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BLOOD AND OATH: RITES CONCERNING BLOOD KINSHIP

The subject of this research is a collection of patterns of common law preserved in ethnological data which are not only sacralized so that their violation causes acute affectation and results in violent behaviour but are also associated with the fundamentals of the personal axiological constitution and self-identification. Therefore, they involve items of existential values.

Common laws on normative relationship between cognates should be observed primarily through *etic*-research providing comprehensive information on emotional perception and effects of the laws in question. *Etic*-research contains danger of the researcher's incompetent evaluation, for those laws are relevant to the intimate field of existential values like next of kin, origin and family as secure environment, honour and social status as elements of self-respect, as well as their potential to develop into uncontrollable affective behavior, hardly observable apart from their carriers. The target of this report is to find out how deep psychological blood-related traditions go among Armenians and why even in our days acute conflicts, fatal decisions and half-conscious crucial reactions occur in connections with those problems.

Why do those problems still remain subject of emotional discussions and what stipulates maintenance of that tradition despite the changed historical context?

Blood in the Common Law and its Sacralization

Self-identification as a member of a certain clan, i.e. identification of a person with his own people in any conscious or unconscious form constitutes the basis of a human's or a group's worldview and is decisive for developing a person's moral orientation (or *value disposition*, *attribution-value*, *self-esteem*, *relational value* in terms of social psychology – those are some terms denoting dignity and feeling of being accepted by the social environment¹), norms of behaviour and relationship with others, decision making and a wide range of phenomena concerning social

¹ Cheng J. T., Tracy J. L., Anderson C., 2014, 162.

interiorization. Ethnic self-identification is a product of the cultural environment of a person or a group. A person normally develops certain concepts affecting the interiorization of values and norms of behavior within the social environment. Such a process of interiorization mostly results in developing the “motivation knots”² stipulating the person’s inner self-identification in a wide range of circumstances.

Given that one of the most important items of self-identification is the ethnic identification, we must observe phenomena generating the concept of a person’s individual ethnicity. The family is the basis for ethnos as a higher form of unity, including kin, clan, other forms of large family structures (*gens, jins, gerdastan*³). For the moral-psychological substratum of social relationship among Armenians at different periods of history large units like the state are ethnically meaningless. After the adoption of Christianity ethnic identification became identified with the Armenian Apostolic Faith and the identification principle of “*hay qristonya*” (Armenian Christian) still valid to date (comp. usage of the notions “Armenian”, “*frang*”, “*horom*” to indicate ethnic Armenians according to confessional propriety, mostly among rural residents).

The significance of the coincidence of “the state” with “ethnos” is artificially supported only to-day, as long as the independent state exists. Meanwhile, the notions of “nation” (**ազգ**) and “folk” (**ժողովուրդ**), are being involuntarily confused. These notions which formerly denoted purely ethnic phenomena (as **հայ ժողովուրդ** *hay joghovurd* ‘the Armenian folk’ – a large group of people belonging to the Armenian ethnos, and **ազգ** *azg* ‘klan’ relayed to **ազգանուն** ‘family name’ – a group of people being in patrilineal or matrilineal blood relationship) especially under the influence of the Marxist term “nation” translated as **ազգ**, changed their meaning and started to designate “population” and “unity of citizens”⁴, respectively. The psychological feature of this shift played crucial role, which affected the generation of moral value and the establishment of norms of behaviour inside the existing community. Meanwhile, the model of “an Armenian Christian”

² Under the term “motivation knot” we mean a certain combination of influence of a concrete situation (so called “extrinsic motivation”) and value disposition of a person having cultural determination (“intrinsic motivation”) along with feelings connected with them, which lead to an expected mode of actions as consequence (**Woodworth R. S.**, 1918, 70).

³ About the *gensakan* organization among the population of Lori see by **Lalayan Ye.**: 1903, 113–114.

⁴ Comp. **Gellner E.**, 2006, 54. **Anderson B.**, 1991, 83–84. In fact, the milieu of kinship and family relations and blood relationship as the most ancient form of social organization is principally opposed to homogeneous and nameless “imaginary society”, which is a product of the New era. Although for in our days the family and the national state coexist, the twofold interpretation of the notion of *azg* is getting on used with these controversial meanings.

is still operational with regard to its religious, ethnic, axiological and behavioural features. That model went down in significance through establishment of the Soviet commandment, atheistic, technocratic-progressivist social norms and advancement of the written culture of the common western type. Having accomplished its nation-preserving (**ազգապահպան** *azgapahpan*) role in the meaning of preservation of the ethnos and of national self-consciousness, it was expelled from the society without proper substitution.

Altogether, blood relations did not lose their meaning and survived in their old forms. They continue being the basis of long-lasting human relations, subsisting within the social groups. The traditional formulation “Blood never becomes water” means that family ties are very strong. This saying is actual and significant as far as traditional kinship norms still play a huge role in the ethnic psychology of an Armenian. This saying is also significant with regard to the notion of blood emphasized in it. It must be taken into account that blood relatives resemble each other by several physical as well as psychological characteristics, to a certain extent they have similar mode of thinking, they share many material and immaterial values, one part of which is maintained as sanctity and plays the role of holiness embodiment.

A symbolic viewpoint upon blood lies in the ground of that commonness: **blood is a substance- carrier of genetic memory being transferred through navel**. Subsequently, it is the highest value in the family system and carries the invisible imprint of sanctity. Hierophany⁵ is realized in the blood, and for each member of the group of relatives every other is a carrier of that sanctity regardless of their personal qualities or worldview. Renunciation from the holy blood in the form of betraying own blood, desecration of blood (incest), having a relative’s blood shed, i. e. a crime against a relative, traditionally considered the most horrible deed, for which not only the strictest penalty is due, but also an articulated or tacit disgust of the communion.

Blood is the oldest and most universal principle of identification: “To be of the same blood is to possess the same vital principle, and in this sense all who are of like blood make but one single living being. It is in this that the clan relationship really consists”⁶. Independent from the contextual complexes of value disposition, a person conceives him/herself as first a son/daughter, then – a parent of another person, and blood is the gluing substance of this chain. It isn’t occasional that notions of honour and self-respect as values inside the personal psyche are believed

⁵ Hierophany – presence, manifestation and embodiment of sanctity, term by **M. Eliade**.

⁶ **Lévy-Bruhl L.**, 1935, 267.

to be transferred through blood, and when any member of the kin loses them, this influences (inflicts) the whole clan.

To analyze these items, all available data should be classified into two planes: metaphysical-structural and dynamic. The metaphysical plane is supposed to survey the clusters of similar phenomena using the method of synchronic research, and in this case it becomes possible to reveal units independent from time or space factors. Those units are classified according to their relation to death, more precisely, according to binary opposition of causing or not causing death and being replaceable or not replaceable. The dynamic plane is supposed to present transition between them and the diachronic cut, i. e. historic-geographic variation and specific traits. Simultaneous investigation on metaphysical and dynamical planes allows to conceive the essence of the researched phenomena.

