

## An Overview of the Geography of Armenia

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### Armenian Highland

Nowadays the first well-known historical information about the Armenian Highland is preserved in Sumerian cuneiform inscriptions and dates back to 28-27 centuries BC. The early state formation Aratta is mentioned in those inscriptions. The name is compared with the toponym Ararat, which becomes more obvious while comparing Sumerian and biblical stories about the great flood. In these stories Aratta and Ararat are supposed to be place of rescue. In ancient Mesopotamian cuneiform writings proper names were written in two ways: phonetically (in syllables) and ideographically. In the first case Aratta was written in three syllables (A-rat-ta), in the second case it was written as Subur (Subari, Subartu). This means that these two names referred to one state. The analyze of mentionings of Subur-Subari-Subatru (the ancient ones were found in manuscripts dating back to the 26th century BC) shows that it was found in the Armenian Highland (in the basin of lake Van and in its south-western parts). From the 26th century BC Mesopotamian manuscripts mentioned god Hay(a), his eponymous land and nation. It is significant that in Sumerian-Akkadian bilingual inscriptions Suburi of Sumerian part in

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(Յրգիկական բարձրագ)



Akkadian part coincided with Hay(a), which shows that these two toponyms referred to the same land. As a matter of fact, from one hand we have Aratta-Subur, from the other hand Subur-Hay(a), which means that in the first half of the 3rd century BC Armenia was famous with three equivalent names (Aratta-Hay(a)-Subur). From 24-23 centuries BC in the Armenian Highland “Arman(i)”, “Armi”, “Aram” and other toponyms were mentioned, which were proto-forms of “Armenia”. In inscriptions (24-23 centuries BC) of Ebla (northern part of ancient Syria) “Sons of Haya” (“hayordiner”) were mentioned, who lived in the land of Armi and who established relationship with other countries. “Sons of Haya” (hayordiner) in manuscripts of Ebla, god Haya and the land of Sumerian sources genealogically were connected with the Armenian nature. So still from 24-23 centuries BC connected with the Armenian Highland the main names of Armenia and the Armenians were mentioned: Aratta, Haya, Subur and Arman(i). Subur was no longer in use in the first half of 1st millennium BC, and the others are still in use as Ararat, Hayk-Hayastan and Armenia.

Armenian Highland is situated in the northern borderline of Western Asia between Asia Minor and Iranian plateaus, Black Sea and Mesopotamian plains. The Armenian people originated and created their state in the Armenian Highland; they created their own culture here. The Armenian Highland almost completely coincides with the historical Armenian homeland. From ancient times it has been extended from the rivers Kur and Yeraskh (Araks) up to Gamirk (Cappadocia), from Pontus and Trialet mountains to the southern parts of the Armenian Taurus.

The Armenian Highland (about 300,000 Km<sup>2</sup>) is surrounded by high mountain ranges: in ancient times the highland between them was called Mijdashkharh Hayots (Midland of Armenia).

**Armenian Highland** has boundary with Antitaurus mountains to the west, which divided it from the Anatolian Plateau (Asia Minor), and to the north – with west Pontus mountains. Northern borders of the highland stretches the watershed of Moskakan and Trialet mountains. In the East they are the borders of Artsakh and Kur-Araks valleys. The border of the highland reaching Karabakh turns to the west, goes through the mountains in the north of Lake Kaputan (Urmia), then turning to the south it includes the western coastal regions of the lake and reaches Kordvats mountain range, which is the continuation of the Armenian Taurus. Turning again to the west and crossing the river Tigris, it reaches Euphrates, cuts it and goes up to Antitaurus through Malatya mountains. In these borders the region has over 400 sq. km. area. The surface of the Armenian Highland is divided into mountain

ranges with different directions, between which concavities and plateaus extend, which have favorable conditions for agriculture, they are called in the Armenian sources “fields”. The highland has **1500-1800 m.** average height above the sea level, with which it significantly exceeds both the neighboring Iranian and Anatolian plateaus.

In the center of the Armenian highland from east to west **mountain range Haykakan Par** is situated. In the outskirts of the latter rises extinct volcanic Ararat (Masis) with its two peaks, one of which is the highest mountain of the Armenian Highland (5165m.) and it is called in the Armenian sources Azat Masis (free Masis), which joins to Sis or Lesser Ararat mountain peak (3925m.) with “Sardari aghbyur” (Sardar spring). Masis is the holy mountain of Armenians, the symbol of the motherland (the 18th day of the Armenian ancient calendar is dedicated to it). People told many legends about Masis. According to the Bible the Biblical Noah’s ark came to rest on Masis (Ararat). From the eastern edge of Haykakan Par with the southern direction the mountain range of Vaspurakan is expanded, the continuation of which is the mountain range of Zagros. The Armenian plateau has numerous mountain ranges. In the west of the **mountain range of Vaspurakan** the picturesque mountain of Tsaghkants is situated, at the edge of which is situated the only existing volcanic mountain Tondrak (3542 m.). Up to now around him from the crater (600m. deep) still water steams and sulfuric fluids erupt with high temperature. In the southern part of the **mountains Tsaghkants** is situated the extinct volcanic mountain Sipan (4434 m.). It is the second highest peak of the highland. In the south of Sipan avoiding western shores of Lake Van Bznunyats mountains are stretched which are ended with the peak Nemrut. Nemrut is an extinct volcano, although it was active until the first half of XV century (the last eruption took place in 1441). The north - eastern large part of the Armenian highland is called **Lesser Caucasus**. In this part there are several prominent mountain ranges, as Javakheti, Virahayots, Bazumi, Pambak, Geghama, Sevan, Vardenis, Mravi Artsakh mountains. From mountains Vardenis starts and to the south up to Yeraskh (Araks) expands the mountain range of Syunik or Zangezur, in the southern part of which is situated the highest peak of Lesser Caucasus Kaputjugh (3904m.). In the southern borderline of Ararat valley is situated the highest mountain of the territory of Republic of Armenia – Aragats (4090m.). The prairies and feeds spread over his slopes are important livestock areas famous from ancient times. In the east of Aragats mount Ara is situated. In the southern part of the Armenian

highland stretches mountain range of **Armenian Taurus**, in different parts of which various peaks are raised (Marutasar or Maratuk, Tsovasar, Andok, Arnos, Artos, etc.).

The Armenian Highland is famous for its richness of water resources. It is the only Hydraulics of Western Asia and it is not by chance, that it has got the title “The land of rivers” by the Semitic population of Ancient Mesopotamia in II millennium BC. From here Euphrates, Tigris, Yeraskh, Halis, Gaylget, Kur, Chorokh outflow.

The Armenian main river is **Yeraskh** or **Araks**, the basin of which is totally included in the territory of the Armenian Highland. The outflows of Yeraskh are situated in the area of Byuraknyan mountains. In the past Yeraskh separately flowed into Caspian Sea, but over time it changed its watercourse and merged with river Kur. Yeraskh has numerous brooks - Akhuryan, Kasakh, Hrazdan, Arpa, Vorotan, Voghji, Tghmut etc.

From the early times Yeraskh had economic and political huge significance. In the average current of his basin the biggest and most prolific plane – Ararat Valley is expanded, which has been the political center of the Armenian statehood - the Realm of Kings for centuries. In the Armenian Valley ancient cities of the Armenian state were built - Armavir, Yervandashat, Artashat, Vagharshapat, Dvin. The capital of Republic of Armenia Yerevan is also situated here.

**Euphrates** is the longest river (3065km) of Western Asia, while Tigris is the largest by waterflow (1850km). River Euphrates has two branches – Western Euphrates and Eastern Euphrates. Western Euphrates goes out from Tsaghkavet Mountains in the north of the city Karin (Erzurum). For centuries it has been considered to be the western border of the Kingdom of Armenia. Eastern Euphrates – Aratsani river goes out from Tsaghkants Mountains. Both branches of Euphrates merge near the city Kapan of Sophene and form united Euphrates, which then going beyond the borders of the Armenian Highland flows through Mesopotamia. The Tigris unites with the Euphrates and form Shatt-al-Arab river, which flows into the Persian Gulf.

