the Armenian populations of the Van, Bitlis and Erzeroum provinces.³

While both works were serious accounts, *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* was written in a more popular style with very few footnotes, although it identified many of its sources in the body of its text. Such sources included the *Ashkhadank* newspaper of Van, individuals with whom A-Do had consulted, as well as the author's personal observations.⁴

1 A-Do [Hovhannes Ter Martirosian], *Metz Depkeru Vaspourakanoum 1914-15 Tvakanerin*, (Yerevan: Louys, 1917). A-Do had also produced a much earlier work that could be compared, as a genre, to *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*. The earlier report was on the Armenian-Tatar clashes in Russian Transcaucasia in 1905-06. See A-Do, *Hay-Tatarakan Untharoumu Govgasoum (1905-1906 tt.): Pasdakan, Vijagrakan, Teghagrakan Lousabanovtiunnyrov*, (Yerevan: Ayvaziants and Nazariants, 1907).

2 A-Do, *Vani, Erzeroumi yev Bitlisi Vilayetneru: Ousoumnakan Mi Ports Ayt Yergri Ashkhaghagrakan, Vijakagrakan, Iravakan yev Tntesakan Droutyan* (Yerevan: Koultoura), 1912.

3 A-Do also prepared a travel account of his visit to the Ottoman Empire, which was serialized in *Nor Hosank* in 1914. The journal stopped publishing because of the outbreak of World War One and the series was not completed. For a serious appraisal of A-Do's 1912

publication, using contemporary sources of that period, see Robert Tatoyan, "Mi Kani Tver' A-Doyi Vani, Pitlisi yev Erzroumi Vilayetneru' Ousoumnasiroutiunu (1912 t.) yev Hatyakan Hartsu Verartsartsman Zhamanagashrchanoum Arevmdahayoutyan Tvakanaki Hartsu Shourj Haykakan Mamouloum Tsavalvats Panaveju" in *Tseghasbanagitakan Handes* (Yerevan: Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, 2017), No. 5(1), pp. 32-61.

4 A-Do mentions that he started writing his report, *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*, in 1916 and the work was released in January 1917. See A-Do, *Im Hishoghoutyouanneru*, intro. By Rouben Gasapyan and Rouben Sahakyan, (Yerevan: Arm. Rep. National Academy of Sciences, 2015), p. 272. His memoir described how he had made a private visit to Van and Bitlis provinces in May-July 1915, when they were under Russian control. While there, he collected information from eyewitnesses and other details on the ground. He even became

We are fortunate that A-Do also wrote a memoir, *Im Hishoghoutiunneru*, where he provided details of his activities during the war, including a chronological account of his movements when he was in the Van area in June-July 1915. This account included descriptions of his various methods for collecting information in different places.

However, the two sets of demographic information in *Vani, Erzeroumi yev Bitlisi Vilayetneru* and *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* differed from each other without any comment by the author.⁵ A-Do clearly considered the figures in the latter publication to be of greater significance and gave them preference over those in his earlier study, although he only provided one reference regarding their provenance. He stated that his demographic information, with the exception of two (unnamed) districts, was based on material from the Van Prelacy and the Aghtamar

Catholicosate between 1913 and 1914. He did not provide any other details.⁶

Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum, 1914-15 as a Critical Source in Armenian Historiography

A number of historians have used A-Do's population statistics in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* as a vital reference on Van in their own work. The first was Teotig, who produced *Koghkoto Hay Hokevoraganoutyan* and relied on A-Do's data from *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*. Compiled in Constantinople circa 1920, *Koghkoto Hay Hokevoraganoutyan* was a complex study with significant demographic content.⁷ Sarkis Karayan, in his mammoth work on Ottoman Armenians, cited Teotig's work (*Koghkoto*) as a major source on Van, without mentioning that the data had in fact come from A-Do's 1917 publication.⁸ When G. M.

an eyewitness to much of what he described, such as the withdrawal of the Russian army from Van in August 1915 and its aftermath in the Caucasus. An examination of *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* shows that A-Do made extensive use of the *Ashkhadank* newspaper, especially when describing the Armenian defence at Van in April-May 1915. Much of A-Do's analysis of events can be independently corroborated alongside information collected from Armenian refugees who managed to flee to the Caucasus in 1915. See Amatouni Virabyan (ed.), *Hayots Tseghaspanoutiounu Osmanyan Tourkiayoum: Verapradznyi Vkeyoutiunner Pastatghteri Zhoghovadzou, Hador I, Van Nahang*, (Yerevan: Hayastani Azgayin Arkhiv, 2012). The first volume of this three-volume set is devoted to the province of Van.

