THE PROBLEM OF STUDYING OF THE APPLIED ART OF ARTSAKH OF THE 19TH CENTURY
ON THE PAGES OF THE EASTERN ARMENIAN PERIODICAL PRESS

Annotation. Thus, our scientific research led to the conclusion that the applied art which originated in the previous centuries continued to develop along with other branches of the culture of Artsakh in the second half of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century.

In this scientific article, we have presented mainly the following branches of the applied arts of Artsakh: carpet weaving, handicrafts, embroidery, silversmithing, pottery. We have mainly presented interesting information about the branches of the applied art which were covered in the periodicals of the second half of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century. Noting about the carpet weaving of Artsakh, we emphasized that the carpets of that region of Artsakh stood out with their color structure, richness of ornaments, technical mastery. We highlighted the role of handicrafts in the life of Armenian women, emphasizing that this form of the applied art was developed in Artsakh in the Middle Ages. In this article, we also presented a number of pottery samples found during excavations by foreign archaeologists.

The applied art of Artsakh continued to develop in the following years.

The scientific novelty and purpose of the study: Various branches of centuries-old Armenian culture have been studied by a number of prominent scholars for centuries but this field of Artsakh culture has been little studied by Armenian and foreign historians. The scientific novelty of the article is that the information about applied arts is presented mainly on the basis of scientific materials published in the Eastern Armenian periodical press. The purpose of the publication of the article is to inform the foreign audience about the indisputable facts of Artsakh's applied art which will refute the spread of false information about this branch of Artsakh's art.

Content: The Armenian culture stands out with its aesthetic features in the centuries-old history of the Armenian people. Sometimes, the one served to preserve the Armenian people for centuries together with the Armenian Church in the absence of Armenian statehood. The culture of Artsakh stands out with its unique uniqueness in the centuries-old history of the development of Armenian culture.

The second half of the 19th century and the two decades of the 20th century are important periods in the centuries-old history of Armenian culture. The preconditions for the development of culture of that period had their own unique impact on the development of Armenian culture. A period of search for new creative ways of art began in Eastern Armenia where various socio-economic, political and spiritual transformations took place since the 1850s. Social and political movements and the development of culture in Eastern Armenia also influenced the development of Artsakh's art (theater, music, fine arts, architecture, applied arts, etc.) which reached the level of aesthetic requirements of the time. During that period, the applied art also developed which was in line with the requirements of the local historical and social life.

The applied art of Artsakh developed in two directions: rural-folk, urban-craft. Values of applied...
arts have been created in villages, cities, monasteries and elsewhere. Unlike examples of rural applied art, the products of urban workshops were sold abroad. Rural art followed a unique creative path largely adhering to ancient traditions.

The issue of the development and widespread dissemination of Artsakh's cultural values was covered to some extent in the periodicals of that period.

Among the branches of the applied arts the carpet weaving culture stands out with its aesthetic nuances which developed on the basis of the experience of the traditions of the previous centuries, that is, it included in its creative samples the types of Armenian customs of the previous centuries. The carpet weaving was a craft that was formed in Artsakh in ancient times and developed more in the Middle Ages. Carpets, rugs, towels, napkins, aprons and laces decorated and woven with wool, cotton, silk, silver and gold threads have been distinguished by beautiful and elegant combinations of colors, with high mastery of performance since the early 17th century. And many magnificent samples of carpet weaving and embroidery created by Armenian craftsmen decorated the various markets of Persia. At the beginning of the 17th century, when Shah Abbas forcibly relocated the inhabitants of the Ararat Valley to Persia and settled in the city of Isfahan and its environs, the Armenians took carpets and rugs with their property. The types of "Vishapagor" ("Dragon Carpets"), "Artsagorg" of Khachen ("Eagle Carpets of Khachen"), "Transitional Carpets", "Odzagor" ("Snake Carpets")—because there are snake-like patterns on the carpet), "Guhar" (also "Gohar"), "Khndzoresk" carpets were popular in Artsakh in that period. Famous centers of carpet weaving of the period were Avetaranots, Jabrerd, Shush (fortress later Shushi) and other settlements.

The Carpet weaving developed most in Artsakh in the second half of the 19th century. Shushi was one of the major centers of Armenian carpet weaving (there were also a number of centers of carpet weaving culture in western and eastern Armenia: Sebastia, Van, Karin, Mush, Ararat Valley, Synunik, etc.). The carpets of Artsakh stood out with their color structure, richness of ornaments, technical mastery. The great skill of the local craftsmen was demonstrated there. The most significant among the museum collections is the one kept in the Historical-Geographical Museum of Artsakh (part of it - in the RA State Museum of Ethnography) which contains more than two dozen carpets, technical devices and accompanying documents. Those give more or less an idea about almost all the centers of the carpet weaving of Artsakh (Shushi, Varanda, Dizak, Khachen provinces). Those confirm the historical and cultural significance of Artsakh carpet weaving not only of that period but also of past times. Here, as well as for all the carpet weavers of historical Armenia the most important thing was the artistic decoration of the carpet. The carpet weaver himself invented the rug he used to make. In other words, there was an inexhaustible creative process at the time where various versions of ornaments and rugs were created on a national basis.

