

**THE ARMENIAN CIVILIZATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE LENS
OF HUNTINGTON'S HYPOTHESIS
(An Examination Outline of the Concept)**

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The formation of a new world order and the ongoing processes within that context in different parts of the world became a subject of analyses for various outstanding scholars in the field of strategic studies (geopolitics), and in parallel with that different projects of the future were proposed.

One of those is Huntington's hypothesis of the "clash of civilizations", which, we'll note that, became a catalyst for the strategic way of thinking of the late 20th century and of nowadays due to the novelty in formulation of the questions and often admittedly, with originality of the solutions.

From that perspective, the observations concerning Armenia and the Armenian people in the concept Samuel Huntington (within that framework the logic of the ongoing discussions over the *Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh)* issue) are of certain interest. It seems to us that Huntington's knowledge of the "Armenian file", which is manifested in some of his articles¹ and also in the monograph published in 1996², needs to be supplemented, as Huntington is not just a researcher and an ordinary citizen but is an authoritative member of the US political establishment and one of the policy-makers. The U.S. political elites pay a heed to Huntington's opinion. His view is discussed throughout the world, and it has an impact on various peoples' political fate. And if we also take into consideration that Huntington reflects quite precisely the essence of neo-Atlantism (conservative direction - L.Sh.) - one of the two most recent geopolitical projects³, then the importance of the interpellation will become much clearer. Herein, the nuances on the newest tendencies of the world development, which "hunts" the

¹ Huntington S., *The Clash of Civilizations?*, Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993; Brief Russian-language version (which was published in the USA: Economics, politics, ideology, 1994, N 3, pp. 39-41) of the article *The Clash of Civilizations?* originally published in the New York Times); *If not civilizations, then what? Paradigms of the Post-Cold War World*, USA: Economics, politics, ideology, 1994, N 4, pp.71-75, Foreign Affairs, November/December 1993; *The Clash of Civilizations and what it can mean for Russia*, Social sciences & Modernity, 1995, N 3, pp.133-136 (in Russian); *The Future of Democratic Development: From Expansion to Consolidation.* World Economy & International Relations, 1996, N 6, pp. 87-94 (in Russian); *West is unique but not universal* (Foreign Affairs, December 1996; Reprinted in Russian in World Economy & International Relations, 1997, N 8, pp. 84-93.

² *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York, Simon & Schuster, 1996, p.368.

³ See Dugin A., *Fundamentals of Geopolitics. Geopolitical Future of Russia*. To think in space, Third revised edition, Moscow, 1999, p. 115 (in Russian).

newly emerged idol of the US political mental establishment, Farid Zakaria, do not change, in essence, the substantial character of the things⁴.

Hence, in light of what has been said above, the specification of Armenia's place in the hypothesis of the possible clash of civilizations (using his major criteria of **religion** and **religious affiliation** for the classification of civilizations) becomes crucially significant. Thus, he writes that "Religion is a central decisive characteristic of civilizations" and confirms Christopher Dawson's claim that "the big religions are the foundations on which the great civilizations rest"⁵. In another place, Huntington repeats: "Religion is the main decisive feature of a civilization..."⁶. Seeing mechanical identification between the Orthodox and Eastern Churches, Huntington "places" Armenians in the category of the 'Orthodox civilization,' as a result of which Armenia ends up a part of the Orthodox-Slavonic world. Meanwhile, as Russian scholar Nikolay Yutanov pointed out, ascribing "Orthodox civilization to Russia", Huntington envisages "a passive form of cooperation"⁷ for it (consequently also for Armenia - L. Sh.).

