

## РЕЦЕНЗИИ | REVIEWS

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**Рецензия на:**  
**Арутюнян Х. А. (ред.). (2023). Историческое и культурное наследие Еревана. Тпаран.**

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**Review of:**  
**Harutyunyan Kh. A. (Ed.). (2023).**  
**Historical and Cultural Heritage of Yerevan.**  
**“Tparan” publishinghouse**

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In the modern world, along with the rapid developments of the Internet, information spreads in the world at the speed of a second. In the most diverse geopolitical situations, the correct positioning of the given country in the widespread information situation is important. From time to time, the Internet and various international scientific publications can influence a country negatively.

Foreign language scientific materials about Armenian studies published in Armenia have showed a sharp increase, especially in recent years. Due to the political events, we highlight the role of the publication of materials related to Armenian history and Armenian culture. Over the years, many articles have been published that refer to various scientific fields with thorough professional observations. It is a fact that such publications do not become available to the majority of society and wider scientific circles. Among the studies on Yerevan, the book “Memories of Yerevan” (Iljine, 2023) stands out. With its diverse content and materials, it presents a wide range of events that occurred in or are related to the city. The editor-in-chief of the collection sought to highlight Yerevan’s significance in the history of Armenian statehood, emphasizing that its emergence as the capital was not sudden. Instead, its rapid and expansive development had deep-rooted prerequisites in both the historical and even prehistoric past (Margaryan, 2023, p. 285).

Constantly emphasizing the fact of presenting scientific materials in the most accessible language, we are happy to mention the collection of articles entitled “Historical and Cultural Heritage of Armenia” published in 2022 under the editorship of philologist Khachik Harutyunyan. It was published with a special grant from the RA Ministry of Education and Culture. Most of the 1000 copies of the book were sent to several libraries around the world. This collection consists of 12 articles. They represent the various manifestations of the Armenian cultural heritage, from archaeological material to manuscripts, khachkars and carpets, medieval Armenian sculpture, murals, and lithographs that are part of church decorations. The authors of the articles included in this collection are recognized specialists in Armenia and abroad who have combined the important points of the material they have studied over the years. The articles have a scientific basis, and at the same time, they are written in an accessible language, thus increasing the scope of interests of both specialists researching the same topic and specialists in other fields. Thus, another manifestation of such a successful experience was the compilation “Historical and Cultural Heritage of Yerevan” compiled by the same editor.

The history of Yerevan, the capital city of the Republic of Armenia, began thousands of years ago. During that time, Yerevan experienced a cycle of developments, declines, and ups and downs. Today Yerevan with its diverse architecture, rich archaeological material, cultural monuments, and written heritage is the testimony of our many years of history. Thus, historical events have found their reflection on the profile of Yerevan as a city. For decades, some Armenian and foreign researchers have been reflecting on the history and architecture of Yerevan. The studies of Yervand Shahaziz, Karo Ghafadaryan, Vardan Grigoryan, the travelogue of the French traveler Jean Chardin (Shahaziz, 2003 [1931]; Ghafadaryan, 1975; Grigoryan 1958; Chardin, 1811) are noteworthy. They convey fundamental and exclusive information about the history of the city of Yerevan in different periods.

It is a fact that until recent years there was no such workbook through which readers could get comprehensive information about Yerevan. However, we can happily record that the collection of articles “Historical and Cultural Heritage of Yerevan” (“Դրան” publishing, Yerevan, 2023) presented to the public in 2023 is of exceptional importance.

The editor of the collection is Khachik Harutyunyan. As mentioned in the beginning of the book: “The publication of the book was carried out within the framework of the grant of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Armenia. The book was published by the decision of the Scientific Council of the “Scientific Research Center of Historical and Cultural Heritage” SNCO”. Let us note that the SNCO “Scientific Research Center of Historical and Cultural Heritage” carries out research and popularization of the Armenian historical and cultural heritage in the Republic of Armenia and foreign countries, state registration of immovable historical and cultural monuments and specially protected historical and cultural territories of the Republic of Armenia<sup>1</sup>.

The book is a collection of articles, consisting of a foreword, 12 articles, a bibliography, and a table of contents. Total number of pages: 140. Each text is accompanied by rich illustrations.

In the “Foreword”, editor Harutyunyan very briefly presents the history of Yerevan in chronological order on just one page, emphasizing the most important episodes. First, mentioning the caves found on the banks of the Hrazdan River, the structures dating back to the Iron Age (“Yerevan 1” cave), the Early, Middle, and Late Bronze Age monuments (Shengavit, Karmir Blur, Tsitsernakaberd), the Urartian period, which is considered the most important historical period for the city of Yerevan, and then introducing Yerevan rich medieval layer and gives a brief picture of Yerevan until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

This comprehensive reference gives the reader an idea of the diverse contents of the collection. The book includes the following articles:

1. Hakob Simonyan “Historical-Cultural Heritage of the Pre-Urartian Period of the City Yerevan”,
2. Mikayel Badalyan “Yerevan during the Iron Age”,
3. Ashkhen Julfalakyan, Gevorg Gyulamiryan “Irrigation System of Old Yerevan”,
4. Anahit Grigoryan “Medieval Monuments of Yerevan”,
5. Arsen Harutyunyan “The Mentions of the Place Name Yerevan in Armenian Medieval Epigraphs”,
6. Khachik Harutyunyan “The Manuscript Heritage of Medieval Yerevan and its Surroundings”,
7. Yvette Tajarian “Persian Monuments as Part of Documentary History of Yerevan”,
8. Grigor Nalbandyan “The Rebirth of the Blue Mosque of Yerevan”,
9. Armen Asatryan “Yerevan in the Notes of Foreign Travelers”,
10. Hovhannes Sanamyan “Main Stages of Urban Development of Yerevan”,
11. Marieta Gasparyan “The Architectural Face of Yerevan in the Pre-soviet Period”,
12. Karen Balyan “Yerevan. 100 Years of Modern Architecture: 1919–2023”.