**Tigris** also has two branches – Western and Eastern. The outflows of Western Tigris are situated in the area of Sophene, near Lake Sophene. Going out of the borders of the highland Tigris flows through Mesopotamia, joins Euphrates and together with it flows into the Persian Gulf.

**River Kur** goes out from Kriakunq, which is in the province Kogh of Tao state. With its main part it flows out of the borders of Armenian Highland, but in ancient times it delimited Greater Armenia from Virq

and Albania. In the field of Mughan Yeraskh joins Kur and then they together flow into the Caspian Sea. Halis (Alis), Gayl rivers rise and flow into the Black sea from Upper Armenia. River Chorokh belongs to the basin of Black Sea too, which rises in Chormayr mountains situated in Sper. In the Armenian Highland there are numerous lakes and ponds. The most majors are Kaputan (Urmia), Van and Sevan.



**Lake Urmia** is situated in the borderline of Iranian plateau. The largest of three lakes with the surface area is Kaputan (over 5900 sq.km.), it is an endorheic lake, water is salty, that is why no fish species is multiplied here. Because of high degree of evaporation the mirror of the lake is continuously reducing. The coastal zone of Kaputan has a thick layer of salt. A number of rivers flow into the

lake, such as Salmast, Urmia, Araskh etc..

**Lake Van** is also known as Bznunyats, Tospa, Rshtunyats. It is the second largest river in the Armenian Highland (over 3800 sq. km.). It is an endorheic and saline lake. The level of the lake is constantly fluctuating sometimes descending, sometimes increasing. Like this in 1841 as a result of the severe water increase the lake buried ancient city Artchesh. Akhtamar village was also sunk. That is the reason that from seven islands mentioned in “Ashkharhatsuyts” (“Geography”) only Akhtamar, Arter, Ktuts and Lim remained, the most significant of which is Akhtamar with a magnificent monastery SurbKhach



(monastery of the Holy Cross). The only fish in this lake is Pearl Mullet. Lake Van is a close basin involving in itself rivers and streamlets. The basin of lake Van is the ancient cradle of the Armenian state. At the same time it is a region having major economic and cultural importance. Numerous residences are built in the coasts of the lake - Van, Artchesh, Artske, Khat, Datvan, Vostan etc.

**Lake Sevan** which was called Geghama or Gegharkunyats sea in ancient times is rich in various fish species (Sevan trout, Salmo

ischchan aestivalis, as well as whitefish brought here in last decades).



Up to the artificial lowering of the level the lake covered an area of over 1420sq. km. (now 1240 sq. km.) and was located at the altitude of 1919m (nowadays Sevan is 18m low). It has one island which was turned into a peninsula. The prominent monastery of Sevan (Sevan desert) is situated here with Surb Astvatsatsin (Church of St. Mary) and Surb Arakelots (church of Holy Apostles). Lake Sevan is fed by 28 rivers and streamlets, from which the most famous are Dzknaget, Gavaraget, Vardenis, Masrik.

Hrazdan starts from Sevan with the special canal built form Urartian times.

Except the mentioned rivers in different regions of the highland there are many small ponds (partially salty) the famous of which are Archak, Gaylatu, Tsovk, Nazik, Arpa, Parvana.

The Armenian highland has rich lithosphere. From ancient times salt mines of Koghb, Kaghzvan and Nakhchavan were exploited. There were famous salt mines in Aghdznik, Turuberan, Vaspurakan. The area of Lesser Armenia is also famous for its salt mines. Big stocks of salt are discovered in the territory of Yerevan (Avan).

From ancient times the Armenian highland has been famous for its metal mines and has been considered to be one of the ancient metallurgic centers of world. It is enough to mention the metal molding complex of Metsamor in Ararat valley that existed in 4th millennium BC. In different regions of the highland there are mines of copper, iron, lead, arsenic.

Famous copper mines are in Gugark and Syunik. Aghdznik was also famous for its copper. Iron is found in most parts of the Armenian provinces but the most prominent of them are the mines of Aghdznik and Turuberan, which were exploited from ancient times. Due to the richness of iron the main occupation of the inhabitants of certain mountainous provinces of Taurus (Talvorik, Khut, Shenadzor, etc.) were blacksmithing and weapon manufacturing. From noble metals silver and gold are found. Silver mines are especially found in greater Armenia, Sophene, Artsakh etc. From ancient times the gold mines of Sper have been well known. The province of Sodk in Syunik

(Tsavdek, Zod), the region of the mount Voskehat in Tao were also rich in gold. Chrome, molybdenum and other rare metals are also found.

The Armenian Highland is a rich depository of various building materials. Multi-colored tuffs (pink, white, black, etc) are widespread, from which is particularly well known the famous mine of Artik. Rich mines of marble, basalt, granite, incense (alum), pumice, perlites, clay, limestones and other minerals are also found. There are substantial coal reserves in the district of town-village Olt of Tao, Shirak (Djajur), Tavush (Ijevan), Ararat (Jermanis).

In almost any part of the Armenian highland hot and cold springs have flowed out, which were known as “Jermuk”-s. Since ancient times Jermuk in Vayots dzor, Yeghegik - Yeghegin in Karno valley, the springs of Varshak in Tsaghkotn, the healing waters of Jermajur (Royal baths) in the area of Vaykunik province (Artsakh) have been very famous. Hot and cold mineral springs of Bjni, Arzni, Dilijan, Ararat, Gavar are also well known. The Armenian highland is surrounded by forests from almost all the parts. There are forests in Sophene, in the northern part of Upper Armenia, Aghdznik, in the area of the mountain range of Taurus in Turuberan, Tao, Artsakh, Gugark, in the south of Syunik, in the north-western regions of Utik (Tavush, Aghstev), in the north-east of Ayrarat, Moxoene. Among the trees are widespread oak, beech, hornbeam, maple, juniper, ash, walnut. The forests of Artsakh and Utik are famous for their wild fruit tree species. Here and there birch and pine groves are met. In ancient Armenia in different periods artificial grove-forests were also planted. Among these are famous Sosyats (near Armavir), Tsnndots (in the region of Bagaran), the forests of Khosrovakert and Tachar mayr (in the region between Garni and Dvin).

The soil of the Armenian highland is fertile. The zone situated in the foothill at the height of 1100-1300m is prominent for its delicious local types of grape and various stone fruits (apricot, peach). Armenia is an ancient center of growing many fruit species. The foothill zone is prominent for its fruits (apple, pear, plum etc.) as well as the cultivation of cereals. The Armenian highland is the ancient homeland of wheat where even today you can meet its wild type. The centers of grain crops are the fields of Taron or Msho, Bagrevand, Hark, Kharberd, Karno, Kars, Basen, Yerznka, the basin of lake Van etc. In low-lying semi-desert and desert areas in the case of artificial irrigation grow cotton, rice, fig, pomegranate, olive, melon, watermelon and other vegetable crops.

The fauna of the Armenian highland is diverse. From ancient times the favorable conditions for the development of agriculture allow to breed sheep, goat, cattle, donkey, and different types of birds. From ancient times Armenia is considered to be the center of horse breeding. According to Greek geographer Strabo in the period of Achaemenid dominion Armenia provided 20 thousand fillies annually for the celebrations of the god Mihr (Mitra). Especially Artsakh was famous for its horse breeding. In ancient times pig breeding was widespread. Among wild animals are brown bear, wolf, fox, forest cat, lynx, badger, deer, buck, wild sheep, chamois and many types of birds. It should be noted that in ancient times wild animal world was more diverse. Unfortunately at present as a result of human activity many animals, which are mentioned in Armenian and foreign sources have completely disappeared or the living space of them has strongly reduced. In Ararat valley a type of insect has spawned from which vordan karmir (cochineal red) was made which had a great economic importance and was famous abroad. In ancient sources valuable information have been preserved about the administrative units of Ancient Armenia – “Ashkharhner” (“Worlds”) (“States”, “Provinces”). From the middle of IV century BC the concept Greater Armenia (Major Armenia) and Lesser Armenia (Armenia Minor) appeared. Over the centuries the two parts of the Ancient Armenia had changing boundaries, therefore also different areas.