A. RELIGION AS A MAJOR FEATURE FOR THE CLASSIFICATION OF CIVILIZATIONS: HUNTINGTON'S VIEW

According to Huntington, in the post-bipolar world the local civilization becomes an ethnicity-based civilization. Huntington declares: "The global politics is the politics of the civilizations"⁸. The superpowers' rivalry develops into a clash of civilizations. For the first time in history, global politics has become multi-polar and multi-civilizational"⁹. It should be noted that the multi-polarity of the situation is unpredictable"¹⁰. Huntington makes this view as a starting point in his well-known monograph. Huntington writes that in the post-bipolar world, "local politics is ethnic politics, whereas global politics is a politics of civilizations. The superpowers' rivalry has been replaced by a clash of civilizations"¹¹. Also, in Huntington's opinion, the conflict among various civilizations becomes the

⁴ See Zakaria F., *The Future of Freedom: Non-Liberal Democracy in the USA and beyond its Borders* (translated from English), Moscow, 2004 (In Russian); Zakaria F., *Post-American World* (translated from English), Moscow, 2009 (In Russian).

⁵ Huntington S. *Clash of Civilizations* (translated from English), Moscow, 2003, pp. 59-60 (In Russian).

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 410.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁸ The civilization, writes Huntington, is the people's highest cultural generality and the widest level of cultural identifying, besides that which differs the man from other biological kinds. It is defined by material elements, as the language, history, religion, customs, social institutions, as well as the people's subjective resemblance" (Huntington, S., *The Clash of Civilizations*, p.51). "The civilization", stresses Huntington, "to which the man belongs, is the highest degree, which allows him to distinctly identify him" (*Ibid*, page 51). "Usually a complicated mixture of morality, religion, education, art, philosophy, technologies, material welfare and, probably, of numerous other things" (*Ibid*, p. 529).

⁹ Huntington S., *The Clash of Civilizations and what can it mean for Russia*, *Social Sciences and Modernity*, 1995, N 3, p. 134.

¹⁰ See Huntington S., *Clash of Civilizations*, p. 346.

¹¹ Huntington S., *Clash of Civilizations*, p. 24.

central and the most dangerous aspect of the world politics in that new world¹². Huntington claims that the world is no longer divided into the free world, the third world and the communist bloc, and neither is a simplistic division of the world into the rich and poor camps, or democratic and non-democratic countries sufficient. The separation of the countries of the world to the civilizations they belong to is productive and correct. "At a macro-level it is a matter of the clash of civilizations," Huntington explains, "at a micro-level, it is a matter of particularly dreadful, protracted and brutal conflicts between states and nations that belong to different civilizations"¹³. Huntington concludes that the states are more and more thinking "in categories of civilizations," and they define **their place** and **their interests** in the world (emphasis is mine - L.Sh.)¹⁴. More specifically, Huntington contends, in the post-Cold War period the states "increasingly define their interests in civilization terms"¹⁵. Huntington also points out the tendency in the worldwide development coming to a conclusion of primary significance in the geopolitical field: the growth of statehood might that was predominant in the West is gradually shifted to non-Western civilizations. The global politics has become multi-polar and multi-civilizational¹⁶. And in general, in order to confirm his hypothesis, Huntington addresses various aspects of the issue and brings forth new substantiations. Thus, for example, he believes that world politics is entering a new stage, wherein the principal source of the conflict between countries and peoples will be not in the field of ideology and economy but "in the field of culture." The main conflicts in world politics will occur between the countries and peoples of different civilizations." This clash of civilizations will dominate in the world politics¹⁷. Huntington explains that in a post-bipolar world the earlier question of "Who are you siding with?" has been replaced with a more fundamental question of "Who are you?" Therefore, Huntington believes that each country has to find an answer. That answer is the country's cultural identity, and it defines the country's place in the global civilization as well as its friends and enemies¹⁸.

Thus, besides solving the most important methodological problems within the civilizational conceptual framework that he has put forward, Huntington also draws much more substantive and concrete forecasts. Huntington writes: "During the next few years the local conflicts will most likely transform into full-scale wars both in Bosnia and in the Caucasus, in cases, when those wars will take place at the fault lines of civilizations. The next world war, should it occur, will be a war between civilizations"¹⁹.

¹² Ibid., p. 7.

¹³ Huntington S., "If not civilizations, then what? Paradigms of the Post-Cold War World" (in Russian, - "USA: Economics, Politics, Ideology), 1994, N 6, p. 72.

¹⁴ See Ibid, p. 73

¹⁵ The Russian edition of The Clash of Civilizations, p. 36.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁷ The Clash of Civilizations? in Russian, USA: Economics, Politics, Ideology, 1994, N 3, p. 39.