As it becomes clear from the content, the studies dedicated to Yerevan are presented in chronological order.

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<sup>1</sup> The Research Center is preparing the documentation and certificates for the state lists, as well as the projects for restoration and improvement of protected zones. Our center carries out the preparation and publication of the “Corpus of the Monuments in Armenia” and the scientific journal “Hushardzan (Monument)”, as well as the creation and digitization of the scientific database and archive of the Armenian historical and cultural heritage. See: Scientific Research Center of Historical and Cultural Heritage, <https://armheritage.am/en/about-us/about-us/>

The authors of the article are the best specialists in their field. This book was also published with the mission of sending it to different libraries of the world and popularizing Armenian culture. Therefore, it is expected that the book would contain brief information about the author of each article: the profession, the name of the institution, the workplace, and the position. Nevertheless, while information about the authors is available online, we have chosen not to include it here to avoid potential misunderstandings. We believe the editor can provide accurate information by communicating with each individual directly. We are confident that, given the world while dissemination of the book, it will attract interest from readers who may wish to engage with the authors, ask questions, or discuss the content. Acknowledging that sharing individual email addresses could raise privacy concerns, we propose the option of a single email address which will be managed by the book's editor. The editor would then forward relevant inquiries to the appropriate experts for further discussion.

For printed and electronic materials related to the articles in the collection, we suggest making a list of Literature, which can be:

1. After each article, a specific literature citation is related to the topic of the article.
2. In the literature list at the end of the articles, a grouped presentation of publications, monographs, and possible electronic materials related to each article.

The proposed option would be more effective for researchers interested in a topic-specific article in the collection.

Regarding the design of the collection, we should mention the following suggestions:

1. Each article should start from the same page of the book (recto or verso). We accept the fact that due to the volume of the article or the number of lines, sometimes the designer had to break the layout of the beginning and end pages, but this regularity could have been maintained by placing more pictures or the number of pictures. For example, Mikayel Badalyan's article started on the recto page, and Ashkhen Julfalakyan, and Gevorg Gyulamiryan's on the verso page.

2. First of all, it is recommended to have a clear format for the artistic design of the pages of a collection such as scientific articles. The content of each article requires a clear design solution. One general principle should be developed for the formation of a complete collection, preserving the manuscript.

3. It is suggested that each article should have a monotone coloring of the pages, which would also help the reader to quickly find the page when browsing. Unfortunately, the compilation varies dramatically from page to page. At least four to five colors are used as a background for each article design, while only one color with its color spectrum can be given.

4. The title and pagination of all articles must be the same, for example, the titles of articles starting from pages 17, 67, 77, 113, and the main essay are aligned with one line, and the titles and main articles of pages 34, 44, 56, 86, 104, 124 the essay is not aligned with.

5. It is recommended to maintain the regularity of artistic solutions also in the case of pages formed with pictures. The frames presented in different ways are especially noticeable. There are pictures that are without a frame (for example: 52–57, etc.). There are pictures that are framed by a white outline (pages 48, 84). There are versions which the picture received a shadow to separate it from the background and convey a three-dimensional appearance (pages 60–62, 68–69, 94–95, 114). There are also various frame options (pages 20, 50, 98, 99).

6. The captions of the pictures included in the articles often got a slightly darker shade of the background color of the given page, which makes it difficult to read (for example, pages 23, 25, 84–87).

This review discusses the significance of publishing foreign language scientific materials in Armenia, particularly focusing on Armenian history and culture. It highlights the importance of accessible academic work, noting that many publications remain unavailable to the general public. Two recent collections, “Historical and Cultural Heritage of Armenia” (2022) and “Historical and Cultural Heritage of Yerevan” (2023), edited by philologist Khachik Harutyunyan, are emphasized for their efforts to present Armenian heritage in accessible language, supported by Armenia’s Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport.

These collections consist of several articles written by experts, covering a wide range of topics – from archaeological materials, medieval manuscripts, and architectural monuments to Yerevan’s urban development across different periods. The collections aim to preserve and share Yerevan’s rich cultural heritage by making academic research more accessible to a wider audience. Copies of these works have been sent to libraries worldwide, fostering international awareness of Armenian history and culture.

Let us hope that these observations will prove useful for future publications or reprints. These suggestions in no way diminish the immense work that has already been accomplished. We are confident that a review of each book further enhances its value and contributes to the wider dissemination of information about it.

In conclusion, the comprehensive work presented in these publications reflects a deep commitment to preserving and sharing Armenian history and culture. Through meticulous research and accessible presentation, these collections bridge academic rigor with public understanding, ensuring that knowledge is both preserved and passed on. As we look toward future publications, it is essential to build on these foundations, embracing new insights and perspectives. Despite our suggestions, these concise articles, grounded in comprehensive professional studies, are inherently suited for wide distribution, reaching not only the scientific community but also the broader public. Let us move forward with confidence, knowing that each contribution enriches the global understanding of Yerevan’s heritage, fostering cultural appreciation and inspiring future generations.

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