Previously **Lesser Armenia** included the upper basin of Western Euphrates as well as the upper provinces of the rivers Halis and Gayl. After 331 BC when the Armenian independence was restored the development of Lesser Armenia and Greater Armenia proceeded in a unique, original way. As an independent state Lesser Armenia existed until the 1st century AD (there was a time when the provinces of the Pontus region near Black sea including the cities of Trebizond and Kerasunt entered into its borders) but gradually losing its main areas it became firstly a state dependent from Rome, and in 72 AD one of the ordinary provinces of the latter.

The historical destiny of **Greater Armenia** - the homeland of the Armenian state proceeded otherwise. Being national state it also existed during further centuries (till the first decade of the 5th century) and became a unifying center for the Armenian region.

According to the records of the famous Roman scholar Pliny the Elder (1st c. AD) Artaxiad Armenia was divided into 120 provinces (in Greek - strategies). When Arsacid dynasty took the Armenian throne (66 AD), new modifications of the country's administrative structure



took place as a result of which administrative units were enlarged and the system of early middle ages “ashkharhner” or “states” appeared.

The division of the states of Greater Armenia has still recorded in the famous work of the great thinker of the ancient world Claudius Ptolemy (2nd c. AD) “Geography”. Here 20 states are mentioned which have much in common with the data written in “History” of Agatangelos (5th c.). Further decades particularly the events of the second half of the 4th century made serious changes in the administrative structure of Greater Armenia. That is the reason that in “Ashkharhatsuyts” (“Geography”) number of the states of Greater Armenia is already 15. Those are Upper Armenia or Karno world, Sophene or Fourth Armenia, Aghdznik, Turuberan or Taron, Moxoene, Corduene or Kordvats ashkharh (land of Korduk), Persarmenia, Vaspurakan, Syunik, Artsakh, Utik, Paytakaran, Gugark, Tao, Ayrarat. These states had more than 190 provinces. In the Armenian history a significant role had especially Ayrarat, Vaspurakan, Turuberan, Syunik, Artsakh, Gugark, Upper Armenia and Sophene.

Being situated in the crossroads of the major international highways and having great strategic significance Armenia always experienced the raids of foreign conquerors. As a result the borders of the state were unstable; its area has continuously been decreasing. Nowadays the Armenian people preserved its state in the northeastern 1/10 part of Greater Armenia, that is Republic of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh Republic (NKR), which includes separate parts of Ayrarat,



Syunik, Gugark, Utik, and Artsakh provinces<sup>1</sup>.

### Provinces of Ancient Armenia

According to “Akharaysuys” (World Mirror or World Map) by Anania Shirakatsi<sup>2</sup> Armenia was divided into 15 Provinces (called “Ashkhar”) and each province consisted of few cantons, as following:

#### A-Greater Armenia (Արև Հայք, Meds Hayk)

(201 cantons)<sup>3</sup>

- 1-Upper Armenia, had 9 cantons, 23,860km<sup>2</sup>
- 2-4<sup>th</sup> Armenia or Sophene, 8cantons, 18,890 km<sup>2</sup>
- 3-Aghdznik, 11 cantons, 17,532 km<sup>2</sup>
- 4-Turuberan, 16 cantons, 25,008 km<sup>2</sup>
- 5-Mogk, 8 cantons, 2,962 km<sup>2</sup>
- 6-Kortchayk, 11 cantons, 14,707 km<sup>2</sup>
- 7-Parskahayk, 9cantons, 11,010 km<sup>2</sup>
- 8-Vaspurakan, 35 cantons, 40,870 km<sup>2</sup>
- 9-Syunik, 12 cantons, 15,237 km<sup>2</sup>
- 10-Artsakh, 12 cantons, 11,528 km<sup>2</sup>
- 11-Paytakaran, 10 cantons, 21,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- 12-Utik, 8 cantons, 11,315 km<sup>2</sup>
- 13-Ayrarat, 22 cantons, 40,105 km<sup>2</sup>
- 14-Gugark, 16 cantons, 16,765 km<sup>2</sup>
- 15-Tayk, 8 cantons, 10,179 km<sup>2</sup>

#### Marats Amur Ashkhar (Province)

3 cantons, 7,327 km<sup>2</sup>

#### Mijagetk Hayots (Armenian Mesopotamia)

3 cantons, 27,600 km<sup>2</sup>

Greater Armenia:66BC-37AD was 312,7953 km<sup>2</sup>

Greater Armenia:363-387AD was 272,798 km<sup>2</sup>

#### Inner Armenia

(Upper Armenia, Sophene, Turuberan, Mogk, Vaspurakan, Syunik, Tayk, Ayrarat) was 174,011 km<sup>2</sup>

#### Bordering provinces

(Aghdzenik, Kortchayk, Parskahayk, Artsakh, Paytakaran, Utik, Gugark) was 103,857 Ayrarat) was 174,011 km<sup>2</sup>

#### Marzpanate Armenia

<sup>1</sup> - G. Badalyan, Institute for Armenian Studies of Yerevan State University.

<sup>2</sup> - Anania Shirakatsi, complete works, Yerevan 1979, pp.291-298.

<sup>3</sup> - Academician Suren Yeremian, *Armenia according to “Ashkharatsuyts”*, Yerevan, 1963, pp. 116-120.

(Ayrarat, Tayk, Turuberan, Mogk, Vaspurakan, Syunik) was 134,161 km<sup>2</sup>

**Byzantine Armenia**  
(Upper Armenia, Sophene)  
39,650 km<sup>2</sup>

**B-Virk (Georgia)**

- 1-Armenian Moskhika, 8,425 km<sup>2</sup>
- 2-Georgian Moskhika, 4,832 km<sup>2</sup>
- 3-Arguet 1,450 km<sup>2</sup> and Georgian Upper province 6,485 km<sup>2</sup>
- 4-Bdeshkh (Sapitiashkho), 2,625 km<sup>2</sup>
- 5-Tashir possession, 3,875 km<sup>2</sup>
- 6-Kakhet-Kukhet, 5,145 km<sup>2</sup>
- 7-Yegr (joined Virk at the end of 7<sup>th</sup> century), 1,976 km<sup>2</sup>
- 8-Alanats Drner (Albania passages) fortification region, 2,325 km<sup>2</sup>

Virk until 363: 17,912 km<sup>2</sup>

Virk 363-87: 22,987 km<sup>2</sup>

Virk in 387 : 34,682 km<sup>2</sup>

Marzpanate of Georgia after 532AD: 37,007 km<sup>2</sup>

Virk at the end of 7<sup>th</sup> century: 38,981 km<sup>2</sup>

**C-Aghvank or Aghwank (Caucasian Albania)**

1-Albania (Aran, Alania)mainland: 23,002 km<sup>2</sup>

2-Cantons taken from Armenia: 20 cantons, 26,493 km<sup>2</sup>

Maszipanate of Albania at the second half of 7<sup>th</sup> century: 72,204

**Administrative division of Armenia**  
**During History**

There is not much information about administrative division of prehistoric Armenian highland at the time of Aratta, Mitani, Hayasa-Azzi, Nairi, Uratri, Arme-Shupria, Urartu (Van kingdom).



The Kingdom of Urartu, 9th-6th Centuries B.C.



### Kingdom of Van (Urartu)

Achaemenid king Darius (522-484 BC) managed 5 battles in 551-550 BC against Armenians to occupy Armenia. At that time Iran was divided into 20 Satrapies and Armenia was included in two of them 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Satrapy 13 included eastern regions Armenia<sup>1</sup> and Hayasa-Azzi and other small areas. Armenia stretched to upper Tigris and Aradsani areas, corresponding with Sophene and Aghdzenik provinces, it is possible that many other small regions were also included in Armenia, beside them, regions near Pontus sea (Black sea) were also covered by Satrapy 13.

According to Herodotus (484-425 BC) satrapy 18 consisted of landas of Matieni, Saspiri and Alarodii<sup>2</sup> (Armenians<sup>3</sup>).

Anabasis of Xenophon (430-354 BC) is the most important source for Armenia under Achaemenid rule. His information relates to “The March of the Ten Thousand” and the route through Armenia, according to it, we can have some information about geography of Armenian at that time. According to him Armenia was divided into two Eastern Armenia and Western Armenia<sup>4</sup> Satrapies for administration included in Achaemenid Persia.

<sup>1</sup> - Herodotus, The Histories, Book 3, chapter 93, section 1. Herodotus, with an English translation by A. D. Godley. Cambridge. Harvard University Press. 1920.