¹⁸ The Russian edition of The Clash of Civilizations, p. 186.

¹⁹ The Clash of Civilizations? in Russian, p. 39.

On the whole, by stressing that civilization is the highest form and the broadest range of features of the cultural generality of people that define the people's cultural identity, he predicts that the world will be more and more defined by seven or eight main civilizations, *viz.* Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavonic Orthodox, Latin American and, possibly, African²⁰. Besides, Huntington believes that the bloodiest conflicts will take place along the fault lines that divide those cultures²¹. This conclusion finally stems from Huntington's cultural orientation. He contends that in the new world the most important, large-scale and dangerous conflicts will occur ... between peoples of different cultural identifications²². In Huntington's conception, here a decisive one could even say an important, key role here belongs to religion. And since religion is the key cultural feature that defines a civilization, the "fault line"²³ conflicts almost always occur between the peoples belonging to different civilizations²⁴.

Huntington claims that when a major clash occurs at a global, or macro level in world politics between the West and the rest of the world, at a local or micro level the clash occurs between Islam and other religions²⁵. Besides, according to Huntington, the borders of Islam are bloody. They will most probably remain such for some time to come²⁶. It seems to us that in order to give flesh and blood to his strategic projects Huntington also applies the understanding of sub-civilizations. Huntington clarifies: "It is obvious that civilizations merge and partially overlap. They can incorporate sub-civilizations. The Western civilization has two principal versions, *viz.* the European and the North American, whereas Islam²⁷ is subdivided into Arab, Turkic and Malay. And even though civilizations, in rare cases, have no clear-cut boundaries, those civilizations are real. They have their ups and downs; they split and they merge. And as every student of history knows, civilizations disappear²⁸."

Introducing an understanding of a **core state**²⁹, Huntington outlines the boundaries of principal civilizations, including the Orthodox civilization. He places

²⁰ In his monograph the civilizations are presented with following specifications and sequence: Sinic, Japanese, Hindu, Islamic, Orthodox, Western, Latin American and African (possibly) civilizations (see Huntington, S., *The Clash of Civilizations*, pp. 54-60. Hereinafter, we will be guided by this pattern.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² The Russian edition of *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 24.

²³ **Fault line** is a line between neighboring states from different civilizations or between groups from different civilizations but that are in one state.

²⁴ The Russian edition of *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 410.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 413.

²⁶ Huntington S., *The Clash of Civilizations and What it Can Mean for Russia*, Public Sciences and Modernity, 1995, N 3, p. 135.

²⁷ In his monograph Huntington adds also Persian sub-civilization to the Islamic civilization. He writes, "Numerous distinct cultures or sub-civilizations exist in Islam, including Arab, Turkic, Persian, and Malay" (Huntington S., *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 56).

²⁸ Huntington, S. *If not civilizations, Then What?* (Russian version), p. 39.

²⁹ **Core State** - In civilizations, there are usually one or more places that are seen by its members as a main source or sources of culture of a given civilization. Usually such sources are located in a core State or in civilizations' countries,

Armenia in that category. Huntington writes: "Russia remains one of the global civilization's core states that historically identifies with the Orthodox civilization. Up to now civilization includes such Orthodox Slavonic States as Belarus, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Serbia, such non-Slavic Orthodox States as Georgia, Armenia and Romania, as well as countries with mixed population, i.e. Orthodox and non-Orthodox, as Ukraine and Kazakhstan. As a core State, Russia bears main responsibility for preserving order and stability in the Orthodox States and countries"³⁰.

I believe it is appropriate also to quote here a relevant passage from his monograph. Huntington reports: "Some scholars distinguish the existence of a separate Orthodox civilization, centered in Russia, which differs from Western civilization by its Byzantine roots, 200 years of Tartar rule, bureaucratic despotism, and limited exposure to the Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, and restricted influence of other significant events, which took place in the West"³¹.