In this way the phenomenon of blood in traditional culture is characterized by the following:

relation to life (living, giving birth) and to death (leaving, deprivation of life), abundance and lack,

belonging (including the opposition own/alien, conquering/deprivation).

The dynamic of blood as transmission, loss, compensation lie in the very basis of relationship between the kin members and between the kin and other people. Transmission without waste is connected with regular marriage and birth-giving, and any disturbance of the system as a result of voluntary or compelled actions of a kin member may terminate in loss of blood.

The most general forms of the loss are assassination (violence) and abduction of women and girls⁷. According to oral law, these two need a compensation, the older preferred form is death penalty, thus – blood for blood.

While surveying symbolic perception of blood in the Armenian ethnographic materials and written sources, an important note must be made concerning the character of witnesses. They cannot be plentiful because of their being hallowed and sometimes controversial to the Christian values.

⁷ Any death caused by a natural disaster or casualty might be compensated, as well. It is widely witnessed that in the period of high heathenism voluntary or necessary human sacrifices took place (see description of Artashes the king's obsequies by Movses Khorenatsi (**Մովսես Խորենացի**, 1981, 205) and of Patrocles' obsequies in Homer's Iliad, Chant XXIII. A special compensation was needed for the blood of a hero perished in the battlefield, for which mainly sacrifice of war captives was prescribed. An echo of compensation of natural death is still preserved within the complex of traditional obsequies (cutting of women's hair etc.).

Blood revenge

Blood revenge, though different among diverse peoples and made milder by means of religious or secular legislation, has deep psychological and symbolic roots⁸. To shed or draw out anybody's blood means not only wasting but also fastening tie - the victim and the murderer, the virgin and the man who had sexual intercourse with her are tied with each other. In Tatev it was believed that the murderer remains in connection with the killed through the victim's blood, and cannot make even a step. To get free he ought to drink the victim's blood or to tear own collar⁹: Perhaps the image of a 'blood-drinker' (**արյունախում** as metaphor for a tyrant, mean person) is originated from this belief as someone who not only kills but also drinks his victim's blood, becoming free of persecution of the society and thus – of own conscience. That also is the reason for calling murderers **արնտեր, էրնտեր**¹⁰ (*ar'nter*, or *er'nter*), literally, 'host of blood'. At the same time to be the host of anybody's blood one must be the father or, in fact, the owner, the buyer of that person's blood. In this sense the blood of the bride is being "bought" by means of relevant payments, including wedding expense and guarantees of responsibility during the matrimonial ceremonies.

To present the core of the blood revenge the case of revenge laws and their reasoning among the Dersim Armenians and Zazas is exemplary: "Anybody who killed unrighteously is an *ar'nter*. People hate the *ar'nters*, who kill others without serious reasons or just for robbing. Assassinations during serious reciprocate quarrels, battles, for the sake of family, hearth honour are considered legal and [executors] are not called *ar'nter*.... Blood is needed for blood... a financial compensation (**արնզին** *ar'ngin*, literally, 'price for blood') must not be taken, because a financial compensation of blood is a renunciation of the killed person's memory and an action of selling his blood, the latter being considered as inexpiable sin"¹¹.

Blood revenge among the Zaza and the Kurds is multilevel and sometimes turns into enmity between families. There was a custom to delay the hoisting of a stone on the tomb of the assassinated before his revenge is fulfilled. The father or the brother had to kill the murderer or his relative, drink of his blood and, pronouncing a certain formula, put the bloody weapon upon the tomb of the killed relative and wish him peace. Only thereafter one could crown the tomb with a tombstone. Armenians didn't have such a custom, nevertheless one-level revenge

⁸ For blood revenge among Armenians see: Սամուելյան Խ., 1903, 269–270:

⁹ Григоров Н., 1892, 119.

¹⁰ Ալաջանյան Ա., 1961, 1050:

¹¹ Հալաջյան Գ., folder 59, Part IX – 5g, l. 931:

was accepted in some cases, when the murderer was killed¹². Among the Dersim Armenians and Zaza the reason of assassination was significant. If there were attenuating circumstances, the murderer could find refuge in a neutral territory or a sacral place before emotions calmed down and points of bargaining develop. Any attenuation was impossible if revenge concerned traitors, abductors of married women or intentional killers¹³. In this sense the one who “made a woman turn aside the right path is the enemy of the hearth and when he doesn’t depart from the village, he is condemned to death by the husband, brothers or sons of the woman, and that in juridical sense is equal to the revenge for the blood of a killed relative”¹⁴. In fact, revenge for the marital infidelity in its psychological and symbolic meaning is the same as the blood revenge.

In other regions of historical Armenia reconciliation of the parties was accepted. In some villages of Sasoun a certain form of payment for the blood was used. The sum the family of the murderer had to pay to the aggrieved family was called **արունք** *arunk*’ or **արյան գին** *aryan gin* i.e. ‘the price of blood’. It was accustomed here to ask for necessary money and gather the demanded amount of money from neighbours, for it ought to be paid in a very short term¹⁵. In other cases the murderer took the instrument of murder and a piece of cloth for shroud, went to the head of the aggrieved family and resigned to his power. The third form was marriage between representatives of both families¹⁶, and the child born through that unity in fact “substituted” the killed, compensated the wasted blood of the kin. Obviously, if a girl was taken from the family of the murderer to the family of the assassinated, the blood price for her (here: *ghalan*) was not paid, she was herself a form of compensation.

Nevertheless, there are data in ethnographic materials witnessing conservation of some forms of real blood revenge. A. Aharonyan describes phenomenon of *arunk*’ (here that was the title for any murder) and customs connected with it among Armenians in the province of Her in Iran: “... the most severe threat was expressed linked to blood, that is “I will make blood” or “Blood will be shed”. In figurative sense, speaking about a bad quarrel there was an expression “nearly blood falls” and about a mean, morally uninhibited man one says “he carries blood in his bosom” or “he smells of blood, people have to avoid him”. If *arunk*’ occurred in house, it is considered cursed and unusable for living in, if not forever, at least

¹² Ibid, 935.

¹³ Ibid, 946–948.

¹⁴ Հակաջյան Գ., part, X-5, l. 974–975:

¹⁵ Կարապետյան Ե., AIAE, folder 153, 153–154.

¹⁶ Ibid, 155–156.

for long years... Revenge for *arunk'* existed in the villages of Her before the Russian political control, and people tell of *arunk'* spread over all the members of the clan. Often *arnagin* was paid by *ar'npart* to the *ar'nter* and thus the problem was solved, but there were cases when a girl was given to the enemy and reconciliation was thus achieved... Now Armenians mainly resolve the problem of *arunk'* in court but taking a girl from the enemy's family remains a custom"¹⁷.