5 The reference here is to the common denominator to the two works, the Armenian population of the Van province.

6 A-Do, *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*, p. 11. A-Do states that only two regions were not based on sources from the Van Prelacy and

Aghtamar Catholicosate. Presumably these were regions that were not covered by *Ashkhadank* between 1913 and 1914. According to our own examination of the *Ashkhadank* newspaper and A-Do's work of 1917, there were three such areas, not two. They were Pergri (734 households), Hoshap (252 households) and Saray (118 households).

7 See Teotig, *Koghkoto Hay Hokevoraganoutian yev ir Hodin Aghedali 1915 Dariin*, ed. Ara Kalayjian (New York: St. Vartan Press, 1985). Teotig mentions A-Do as his source without mentioning any other details. See *ibid.*, pp. 35-37.

8 Sarkis Y. Karayan, *Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, 1914: A Geographic and Demographic Gazetteer*, (London: Gomidas Institute), 2018, pp. 482-526. Alongside Teotig's work, *Koghkoto*, Karayan also uses A-Do's earlier work, *Vani, Bitlisi yev Erzeroumi Vilayetneru*. Karayan does not cite A-Do's *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* in his bibliography and was probably unaware of its existence.

Patalyan prepared a demographic assessment of the Armenian population of the Van region in the late Ottoman Empire, he utilised a range of major sources, including A-Do's two aforementioned works, but he also did not discuss the provenance of the figures in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*.⁹ Only Raymond Kevorkian used *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* with proper citation identifying A-Do's original reference relating to the Van Prelacy and Aghtamar Catholicosate; furthermore, Kevorkian also included a critical addition, that A-Do had obtained these figures from an intermediary source, the pages of *Ashkhadank* newspaper of Van.¹⁰

***Ashkhadank* and the Constantinople Patriarchate's Survey of the Province of Van, 1913**

An examination of the *Ashkhadank* newspaper confirms that it did, indeed, publish demographic information on Armenians in Van province in 1913 and 1914. As the newspaper explained, this data was derived from the Van prelacy, the administrative centre of the Arme-

nian Apostolic community in that province, following a population survey that had been undertaken in 1913.¹¹ According to *Ashkhadank*, the survey had been requested by the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople.¹² The newspaper's description of the survey clearly suggests that it was part of the Constantinople Patriarchate's survey across the Ottoman Empire that year.¹³ However, while we do not have any of the original returns sent to the Patriarchate from Van in 1913, the correspondence records of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople included a note from the prelate of Van explaining that his prelacy did not have centralised records and had had to request a special survey through the parishes and church bodies of his prelacy.¹⁴ The note explained that the figures that were eventually collected were not entirely reliable and in some [unspecified] cases no new data had been gathered at all. Where no new data could be obtained, the prelacy had used [unspecified] population figures dating back eight years [i.e. cir. 1905]. The prelate described the new figures as "more probable than accurate," and

9 G. M. Patalyan, "Vani Nahangi Hayabnak Bnakavayreru Tsoutsagnern Usd Arantsin Gavarakneri yev Kyoughakhberi" in *Banber Yerevani Hamalsarani*, Yerevan, 1987 (2), pp. 83-110. Patalyan assumes that A-Do had seen no-longer-extant church records in Van as the basis of the figures in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*. He does not trace their provenance to the *Ashkhadank* newspaper as a critical intermediary source.

10 Raymond Kevorkian and Paul Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens dans l'Empire ottoman à la veille du génocide*, (Paris: Arhis. 1992), p. 511. However, Kevorkian did not specify which issues of *Ashkhadank* A-Do had used when making his observation.

11 *Ashkhadank*, 22 June 1913.

12 For more information about the Constantinople Patriarchate's 1913 population survey, see Raymond Kevorkian and Paul Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens dans l'Empire ottoman à la veille du génocide*, (Paris: Arhis. 1992).

13 The survey requested detailed, tabular reports, according to a common questionnaire accounting for the number of Armenians, Turks, Kurds, and other ethnic and religious groups in each town and village, as well as the value of Armenian national properties, *bantoukhds* workers away from each village, schools "and other details."- *Ashkhadank*, 22 June, 1913.