Huntington comes to those conclusions, in general, by applying the criteria that characterize cultures and civilizations. Huntington writes: "People identify themselves with the origin of religion, language, history, values, traditions and institutions. They identify themselves with cultural groups, tribes, ethnic groups, religious communities, nations and, at the broadest level, civilizations"³². Besides, according to Huntington, in the future the countries will align themselves by the features **of culture and civilization**, realizing, in particular, that "the differences between civilizations are extremely profound, and that civilizations are connected by common history, language, culture, traditions and, most importantly, by religion. Civilizations hold different views on the relations between God and man, citizen and state, parents and children, freedom and power, equality and subordination. Those differences are the results of centuries. They will not quickly disappear"³³.

Concluding that the present-day non-Western societies (states) become modernized, without becoming westernized, and increase their potential, Huntington writes: "The central axis of the world politics, most probably, will be the conflict between The West and The Rest and resistance put up by non-Western civilizations to strong West and its values"³⁴. In another place Huntington writes: "The central axis of post-Cold War world politics is the interaction of Western power and culture with the power and culture of non-Western civilizations"³⁵. Hence, the West will be forced to get adapted to those non-Western present-day civilizations, whose force will approximate to that of the West. Huntington believes: "Therefore, it is necessary to have better

i.e. in terms of culture in the most powerful and central country or countries (see the Russian edition of *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 203).

³⁰ Huntington S., *The Clash of Civilizations and What it Can Mean for Russia*, p. 135.

³¹ Huntington S., *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 57.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³³ Huntington S., *The Clash of Civilizations?*, p. 39.

³⁴ Huntington S., *The Clash of Civilizations?*, p. 39.

³⁵ Huntington S., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, p. 41.

knowledge of foundations of other civilizations, religions and philosophies as well as of the people's traditions and to distinguish common elements of the western and other civilizations"³⁶. At the same time Huntington shares his solidarity and sympathy with the view held by the European politician Jacques Delors that it becomes more obvious that "the future conflicts will be sparked by cultural factors rather than economics or ideology. The West should learn to get a profound understanding of the religious and philosophical underpinnings of other civilizations"³⁷.

It is clear, however, that not only the West, but any nation needs to understand the religious and philosophical underpinnings of other civilizations and to visualize its place in the Huntington's classification of civilizations. First of all, as that is a geopolitical concept par excellence. For example, the Russian political scientist Sergey Pereslegin finds that even though Huntington's book has certain traits of a scholarly work and all "the related features" of an essay, it should nevertheless be relegated to the field "of strategic studies." Pereslegin writes: "In fact, the matter concerns military and strategic planning that transcends its limits, with state/ethnic group playing a role of the smallest tactical unit"³⁸. Perhaps, this issue of cognition is topical, first of all, for those people that live to use Huntington's concept, on the "fault line" of civilizations. It is obvious that the Armenian nation fits into that category as its homeland, the Armenian Plateau, is situated at a crossroads of civilizations. That is why it is so important to regard the adequate placement of the "Armenian file" in Huntington's hypothesis framework as a strategic task.

B. "THE SPATIAL HOUSE" OF THE ARMENIAN CIVILIZATION

Within the framework of the interpellation the differentiation of the vital area, "spatial house" of the civilization (Huntington) gains importance, where the subject of the given civilization has created through centuries, and sometimes through millennia its "political house," have been endowed by the objective attributes of every civilization, religion, language, traditions, literature, institutions (Huntington). There he has fed his historical mission. In that sense, the history and the cultural development of Armenia, the unification of the Armenian civilization to the Armenian Plateau is impressive. Generalizing the information of the medieval maps, the well-known cartographer Rouben Galichian (England) underlines: "The geographical region of the Armenian Plateau and Armenian Highlands," the borders of which are "The Pontos Mountains, so called Small Caucasus, the Zagros Mountains reaching the west of the Lake Urmia and the Eastern Mountains of the South of the Lake Van or the Armenian Tavros, a territory

³⁶ The Clash of Civilizations? (Brief Russian-language version in USA: Economics, Politics, Ideology, 1994, N 3, p. 41.

³⁷ Huntington S., If Not Civilization, Then What?, p. 75.

