

THE EPISTEMOLOGY AND THE LINGUISTIC-HISTORICAL  
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ARMENIAN AND WORLD ROCK ART  
AND VISUAL ARTIFACTS

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Introduction

"The first form of transformation of the oldest Armenian sculptural monuments is the huge stone fishes founded in Gegam mountains, "vishaps", 5000-4000 B.C. The second form is the flat columns or stele of Van's Kings. The third is the carved columns with early Christianity images, the period down to IX century. And after all, at last, it is "khachkar" (cross stone) is the fourth form" (Marr, 1925). Marr and after Bryusov (1917) fairly considered, that the ancient Caucasus has been connected by with other world cultural centers. "...That this circle included also Caucasus, with its various population, monuments 2000 B.C. opening by archeologists., which show similarity of techniques and unity of styles to monuments of other countries, first of all Egypt, Egey and Hittite, but also Etruria partly even China and Mexico", - emphasizes Bryusov (1917).

He marks that... "Not so long ago, in Transcaucasia, huge stone fishes-monsters, so-called "vishaps", found and in the field of Van have attracted attention of scientists. Sculptors of the most ancient Egypt manufactured same fishes-dragons. The Armenian saw in a museum of art of the far south, the valleys that have arisen under hot sky Nil and on fragrant coast of Aegean Sea, will by all means exclaim: "Yes it is ours vishaps!" "Vishap", being the form of plural the old god "vesh" or "vish", had in Armenia set of places of worship, including Oshakan, remained those and during Christian times. Numerous of legends about vishaps since Van empire period of an up to now give an inexhaustible material for studying Armenia, Georgia, all Caucasus and the grounds far to the north from them" (Marr, 1925).

**Keywords:** epistemology, knowledge, language, rock art, artifact, motives, myths.

Unfortunately, Marr and other researchers were not familiar with the Rock art artifacts, founded later in Gegham and Vardenis mountains, in Syunik and Aragats regions of Armenia and naturally could not consider them as a basic source of an origin for stone sculptures motives of fishes and "vishaps", indicating a water source in mountains. Rock art, vishaps, snakes and fishes were not simply witness's disappointment pages of prehistoric art. They have left in transnational culture a deep and strong trace. The main conclusion is that early archetypes of

dragons, "vishaps" and the snake's motives used in myths and legends of various cultures created in Old Armenia in 7000-5000 B.C.

The symbols which have been found out on fishes and vishaps, unfortunately, are not systematized and not interpreted, however it is known, that on them crosses and swastikas which were usual not only in early Old Armenian religious iconographic, but also in Rock art. As a result of the classification and the comparative analysis of the Armenian Rock art author reveal a number of archetypes which served as **symbols of a sun, trees of a life and a cross, heroes and enemies, goods and a harm, sphinxes and other fantastic animals**. They used for a visual illustration of myths and legends in various cultures. Armenian Rock art are described by archetypes not only from old, but also from modern Armenian language. This conclusion implements of ideas of academician Marr (1925).

At the first stage of the form transformation, but not the ideological maintenance, has undergone to change, for example, one culture the main deity had a sun, for other – the moon. "The union of a sun and a moon" has been split that uniform reproduction on two parts. One tribe has kept one component of the whole, other tribe – other component. For one people and tribes "a sacred animal" **it became left** (an early symbol of a sun), for others - **a bull** (a later symbol of a sun). At development of a life, social and economic attitudes there were young cultures which differed from initial, borrowed, the local elite which for self-affirmation and demanded preservation of authority creation and applications of own symbols, legends, values was cultivated from other cultures.