In historical Zeytun region it also was a custom for a murderer to visit the house of the killed with a shroud strapped around his head, and ask for forgiving. As a formula for absolution, the following was to be said. "Now you are my son, I had to kill you, but won't do anything"¹⁸. Such an expression meant that the murderer had turned to a substitute of that family member, representing the family of the killed as its real son.

Even if for some reasons the murderer remains unpunished during his life, according to the folk representations, he can find no peace in the underworld. Folk belief says that an assassin like other people with hard sins awaits a punishment of sinking into boiling blood¹⁹. In a fairy-tale the prince in his travel in the underworld, meets an old man bent before a pot filled with blood, who drank blood with a big spoon, while meat was cooking around him. When on the way back the youth asks about the reason of this penalty, the old man tells his life story. He was a priest, and he was responsible for the sacrifice to be distributed. But when a hungry pregnant woman came and asked for her portion of sacrifice, he refused, ate himself until satisfaction and only afterwards started to give to others. Meanwhile the woman went unconscious and bore a dead child, and the greedy priest got the punishment of drinking blood in the underworld²⁰.

The expression "The blood must not be washed with blood, it must be washed with water"²¹ means that an assassination must not become a reason for blood revenge and durable clan hostility. Existence of such a proverb suggests that in most cases blood revenge was substituted with other means of punishment, and adoption of Christianity is not the least motivation for that, being another long and steady tradition among the Armenians.

Menstruation and Hymen Blood

Customs of blood revenge reveal negative approach to the facts of shed, i. e. wasted blood, and on the symbolic plane this can be characterized as "life principle

¹⁷ Մհարրոնեան Ա., 1897, 24–25:

¹⁸ Ալլահիվերեան Յ., 1884, 133:

¹⁹ Мелик-Шахназаров Е., 1892, отд. II, 197.

²⁰ Злой царь//СМОМПК, вып. 28, 1900, отд. II, 96, 100.

²¹ Նավասարդեան Տ., 1883, 25:

wasted in vain”. The same or almost the same approach is observed in the case of menstruation and post partum hemorrhage. As far as the identification blood-lively energy has archetypical origin, such cultural phenomena are not only international but inexhaustible. In the modern western mode of thinking this concerns strict laws of hygiene and new methods of conceiving the fact of bleeding. In traditional societies women in the period of menstruation or after childbirth were declared “unclean” and were subject to many taboos.

Armenian traditional society is not an exception. In Basen sexual intercourse was prohibited during the menstrual period, and a belief existed according to which deaf, mute, defective and early dying children are the result of such an intercourse²². Traditionally, a woman remained unclean for seven days during the menstrual period, she had no right to tackle dough or bake bread²³. Davit the Alavka Son, who was a priest and a physician, thinks it is incorrect to consider menstruation as something nasty (his approach itself witnesses that many others were of opposite opinion) and explains its natural causes, but insists on the viewpoint that sexual intercourse during the period of menstruation leads to many diseases such as pock-markedness, leprosy, squint, blindness, redundant limbs, falling sickness etc.²⁴. “But the woman in this period must hold herself away from serving priests and monks, be separate, not enter the church or make a pilgrimage or kiss priest’s hand...”²⁵. The Alavka Son does not explain the basis of these latter preventions, therefore a conclusion proceeds that they are remnants of old common law and are nevertheless connected if not with “pollution” but rather with the notion of “unclean”. In our days there are still many women who observe the taboo on visiting church or baking bread during menstrual period²⁶. A similar approach is observed towards hymen blood (bleeding of the wedding night) which was followed by the (mostly 40-day) period of “newly wed” status. In Syunik there was “...wedding “fourty”, during which the daughter-in-law didn’t visit houses of newborn children, not to step (*kokh*) them (i. e. ‘not to harm’). For 40 days she doesn’t wash dishes, bake bread, put her hand into a pot with food”²⁷. In earlier

²² Հակոբյան Գ., 1974, 189–190:

²³ Շահբազեան Ա., 2003, 183:

²⁴ Դավիթ Ալավկա Որդի, 2010, 81–82:

²⁵ Ibid, 83.

²⁶ Bread as something sacral (in folk prayers “Bread, the angel of bread//A product of the pure ox”) and *tonir* as church, on which even matrimonial rites were executed, have deep symbolic roots in the Armenian tradition. This item is not discussed in our context.

²⁷ Լիսիցյան Ստ., 1969, 198–199:

times a new daughter-in-law had no right to enter the church for a year, because she wasn't "purified"²⁸.

Blood after the first intercourse of spouses, or hymen blood, as well as its trace on the sheet is the guaranty, oath and mark (signet) for the man and the women of becoming blood relatives. It is exemplary, when such a polluted sheet is presented as a "document" for legitimate relationship between two families. Kh. Samvelyan picked up the relevant materials from different ethnographic regions, such as Gegharqunik, Nakhijevan, Javakhk, Taron etc.²⁹. But the author's rationalization of the custom's aims as "... the boy's relatives' community used that to keep strict control over the newly wed girl", while the very "control" as an assumed means for fighting against matriarchal promiscuity³⁰ is too far from reality and only justifies the ideas of the evolutionist paradigm. In reality this is a different and much more profound item concerning the process of becoming a family member after being alien, receiving the right to continue generations of this family. Even the custom of awarding sugar to the bride is symbolically not based on aiming at "making her relation sweeter", but at extension of her blood, subsequently increasing her capacity to bear children, because sugar was believed to be the substitution of blood. In this occasion a belief of Nakhijevan Armenians is to be mentioned: they considered sugar not proper to eat during the Great Lent, because it arises from animals' bones and, being burnt, turns to blood³¹.

The word **աղի** *agh'kh* has the meaning of clan, kin, but in its primary meaning it denoted lock, further **աղիսեալ** – "closed, locked, virgin"³². Now the "locked" kin- **աղի** is identified with the virginity as something equally "locked". To enter that closed system many prescriptions are to be kept.

When young people – friends and girlfriends – became brothers and sisters, and thereafter the whole society comprehended them as relatives, they underwent a ritual, which in its initial form was connected with blood. As Ye. Lalayan notes, among Armenians usually blood was drawn off the little fingers of both fraternizing young people and they had to suck each other's blood³³. That this is a very ancient custom and it is identical with customs of concluding agreements, we know due to Herodot's message: "Oaths are taken by these people (Persians and Medes) in the same way as by the Greeks, except that they make a slight flesh

²⁸ Мелик-Шахназаров Е., 199:

²⁹ Սամուելյան Խ., 1908, 68–69:

³⁰ Ibid, 69.

³¹ Зелинский С. П., вып. 2., 1882, II отд., 29.