³⁸ Pereslegin S., Afterword in About a Spectroscopy of Civilizations, or Russia on a Geopolitical Map of the World (Russian edition of The Clash of Civilizations), p. 579 (in Russian).

of about 400.000 km²³⁹. Afterwards: "In the maps the territory of Armenia is always noted from Virk and Aghuank to the south and passing from Arax reaches up to the west of Van, up to the Eastern Euphrates, thus, includes the territory of the Armenian Highlands. Until 1915, about three millennia, the inhabitants of the highlands, the Armenians, were centralized in this region. Armenia lost independence in the 11th century, however the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia followed it, which survived more than three centuries"⁴⁰.

Thus, differentiating the medieval cartography the geographical borders of the Armenian Plateau and identifying it with the location of the "Eden Garden,"⁴¹ in fact, outlines and demarcates the biological territory of "the Armenian civilization," distinctly also showing in its context other, "the contact zones" with Orthodox-Byzantium, perhaps Georgian, Iranian and Islamic civilizations.

We won't be mistaken, claiming that from the Golden Century up to Bagratid Armenia and the Cilician Armenia "Armenian civilization" reached its classical forms and manifestations. It is obvious that the Armenian civilization was developing on the basis of the "Armenian Christianity" and within its framework, when the latter "from the beginning of the fourth century gets its statehood, then in organized way becomes independent from the outer world, becomes feudalistic in the inner life, learns the forms and the rites of the organization of the Armenian pagan religion, gets nationalized in this way"⁴². In this way, it learnt "the organization of the Armenian pagan religion and its administrative situation and the state"⁴³.

The fact that Armenia could not restore its full sovereignty through centuries until the Genocide, essentially slowed down the development of the Armenian civilization, nevertheless, it could suspend its progress⁴⁴. It appeared to be that throughout the centuries the Armenian culture and civilization, almost independent of political ups and downs, got developed with their inner logic. What had been noticed during the Seljuk reign, evading the political administrative regime of the country (12th - 13th centuries)⁴⁵, became a sustainable tendency during the further centenaries. The Armenian clerical-political and intellectual elite reigned on this work style and got used to it.

What refers to the Armenians' "political house," then in the beginning a new period of preserving independent kingdoms, the restoration of the ministers' system and the

³⁹ Galichian R., The countries south to Caucasus in the medieval maps: Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, Yerevan-London, 2007, p. 18.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p.89.

⁴¹ See the Bible. Old and New Testament, Holy Echmiadzin, 1994, Book of Genesis 2, 8-15.

⁴² Gyouzalian G., Historical Problems, Beirut, 1985, p. 65 (in Arm.).

⁴³ Ibid., p.84.

⁴⁴ See about this Shant L., The Independence as a Demand of the National Existence in Levon Shant, Works, Beirut, 1948, vol. 5, pp.161-225 (in Arm.); Gyouzalian G., The Big Jubilee: on the occasion of the 1500th anniversary of the Armenian translation of the Bible, Historical Problems, Beirut, 1985, p. 49-105 (in Arm.).

⁴⁵ See Yuzbashian K. N., The Armenian State of the Bagratunid Era and Byzantium in the 9th-11th centuries, Moscow, 1988, pp. 233-235 (in Russian).

Armenian statehood and for providing different degrees of sovereignty in different regions of Armenia in the uninterrupted and stubborn struggle, up to the Armenian revolution and freedom fighting was developed. In that sense, the political history of Armenia everlastingly turned into the history of preservation and strengthening of the national self-sovereignty, the history of the Armenian civilization's stable and uninterrupted evolution.