Also Armenian version of Herodotus by Simon Krkyasarian, page 197, Yerevan 1986,

<sup>2</sup> - Herodotus, The Histories, Book 3, chapter 94, section 1.

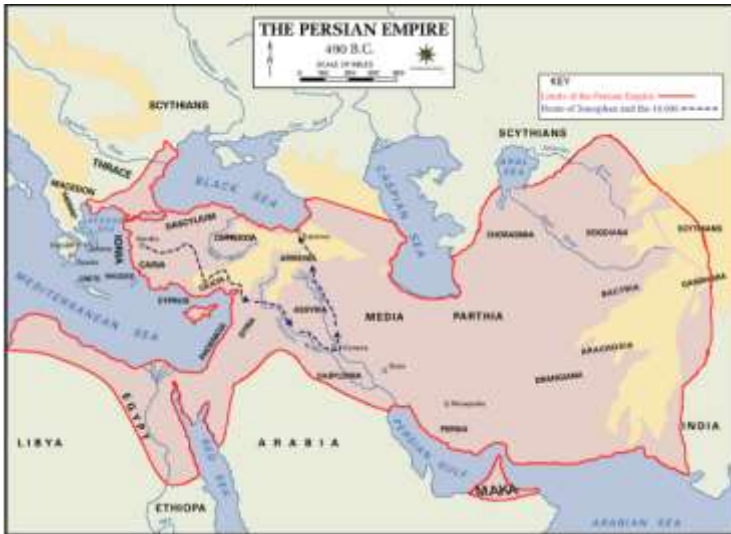
<sup>3</sup> - B. B. Piotrovsky, Urartu, Tehran, 1969, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> - Xenophon, Anabasis, The Project Gutenberg EBook

Orontid (Yervandouni) Armenia, 4th-2nd Centuries B.C.



Yervandunian (Orontid) Armenia



Route of Cyrus the Younger, Xenophon and the Ten Thousand. Unfortunately He does not describe the exact borders of Armenia.

Translated by H.G. Dakyns, 2008 and 2013, Book 4, Chapter 4, Section 4. Also Amienian translation by Simon Krkyasahrian, Yerevan 1970, page 93.



**Achaemenid Empire**

During Seleucid reign (312-63 BC) only a portion of Armenia was under their rule. At that time Armenia consisted of three major parts: Armenia Minor (Lesser Armenia), Sophene and Armenia Major (Greater Armenia). Northern parts of Armenia Minor and Armenia Major were independent and ruled by regional kings.



**Seleucid Empire**

After the battle of Magnesia in 190 BC between Romans, led by the consul Lucius Cornelius Scipio and the Roman ally Eumenes II of Pergamum, and the army of Antiochus III the Great of the Seleucid

Empire, Artashes and Zareh governors of Greater Armenia and Shphene, respectively, declare independence and established Armenian kingdoms, while Armenia Minor had already achieved independence. We get clearer idea about the territories the Armenian kings were able to take under their control through information reached us by Strabo. According to him King Artashes had captured Caspian land (Paytakaran), Vaspurakan, (Strabo mentions Basoropeda), Pavnitis (?), which is considered to be Syunik, Tayk, Khordzene, Gugark, (Gogarine), Karin (Karenties), Derjan (Derksene), and Tmorik<sup>1</sup>. Strabo also gives us description of mountains, plateaus, valleys, etc<sup>2</sup>.

Zareh had captured lands at Antitaurus and Yegeghiats canton<sup>3</sup>.

So Main Armenia (East of Euphrates) i.e Greater Armenia and Sophene at the time of Artashes I (189-160 BC) and Zareh consisted of Paytakaran, Syunik, Vaspurakan, Ayrarat. Gugark, Tayk, most of Upper Armenia, Turuberan, Fourth Armenia, Aghdzenik, Mogk, most of Kortchayk, Utik and Artsakh, which means 14 out of 15 province of future Arshakunian Armenia. Strabo mentions that the population of all captured lands spoke in Armenian<sup>4</sup>.

In the same time (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC), Lesser Armenia was enlarged west of Euphrates, which occupied west of mountains Paryadres<sup>5</sup> (Parkharian) and north-eastern shores of Pontus.

The largest of all three Armenian kingdoms was the Greater Armenia under Artashes I.

Historians especially have reported more details starting from Tigran II the Great (95-55 BC) of Artashesian Dynasty. After ascending the throne, he liberated “70 valleys” from Persia. They were a part of Armenia at the time of Artashes I and were surrendered to Persians as a price to get Tigran’s freedom. Tigran had been a hostage until the age of 45 at the court of King Mithridates II of Parthia after the Armenian defeat in 105 BC. According to many researches, this region corresponded with future Parskahayk province.

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<sup>1</sup> - Strabo, Book 11, Chapter 14, section 5.

[http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Strabo/11N\\*.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Strabo/11N*.html)

<sup>2</sup> - Ibid, XI, Chapter 14, sec. 1-16.

<sup>3</sup> - Strabo, Book 11, Chapter 14, section 5.

<sup>4</sup> - Strabo, Book 11, Chapter 14, section 5.

<sup>5</sup> - Ibid, sec. 1 & 5.





### **Tigran the Great's Armenian Empire: Countries, composing parts of the Empire**

Under his reign, the Armenian kingdom expanded beyond its traditional boundaries, allowing Tigranes to claim the title Great King, and involving Armenia in many battles against opponents such as the Parthian and Seleucid empires, and the Roman Republic.

Then he annexed (in 94 BC) Sophene, all lands except Pontus until Cappadocia. These lands later on became a part of Armenia, but other lands such as Aturpatkan (Iranian Azerbaijan), Great Medes, Adiabene, Osroyene, Migdonia, Commagene, Assyria and some other locations were a part of Armenia for short time until his battle against Pompey (65 BC), So political borders of Armenia matched approximately with Armenian Highland. So when using the term “Ancient Armenia”, we should not consider the Armenian Empire borders created by Tigran the Great, but we should consider the borders of Armenia as Greater Armenia at the time of Artashes plus the lands joined by Tigran II (Sophene, Eastern part of Lesser Armenia, Kortduk and Shirakan, which was called Parskahayk at a later time).

About Administrative division of Armenia we do not have much information. Academician H. Manandian mentions about “Feudal system” for administration of the country<sup>1</sup>. Roman geographer Pliny

<sup>1</sup> - H. Manadian. Feudalism in Armenia, Erevan, 1934, pp. 248-251.

the Elder (Gaius Plinius Secundus 23-79 AD) mentions that at his time Armenia was divided into 120 regions, which he called them “Strategia”<sup>1</sup>. Artashesian kingdom had two capitals: Artashat built by Artashes I (About 166 BC) and Tigranakert built by Tigran the Great (About 77 BC).

As mentioned earlier, according to “Ashkharatsuyts” of Anania Shirakatsi, Greater Armenia was divided into 15 provinces<sup>2</sup>.

Borders of Armenia reached its maximum level at the time of Armenian Arshagunian (Arsacid) kingdom (66-428 AD). According to Shirakatsi 15 provinces of Greater Armenia had borders with Assyria, Georgia, Caspian sea, Aturpatkan (Iranian Azerbaijan) and Caucasian Albania<sup>3</sup>.



### 15 provinces of Greater Armenia (Arsacid Armenia).

Arshagunian Armenia had two capitals: Artashat and Vagharshapat. Armenian political borders remained almost unchanged until 387, when during the Byzantine–Sasanian wars, Armenia was ultimately partitioned into Byzantine Armenia (Western) and Persian Armenia (Eastern). According to this big change border provinces of Sophene, Aghdzenik, Korduk, Parskahayk, Paytakaran, Artsakh, Utik and

<sup>1</sup> - T. Hakopian, overview of the historic geography of Armenia, Yerevan, 1960, p. 99. (Pliny the Elder: the Natural History, Book VI, Chapter 27).

<sup>2</sup> - Anania Shirakatsi, Yerevan, 1979, p. 291.

<sup>3</sup> - A. Shirakatsi, Ibid, p. 291.

Gugark were separated from Armenia and central provinces were divided between two mentioned powers.