14 Hovsep Sarajian (Armenian Prelacy of Van) to Patriarch of Constantinople, 17 July 1913, AGBU Nubar Library, Paris, DOR 3/4, 017-18.

stated that Aghtamar and Gdouts monasteries had been contacted directly about the survey by the Constantinople Patriarchate.¹⁵

So, did the prelate of Van, Hovsep Sarajian, send any set of figures to Van? As mentioned earlier, when Teotig worked on the 1913 population survey results for his own study, *Koghkoto*, he used A-Do's 1917 statistics for the Armenian population of Van. This choice was probably because the data from Van in the original records he was consulting were either too poor or non-existent. We may have a clue in this regard in the body of Teotig's discussion in *Koghkoto*, where he actually presented two sets of summary figures related to Van province. The first set of figures were from the Armenian Prelate of Van, dated 17 July 1913.¹⁶ While we do not have the original summary figures available for our examination, the date Teotig gives for these figures suggests that they may well have been the actual returns from Van. Both the original note and the summary data presented for Van by Teotig are dated 17 July 1913. The second set of figures in the body of Teotig's work were from the Aghtamar Catholicoaste, dated 1914.¹⁷ This Aghtamar data was practically identical to the summary figures published in *Ashkhadank* newspaper on 28 June 1914. Again, given the summary nature of these figures, Teotig probably included them in the body of

his work and used A-Do's detailed figures for *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakounoum*. A-Do's figures were based on the more detailed figures from *Ashkhadank*, but we have no explanation why these detailed figures were not forwarded to Constantinople in 1913.

Van Prelacy and Administrative Records

Van prelacy did not keep centralised records probably due to poor administrative practice, the spread Armenian-inhabited settlements over a wide area, further difficulties presented by terrain and communications, and the overlapping jurisdiction of Armenian ecclesiastical authorities in the province, most notably Aghtamar Catholicosate's sway over much of the Van area, as well as the authority of Lim, Gdouts and Varak monasteries over a smaller number of villages. By way of comparison, while the Van prelacy was responsible for 450 Armenian-inhabited towns and villages, the prelates of Erzeroum, Kharpert and Bitlis, which responded to the survey, were responsible for 46, 64 and 71 settlements respectively. They were also not held back by overlapping jurisdictions of other ecclesiastical authorities. Of the 450 Armenian-inhabited towns and villages in Van province, around 230 were actually under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Aghtamar, Lim and Varak. We have no details of the villages under the jurisdiction of Gdouts Monastery. However, an earlier report, dated 13 April 1873, noted

15 Today, there are no traces of any returns from Aghtamar Catholicosate and Gdouts monastery in the files of the Patriarchate of Constantinople at the AGBU Nubar Library. However, there is a return from Lim Monastery, sent directly to Constantinople (dated 23 October 1913) [See AGBU Nubar Library, Paris, DOR3/1, 051]. There is also a second

near identical set of figures sent to the Van prelacy and published in the *Ashkhadank* newspaper on 28 June 1913. [See AGBU Nubar Library, Paris, DOR3/1, 051]

16 Teotig, *Koghkoto*, p. 33.

17 Teotig, *Koghkoto*, pp. 37-38.

that Gdouts Monastery held sway over eight villages: Khavents, Annavank, Jrashen, Marmed, Yegmal and Amenshad, Alour, Trnashen, all of them in the Timar region.¹⁸

Although the 1913 survey in question requested information according to 21 categories, the returns that were submitted to the Van prelacy were somewhat varied in content.¹⁹ Most did not provide much of the information that had been requested. Some returns were very brief and only presented lists of Armenian inhabited settlements and the number of Armenian households, while others gave fuller returns, though none responded to the 1913 survey form in full.²⁰

Nevertheless, the *Ashkhadank* newspaper saw the merit of publishing the returns that were sent to the Van prelacy as raw data. These were published in an *ad hoc* manner throughout 1913 and 1914. The newspaper did not share any further correspondence that may have accompanied the returns. Although *Ashkhadank* solicited comments from readers, no such comments were published in the newspaper. Three regions appearing in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* – Pergri, Hoshap and

Saray – were not covered in the datasets published by *Ashkhadank*. We do not know whether these regions responded to the survey at all.