C. MONOPHYSITISM AS A STARTING POINT FOR UNDERSTANDING

It is a fact universally acknowledged that alongside Catholicism and Protestantism, the Orthodoxy is a part of Christianity. It designates local, autonomous national churches or two major families of Eastern Christendom, viz. the Oriental Orthodox Churches (Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Holy Church, Assyrian Orthodox Church, Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Coptic Orthodox Church and Malabar Assyrian Orthodox Church of India) and Orthodox Chalcedonite Churches. The latter are also called Greek Orthodox since they originate from the Greek or Byzantine Church, and they have the same church traditions, rites and similar hierarchy structure. Even though today the Orthodox Churches include national traditions, languages and features, all of them, however, have the same historical origins in the Byzantine Orthodox Christianity. They emerged in the 9th-11th centuries as autocephalous, Chalcedonite churches and go by the name of Orthodox (Eastern Dyophysite) churches. (The Georgian Church was established earlier; however, in 608 it separated from the Armenian Church and started to get closer to the Byzantine Church in terms of creed.) The Oriental Dyophysite Church recognizes the authority of seven Ecumenical Councils and their doctrinal definitions, whereas the Catholic Church recognizes twenty. These two branches recognize the dual nature of Christ, i.e. Divine and Human that exist "inseparably but without merging." By clearly drawing a distinction between the Divine and the Human in Christ, the Dyophysitism thus ruled out the opportunity of deification of the Human. Hence, God remained merely as an object of worship. On the other hand, a man was put where he belonged and the framework of his competence was limited⁴⁶. And in general, the Armenian Catholicos Karekin II states a historical reality when he says that if "in the western part of the East the Byzantine Church served as a **Mother Church** for the **Orthodox** churches that were spawned in it, Armenian Church was in the same position in the eastern part of the East (in the South-Eastern section of Asia Minor) and had the same special role of a central institution in the life of Eastern churches"⁴⁷.

The Armenian Apostolic Church, protecting its spiritual independence, which, by the way, was founded earlier than the Byzantine Church and was the latter's opponent after the Council of Chalcedon (451). After that Council the Armenian Church has not

⁴⁶ For more detailed treatment see Mirzoyan H., Religious and Doctrine Struggle and the Armenian Philosophical Thought, Armenian philosophy in the system of spiritual culture. Methodological issues of the Armenian history of philosophy (Ed. by S. Arevshatian), Yerevan, 1992, pp. 69-81 (in Arm.).

⁴⁷ Catholicos Karekin II. The Armenian Church "as a service institution", Antilias, 1994, p. 157 (in Arm.).

recognized the decisions made by subsequent Ecumenical Councils and accepted **Monophysitism** that regards Christ as God's indivisible nature. The Christological doctrine of the Armenian Church defends Monophysitism and places a greater stress on Christ's divine aspect; however, by saying "one nature," it does not construe that as only the Divine nature disregarding the Human one. Catholicos Hovhannes III from Odzun writes about the true faith of the Armenian, hereby, Apostolic Church, "Christ is neither merely a man, nor merely God but at the same time God and man"⁴⁸. And recognizing the unity of the Divine and the Human, a Monophysite church awakens a person's self-confidence in terms of his potential and abilities and instills hope of reaching the Divine and a wish and will do so. Hence, it deifies man⁴⁹. The Russian writer, translator and scholar V. Mikushevich believes that the selection of "Monophysitism" by the Armenian Church has had an impact on the unique features of the Armenian culture. Mikushevich generalizes, "Armenia not only did not seclude itself in its church isolation but, on the contrary, displayed **a true universal scope of creative aspirations** (emphasis is mine - L. Sh.), by reflecting in a unique fashion all those spiritual tendencies that were discernible from India to the Pyrenean Peninsula"⁵⁰.

Let us have a close look at those statements.

Fridtjof Nansen's observations concerning Cilician Armenia, the Armenian Church (and its creed) and connections between the Armenian and the world architecture are important as significant evidence. Nansen writes, "Even though surrounded by enemies, Cilicia was able to preserve its independence in the face of increasing strength of Turks and Byzantine's encroachments for three centuries. The Cilician Armenians, too, disregard the cajolery and threats of the Greek-Byzantine and Roman Churches. Like Armenians in Greater Armenia (emphasis is by L. Sh.), they remained loyal to their Monophysite creed and preserved their Church"⁵¹. It seems that H. Gevorgian, one of the best experts in the philosophy of culture, Member of the Armenian Academy of Sciences, bore in mind the issue in question, when he wrote that in early second millennium Armenia "conditioned by the preservation and strengthening of the national identity... was one of those few countries that retained the culture of the Antiquity and undertook a unique combination of the latter with Christianity" and that "having the same foundation of the combination of the culture of Antiquity and Christianity, the Armenian culture unfolded itself in a whole multitude of cultural forms that were in harmony with the European civilization ... as well as in the legal and statehood forms of the

⁴⁸ St. Hovhannes from Odzun, Against the Illusories, Gandzasar, Theological Journal, Yerevan, 2002, vol. 7, p. 268 (in Arm.).