### Eastern Armenia (Persian)

About 4/5 was under Persian (Eastern Armenia) and 1/5 under Roman (Western Armenia) influence. The border between these two was passing through Nisibin-Karin line.



### Western Armenia (Roman)

### **Western Armenia**

This portion of Armenia had three partition from administrative point of view:

1-*Autonomous principedoms or Satrapy Armenia*: It was bounded by lower Aradsani and upper portion of Western Tigris and consisted of 6 Armenian principedoms: Great Sophene, Angeghtun, Andzit, Shahuniats Sophene, Hashtiank, Balahovit. Armenian princes had only internal autonomy.

2-*Inner Armenia (Armenia Inferior)*, It was also called “Great Armenia” by Romans and Byzantines and consisted of 11 cantons: Khordzian, Paghnatun, Mundzur, Daranaghi, Yegeghiats, Manabaghi, Derjan, Karin, Shaghgomk, Sper, Aryuds. Inner Armenia was occupied by Romans at 387. Inner Armenia corresponded with Upper Armenia<sup>1</sup>.

3-*Lesser Armenia*.It corresponded with ancient Hayasa. During collapse of the Seleucids, Lesser Armenia of Armenia Minor was the first to declare independence and establish Armenian kingdom. There were 5 regions in Armenia Minor: Orbalisen, Aytughan, Ayretik, Orsen, Orbisen. After second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century (379-395) Armenia Minor was divided into two provinces: First Armenia (Armenia Prima) and Second Armenia (Armenia Secunda).

The highest authority in Armenia Inferior was called “Comes Armeniae”. In the satrapy Armenia Armenian princes were ruling without any higher state officials.

Lesser Armenia was autonomous in internal affairs but for foreign affairs was dependent on the Roman Emperor.

In 535 and 536, the emperor Justinian I reorganized the provincial administration, and Armenian lands were divided into four provinces: First Armenia, Second Armenia, Third Armenia and Fourth Armenia.

The borders of the Byzantine part of Armenia were expanded in 591 into Parskahayk of Persarmenia, but the region was the focus of decades of warfare between the Byzantines and the Persians (the Byzantine-Sassanid Wars) until the Arab conquest of Armenia in 640.

### **Eastern Armenia**

EastenArmenia was also called of Marzpanate Armenia or Persian Armenia, although these latter names were not acceptable, since the name of a country can not be taken from the Rulers titles. After

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<sup>1</sup> - A. Shirakatsi, Ibid, p. 291.

Armenia partitioned in 387, Western portion was annexed to Roman empire, but Eastern Armenia preserved its kingdom until 428.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> century Sasanian Iran was divided into four regions or “Kustaks” or “Kusts”: eastern (Kusti Khorasan), western (Kusti Korbaran), northern (Kapkoh) and southern (Kusti Nemroj). Each Kustak had two authorities one was called “Padgospan” for administration and the second one was “Sepahbod” or army general or commander for military affairs. Armenia, Aturpatkan, Georgia and Albania were included in the northern kustak. Each kustak was also divided to smaller administrative areas called “Shahr” or “Marz” or province. Northern kustak had 13 provinces. Marspan or governor of Armenia was appointed by Sasanian kings, there were also two high-rank officials Sparapet or commander-in-chief of army and Hazaapet (Hezarbod) was responsible for economy, culture and internal development.

According to treaty of Nvarsak in 484 between Vahan Mamikonian and Persian court, Marzpanate Armenia was called “Tanutirakan country” and Marzpan was “Armenian Tanuter”.



**Armenia (527-591)**

- 1- Armenian Marzpanate
- 2- Roman Armenia
- 3- Georgian marzpanate
- 4- Albanian Marzpanate

Territory of Eastern Armenia under the rule of Marzpan (429-640) was significantly smaller than Arshakuni era's Armenia. These regions were taken off from Armenia: Gugark, Utik, Artsakh, Paytakaran, Parskahayk, Kortchek, and Aghdzenik.



### **Armenia just before Arab invasion**

1-First Armenia, 2-Second Armenia, 3-Third Armenia, 4-Fourth Armenia, 5-Armenian Marzpanate, 6-Albanian Marzpanate, 7-Georgian Marzpanate

Two superpowers of the time, Roman and Persian Empires, partitioned Armenia for the second time in 591, from that time until Arab invasions significant changes did not happen in the former Eastern Armenia's internal life and affairs.

### **Armenia in 7-9 centuries**

Three destructive Arab invasions to Armenia happened in 640-650., despite of that, Armenia could preserve internal independence until the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, while was enjoying full independence from time to time. But soon after, Arabic Caliphate made fundamental changes to political, administrative and military system of Armenia, According to them, Armenia, Georgia and Albania were included in one administrative unit called "Arminiya" (Arabic pronunciation of Armenia), which bordered with Causasian mounts to the north, Eastern Tigris to the south, Caspian sea to the east and Black sea, Tchrorokh and Euphrates to the west.



Arminiya in. 750-885

Arminiya population consisted of Armenians, Georgians, Albanians, and some other ethnicities. It was divided into four administrative areas:

1-Albania, 2-Georgia, 3and 4-Armenia. Dvin was capital of caliph's appointed Emir (Armenians called him Vostican) in Arminiya. That is why Armenia under the rule of Arabs was also called Vostikanate or Ostikanate of Arminiya.

During 7-9 centuries Western Armenia remained as it was under Byzantine empire, but Arabs took major part of Fourth Armenia and Karin canton, the latter was soon taken back by Byzantines.

### Armenia in 9-11 centuries



Armenia achieved its full independence from Arabic caliphate in 885 by Armenian Bagratuni dynasty. At that time there were many Armenian princedoms under princes or great feudal-lords (with their own administration, army, etc). But very soon in 908 the integrity of Bagratuni kingdom was changed and some subordinate states were formed under Bagratuni Kingdom. The main part of the kingdom was that of Ani-Shirak (885-1045). These states were: kingdoms of Vaspurakan (Ardseruni dynasty 908-1021), Vanand or Kars (Bagratuni, 963-1065), Syunik or Kapan (970-1170), Tashir-Dzoraget or Lori (Korikian, 966-1113), Tayk (962-1001), Andzevatiats princedom, Mogk,Taron (Bagratuni, 826-967), Artsakh (5-10 cc.), Albanian princedom, Hamshen princedom, Georgian princedom (Bagratuni, 9-19 cc.), Khachen princedom (10-16 cc.), Tchighb princedom, Kakhet, Kegharj,, Samtskhe, Liparit-Baghvash, Abkhazia, Kaysid emirate, Aghdzenik emirate, etc<sup>1</sup>. Bagratuni kingdom collapsed in 1045.

### **Armenia in 11-13 centuries**

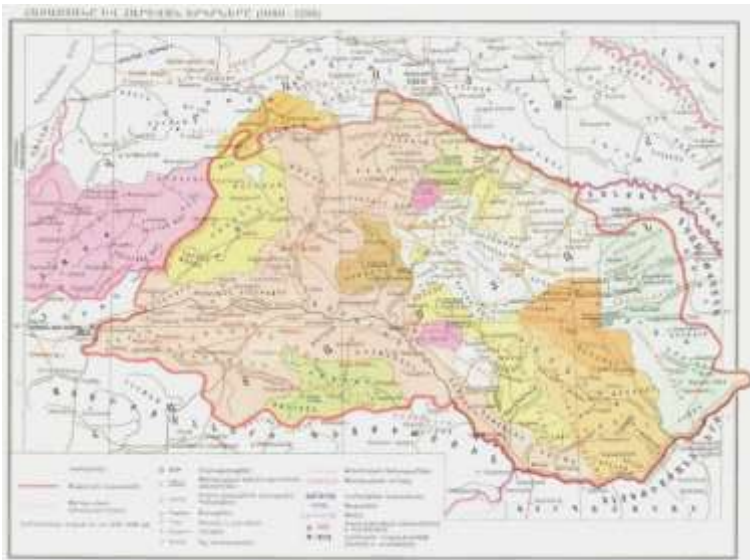
During this period Armenian administrative-political system went under fundamental changes. For a short period (1045-71) Armenia was under Byzantine rule, despite, some of formerly mentioned states were able to preserve their existence (Taron, Vaspurakan, Ani, etc). Three destructive Seljuk invasions in 1043, 1049 and 1054 were catastrophic, hundreds of villages and tens of cities wre destroyed.