For one civilization, a symbol of a sun became a reproduction of a lion, for others a symbol of a moon became an image of a bull. **For one culture, a motive "the union of a sun and a moon" became a source of an origin and a symbolic maintenance of a first alphabet letter, for others a first letter was transformed by "on an image and similarity" head of a bull (aleph or alpha).**

For the Armenian culture that is especially evidently shown in language, the most valuable and significant is **a sound "A, a"** and accordingly in **a sign "and"** ("ayb" - the first alphabet letter). Frequency "and" makes approximately 18 % from all speech sounds and text letters signs. Moreover, ideogram of a sign of the first Armenian letter includes a first-born reproduction of a union of elements of the whole, namely space, initial for the ground, the first-born, creative **"union a sun and a moon"**. This idea was precisely traced for cognitive design schedules of a letter. The second letter **"B, b"** ("ben") would express concept "ban" that means "to speak", "to make act" and "to create". The third letter is **"G, g"** ("gim"), that means, "is deaf" (head) or knowledge ("gitelik"). The logic sequence and structure of a trinity of the basic concept is three signs on the alphabet ("aybenaran").

By the way, the root "ah" underlies such informative, key concepts for the description of a reproduction of the word as: "Haik" (the hero of Armenians), "hai" (Armenian), "hair" (father), "mair" (mother), "airel" (flame), "airvel" (to burn down), "ait" (this), "aigi" (garden), "pait" (tree), "aits" (goat), "kaits" (spark), "kaitsak" (lightning), "baitc" (however), "vay" (exclamation of type "ah").

A principles of unity "maintenances and forms", of knowledge of the validity (a continuity, conformity and compatibilities), and reflection play a role of toolkit for cognitive model construction. Mythological motive of a hero battle with

a dragon or snake has received a wide circulation in fine arts, in folklore, and then has got and into the literature as forms a legend about Sacred Georges, won a dragon and released the girl captivated by it (table 1). Literary processing of this legend and corresponding images are characteristic for medieval European art, and the Armenian medieval hand-written miniature.

An archetype of battle "goods with a harm" in Armenian Rock art (Petrosyan S., Gegam mountains) meets in various forms, for example, in Haik's opposition and is white, two opposite forces, in a form of a hero – forms of a swastika and a bull (fig. 1b., 5000-4000 B.C. and fig. 1c., 4000-3000 B.C.). Other earlier archetype is identified by author on the graphics reproductions of a battle "Vahagn and a dragon" (fig. 1a, 7000-5000 B.C.). Ideological maintenances of these graphics reproductions are invariant, but the forms of representation are various. However, the genetic generality, sources of originality, plasticity of images, aspiration painters hold does not raise the doubts of tradition of early masters "school".



Fig. 1. The forms of transformation of the graphics reproductions and styles. Universal motive of struggle of a hero with harm, vishap – snake (a) and with the bull (b and c).

Comparison of various graphics reproductions shows, how representation style of a hero and his anatomy, especially the enemy are changed. There are at least three styles: early form of a dragon, a dragon's essences and, at last, an abstract - realistic bull. On figure 1a, we can see something similar to serpents (snake), a prototype of a dragon or vishap, which body coils on strict law. A graphics reproductions of a hero (fig. 1, and, passes from the initial natural form of a person with a man's sign, typical for early hunters, to stylized to form and to more perfect to the half abstract graphics reproduction form of "a person - swastika", to a life symbol, a "sun", typical symbol for early farmers.

By architect Petrosyan opinion, graphics reproduction on fig. 1a is an archetype of Vahagn from the oldest Armenian myth. The hero in a duel with a monster, a dragon wins the last is represented and releases "heavenly light from darkness", "kindly from a harm", the ground from a drought. Because of it, "released of captivity" water streams flow from the sky on the ground. Vahagn together with the father - main deity "Aramazd" and mother goddess "Anahit" finished structurization of sacred "trinity" – three forces, interconnected qualities and properties of components ("deities of a sun, a moon and a ground", "a father of the son and sacred spirit" in Christianity). Other archetype, more complex symbol, implemented motive of struggle of the whole components, is on the other

Armenian Rock art graphics reproductions (fig. 2, Martirosyan, Israelyan, 1972). By author opinion, on the one hand, half of the snake – "heavenly", one head swallows a "sun" (moon), and other end of a body – "terrestrial", snatches on a deer, a source of food/meat, dairy products. These symbols were important for ability to live for hunters and early cattlemen.