³² Աճառյան Հ., 1971, 131:

³³ Լալայան Ե., 1911, 175:

wound in their arms, from which each sucks a portion of the other's blood"³⁴. That ties strengthened by means of blood are equally traditional and psychological in their basis, a case reported by archaeologist H. Melkonyan indicates. During the excavations in Lusagyugh (near Aparan) two groups of young workers started quarreling. Melkonyan tried to separate them. But an old woman who was a witness of that occasion held him back, saying that only if they draw out some of each other's blood, their friendship will be solid and long-lasting.

Blood is a mediator and gluing substance, therefore "exchange" of blood or its "merging", "junction" is a necessary condition for creating unity and becoming blood relatives.

Such representations' origin is to search in the oath principle of paganism, when the sacrifice's blood unites the communion, it is the mediator between people. This idea wasn't annihilated among Armenians in Christian era, moreover, it still gained ground being fused with the idea of unity through Jesus' blood. Sacrifice (*matagh*) plays significant role in Armenian tradition, and as much significant is wine as sacral blood of the Lord, thus the most important oaths remain still connected with blood – material or symbolic. According to a myth, the mean deity *Tchanchik* ("Fly", biblical Baal-Zabab), drinks Jesus' blood and turns to a ladybird³⁵ (*zatic*) which symbolizes the festival of Resurrection (*Zatik*, as Armenian name for Easter).

Oblation with the blood of the sacrifice as a symbolic metamorphosis and establishment of a sacral liaison through marriage (in this meaning also marriage as a counterpart of a religious festival) are on the same plane. The ox slaughtered for the wedding is on the one hand food, on the other hand – a sacrifice. In Khachik village (Vayots Dzor) the bridegroom dunked a rope made of the animal's tail's long hair into the blood of the same ox and tied it on his body as a belt³⁶. In other regions it was just a cord which was dunked in blood and kept in bosom to avoid any mean magic³⁷. In Nor-Bayazed (now Gavar) the bridegroom's mother dunked her hand in the ox's blood and drew a cross on the fronton of the house to prevent it from every mean force³⁸.

After crowning the groom and bride in the church become sacral, to a certain extent they even substitute statues of gods to be accompanied in the triumphal

³⁴ The History of Herodotus, 1936, 37.

³⁵ Տէր-Սինաստեան Վ., 1904, 165–167:

³⁶ Քաջբերունի., 1901, 156:

³⁷ Հայկունի Ս., 1906, 400:

³⁸ Լալայեան Ե., 1907, 18:

procession³⁹. A ram was slaughtered under their feet⁴⁰, everyone kissed the cross and the gospel in their hands⁴¹.

Well, if the bride is something like a goddess, her blood is as sacral as the blood of a deity (such as blood of the sacrifice or wine in the divine service). That is why it is worshipped and tabooed simultaneously, and it is sacrificed for the sake of unity and as a symbol of the oath.

The blood of the sacrifice has connecting function, therefore it is printed on the forehead of the person for whose well-being the sacrifice is offered. It is printed on foreheads of other participants of the rite as well, especially if it is a festival sacrifice and is intended for the whole community, it is also printed or even made flow on the wall of the church. On special occasions that blood is even the main dish of the ritual cuisine, as *Khachi yar* ('wound of the Cross') – a dish made of animal's blood - as in the contemporary *Vardavar* festival in Tavush⁴².

The stain of blood carries symbolic weight of innocence of a victim, oath of unity within the human group, and of sacral character of the worshipped object. "Stains" on the lunar disc were mythologized among Iranian Armenians: they called them blood of Christ, because at the moment of crucifixion eclipse occurred not only of the sun, but also of the moon⁴³. Kirakos of Gandzak writes about the priests of Bagavan church, whose blood flew down the castle wall, and the stain pertained for a long time⁴⁴. Not far from the monastery St. Thovma in Nakhijevan there was the tomb of Kumsi, an apprentice of St. Bartholomew, where according to a legend bloody stones were found and buried⁴⁵.

Many folk beliefs concern the sacral blood of the beloved hero St. Vardan Mamikonyan and his martyred soldiers. People in Van called a kind of flower "blood-flower" and believed that it originated from St. Vardan's blood⁴⁶. In a village in Nakhijevan region, Qaratak, the St. Stephanos the Fulfiller of Requests monastery is situated, called also Red monastery. According to a legend, wounded soldiers of Vardan were taken here after Avarayr battle, and the naos and staircase

³⁹ Фрейденберг О., 1998, 185.

⁴⁰ Լալայեան Ե., 1910, 155, Պազազեան Եր., 1900, 134:

⁴¹ Ճահրազեան Ա., 170:

⁴² Մկրտչյան Ս., 2014, 248:

⁴³ Ճահրազեան Ա., 193:

⁴⁴ Կիրակոս Փանձակեցի, 1982, գլ. Ը, 137: Comp. reddish places of Bagavan church which H. Orbeli connects with the story told by Kirakos: Орбели И., Багаванский храм и его надписи//Христианский Востокъ,

⁴⁵ Լալայեան Ե., 1903, 302:

⁴⁶ Լալայեան Ե., 1903, 302:

of the church are dyed with their blood⁴⁷. The richest memory is preserved in Alapars village in Kotayk, where pilgrimage to the St. Vardan church on the last Sunday of October is a living tradition. According to a legend, this church is built over the stone dyed with St. Vardan Sparapet's blood and taken here from Avarayr⁴⁸. Babken Khachatryan who was born in this village tells that the stone was brought by village inhabitants' ancestors from Maku and Khoi (Her) in Iran. Not long ago there were old people who still remembered how the stone looked before 1937 fire, and witnessed that the stain of St. Vardan's blood was on the stone. After the fire in the church the stone glowed, became white-hot and cracked into three pieces. When a local goldsmith suggested to place the pieces in a silver frame, others refused and said that the heart of the War-Lord cannot be imprisoned, it should beat freely. However in 1974 a family emigrating to USA stole two of three pieces of the stone and (so people believe) built another chapel over them in Los-Angeles⁴⁹.

Like in the case of the flower called "the blood of seven brothers", legends about bloody stones tell about once shed innocent blood. In Malatya Armenians called a reddish stone "*erin qar*" "bloodstone" and the name is connected with the living belief: there is blood in stones. Probably, representations on stones containing blood are reminiscences of heathen times' human sacrifices executed with obsidian, called «the satan's nail». Armenian myths around the motif of the first victim – Abel – tell of slaughtering him just with that stone⁵⁰. Pseudo-Plutarch also tells about the black *sykion* stone in the river Arax. When a human sacrifice is needed, two girls are put on the altar of the deity preventing disasters, and as the priest touches the stone with his knife, the stone starts bleeding⁵¹.