Zakarian Armenia was an Armenian principality between 1201 and 1360, ruled by the Zakarian dynasty. The city of Ani was the capital of the princedom. The Zakarids were vassals to the Kingdom of Georgia (Bagratuni Georgia) until 1236 when they became vassals to the Mongol Empire. Their princedom was divided into two portions, one was under the rule of Zakare, the

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<sup>1</sup> -For details see my *History of the Armenin State, in 7 volumes, in Armenian, vol. 1, Toronto, 2013, pp.297-374.*





### Armenia 1080-1236

other one under his brother Ivane. Zakarian dynasty had also their vassal principdoms (Vachutian, Orbelian, Proshian, Dopian). Their descendants continued to hold Ani until the 1330s, when they lost it to a succession of Turkish dynasties, including the Kara-Koyunlu, who made Ani their capital.



### Zakarian Armenia 1201-1360

### Armenia in 13-15 centuries

The first Mongol invasion to Caucasus happened in 1220-21, but they encountered strong resistance in 1221 at Shamkor (Battle of Khunan) and were not inclined to conquer the Caucasus at that time and turned back south to Hamadan. 14 years later, for the second time they invaded Northern Armenia, and during 1242-1243 occupied the whole area, and in 1242-43 invaded and occupied Southern and Western Armenia. Consequences of these invasions were mass murder of population, destruction of settlements, imprisoning, plunder, etc.



### Mongol Empire before 1259

Mongol empire was divided into uluses at the time of Momgke khan (1251-1259), Armenia was included in the fourth ulus (1236-1335).



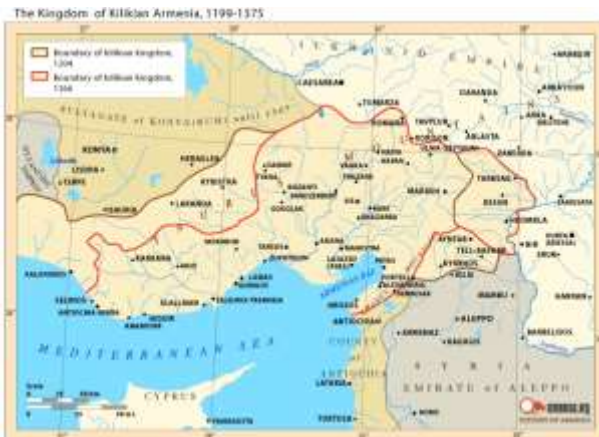
### Armenia in Mongol empire

Armenian semi-independent and autonomous states gradually lost their political power and influence under Mongol administration. The most stable among them, at the time of Hulagu ilkhanate until invasions of Tamerlane, was principdom of Orbelian dynasty in Syunik. Mongol khans were assisting Orbelians against Zakarian rulers. After Syunik other Armenian relatively enduring principdoms were Ardsrunis of Mahkanaberd, small principalities of Sasun and Aghtamar. Other principdoms such as Zakarians, Vachutians, Vahramians, Dopians, Proshians, Jalalians (a branch of Orbelians) lost their previous importance and political position at the second half of 13<sup>th</sup> century.



1-Zakarian, 2-Orbelian, 3-Vakhtangian, Jalalian, Shirjanshank, 4-Dopian, 5-Kyurikian, 6-Ardseruni, 7-Vahramian, 8-Ardserunik, 9-Vachutian, 10-Proshian

The Armenian kingdom and principalities of Cilicia (1080-1515) was formed by refugees and migrants from Greater Armenia. Located outside of the Armenian Highland and distinct from the Armenian Kingdom of antiquity, it was centered in the Cilicia region northwest of the Gulf of Alexandretta, which was called Armenian Gulf at its time.



**Armenian kingdom of Cilicia**

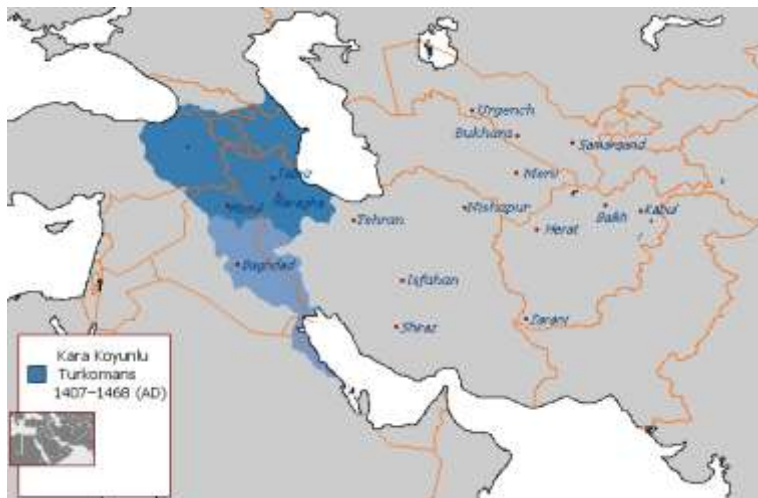
Tamerlane (1370-1405) invaded Armenia in 1386, 1387, 1394 and 1400, destroyed settlements, murdered population and plundered, etc. He created a vast empire from Aral lake to Persian gulf and from Pamir to Mediterranean shores at Asian Minor. In 1395-96 almost whole Armenian highland and local emirates were under his rule. Like Mongols, he divided his empire into vast portions and appointed his reliable persons as governors of these lands. According to new division, Armenia and Aturpatkan (Iranian Azerbaijan, south of Araks river) were included in one administrative unit, the governor was called great Emir. Tamerlane preserved the Armenian Orbelians (Syunik), Dopians (Dsar), Proshians (Vayots-Dzor, Sahapunik), principalities of Artsakh, Gegharkunik, etc.

Armenia, End of 14<sup>th</sup> century until beginning of 16<sup>th</sup> century



**Armenia, late 14 early 16 centuries**

After death of Tamerlane (Timur) his empire was divided by local emirs and lords, before that time new foreigners, Kara-Koyunlu (1375-1469) and Ak-Koyunlu (1378-1501) tribes had already established in the area and soon took power in Iran and Caucasus and neighboring areas.



**Kara Koyunlu state 1407-1469**

Ak-Koyunlu Jahanshah (1437-1467) ruled over large portion of Armenia, in order to confront with his Persian and Turkish enemies, he supported local Armenian principalities which could preserve their existence, So he granted special privilege to them as Meliks. Armenian meliks were mainly residing in “Geghama land”, Vayots-Dzor, Syunik, Artsakh and Gugark. Such principalities existed also in Vaspurakan, Reshtunik and Mogk. Only principality of Aghtamar has some power at southern Armenia. Jahanshah made Ararat a separate province with Yerevan capital.

Ak-Koyunlu state achieved its maximum enlargement at the time of Uzun Hasan (1467-1477), at that time his territory stretched from Halis to heart of Persia included parts of Middle East and Near East. Not very long after his death, his state collapse and new powers emerged, Ottoman Sultanate and Safavid Persia, that made Armenia their battlefield.



**Ak-Koyunlu state**

### **Armenia in 16-18 centuries**

After collapse of Ak-Koyunlu power, two large states, Ottoman Turkey and Safavid Persia were established in two portions of Armenia in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. These superpowers of the region had a few battles. These battles ended in 1555 with a peace treaty, according to it Armenia was divided between them for the first time, Large part of Vaspurakan, Bayazit and Alashkert regions were passed to the Turks, though Turkey had already occupied other provinces of Western Armenia, beside Armenia, Turks occupied also Western Georgia. The peace did not last long and war was restarted in 70s and ended in 1639. For the second time Armenia was divided between Turkey and Persia.



Divided Armenia 17-18 centuries

Safavid Persia created a few khanates in Eastern Armenia and Caucasus (Shaki, Shirvan, Ghuba, Ganja, Nakhijevan, Yerevan, Baku, Gharabagh). These khanates were divided into Mahals (Places).



Map of Armenia, 1720.