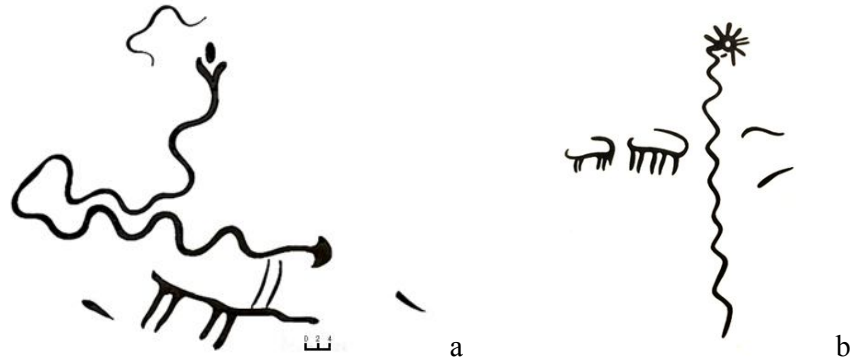


Fig. 2. Unique archetypes "struggle of a snake/dragon, spiritual and material", "heavenly and terrestrial". One head of a snake is swallowing a sun, and other head is snatching on a deer (a). A snake (dragon) is swallowing a sun (b). Rock art, Gegam mountains, Armenia

In Gegam mountains is revealed a rock engraving of "king" (Martirosyan, Israelyan, 1972) approximately 8000-years prescription (fig. 3), entered into computer database "Karedaran" (Vahanyan G., Petrosyan S., Tracce #12), which may be a prototype of a legendary Haik, primogenitor of Armenians and so-called Egyptian "king of Scorpion" (fig. 3.2), whose feats earlier were a myth and a legend.



Fig. 3. The battle of a hero with two scorpions (a). It may be a prototype of the Armenian primogenitor Haik and probably the Egyptian king of Scorpion. Rock art, 5000-4000 B.C. Gegam mountains, Armenia.

It can become solving in a question on dating origin of Old Armenian and Egyptian civilizations. It is possible to approve, that the graphic reproduction of a "king" can be one of the earliest historical world document. Moreover, the symbols are very similar to Armenian and Egyptian ideograms (hieroglyphs).

Rock art symbols (fig. 3) are representing a stage of fight, battle of a leader, a king, which pulls a bowstring of powerful onions (complex type) and an arrow of greater sizes. The onions lean on a tripod - rather interesting and from the point of view of the engineering decision. To the left of the leader there is seen a reproduction of "a sacred lizard", that king protects from two scorpions. Under the lizard is represented a dragon. "The sacred lizard" from the gold was found also in Shengavit (Armenia) by Sardaryan S. (2004).

The Armenian Rock art graphic reproductions of the heroes, scorpions and snakes (fig. 2 and 3, fig. 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 5.1, table 2,) author compared with the rock engraving reproductions from Har Karkom (fig. 4.1, 4.2, 5.2 and 5.3, table 2) with a rock art hero from Anatoly (fig. 1.3, table 2), described by Anati E. (1972, 2001), and with an artifact from the museum of Anatoly's civilization (fig. 4.3, table 2). There are similar in motives and styles. The Har Karkom rock engraving is representing a group of poisonous creatures: a lizard is attacked by two scorpions, and group of six various sizes snakes, which try "to bite off" parts of a body, a head and legs of the lizard. The other rock engraving (fig. 5.2 and 5.3, table 2) called "the staff and the serpent".

The rock is located, at the side of a path and by Anati E. opinion, indicates a water source below in the wadi. "It may be a graphic reproduction of a concept similar to that of water-giving in the desert in Deuteronomy" (Anati E., 2001). The stone identifies presence of resource so necessary for life-support. Stylistic conformity of the Armenian, the Har Karkom and Anatoly rock engravings are very important for dating and acknowledgement of a hypothesis for origin of the hero history, a scorpion motive, snakes and "a sacred lizard".