Mystical connection with superhuman forces, with the world of wonders is also connected with blood, in this case – with the Bloody Sea. In Bulanukh in order to receive witchcraft capacities one had to pass the rite of «*ovalusin*» (literally – the moon of *Ov*, the second part of August). The rite supposed that the neophyte had a vision, an important part of which was the Bloody Sea⁵². The saint Ter Huskan Vordi sees the same Bloody Sea during his single divine service⁵³. Here is an excerpt of a folk-charm:

– Saint Sargis, where are you coming from? (Սուրբ Սեբգիս, ի՞նչի՞ կուգաս),

⁴⁷ Լալայեան Ե., 1906, 150:

⁴⁸ Հարությունյան Ա., 2009, 151: Քրիստոնյա Հայաստան հանրագիտարան, 2002, 971:

⁴⁹ Simonian L., Hovhannisyan K., Shamamyan N., 2014, informant B. Khachatryan, b. 1946.

⁵⁰ Ղանալանյան Ա., 1969, 337–338, №№ 790 Ա, Բ, Գ, Դ:

⁵¹ Pseudo-Plutarch, 2010, 22.

⁵² Բենսէ, 1900, 32–33:

⁵³ Սիմոնյան Լ., 2010, 472:

- From the Bloody Sea. (Էրինսն ծովեն),
- Then why there is no blood upon you? (Վրրաստ օրի՞ Էրին չէ),
- By the order of God⁵⁴. (Աստուծու հրրամանով):

Hymen blood is needed to make a relative out of an alien, in this case – of a daughter-in-law, but first of all that is an innocent girl and the hymen blood is her sacrifice. Here blood also serves as sign of sexual union and at the same time as a seal of oath. The blood of an alien family contained in the girl may be received if there is a contract about its compensation. In this respect the most archaic form is payment (gifts) given to the girl's parents. In a lamentation from Chimishgezek a woman is singing:

- My sister-in-law, sister-in-law (Իմ նիքուկ, նիքուկ),
- The host of my blood⁵⁵ (Իմ արունսիրուկ):

That means that the sister – in-law is the woman's "host of blood" because she with her family acquired the daughter-in-law having paid for her blood *arnegin* or **գլխագին** *lkhagin* (literally – «the head's price») just like a murderer pays for the blood of the killed. Thus he gave her the right to continue his stock. That is why hymen blood of the wedding night is densely connected with family and communion-social sacral items.

Symbolic representation of hymen blood is henna paint⁵⁶, with which blood of the bride and groom is mixed in the wedding rites. Usually the two are subjected to ritual painting with the same portion of henna divided in two parts. In Kemerek village near Caesaria a beautiful ceremony was executed in the night to Saturday: the bride and the groom along with their married friends meet in an appointed neutral place and are left alone in a corner of the house. The groom kisses the bride's eyes, reaches his hand to her covered with henna and lets her loosen the bundled kerchief, and he says: "You are my first love". The bride kisses that hand, looses the bundle and answers: "As I open my blurred eyes for the first time, I shall see you"⁵⁷. In Akn a pyramidal handful of henna was used to paint the hands of the bride and the groom, after which they danced facing each other. As henna was brought, the accompanying song was performed: "This henna is not *that* henna"⁵⁸, suggesting that the ritual henna is different from that of everyday use, it has the meaning of nuptial coalition. On describing those rituals V. Temurchyan noted: "... the ritual ceremony of

⁵⁴ Թումանյան Մ., հայտ. 2, 1983, 324:

⁵⁵ Ibid, 377:

⁵⁶ Comp. usage of ochre as substitution of blood in rites and medicinal interventions of archaic tribes. Levy-Bruhl L., 268–269.

⁵⁷ Թեմուրճյան Վ., հայտ. 1, 1970, 122:

⁵⁸ Comp. Ճանիկեան Յ., 1895, 116:

painting with henna before the demonstration of hymen sheet before the community means nothing but the confession of the bride and the groom of their being virgin, and an oath of love and fidelity”⁵⁹, while the substitution of blood with henna is added into that oath. Another tradition is described by H. Mndzuri – a ritual executed out of the wedding cycle. In his short story «The House of the Uncle» to heal the *hasrneharutyun* (actually, weakness caused by sexual addiction) the protagonist is dressed as a bridegroom with a cross on the forehead side of the hat, with hands painted with henna. His matrilineal blood relatives take him to the roof. There he has to look directly at the mountain M’zra (Mndzur, or Muzur) and dance⁶⁰. This ancient ritual, the meaning of which is sacral marriage with the great goddess Anahit, living on the mountain (which Phaustos Buzand calls *Nahata ator* – «The Trone of Nahat»⁶¹) is aimed at releasing the harmful addiction. In fact that was the dance of the groom before his bride, expressing the same oath with hands painted with henna as in the wedding rite of Akn.

In this complex of customs multilateral interrelation of rules concerning blood is revealed. The unmarried girl, the virgin, belongs to the family of her father and may be given to anybody only by consent of her host by means of payment of *g’lkhagin*, ratified by a sacrifice offered by the new family before (an ox) and after (a cock) the wedding night and doubled by henna-pigmentation. The blood shed in the wedding night is a verification of the contract, which is «signed» by blood and can only be loosed by blood⁶² as well. After signing the contract the new family represented by the ruler-patriarch is perceived as “*ar’nter*”, the host of the girl’s blood. Consequently, any trespass, assault on the daughter-in-law is a bloody offense requiring a bloody revenge. The communal character of the wedding means that the legitimacy of passing blood from one family to another is sacral and is related (valid) for the whole community.

In this field of representations any adultery (in this case – infidelity in terms of religious abuse) is the problem of dignity not only for the given family-kin but also for the whole socium, because it is assessed as public blasphemy and disturbs the well-being of the whole community. It is clear then, why if living as a couple did not follow the first sexual intercourse, the question had public significance and was regarded as abuse of honour and perjury, in fact it was related to the lost,

⁵⁹ Թեմուրճյան Վ., 122.

⁶⁰ Հակոբ Մեծուրի, 1986, 191:

⁶¹ Փավստոս Բուզանդ, 1987, Գիրք հինգերորդ, 334:

⁶² This symbolic representation is connected with the capacity of material blood to glue after getting dry, thus being sort of a special adhesive matter, like anointing oil or sealing wax, compare fastening of feathers and wool on bodies with help of blood: L. Lévy-Bruhl, 267.

expropriated, stolen blood. When a girl is taken away without the consent of her father, the whole community regards the fact as perjury of blood, therefore the parent has a right to consider that child dead, in special cases (in Armenian materials – when she eloped with a person of a differing religious identity, rarely – of a hostile clan) or even kill. As a loss of blood the situation could terminate with compensation through blood. Propitiation was possible in two ways: equal exchange or special order by the spiritual leader, i. e. divine intervention. One should state here that the payment of a forfeit for the girl to her family is another means to achieve consensus⁶³. In a fairy-tale, however, a more archaic model is represented, when such a conciliation is impossible, and the abductor is condemned to death if he doesn't leave the community forever⁶⁴.