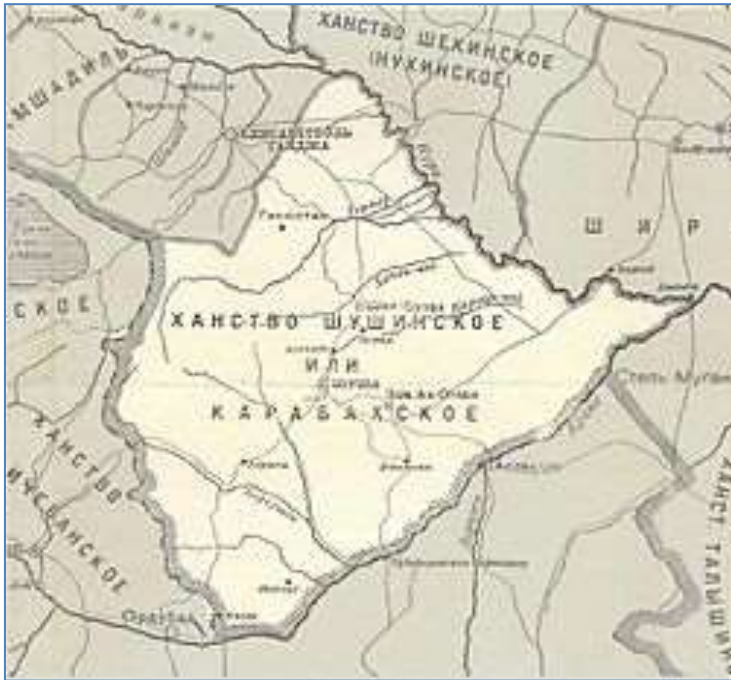


Mahals were administered by administrators who were appointed by khans and were called Beg, Melik, Nayib, Mirboluk etc. Political, administrative and judicial power was in khan's hand. Most of Armenian population in Eastern Armenia were settled in Yerevan (roughly 19,500 km<sup>2</sup>), Gharabagh (24,000 km<sup>2</sup>) and Nakhijevan khanates ( 7,000 km<sup>2</sup>), Gandzak (Ganja, 5,000 km<sup>2</sup>).



Khanate of 1-Yerevan, 2- Khanate of Gharabagh,  
3-Khanate of Nakhijevan

Eastern Armenia was divided into Yerevan Khanate (1747-1828), Nakhijevan Khanate (1747-1828), Gharabagh Khanate (1747-1822), Gandzak (Ganja) Khanate (1747-1804).



**Gharabagh (Karabagh) khanate**

Armenian Melikdoms and principalities in Eastern Armenia were established since 15<sup>th</sup> century and Jahanshah of Kara-Koyunlu supported them against Turks, but when the area got under Safavid rule in 16<sup>th</sup> century, they disregarded and weakened them, but in 17<sup>th</sup> century Persians changed their policy and resumed the support of Armenian melikdoms, so that they could be a barrier against Ottoman invasions.

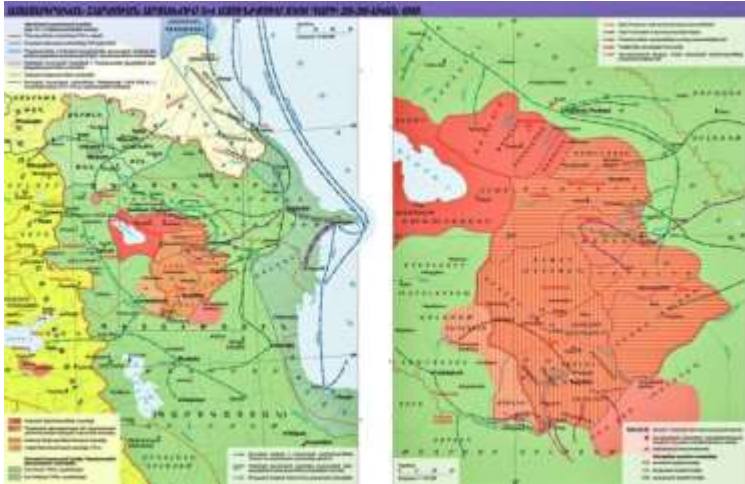


### Gharabagh (Karabagh) melikdoms

Each one of the meliks had 1000-2000 soldiers. There were a series of melikdoms in Eastern Armenia, but “The Five Melikdoms of Karabakh” (Gulistan, Jraberd, Khachen, Varanda, Dizak) were more famous. (See *Melikdoms of Karabagh*).

Other melikdoms were: Gegharkunik, Gardman, Dsar, Ghapan, Angeghakot.

Armenian struggle for independence was going to come true as a result of the wars in Syunik, Leader of the movement was Davit Beg (1669-1728), he created an independent state in 1722 which could endure for 9 years until 1730. It was called Independent state of Ghapan.



**Independent state of Ghapan**

After division of Armenia between Ottoman Turkey and Safavid Persia in 1555 and 1639, Western Armenia went under Turkish rule and the administrative condition was not much different from Eastern Armenia.



**Western Armenia**

Western Armenia at the beginning was in one administrative unit called “Ermenistan” (Capital Erzurum), which was soon change to Vilayet of Arzum. At a later time it was divided to vilayets of Kars, Van, Ezrum, Diarbekir, Sivas.

Famous Armenian independence activist, Israel Ori Prepared a plan for independence of Armenia and presented to Peter the Great emperor of Russia in 1701 and attached the following map:



H. Arghutian, one of the activists for liberation of Armenia prepared a plan for liberation of Armenia and presented to Russian officials in 1783, according to it, Armenia would have kingdom system under Russian support:



**Armenian kingdom planned to be created under Russian support (second half 18<sup>th</sup> c.)**

Another plan was to created Autonomous Armenian kingdom in Russian Empire:



**Armenian kingdom planned to be created inside Russian empire (1827)**

### Armenia in 19-21 centuries

After the last two wars between Russia and Persia (1804-1813, 1826-28) the Caucasus including Eastern Armenia was occupied by Russian Empire. In 1829 Caucasus was divided into the following units:

- 1-Georgian mainland (6 cantons).
- 2-Five regions: Borchalu, Ghazakh, Shamshadin, Pambak, Shoragial.
- 3-Seven provinces: Gharabagh, Shaki, Shirvan, Baku, Kuban, Derbend, Akhaltskha.
- 4-Four oblasts: Imereti, Mingrelia, Guria and Armenian.
- 5-Talish Khanate
- 6-Teritorries of mountainous peoples.



### Armenian Oblast (1828-1840)

Future Armenian republic borders were gradually getting formed as the following geographical pictures :

- Armenian oblast: 1828-1840
- Armenian oblast together with Lori and Javakhk regions included in Georgia-Imeretia governorate (1840-1848)
- Yerevan Province : 1849-1918

Yerevan province had an area of 28,000km<sup>2</sup> , which is almost equal to Soviet Armenia (29,900 km<sup>2</sup>). During 1860-70s and after that Province of Yerevan had 5 cities (Yerevan, Alexandropol or Gyumri, New Bayazet, Nakhijevan, Ordubad). Zangezur, Lori and some other regions, which were undisputable part of Eastern Armenia were included in Provinces of Tiflis and Elizabetpol. After Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78, some regions such as Kars, Sarighamish, Kaghezvan, Olti, etc were annexed to Russia, which were included in Province of Kars by Russian government. Kars province was as large as Yerevan province (excluding Lake Sevan).





### Western and Eastern Armenia, 1830-1878

1-Vilayet of Ermenistan, 2-Vilayet of Diyarbekir – 3-Kars Province 4- Yerevan province, 5-Elizabetpol Province, 6- Tiflis Province, 7 Baku province

After the Ottoman-Persian War (1623–1639), Western Armenia became decisively part of the Ottoman Empire. Since the Russo-Turkish War, 1828–1829, the term "Western Armenia" has referred to the Armenian-populated historical regions of the Ottoman Empire that remained under Ottoman rule after the eastern part of Armenia was ceded to the Russian Empire by the Qajar Persians following the outcome of the Russo-Persian War (1804–1813) and Russo-Persian War (1826–1828).



### 1914 International Borders

Western (Ottoman) Armenia consisted of six vilayets (provinces) :



Vilayets of : 1-Erzurum, 2-Van,3-Bitlis,  
4-Diyarbakir, 5-Kharput, 6-Sivas.