Returns Appearing in *Ashkhadank* and their Rendition in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*

Although the 1913 Van survey, as published by *Ashkhadank*, provided the substance of *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*, there were also some significant differences between the original data in *Ashkhadank* and *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*. A comparison of the two datasets, i.e., the datasets appearing in *Ashkhadank* and their final rendition in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*, supports the following observations.²¹

The information presented by *Ashkhadank* covered all regions of the Van province, except for Pergri, Hoshap and Saray, thus accounting for around 90% of Armenian inhabited towns and villages of the province. Seven of the returns in *Ashkhadank* are practically identical to the data in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* (the city of Van, Aghpag, Hayots Tsor, Gavash, Shadakh, Gargar and Garjgan); three returns are

18 See Yeremia Devgants, *Janabahortoutiun Partsr Hayk yev Vaspouragan (1872-1873 tt.)*, ed. and intro. by H. M. Poghosyan (Yerevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences), p. 247.

19 The full list of categories were: 1. Name of village; 2. Armenian (Apostolic); 3. Armenian (Catholic); 4. Armenian (Protestant); 5. Total Armenian; 6. Armenian households (total); 7. Turks; 8. Circassian; 9. Kurdish; 10. Nomads; 11. Others; 12. Bantoukhts; 13. Community Properties (value); 14. Churches; 15. Monasteries; 16. Boys' Schools; 17. Girls' School; 18. Students (total); 19. Clergymen; 20. Islamised Armenians; 21. Other [destination of bantoukhts].

20 The 1913 survey included 22 categories of information. The most detailed results generated in the province were from the city of Van, and the monasteries of Lim and Varak.

21 Our study is based on the following returns to the 1913 survey of the Van province: Van city, Ardzge (Adljavaz), Kachperouni (Arjesh), Arjag, the parishes of Timar and Varak monasteries (covering villages mostly in Timar but also Van-Dosp and Arjag), Hayots Tsor, Gavash, Shadakh, Gargar, Garjgan, Mogs, Nordouz and Aghpag. These returns accounted for well over 90% of Armenians in the Van province.

similar but some of the specific entries are edited without explanation (Lim Monastery, Varak Monastery, and Ardzge [Adiljevaz]); and another seven returns are completely different, again without any comment by A-Do (i.e. Kachperouni [Arjesh], Jiulamerg, Gyavar, Mogs, Arjag, Nordouz).

The Focus of Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum

A-Do's demographic information in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* had a narrow focus on Armenian-inhabited settlements and their Armenian populations in households and individuals. He extracted this information from the returns in *Ashkhadank* and entered them onto his own pre-existing list of villages from his earlier study, *Vani, Bitlisi yev Erzeroumi Vilayetneru*. This method accounts for the common order of villages in both publications. By using his earlier list of villages as a guide, A-Do ensured that his final village lists in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* conformed to the administrative boundaries of the Ottoman state, as he had devised in his earlier work, and not the administrative boundaries of the Armenian church, as

reflected in the actual returns sent to Van. For example, the villages of Pertag, Dzvsdan and Ardamed, which were listed in Hayots Tsor in the *Ashkhadank* returns, were moved into the Van-Dosp region (the central district or *kaza* of Van) in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*. His earlier list of villages also allowed A-Do to identify Armenian-inhabited villages that might have been missing in the 1913 returns. Such was the case for the villages of Kazogh and Dantsoud in Ardzge (Aljavaz), both of which appeared in *Vani, Bitlisi yev Erzeroumi Vilayetneru* but not in the 1913 figures of *Ashkhadank*. These villages were thus reintroduced in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*, though A-Do does not comment on how he made this arrangement.²² There were also cases where villages appeared in more than one return, such as Arjag and Mandan. These settlements can be seen in the returns of both Varak Monastery and Arjag in the *Ashkhadank* returns. These double entries were resolved in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*, but again, without further comment by A-Do.²³

There were also certain peculiarities presented by the returns of Lim and Varak monasteries.²⁴ While Lim only

²² We can confirm that these villages did not appear in either Adiljevaz or the neighbouring Kachperouni (Arjesh) region. We can also state that Kazogh and Dantsoud were listed as Armenian inhabited villages in Adiljevaz in V. T. Mayevski, *Voyenno-Statisticheskoe Opisaniye Vanskavo i Bitliskavo Vilayetov*, (Tbilisi: General Military Staff of the Caucasus Region, 1904), p. 28.

²³ Arjag and Mandan were included in the returns of both Varak Monastery and Arjag diocese. A-Do chose the data from the latter list over the former one. See *Ashkhadank* 29 June 1913 (Lim Monastery) and 3 August 1913 (Arjag diocese).