In Darnell book ([www.archaeology.org/image.php?](http://www.archaeology.org/image.php?)) spend amazing parallels of some considered motives. Parallels for the Armenian Rock art (scorpions and hero) with the Egyptian artefacts (fig. 3.2 and 3.3, table 2) are even more amazing. Similar cognitive traces of the linguistic-mythological and historical archetypes testifying to prehistoric communications of Egypt (Msra) and Old Armenia (Sasoun) civilizations are identified by author in the Armenian epos "Sasna Tsrer" (Vahanyan G., Vahanyan V., 2006).

Selket reproduction (sacred animal Selket - Scorpion) in the form of a woman with a scorpion on a head Egyptians often placed on the Sarcophag. It may be the Armenian Rock art (fig. 1) is represented the heavenly spirit (fig. 4), which reminds a symbol of the Egyptian cross "angkh". It is necessary to emphasize, that the Egypt architecture initially developed from two traditions, two cultures. Not casually symbolic sign on a life of Egyptians "angkh" is simultaneously similar to a cross and on unit. Whether really a hero represented in Armenian rock art and the Egyptian governor in Abydos and Gebel Djauti (Darnell D.) have a same source in Old Armenia. On the Armenian graphics reproductions are available stylized the images reminding a falcon/eagle (fig. 2.1 and 2.2, table 2).



Fig. 4. Armenian Rock art graphics reproduction reminds Egyptian sign "angkh" (cross)

Table 1

The transformation of graphics reproductions of a hero and a monster (fish, dragon, snake) in Armenian art































 <p>Rock art, Armenia "king" vishaps, 7000 – 5000 B.C.</p>	 <p>Rock art, Armenia Dragon and Tsefey 5000 – 4000 B.C.</p>	 <p>Rock art, Armenia 4000 – 3000 B.C.</p>	 <p>Snakes, Navasar, Armenia 4000 – 3000 B.C.</p>
 <p>Fish, basalt, Armenia, Gegam mountains 4000 – 3000 B.C.</p>	 <p>Snakes, Rock art, Karvachay, Artsakh 3000 – 2000 B.C.</p>	 <p>The two-headed snake, Ceramic, Metsamor, Armenia 1000 B.C.</p>	 <p>Yerevan, Matenadaran, MS 6305, Gospel, Syunik, XIVth cent. St. George and a dragon, Photo: A.Güler</p>
 <p>Erevan, Matenadaran, MS 979, Lectionary of Het'um II, Cilicia, 1286 Photo: D. Kouymjian</p>	 <p>Church Surb Khatch, Akhtamar, lake Van, Relief on church dragon and the snake, 915-921</p>	 <p>Church Surb Khatch, Akhtamar, a relief on church, sacrifice fish – vishap, 915-921</p>	 <p>Vishapagorg – a carpet with a dragon, 19-th century, Armenia</p>
 <p>The hero's triumph, Rock art, Gegam mountains, Armenia 4000 – 3000 B.C.</p>	 <p>Deity above a lion Erebuni, Armenia (Uartu), 900-800 B.C.</p>	 <p>A winged sphinx, Erebuni, Armenia (Uartu), 900-800 B.C.</p>	 <p>Vahagn and dragon, Yerevan, XX century</p>