There was a relevant approach to a male child, as well, therefore dividing the economic wealth of the clan at the demand of children was an incredible injury for the family's dignity.

Back to the question of blood relatives, it is important to discuss the item of blood as the main substantial element of a family, or, wider, of a kin, phratry. At the moment of delivery the parent passes her blood to the child, thus all the children of the same parent are the same «flesh and blood». How literally and concretely this passing is incorporated and how necessary is the use of blood and its symbolic forms in the ritual when that blood is substituted, we can see on Dersim's example of the ritual of adoption. According to G. Halajyan: “The father puts seven or in some cases - three drops of blood, taken from the right side of his body, into milk or water and gives it to the child by himself... When the child is taken home, an animal is slaughtered on the treshould, the stepmother takes the kid and, dunking her finger in the blood of the slaughtered, smears the child's mouth first and thereafter – her own mouth”⁶⁵. The same symbolic ratification of relationship is a group of elements in the wedding-rite. Here too, a person with different blood is accepted as a blood relative (= adopted) with means of manifold symbolic connection, and the portion of blood shed in the wedding night along with the blood of the sacrificed ox and cocks plays the role of the stamp, sealing the mystery of metamorphosis and the contract between the two families.

Blood relationship as common blood assumes the weakening of links «from navel to navel», each navel representing one mother and one child. Here is the demand of strict exogamy called «seven navels». In any type of society the mother and the child are the nearest relatives: «In all human communities, savage or

⁶³ Երզնկեանց Գ. քահ., 1897, 330:

⁶⁴ «Ֆորսկանի հեքիաթ», 1977, 220:

⁶⁵ Հալաջյան Գ., N 63, 532:

civilized, custom, law and morals, sometimes even religion, take cognizance of the bond between mother and offspring...»⁶⁶. In an average traditional Armenian community it is important if the relative is patrilineal or matrilineal. In different ethnographic regions nominally patrilineal relatives are the closest, but in fact matrilineal relatives are closer regarding the factor of «the navel». When asked, why does she love her daughter's children more than her son's, an aged woman answered: «I know for sure that my daughter delivered her children, but how do I know, who are the real parents of my son's children»⁶⁷. Such a vivid expression of «mother right» as a pure rationalization could be regarded as a special opinion, if that were a single example of approach to the daughters' children in Armenian families. But such remnants of obvious preference given to matrilineal descendants are distributed and make an essential part of traditional forms.

The proverb «Love turned to sword, blood turned to water»⁶⁸ was used in cases when hostility rose between the members of the same clan. A primordial source for such a situation assessed as utterly regrettable and shameful the deed of biblical Cain mentioned in many folk stories. A folk version of that plot in H. Malkhasyan's novel "*Horot-morot*" terminated with the following moral sequence: "... that's why since the very day when Adam's son shed blood love became sword, and blood became water"⁶⁹. There was a belief that the wasted blood of a relative cries, just like it "cries" when blood relatives who do not know each other meet suddenly (they feel sympathy to each other before they learn their being related). If in everyday life that "crying" is metaphoric, in a fairy-tale the protagonist occasionally kills own wife and son, and a voice comes out of their blood: "How could you take the hard sin of the mother and the son upon you?"⁷⁰.

To conclude, belonging to the group of blood relatives, being a legal son or daughter of a kin, having stable relationship – all this is fundamental for a strong self-identity, sense of dignity. When a person loses them, he/she loses him/herself and is ready to fight and die, to shed blood. That is why any hint on unsteadiness of the linear passing of blood - like swearing containing items of sexual abuse of the mother – almost automatically leads to shedding of blood. This norm, preserved in the Soviet period basically due to the so-called *goghakan orenq* («thief's law» which only superficially represented the criminal sub-culture, but in fact was a

⁶⁶ Malinowski B., 1937, 19.

⁶⁷ Simonian L., 1998.

⁶⁸ Նավասարդեան Տ., 1883, 29:

⁶⁹ Մալխասեան Յ., 1898, 92:

⁷⁰ «Զոռու, դերվիշի և գլուխ քարեր զարկող մարդու զաղտնիք» 1968, 411:

The identification of the so-called “red apple”⁷¹ with hymen blood and virginity of girls before marriage is a representation of our days. In reality there is no strong traditional liaison between apples and virginity based upon reliable data. Nevertheless, apples were used in the wedding cycle as an important element, symbolizing union, creation of relationship, and fertility.



 Նախ - քա - զի - գնան ու - ռի ծառ,
 Խըն - ձո ըի կես խա - ծած է,



 Խըն - ձոր թա - լեմ, ա - ըի տար:
 Զորս թո - լոր ար - ծա - թած է:

⁷¹ There is an existing (though not too old) custom to present several red apples to the family of newly-married girl if the fact of her being virgin before marriage is proved. In the materials of 19th – beginning of 20th century applications about existence of such a custom are as rare as one or two, without reference of the apple's colour. Nevertheless, the metaphor “red apple” is frequently used by proponents of progressive changes in Armenian family to blame old tradition.

⁷⁴ Լալայեան Ե., 1897, 211:

the sieve serving as bag an apple was put packed in a silk kerchief. The groom had to put on the underwear and hold the apple in his hand. Just before the wedding night the groom's friend had to cut the apple, giving one half to the bride and one to the groom, and they had to eat it⁷⁵.

In Barjanch (a big village near Kharberd) there was a beautiful wedding custom: at the moment of engagement the girl's mother brought a red apple in a kerchief embroidered by her daughter "as a talisman to make their union sweet and to help deliver a beautiful boy"⁷⁶. Such an explanation coincides with that of many fairy-tales, where the dervish gives an apple to a childless couple, which they divide and eat to deliver a hero-son⁷⁷. In some villages near Erzinka, when the newly-wed couple first entered their house after the church ceremony, the bride brought an apple decorated with allspice to the groom, and he cut it with his sword, he ate one half himself and gave the other half to the bride⁷⁸.

There is another wedding song written by Komitas, in which all the participants of the wedding party are characterized as kinds of apples, thus the apple turns to be the main symbol of the wedding:



The higher head-apple, I was asked, who is that?
 The higher head-apple is our king (the groom).
 The hand-apple on the right... is our queen (the bride).
 The party-apple on the left ... are the godfathers.
 The hand-apple there below... are the wedding participants.
 The blessed apple in the centre... is the new king.
 The one and only apple in the trunk... is our queen⁷⁹.