²⁴ We did not find any returns from Gdouts monastery in *Ashkhadank*. However, according to correspondence from the prelate of Van, Bishop Hovsep Sarajian, dated Van, 17 July 1913, Gdouts was a separate monastic region with authority over a number of villages. According to this note, the monastery counted approximately 6,000 Armenian inhabitants, 14 churches and 3 monasteries under its authority. See Teotig, *Koghkoto*, p. 34. The monastic villages of Gdouts could account for the unaccounted villages in Timar region, after the monastic villages of Lim and Varak are taken away.

held sway over a compact group of villages in the northernmost region of Timar sub-district (*nahiye*), the villages under the authority of Varak were scattered over three different areas (mostly in Van-Dosp, but also Timar and Arjag), interspaced with other Armenian inhabited settlements which were not under Varak's authority.²⁵ 25 villages in Timar and Van-Dosb were not listed under the authority of these monastic regions, and there were no separate returns from Timar and Van-Dosb accounting for these missing villages in *Ashkhadank*.²⁶ These villages were included in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*.

In the cases of Aghpag, Joulamerg, Kyavar and Saray, A-Do could not make reference to *Vani, Bitlisi yev Erzeroumi Vilayetneru* because those regions were not covered by the earlier study. The data for Aghpag in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* are almost identical to the *Ashkhadank* figures except for A-Do's clerical error in reproducing some of the information, while those for Julamerg and Kyavar are modified figures, also based on *Ashkhadank*. There is no evidence to suggest that *Ashkhadank* ever printed figures for Saray, and there is no indication regarding the origin of

the data for Saray in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*.

Human Errors

When working on his materials, A-Do made some minor human errors of his own. For example, in the case of Aghpag, he overlooked the village of Arag when working on his dataset in *Ashkhadank* and proceeded to misalign the data entries for seven villages that were listed in the same column immediately after Arag. There are also a few cases where he seems to have misread the printed figures, for example, by reading "638" as "698" for the village of Aren in Ardzge. The figures "3" and "9" look remarkably similar in the newsprint of *Ashkhadank*. These are minor errors that have little or no relevance to the overall figures.

In some cases, A-Do did not notice some double entries in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*, such as the village of Ermants, which appears in both the Van-Dosp and Arjag regions, and Toni, which appears in both Van-Dosp and Hayots Tsor.²⁷ These duplications first appeared in *Vani, Bitlisi yev Erzeroumi Vilayetneru* and seem to have been then

²⁵ There is no data provided by *Ashkhadank* covering the residual villages in Timar, i.e., villages not covered by the returns of Lim and Varak monasteries. One could also add the monastic villages belonging to Lim Monastery.

²⁶ The missing villages were Timar (13 villages): Drlashen, Amenashad, Annavank, Marmed, Keoprikeoy, Khavents, Aliur, Yegmal, Jirashen, Pert/Nor Kiugh, Shvakar, Tashoghli; Van Dosp (12 villages): Tsorovants, Goghants, Kouroubash, Pertag, Dzvsdan, Ardamed, Lamzgerd, Tarman, Farough, Vosgepag, Ermants, Sevakrag.

²⁷ The village of Ermants in *Ashkhadank* is recorded as a mixed Assyrian and Kurdish village

in the Arjag region. However, A-Do does not use the *Ashkhadank* figures for Arjag in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*, but he also does not indicate his alternative reference. A separate, slightly earlier source also locates the villages of Ermants in Arjag and Toni in Hayots Tsor (and neither one in Van-Dosp). According to this source, Ermants had a mixed Armenian, Kurdish and Assyrian population (with 20, 18 and 15 households respectively). See Vladimir Mayevski, *Voenno-Statisticheskoe Opisanie Vanskago i Bitlisskago Vilayetov*, Tiflis: Russian General Staff, 1904, p. 11 and 13.

replicated in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*.²⁸ Elsewhere, A-Do omitted the village of Veri Arjra (Ardzge region), which appeared in the returns of *Ashkhadank*, but not in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*. This omission was almost certainly made by mistake, as the list of villages in *Vani, Bitlisi yev Erzeroumi Vilayetneru* only had a single entry for Arjra, although the return published in *Ashkhadank* distinguished between "Arjra" and "Upper Arjra."²⁹

Regarding a pedantic but important point, A-Do also made changes to the spelling of the names of Armenian inhabited settlements. While some of these changes may have been corrections of typographical and other errors in his original sources, most were made to conform his list of villages to the phonetics and orthographic conventions of eastern Armenian. Unfortunately, these changes were not made consistently, thus adding a peculiar complexity to the information at hand. Consequently, when looking for the accurate spelling of place names (e.g. for transliteration purposes), one should consult original copies of *Ashkhadank* or other unadulterated sources as critical references, such as Teotig's *Koghkoto Hay Hokevoraganoutyan yev ir Hodin*.