Table 2

<p>1</p>	 <p>Rock art, Syunik, Armenia 1.1</p>	 <p>Rock art, Gegam mountains, Armenia 1.2</p>	 <p>Rock art, Anatoly (Anati E., 1972) 1.3</p>
<p>2</p>	 <p>Rock art, Gegam mountains, Armenia 2.1</p>	 <p>Rock art, Gegam mountains, Armenia 2.2</p>	 <p>Rock art, Gegam mountains, Armenia 2.3</p>
<p>3</p>	 <p>Rock art, "King" of Scorpions, Gegam mountains, Armenia 3.1</p>	 <p>King of Scorpion, Egypt, 3000 B.C. <a href="http://www.archaeology.org/image.php?">www.archaeology.org/image.php?</a> 3.2</p>	 <p>Scorpion <a href="http://www.archaeology.org/image.php?">www.archaeology.org/image.php?</a> 3.3</p>
<p>4</p>	 <p>Har Karkom, a rock engraving: a venomous lizard, scorpions and serpents (Anati E., 2001) <a href="http://www.harkarkom.com">www.harkarkom.com</a> 4.1</p>	 <p>Har Karkom, a rock engraving: a venomous lizard, scorpions and serpents (Anati E., 2001) <a href="http://www.harkarkom.com">www.harkarkom.com</a> 4.2</p>	 <p>The sacred lizard, Museum of Anatoly civilization, Ankara, D. Osseman <a href="http://www.pbase.com/dosseman">http://www.pbase.com/dosseman</a> 4.3</p>
<p>5</p>	 <p>A serpent is swallowing a sun. Rock art, Gegam mountains, Armenia 5.1</p>	 <p>A rock engraving called "the staff and the serpent" (Anati E., 2001) <a href="http://www.harkarkom.com">www.harkarkom.com</a> 5.2</p>	 <p>A rock engraving called "the staff and the serpent" (Anati E., 2001) <a href="http://www.harkarkom.com">www.harkarkom.com</a> 5.3</p>

In particular, one of them represented to the left from the center of a composition - a significant place for a king identifying. The falcon, as well as an eagle in ancient Egypt and in other civilization is a solar symbol, a symbol of a victory. It expresses the superiority, strong desire, heavenly spirit, light, freedom.

In ancient Egypt and in Old Armenia the falcon/eagle esteemed as a king of birds and meant a sacred symbol of a sun. From Darnels report it has concluded, that the considered Egyptian symbol is a record of military operation of an establishment of a control over area of small empires clashing among them. In addition, it is "declaration of a victory of the order above chaos". Proceeding from knowledge of the subsequent events, John Darnell approves, that this victory of king of the Scorpion (or other king) could be solving in association of the Grounds. The ancient "the sacred lizard" is well known in many cultures.

A motive of a dragon/snake in Old Armenia transformed to the various forms of art and has found wide application in stones vishaps (fishes, snakes, dragons) and stele (5000–3000 B.C., in pre-Christian and post Christian art, in cross-stones ("khachkars"). Many monuments of architecture and crafts, artifacts of a ceramics art, vishap carpets ("vishapagorg") used and developed variations of main original motive. A motive of heavenly spirit transformed to the cross forms and has found huge distribution in some religious symbolic. Just all known forms of a cross author founded in Armenian Rock art. The facts show, that the basic Armenian ornamental art motives (Vahanyan V., 2009) have arisen during the prehistoric period. Epistemological and the linguistic-historical comparative analysis of the Old Armenian and World artifacts convince author that the first designers of universal motives possessed the developed speech and creative thinking identified as a "protoarmenian uniform model of prototransnational world language and intercultural rock art communication".

## Conclusion

**The basic source of the origin, ideological maintenance and documentary fact for transformation of the cognitive archetypes "from old legends to the myths and visual art" are Rock art artifacts. There were organically reflected and developed in early forms of the Old Armenian sculptural monuments, stones fishes and vishaps, stele and gnomons and the first astronomical complexes – observatories, ideograms, letters, signs and ornamental arts.**

**Comparison the Old Armenian with Egyptian, Anatoly, and also with the Har Karkom artifacts leads to a following conclusion: a source of the origin and the ideological maintenance of the oldest motives of a hero, a falcon/eagle, "a sacred lizard", a scorpion, a dragon were developed on knowledge, experience, traditions and creativity, may be, from Old Armenia. The motives of a cross, sacred struggle of a falcon/eagle with scorpions and snakes, "declaration of a victory of the order (goods) above chaos (harm)" also have been developed and widespread in motives and visual arts of the Christian culture.**

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