According to the "Azgagrakan Handes" ("Ethnographic Magazine") periodical, the development of the carpet weaving art of Artsakh was especially promoted by the "Caucasian Housework Committee" ("Կովկասյան տնայնագործական խորհուրդ") established in 1899 (among the members of the committee were writers, painters, agriculturists: G. Sundukyan, G. Bashinjaghyan, O. Schmerling and others) on the initiative of which carpet-weaving schools were established in the Caucasus including Shushi. The branches of carpet production were in Dizak, Varanda, Khachen, Jabrerd, as well as in the Armenian villages of Nukh province. "The Committee" imported paints from Europe and developed them well then published an album of carpet ornaments.

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1 A carpet-weaving workshop was established in Haterk by the efforts of Arzu Khatun, the wife of the leader Vakhtang of Haterk in the first half of the 13th century.
6 Especially when, at the end of the 17th century, in 1692, Melik Hussein, son of Melik Shahnazar and Melik Baghin, son of his brother Melik Mirza-Bek migrated from the shores of Lake Geghama with some of their relatives to Varanda province and settled in the village of Avetaranots. (See Lalayan E., Varanda, "Azgagrakan Handes"("Ethnographic Magazine"), 1897, N 2, page 5).
7 Kazaryan M., Armenian Carpets, Moscow, 1985, էջ 88 (Կազարյան Մ., Արմենական կարպետ, Մոսկվա, 1985, էջ 88):
Despite the fact that "Caucasian Housework Committee" ceased to exist during the First World War, it did invaluable work to preserve and develop both the Caucasian and Artsakh traditions of the carpet weaving in a short period of its activity (1899-1914). Most of the carpets that have come down to us from the period under study are the values created by the "Committee".

"Khach-Khoran" carpet was famous at the beginning of the XX century which was woven by Anna Shakaryants in 1909.11

One of the most important types of the applied art is handicraft which vividly reflects the spiritual life of the people, its artistic culture, rich national heritage. It is a great aesthetic and historical value with a wide range of themes, richness and variety of traditional ornaments. This branch of folk art having passed through a difficult path of development from an early age and bearing the influence of other ethnic cultures, at the same time interacting those cultures has come down to us mainly preserving the original national image.

Handicraft is one of the most remarkable spheres of activity of the people of Artsakh. Being formed in the system of cultural values of the past, handicrafts brought us images of different times which express the complex symbolic content of the ornaments.

The handicraft is a complex combination of historical periods of the region which is reflected in various ornaments and stylistic features. The ornaments reflect the characteristic features of the people's daily life, the culture of everyday life, they reflect the historical and ethnographic peculiarities of different provinces of Artsakh.

In Artsakh, handicrafts underwent significant changes, especially in the second half of the 19th century. It was connected with new school aesthetics and art education programs. The aesthetics teacher taught painting and sometimes embroidery in schools of Artsakh. For example, the famous painter Stepanos Nersisyan who taught painting in the Diocesan and Girls' Schools of Shushi introduced the students to the nuances of handicraft art. Aesthetics and painting teachers Margarit Aleksanyan, Voski Tavrizyan, Ekaterina Bahatryan and others in addition to painting taught embroidery in Artsakh schools.

Covering the peculiarities of the historical and architectural monuments of Artsakh, "Nor Dar" periodical testified that one of the main occupations of the girls of the Kusanats Anapat Church of Artsakh was handicraft in parallel with which the girls were engaged in needlework. The periodical mentioned the following interesting information in the article entitled "Our Monasteries": "The Kusanats Desert of Shushi is located in the southern part of the village of Avetaranots of Artsakh. It was renovated in 1814. The church bell tower is especially beautiful. There were virgin rooms on the west side of the church. Virgin

Hripsime Bahaturyants was the headmistress of the Shushi monastery in the early 19th century who died in 1865 at the age of 75. His grave is in that church. Hripsime's younger sister, Mother Gayane left beautiful samples of handicrafts in that church. One of the most beautiful and well-known examples of handicrafts is the Gospel. Gayane copied that Gospel and dedicated it to her parents and her cousin, Martyr Bishop.12

The "Nor Dar" periodical also referred to the activity of Mariam Hakhumyan who had a lot of prestige in Artsakh: "Mrs. Mariam Hakhumyan was famous in Shushi who provided her own big house as a school for the education of Armenian girls in Shushi with the special permission of Catholicos Matteos. She opened the school with his own means and she covered all the expenses related to the school. She invited famous Armenian pedagogues to Shushi. Mariam Hakhumyan taught her students handicrafts. She went to school every morning until noon, teaching her students handicrafts. Poor schoolchildren were provided with all the necessary school supplies.