Conclusion

A-Do's figures for the Armenian population of Van on the eve of the First World War were based on the returns of

a 1913 population survey conducted by the Van Prelacy, as the results had been published in *Ashkhadank* over 1913-1914. A-Do drew on the information that appeared in *Ashkhadank*, rearranged the listing of villages to conform to Ottoman administrative regions, sought out double entries and missing settlements, and scrutinised the actual figures before including them in his own work, *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*. Most of the datasets appearing in *Ashkhadank* were thus utilised without changes, though the population of many villages had minor adjustments, and in some cases, significant ones. In some areas, A-Do based his figures on entirely different sources which he did not disclose.

Any evaluation of A-Do's final figures in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* has to take note of the author's standing as a meticulous scholar in his own right and a keen observer who probed his subject matter and collected information when he visited Van in 1909 and 1915. Indeed, by the beginning of 1916, A-Do claimed to have amassed a "rich collection of materials" for his publication, *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*, which appeared a year later.³⁰

However, the popular format of *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum* meant that A-Do provided practically no commentary about the demographic materials he had so meticulously collected or his method of scrutinising them for his published work. The demographic infor-

²⁸ Unfortunately, there were no returns for Van-Dosp in *Ashkhadank*, but in all likelihood, these duplications started with *Vani Bitlisi yev Erzeroumi Vilayetneru* and were then included in A-Do's later work.

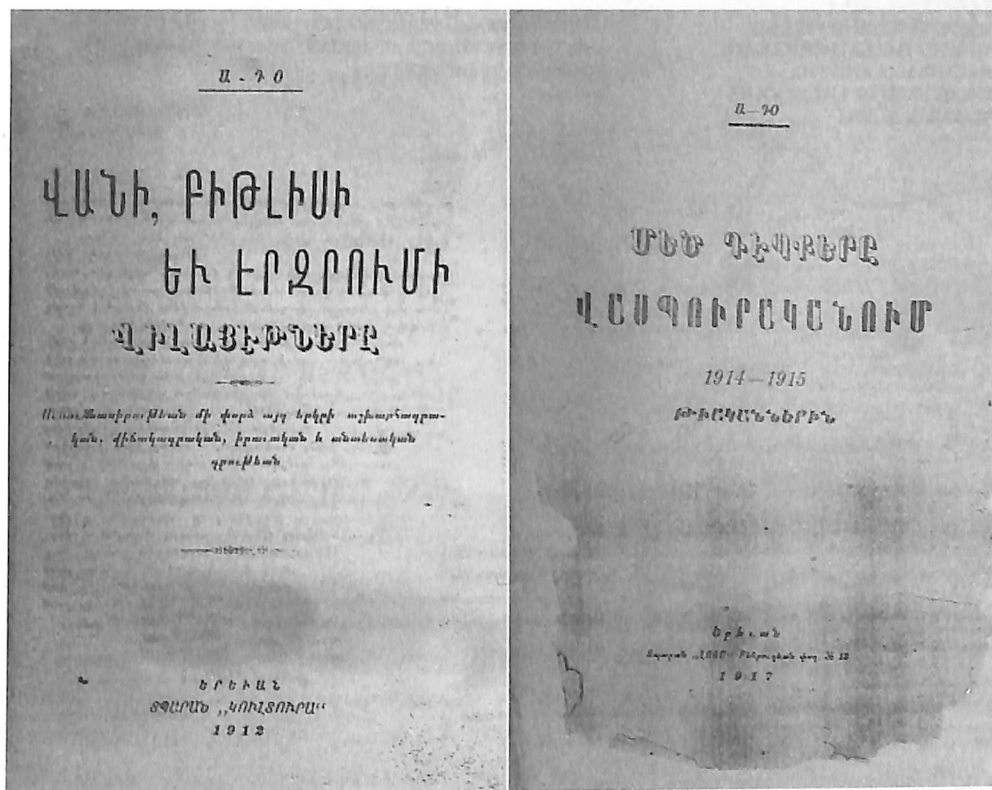
²⁹ A-Do, *Vani, Bitlisi yev Erzeroumi Vilayetneru*, p. 43. A-Do has taken the figure for Verin [Upper] Arjra and omitted the figure for Arjra in *Ashkhadank* when compiling his figures for this region in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakanoum*.

