

Introduction

Editorial board *

NAS RA V. Ambartsumian Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO)

The International Conference Astronomical Heritage of the Middle East 2 (**AHME-2**) will take place from 6-10 October 2025 in the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) in Armenia. This will be the second such meeting; we had a very successful meeting, **AHME 2017**, with the participation of astronomers and many other specialists. This way, we make these meetings regular for BAO and Armenia, as Armenia is one of the cradles of Astronomical Heritage, and BAO hosts a UNESCO “Memory of the World” Documentary Heritage (Markarian Survey). We bring together astronomers and many other specialists from related fields. The Conference is devoted to the role of Astronomy in Culture and other fields of human activity, as well as to the development of these fields due to the knowledge obtained from the Universe. In the modern era, Astronomy is probably the field of science that plays a leading role in the formation and development of inter- and multi-disciplinary sciences. For a long time, Astrophysics has reached a high level of development; recently, new scientific disciplines have been created, such as Astrochemistry, Astrobiology, Planetary Science or Planetology (“Astrogeology”), Astroinformatics, and Astrolinguistics. Archaeoastronomy plays an important role in culture and in the heritage of nations, chronologies and calendars created on the basis of astronomical knowledge. Cultural Astronomy also plays an important role in the development of scientific (Astro) tourism and scientific journalism. The meeting is aimed at developing problems in astronomy-related interdisciplinary sciences in the countries of the European and Asian regions and at preparing a basis for further possible collaborations through presentations of available modern knowledge in various areas of culture by experts from different professions and through joint discussions.



Figure 1. *Left panel* - Celestial Maps of Gegham Mountain; *right panel* - the ancient observatory of Karahunj.

The history of Astronomy in Armenia goes back to ancient times. Since ancient times, Armenians have accumulated astronomical knowledge and left this heritage in the forms of rock art, ancient observatories, calendars and chronology, records of astronomical events, medieval sky maps, astronomical terms in the language, etc. Nowadays, Armenia is one of the more developed countries in an astronomical sense as well, though by terms of its economic level, Armenia is among the developing countries, and it is located in a region (Middle East) where efforts are needed to develop and promote Cultural Astronomy.

The following topics were covered at the meeting:

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- Review and discuss the Astronomical Heritage of the Middle East to summarize available data;
 - Review and discuss individual items of Astronomical Heritage;
 - Learn about related major current and upcoming projects and studies;
 - Learn and discuss how Astronomical Heritage can change our understanding of history;
 - Discuss access, data mining, analysis, visualization, etc., related to Astronomical Heritage;
 - Discuss access, data mining, analysis, visualization, etc., related to Astronomical Heritage;
 - Discuss the future of studies by joint efforts of Astronomers, Historians, Archaeologists, and other experts;
 - Discuss and homogenize the presentation of available information on webpages, etc.

During the Conference, an Astronomical Festival (AstroFest-2025) will be organized on 8 October, where dozens of scientists, students, and others will visit BAO and meet scientists, writers, poets, composers, and artists.

This issue of BAO Communications presents the proceedings of the **AHME-2** meeting. All included articles have undergone a rigorous peer-review process.