### **The Republic of Armenia**

After Russian revolution of 1917, Russian-controlled Eastern Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan attempted to bond together in the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic. This federation, however, lasted from only February to May 1918, when all three parties decided to dissolve it. As a result of that and the Battles of May 1920 between Armenian forces and Turkish Army, during which Armenians won great victory, Eastern Armenia declared its independence on 28 May as the First Republic of Armenia.

In 1920 (November 29) Republic of Armenia was sovietized by Armenian communists with the help of Red army and Armenian Soviet republic was formed, which endured until 1991. After collapse of Soviet Union Armenia declared its separation from Soviet Union and was recognized as Independent Republic of Armenia (Third).

First Republic was about 12,000km<sup>2</sup> (after Batumi treaty, June, 4<sup>th</sup> 1918)<sup>1</sup>, but after WWI was ended in November 1918, Turkey as loser of the war was pushed by England to withdraw from Caucasus and return to international borders of 1914, so Armenian forces took over the areas

<sup>1</sup> - Simon Vratsian, *Republic of Armenia* (in Armenian), Beirut, 1958, p. 177.

and borders of Republic expanded from late 1918 to April-May of 1919 and included also Lori-Pambak, Alexandrapol, areas of Echmidzin, Surmalu, Sharur, Nakhijevan, Kars province, etc. In summer of 1920 official borders of Republic of Armenia stretched up to Olti coalmines including Gharabagh having area about 70,000 km<sup>2</sup>.



1-First Republic of Armenia 2-Western Armenia as per Treaty of Sevres (Wilsonian)

Republic of Armenia was divided into four administrative provinces: 1-Araratian, 2- Vanand, 3-Shirak, 4-Syunik. These provinces were also divided into cantons<sup>1</sup>.

According to Treaty of Sevres, (10 Aug. 1920), 4 vilayets of Western Armenia (Erzurum, Trabzon, Van, Bitlis provinces) were supposed to be annexed to the Republic of Armenia, total 90,000 km<sup>2</sup> plus Eastern Armenia 71,330 km<sup>2</sup> United independent and free Armenia would be created with a total area of 161,330 km<sup>2</sup>. W. Wilson president of US was assigned to identify the border between Armenian Republic and Turkey.

Accordingly the areas of Republic of Armenia would be as follows<sup>2</sup>:

- 1-Yerevan: 3,140 km<sup>2</sup>.
- 2-Echmiadzin: 3,750 km<sup>2</sup>.
- 3-Leninakan (Gymri): 3,300 km<sup>2</sup>.
- 4-Lori-Pambak: 5,000 km<sup>2</sup>.
- 5-Ghazakh-Ijevan: 4,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> - Ibid, p. 419.

<sup>2</sup> - Gabriel Lazian, *Armenia and Armenian Cause*, (in Armenian) Yerevan, 1991, p. 213-214.

- 6-New Bayazet: 4,790 km<sup>2</sup>
- 7-Daralagiaz: 2,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- 8-Zangezur: 6,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- 9- Surmalu: 3,650 km<sup>2</sup>
- 10-Sharur-Nakhijevan: 5,600
- 11-Akhalkalak: 2,800 km<sup>2</sup>
- 12-Gharabagh: 10,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- 13-Kars: 5,800 km<sup>2</sup>
- 14-Kaghezvan: 4,450
- 15-Ardahan: 4,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- 16-Olti: 3,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- Total 71,330 km<sup>2</sup>

Western Armenia as per W. Wilson:

- 1- Van province: 20,000 out of 39,300 km<sup>2</sup>.
- 2- Erzurum: 40,000 out of 49,700 km<sup>2</sup>.
- 3- Baghesh (Bitlis): 15,000 out of 27,100 km<sup>2</sup>.
- 4- Trabizon: 15,000 out of 32,700 km<sup>2</sup>.
- 5- Total: 90,000 km<sup>2</sup>

Grand total: 71,330 plus 90,000 equals 161,330 km<sup>2</sup>

When Mustafa Kemal succeeded in his fight for Turkish independence and forced the former wartime Allies to return to the negotiating table, as a result, Treaty of Sevres was archived and forgotten till today and Armenian struggle to create United Armenia of 161,330 km<sup>2</sup> did not end up as expected.

The Turkish national movement developed its own international relations by the Treaty of Moscow with the Soviet Union on 16 March 1921, the Accord of Ankara with France putting an end to the Franco-Turkish War, and the Treaty of Alexandropol with the Armenians and the Treaty of Kars fixing the eastern borders. By Treaty of Alexandropol between First Republic of Armenia and Turkey, Armenia not only did not achieve western Armenia, but also lost more than 40,000 km<sup>2</sup> of its 71,330 km<sup>2</sup> and left 29,713 km<sup>2</sup> for Soviet Armenia (November 29, 1920- September 21 1991).



### \*Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (1920-1991)

Government of Soviet Armenia decided on Dec. 26, 1920 to change the administrative division of the republic and on Dec. 29 temporarily considered 6 cantons for the republic: Daragiaz, Dilijan, Gharakilisa, New Bayazet, Yerevan and Echmiadzin. On July 20, 1921 by Government order Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic was divided into 8 cantons: Yerevan, Echmiadzin, Alexandropol, Gharakilisa, Lori, Ijevan, New Bayazet, Daralagiaz and 33 regions. On August of the same year Zangezur canon was formed including Goris, Tegh, Tatev, Sisian, Ghapan, Meghri. In 1922 Soviet Armenia consisted of 10 cantons: Yerevan, Alexandropol, Echmiadzin, New Bayazet, Dilijan, Zangezur, Lori, Daralagiaz (Vayots Dzor), Gharakilisa, Meghri.

This status was in effect until 1929, when the Republic was considered to have 5 cantons: Yerevan, Leninakan, Lori, Sevan, Zangezur, and 33 regions and two cities (Yerevan, Leninakan). But on September 9, 1930 another change was made instead of village/region/canton new model of village/region was applied, which was in effect until the last year of Soviet Armenia, Accordingly Republic was divided into 25+1 regions. In 1937, 11 new regions were added.

As of September 1, 1987 Soviet Armenia had 37 rural and 10 urban regions, 22 republic and 5 regional cities, 31 townships and 479 villages<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> - Armenian Soviet Encyclopedia, Vol. 13, pp.18-19.



### 37 regions of Soviet Armenia

After collapse of Soviet Union, Republic of Armenia declared its independence on September 21, 1991. The third Republic of Armenia consists of 10 provinces (Marz), 48 cities, 953 villages, 932 communities (871 rural and 61 urban). Provinces are:



<b>Province</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Area (km<sup>2</sup>)</b>
Aragatsotn	Ashtarak	2,756
Ararat	Artashat	2,090
Armavir	Armavir	1,242
Gegharkunik	Gavar	5,349
Kotayk	Hrazdan	2,086
Lori	Vanadzor	3,799
Shirak	Gyumri	2,680
Syunik	Kapan	4,506
Tavush	Ijevan	2,704
Vayots Dzor	Yeghegnadzor	2,308
Yerevan Capital)	–	223

In February 20<sup>th</sup> 1988, within the context of Mikhail Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika policies, the Supreme Soviet of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO) voted to unite itself with Armenia. By the summer of 1989 the Armenian-populated areas of the NKAO were under blockade by Azerbaijan as a response to Armenia's blockade against Nakhichevan, cutting road and rail links to the outside world. On July 12 the Nagorno-Karabakh AO Supreme Soviet voted to secede from Azerbaijan. Soviet authorities in Moscow then placed the region under its direct rule, installing a special commission to govern the region. In November 1989 the Kremlin returned the oblast to Azerbaijani control. The local government in the region of Shahumian also declared its independence from the Azerbaijan SSR in 1991. On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1991, the Armenian representatives in the local government of the NKAO proclaimed the region a republic, independent from Azerbaijan as Republic of Artsakh (Gharbagh).



Republic of Artsakh has total area of 11,458 km<sup>2</sup> and eight administrative divisions:

#	Divisions of Artsakh Republic
1	Shahumyan Region
2	Martakert Region
3	Askeran Region
4	Martuni Region
5	Hadrut Region
6	Shushi Region
7	Kashatagh Region
8	Stepanakert (capital)