³⁰ *Im Hishoghoutiunneru*, p. 225 and 272.

mation in *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakoun* was thus presented under his own authority and should be qualified as A-Do's population figures for Van, based on the results of the Van Prelacy's 1913 population survey, as published in the *Ashkhadank* newspaper in 1913-14. This qualified description is a significant clarification which reflects the provenance of *Mets Depkeru Vaspourakoun* as a serious resource for historians working on Van in the late Ottoman

Empire. While the original statistical tables collected at the Van prelacy may be lost, as well as the archival records upon which they were based, the raw datasets published in *Ashkhadank* remain an important intermediary source that can be consulted in conjunction with A-Do's work today.

Gomidas Institute Studies Series
4 December 2022



A-Do's two publications under discussion.

ԱՄԵՐԻԿԱՆ ԲԵՆԻ

ՀԱՅՈՑ ՉՈՐ

Առաջին տեղում զբաղվում էին հայերը, որոնք
հայրենիքից հեռանալով, այստեղ հայտնաբերեցին
հայկական բնակչության մասին լավ տեղեկություններ
և, հիմնարկ դնելով, հայկական բնակչության մասին
հարկերի կտրման համար հարկային տարբերություններ
մեզ հայտնի դարձան:

| Գյուղերի անուններ | Բնակիչ | Բնակիչ | Բնակիչ | Բնակիչ |
|-------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Արտաշատ | 36 | 210 | — | — |
| Բնակ | 40 | 232 | — | — |
| Երզրում | 65 | 135 | — | — |
| Բաղրամյան | 70 | 109 | — | — |
| Բաղրամյան | 12 | 60 | 3 | 44 |
| Մարտի | 20 | 110 | — | — |
| Մարտի | 7 | 37 | 29 | 152 |
| Մարտի | 68 | 394 | 9 | 66 |
| Անդա | 103 | 678 | — | — |
| Գևորգ | 100 | 547 | — | — |
| Գևորգ | 65 | 386 | — | — |
| Գևորգ | 104 | 657 | 19 | 39 |
| Գևորգ | 51 | 314 | 6 | 32 |
| Հրե | 30 | 205 | 65 | 356 |
| Խոսր | 38 | 291 | 3 | 19 |
| Կարեն Գևորգյան | 7 | 53 | 13 | 296 |
| Կարեն | — | — | 39 | 230 |
| Կարեն | — | — | 40 | 260 |
| Կարեն | 44 | 112 | 12 | 80 |
| Կարեն | 41 | 67 | 5 | 33 |
| Կարեն | 48 | 311 | 47 | 218 |
| Կարեն | 40 | 235 | 9 | 49 |
| Կարեն | 2 | 11 | 12 | 42 |
| Կարեն | 29 | 422 | — | — |
| Կարեն | 67 | 411 | 3 | 47 |
| Կարեն | 64 | 319 | — | — |
| Կարեն | 37 | 209 | 6 | 30 |
| Կարեն | 88 | 543 | 2 | 10 |

ՀԱՅՈՑ ՉՈՐԻ ԳԵՂԵՐ

Գ. Բ. Գ.

| Գ. Բ. Գ. | Գ. Բ. Գ. | Գ. Բ. Գ. |
|--------------|----------|----------|
| 1. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 13 | 120 |
| 2. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 28 | 312 |
| 3. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 25 | 175 |
| 4. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 27 | 209 |
| 5. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 41 | 247 |
| 6. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 24 | 219 |
| 7. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 28 | 254 |
| 8. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 40 | 255 |
| 9. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 67 | 411 |
| 10. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 82 | 432 |
| 11. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 44 | 312 |
| 12. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 11 | 67 |
| 13. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 7 | 60 |
| 14. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 62 | 301 |
| 15. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 30 | 205 |
| 16. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 51 | 314 |
| 17. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 104 | 637 |
| 18. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 65 | 386 |
| 19. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 7 | 33 |
| 20. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 30 | 219 |
| 21. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 12 | 60 |
| 22. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 20 | 170 |
| 23. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 100 | 647 |
| 24. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 108 | 676 |
| 25. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 64 | 394 |
| 26. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 70 | 408 |
| 27. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 40 | 233 |
| 28. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 18 | 114 |
| 29. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 65 | 435 |
| 30. Գ. Բ. Գ. | 2 | 10 |