⁷⁵ Լալայեան Ե., 1916, 163:

⁷⁶ Շերոն Մ. Պ., 1938, 113:

⁷⁷ Բ. Ե. ՀԺՀ, հատ. II, 1959, 190:

⁷⁸ Տէր-Մինասեան Վ., 1893, ՀԳ:

⁷⁹ Կոմիտաս, հատ. 10, 76:

The tradition of presenting red apples to the family of the bride after the wedding night obviously has the same symbolic meaning – assurance of becoming relatives and of the magic of fertility.

Therefore, identification of the common law demand of virginity with the “red apple” is nothing more than euphemism, a modern metaphor. The question concerns young people and to a certain extent – middle-age generation and their adoption of western values and denial of traditions.

Resistance of traditionalists is quite understandable, for unwritten and written⁸⁰ laws of their ancestors are based, as we have seen, on the notions of the family-clan unity, sacrality and honour, making a large worldview complex, an old and persisting cultural programme of self-identity and social relations. Those who want to relinquish the rule of premarital virginity, regardless of improper statements on “women’s rights” (they have no address because the old law assumed the virginity of both parties and much younger age of marriage than it is normal today) defend their own right of free sexual relations, which in fact fits rather the modern Armenian culture with its cult of individualism than the kinship norm of their grandfathers. The modern Armenian searches for fresh fundamentals of own self-identity, sometimes utterly differs from those of the traditional clan, which started collapsing since the end of 19th century. Obviously, there is a proper doze of absurdity in trying to revive those norms. But it is not less preposterous to deny everything in the traditional form of blood relationship because of one backward tradition in view of an out-of-context, wrong symbol.

In any case, the new problem of the premarital virginity and need to prove it must be considered from the viewpoint of changes in the structure of the family. The item concerns the frame of problems that may be named as “traditional community and modern society of Armenia”, as well, taking into account changes resulting from the western educational system, urbanization, atheism, mass media etc. which imply opposition between the traditional community and the modern society.

⁸⁰ Կանոնք Կեսարեայ գլուխք Ժ, Կանոն Բ. «Դասն կուսանաց, որ յառաջ քան զհարսանիսն շնացաւ» ասկում է. «Դասն կուսանաց, որ քան զհարսանիսն յառաջ ընդ ունեք շնացաւ եւ երդօ զկուսութիւն իւր, կուսան այնուհետեւ մի կոչեացի, զի խրատատեցաւ ցանկն, բայց սպաշխարեացէ ջերմ սրտիւ ողորմութեամբ եւ գթով տնանկաց տրեացէ զինքն, Բ սմ առ դրանն հաւատարեացէ աղաթից եւ Ա սմ մտեալ յեկեղեցի եղցէ ընդ սպաշխարոյս եւ հաղորդեացի ստիինաց եւ վասն յաղթութեան թշնամոյն առցէ զաւրինութեան պսակն հարսանեաց ի գլուխ իւր. թէ այր թէ կին կանոն այս լիցի» // Կանոնագիրք Հայոց, 1964, 169–170: It is important to note here that the Christian law did not suppose a strict punishment for losing virginity before the marriage but repentance during two years. Besides, it concerned not only women, but also men.

However, violation of the human right to preserve traditional norms is another form of contravention. Blind progressivism and fanaticism in destroying traditional forms will produce heavy consequences, two of them having been embedded in the modern Armenian society – loneliness and value disorientation. Therefore, another Armenian proverb fits well to terminate this discourse: “What do I do with the golden basin if I spit blood into it?”⁸¹.

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⁸¹ Նավասարդեան Տ., 1883, 33, Նավասարդեան Տ., 1891, 81:

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ԱԶԳԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆԸ ՎԵՐԱԲԵՐՈՂ ԾԵՍԵՐ**

ԱՄՓՈՓՈՒՄ

Սույն հետազոտության նյութը ազգագրական նյութերում մարմնավորված սովորության իրավունքի այն սրբացված նորմերն են, որոնց խախտումն առաջացնում է սուր հույզեր և դառնում է բռնության դրդապատճառ, քանի որ դրանք կապված են անձի հոգեկերտվածքի և նույնականացման ամենախոր հիմքերի հետ և ներհյուսվում են գոյաբանական խնդիրներին: Արյան և ինքնանույնականացման առնչությունը դիտարկվում է չորս գլխավոր տեսանկյուններից. ա. պատկանելիություն որևէ տոհմի, ժողովրդի, բ. տոհմական արյան կորստի և փոխհատուցման, գ. արյան միջոցով կնքվող պայմանագրի, այդ թվում՝ արյունակից դառնալու դինամիկայի, դ. հիերոֆանիայի միջոցով որոշակի առարկաներով արյան խորհրդանշական փոխարինման:

Տոհմական ինքնաընկալումը, այսինքն, անձի նույնականացումը իր ազգականների հետ, գիտակցված և ենթագիտակից ձևով ընկած է անձի և մարդկային խմբի աշխարհայացքի հիմքում և վճռորոշ է նրա բարոյագիտական կողմնորոշման համար: Արյունակցական կապերը այսօր էլ շարունակում են խարսխել մարդկային հանրության ներսում ձևավորվող և հարատևող հարաբերությունները, վճռորոշ լինելով ինչպես ինքնարժեքի, այնպես էլ հայ ժողովրդի ներկայացուցիչը լինելու մասին պատերազմների համար: «Արյունը ջուր չի դառնա» ավանդական բանաձևը նշանակում է այն, որ ազգակցական հարաբերությունները առավել ուժեղ են, և հայի էթնիկական հոգեբանության մեջ մեծ դեր են կատարում ընտանեկան, տոհմական ավանդական արժեքները:

Հիմքում այն պատկերացումն է, որ *արյունը գենետիկական հիշողության պարունակող ու պորտի միջոցով փոխանցող սուբստանց է*, ուրեմն և պատիվն ու արժանապատվությունը – իբրև անձի մեջ պարունակվող արժեք – ժառանգվում և փոխանցվում են արյամբ:

Առանց վատնումների փոխանցումը կապվում է կանոնավոր ամուսնության և ծննդաբերության հետ, դրա խախտումը կարող է տեղի ունենալ տոհմի

անդամի ինքնակամ կամ բռնության հետևանք հանդիսացող գործողությունների պատճառով, որոնք ծայրահեղ դեպքերում հանգեցնում են արյան կորստին: Կորուստի ձևերն են բռնությամբ մահը և կանանց ու աղջիկների առևանգումը: Միաժամանակ ուրիշի արյունը թափելը ոչ միայն կորուստ էր, այլև կապի հաստատում. գոհն ու մարդասպանը, կույսը և նրա հետ սեռական հարաբերությունների մեջ մտնող տղամարդը կապված էին իրար: Այստեղից՝ արնտեր էր համարվում մի կողմից մարդասպանը, մյուս կողմից՝ հարսի սկեսրայրը, որը արնգին էր վճարում որդուն ամուսնացնելիս ճիշտ այնպես, ինչպես արնգին էր պարտավոր վճարել մարդասպանը: Արյան վրեժի օրենքով մարդասպանը պետք է փոխհատուցեր իր կողմից վատնված արյունը ա. սեփական կամ ընտանիքի որևէ անդամի արյամբ (կյանքով), բ. իր վրա վերցնելով սպանվածի դերը, գ. իր ընտանիքից սպանվածի ընտանիքին հարս տրամադրելով՝ առանց նրա համար արնեգին պահանջելու:

Վերջին միջոցը նույնանում է պայմանադրությունը արյամբ կնքելու ասպեկտին, քանի որ հենց այդ դերում է հանդես գալիս կույսի ծննդյան արյունը կամ եղբայրացողների, դաշինք կնքողների արյունը, որ կողմերը ծծում էին միմյանց ձեռքերից:

Արյունը միջնորդ է և միացնող սուբստանց, ուրեմն և արյան «փոխանակությունը» կամ «միախառնումը» դաշնության և արյունակից դառնալու անհրաժեշտ պայման է:

Այս պատկերացումը բխում է հեթանոսական արյունով ուխտի սկզբունքից, երբ գոհի արյունը միավորում է համայնքը, միջնորդ է համայնքի անձանց միջև, և այդ պատկերացումն ավելի է ամրապնդվել՝ Հիսուս Քրիստոսի արյունով հաղորդվելու հիմքով կայացող և գոյատևող քրիստոնեական համայնքում:

Պայմանադրության տեսանկյունից արյունը կարող է փոխարինվել խորհրդանշական առարկաներով: Հարսանեկան ծիսաշարում այդ դերում հանդես է գալիս հինան: Խնձորը, թեև նույնպես մտնում է ամուսնական միության, ազգակցություն ստեղծելու խորհրդանշական շրջանակի մեջ, ունի առավելապես պտղաբերություն ապահովելու խորհուրդը. ինչը փաստվում է ազգագրական և բանահյուսական առատ նյութով: Սակայն «կարմիր խնձորի» նույնացումը կուսության պահանջի սովորությային օրենքի հետ մեր ժամանակներում նորոգյա այլաբանություն և եվֆեմիզմ է: Խնդիրը վերաբերում է արևմտյան արժեքների որդեգրմանը և ավանդական արժեքների մերժմանը և պետք է դիտարկվի սոցիալական և ոչ՝ խորհրդանշական դաշտում, կապված ինքնանույնականացման նոր միջոցների որոնման ներկայիս պայմանների հետ: Այս առումով այն անհրաժեշտ է դիտել ավանդական խորհրդանշական դաշտից անկախ, քանի որ այն առաջացել է բոլորովին այլ պայմաններում:

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КРОВЬ И КЛЯТВА: ОБРЯДЫ, ОТНОСЯЩИЕСЯ К КРОВНОМУ РОДСТВУ

РЕЗЮМЕ

Материал данного исследования – освященные традицией нормы обычного права, нарушение которых вызывает острые чувства и приводит к насилию, поскольку они связаны с глубинными корнями психической организации личности и ее самоидентификации, тем самым сплетаясь с проблемами экзистенциального порядка. Связь между кровью и самоидентификацией рассматривается с четырех главных точек зрения: 1. принадлежность к определенному роду, народу, 2. утрата и компенсация крови, 3. скрепление договоров кровью, в т. ч. – динамика установления кровного родства, 4. символическая замена крови другими предметами посредством иерофании.

Клановое самосознание, т. е. идентификация личности с родственниками осознанно или подсознательно лежит в основе мировоззрения личности и человеческой группы и имеет решающее значение для его моральной ориентации. Узы кровного родства и в наши дни продолжают оставаться в основе отношений, складывающихся и продолжающихся внутри человеческих общностей, являясь определяющими как для самооценки (чувства собственного достоинства), так и осознания себя в качестве представителя армянского народа. Традиционная формула «Кровь не станет водой» означает, что именно родственные связи наиболее сильны, и в этнической психологии армянина семейные, клановые традиционные ценности играют значительную роль.

В основе – представление о том, что кровь является субстанцией, содержащей генетическую память и передающейся через пупок, следовательно честь и достоинство как ценности, содержащиеся в самой личности, также наследуются и передаются через кровь. Такая передача без потерь связана с законным браком и рождением детей, а нарушение этого порядка может произойти как следствие определенных действий члена рода – самовольного или вынужденного, как результат насилия, которые в крайних проявлениях могут

привести к утрате крови. Видами утраты являются насильственная смерть и похищение женщин и девушек. Одновременно пролитие чужой крови – это не только потеря, но и установление новой связи, т. к. жертва и убийца, девственница и мужчина, вступивший с ней в половую связь, оказываются связаны между собой. Отсюда: в армянской традиции *apn'ter* «хозяин крови» – это с одной стороны убийца, с другой – свекр замужней женщины, который уплачивает *apnegin* «цену крови», когда женит сына точно так же, как «цену крови» обязан выплатить убийца. По закону кровной мести убийца должен был возместить кровь, утраченную из-за него либо 1. собственной кровью (жизнью) или кровью (жизнью) какого-нибудь члена собственной семьи, либо 2. взяв на себя роль убитого, либо 3. предоставив семье убитого женщину из своей семьи в качестве невестки, не требуя при этом «цены крови» за нее.

Последнее состоит во внутренней связи с аспектом подписания (закрепления) договоров кровью, поскольку именно в этой роли выступает кровь девственницы или кровь друзей, становящихся братьями, кровь при клятвенных обязательствах, когда стороны пьют кровь друг у друга из рук.

Таким образом кровь становится посредником и соединяющей субстанцией, а значит обмен кровью или смешивание крови людей разного происхождения – необходимое условие альянса и становления кровными родственниками. Такое представление исходит из языческого представления о клятвенной крови, когда кровь жертвы объединяет общину и отдельную личность, и это представление еще более закрепилось в христианской общине, которая образуются и сохраняется на основе причащения кровью Иисуса Христа.

С точки зрения заключения договора кровь может быть заменена символическими предметами. В свадебном цикле в этой роли выступает *хна*. Напротив, яблоко, которое также входит в круг символических представлений о создании законной супружеской четы и закрепления родства, преимущественно относится к сфере обеспечения плодородия, рождения детей, что подтверждается богатым этнографическим и фольклорным материалом. Отождествление «красного яблока» с требованием обычного права о девственности – не более чем современный эвфемизм и новоявленная метафора. Проблема скорее касается самоотождествления с западными ценностями и отрицания традиционных ценностей, посему она должна рассматриваться с точки зрения социальных процессов, а не символизма, в связи с поиском новых основ самоидентификации в настоящее время. Очевидно, что ее следует изучать независимо от традиционного символизма, который формировался в совершенно иных условиях.