The Mariamyan school achieved great success and wide recognition in a short period of time. Well-known pedagogues Petros Shanshyan, Garegin Muratyants, Perch Proshyan, Stepanos Nersisyan and others taught there.13

One of the most advanced types of handicraft is embroidery. Serik Davtyan noted that Artsakh embroidery was included in the "Syunik-Artsakh" school taking into account the historical commonality of crafts and creative interests of these two regions.14

After the floral patterns, geometric patterns were common in embroidery. Those ornaments were usually used in different types of embroidery compositions. In addition to the widespread geometric patterns there were works with specific local images and ornaments in the embroidery art of Artsakh. It is worth mentioning the embroidered carpets which formed a separate group and repeated the ornaments of the carpets and rugs.

One of the peculiarities of Artsakh handicrafts are the protocols which complement the compositional structure of the woven work. Household and church gifts, memoirs, dates, titles were singled out which provided valuable information embroidery centers (Shushi, Varanda, Dizak, Khachen, Nukhi, etc.), craft organizations and craftsmen.

Pottery is one of the branches of applied arts. Items such as cups, jugs, household and other archeological items made by a large number of pottery craftsmen were discovered during excavations in Artsakh. Those are auxiliary resources for the study of applied art of the history of Artsakh.

"Azagrakran Handes" periodical referred to those in detail in its article " Graves of Khojalu: "E. Reossler conducted a number of archeological excavations in various places in the province of Karabakh. He was

12 "Nor Dar", 1894, N 111, July 1, page 2.
13 " Nor Dar", 1894, N 111, July 1, pages 2-3.  
Member of the Imperial Archaeological Society of St. Petersburg in the second half of the 19th century, E. Reossler is German and taught at the Realakan School of Shushi of Artsakh as a German teacher. He carried out excavations in Karabakh for four or five years on the instructions of the famous Virkhhov, a member of the Imperial Archaeological Society of St. Petersburg and other scientists and discovered a large number of antiquities… The last time he carried out excavations was near the villages of Khojali and Arajadzor of Artsakh. During excavations, he discovered a number of antiques such as pottery items. Those stand out with their originality15:

This branch of the applied arts became widely used in the provinces of Artsakh in the second half of the 19th century. The potters made pottery - water pipes, roof bricks as well as waterproof decorative pottery. In other words, wet pottery also developed in parallel with the pottery the traditions of which continued in our time in Artsakh.

Necessary household items made by Artsakh craftsmen (jars, jugs, kula, dishes, ovens, etc.) were regularly sold both on the spot and in other towns and villages. The documents of the specimens preserved in the Artsakh Historical-Geographical Museum prove that they are mainly items made by craftsmen of the 19th century and the second decade of the 20th century.

The values of this branch of the applied arts are stable in relation to local requirements and lifestyles, and by their roots those are connected with the Armenian pottery. Masters in a number of fields have raised their craft to the level of art. This fact and the well-developed aesthetic taste of different segments of the population especially in the cities (Shushi, Nukhi) raised the high level of development of applied art.

The samples of other branches of applied art were also included in the cultural value system of Artsakh. Among them are stone, silver, jewelry, artistic engravings, various metal items, gospel compositions, carvings and high sculptures of architecturally monuments, khachkars, tombstones and other ornaments with other inscriptions. Interesting information about those has been preserved in the pages of the Eastern periodicals.

The author of the article of "Azagrakan Handes" magazine (in the 2nd issue of1897) referred to the architectural monument of the Ghevondians Church of Artsakh. He mentioned about the wonderful samples of silverware: "There are the following relics of the saints in the chapel of the Ghevondians: 1) the relic of the Apostle Thaddeus in a small silver cross, 2) the relic of the Baptist John in a small silver and a large cross, 3) the relic of St. John in a mediocre cross of silver16... ".

The applied art of Artsakh like other spheres of local culture with their ideological and artistic thinking were closely connected with the aesthetic-philosophical essence of the culture of the Armenian people and became one of its main links. The applied art of Artsakh included all the types of that cultural sphere the development of which was dictated by the preferences and tastes of a wide range of people. The widespread recognition of the applied art was also facilitated by the creative freedom of the performing masters, the high level of expression of their professional abilities, their desire to study the best features of the national and Eastern arts and to present them in a creative combination.

During that period, the branches of Artsakh applied arts developed in many ways, tied to the Eastern traditions and national traditions. Although the applied art of Artsakh was influenced by the applied art of the neighboring countries, it did not lose its spirit, its national originality, the roots of which were embedded in various layers of pan-Armenian culture. Purely Armenian spheres were free from these influences - architectural sculptures, some branches of embroidery, etc.

Local markets of Shushi, Dizak, Varanda, Jraberd and other places had an impact on the development of applied arts. Products from different countries were brought to those markets, such as the Caspian Sea, the North Caucasus, Georgia and Russia. Those were reflected in the material and spiritual culture of the people there.

These important features which are typical of the applied art of each ethnographic period have also found their unique expression in the art of Artsakh. The ones roots were rooted in the centuries-old roots of the history of general Armenian culture.

**LIST OF USED LITERATURE**


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16 "Azagrakan Handes",1897, N 2, page 46.