Hayots Tsor Data: Ashkhadank, 1914 (left); Mets Depkeru (1917, right)

VAN PROVINCE AND PRELACY
SHOWING THE CATHOLICOSATE
OF AGHTAMAR AND THE
MONASTERIES OF LIM, GDOUTS
AND VARAK cir. 1914

© Ara Sarafian 2022



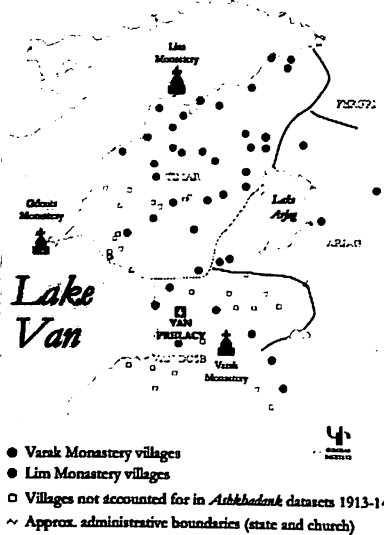
KEY

- International Borders
- Provincial Boundaries, Van
- Sub-Provincial Boundaries, Van
- Van Prelacy
- Catholicosate and Monastic areas of influence

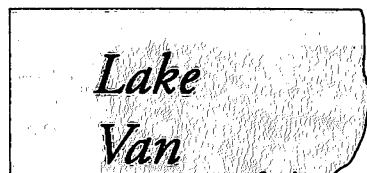
Regions covered by *Vani, Bittisi* or *Erzerumi Vilayetsi* in black. Additional areas only covered by *Mets Depheru Vaspourakanoum* are in brackets.

LIM, GDOUTS AND VARAK MONASTERIES
AND THEIR SWAY OVER ARMENIAN
INHABITED VILLAGES cir. 1914

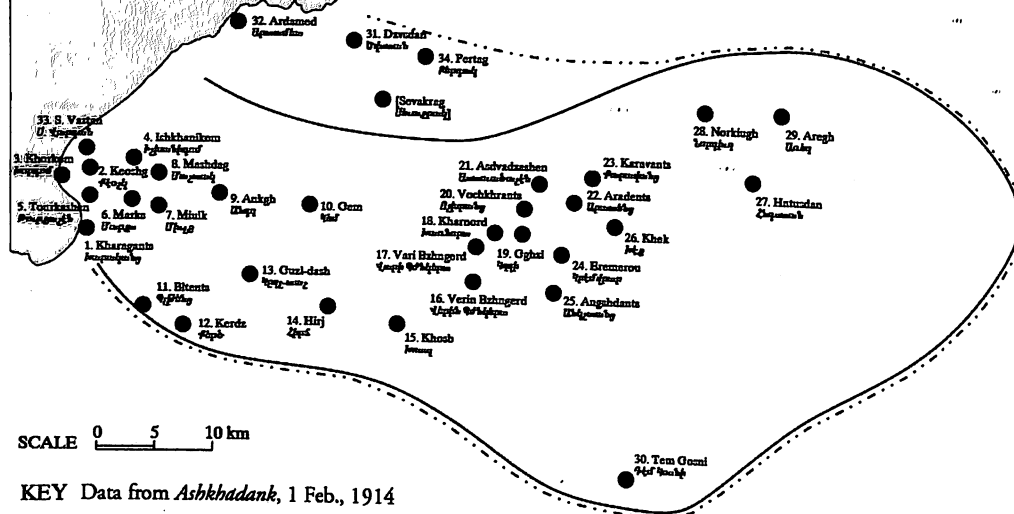
© Ara Sarafian 2022



- Varak Monastery villages
- Lim Monastery villages
- Villages not accounted for in *Ashkhadank* datasets 1913-14
- ~ Approx. administrative boundaries (state and church)



HAYOTS TSOR: ADMINISTRATIVE
RENDERING OF ASHKHADANK (1914 DATA)
VAN
IN METS DEPKERU VASPOURAKANOUM (1917)
© Ara Sarafian 2022



SCALE 0 5 10 km

KEY Data from *Ashkhadank*, 1 Feb., 1914

HAYOTS TSOR ACCORDING TO CHURCH DIOCESE AND OTTOMAN STATE ADMINISTRATION
 --- Northern Boundary of Hayots Tsor According to Church Diocesan Boundaries (*Ashkhadank*, 1914)
 — Northern Boundary of Hayots Tsor (Havasar) According to State Administrative Boundary