⁴⁹ Comprehensive Notion and Information about the Armenian Church, see Ter-Mikelian A., The Christian of the Armenian Holy Church. Manual of Faith, Holy Echmiadzin, 2007, p. 592 (in Arm.); Ormanian Archbishop Maghakia, The Armenian Church, Yerevan, 1993, p. 287 (in Arm.).

⁵⁰ Mikushevich, V., A Healing Light ("Book of Lamentations, Grigor of Narek"), Bulletin of Yerevan State University, 1981/3, p. 62 (in Russian).

⁵¹ Nansen F., The Deceived Nation: Investigative Trips of the High Commissioner of the League of Nations to Georgia and Armenia. Yerevan, 2002, p. 223, translated from German (the Armenian edition).

organization of public life (we'll recall, perhaps, here how harmoniously the Cilician Armenia entered into the universe of the European nations)"⁵². In the light of what has been said above, the statement that the "unique process of development of the Armenian nation has had an essential impact not only on the Byzantine"⁵³ but also on the West European culture"⁵⁴ and that, in particular, "the Gothic style that is one of the significant achievements of the medieval world culture, had experienced certain influence at its initial stage" from the Armenian culture"⁵⁵ becomes even more credible and convincing.

C. CILICIA AS A WINDOW BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA

From the perspective of covering the issue of a civilizational "affiliation" of the Armenian nation, the assessment of the historical role and the clarification of the position of Cilician Armenia (1080-1375), undoubtedly, have left an essential trace on the development of the Armenian spiritual culture"⁵⁶. It is well known that in the Middle Ages a transit trade and economic contact (why not also spiritual communication) between the West and East on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean took place in the territory of the so-called Lesser Armenia, i.e. Cilicia"⁵⁷. It is noteworthy that starting from the 11th century, the Armenian Cilician State had close ties with the Crusaders and, through them, with Western Europe. The Pope Gregory III says in his official epistle *Eglesia Romana* in 1384: "When Christian princes and armies went to win back the Holy Land, no nation or people would so enthusiastically rush to help with people, food, horses and advice as Armenians. They did their best and helped Christians in that holy war with their great courage and loyalty"⁵⁸.

Naturally, the Cilician Armenian State was not immune to the European influences. Starting particularly from the reign of Levon II, Cilicia strengthened its economic ties with the European countries. V. M. Kyurkchian writes: "The political organization of the State, the administrative and other positions, as well as, the gate to the royal court were modeled after Europe. The number of marriages between the Armenian and European

⁵² See Gevorgian H., *The Adoption of Christianity in Armenia from the Perspective of the History of Philosophy, Philosophy, History, Culture*, Yerevan, 2005, p.94-95 (in Arm.). For the Wide Context of the Position of the Problem see Gevorgian H., *Armenia and Europe: The History of Armenia and the Armenian Culture under the Light of Modern Historiographical and Political Theories*, Vem, 2009, April - June, p. 26-46 (in Arm.).

⁵³ In particular, About the History and Civilization of Byzantine, Byzantine-Armenia Multilateral Connections see Dil Charles, *The Problems of the History of Byzantine* (in Arm., trans. from French), Yerevan, p.400 and Hrach M. Bartikian's Preface "Charles Dil" (pp. 5-25).

⁵⁴ Nansen F., *The Deceived Nation*, p. 229.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.234.

⁵⁶ See in detail Mikayelian G.G., *History of the Cilician Armenian State* (trans. into Armenian from Russian), Yerevan, 2007, p. 552 and Mutafian K., *In the Crossroads of the Cilician Emperors* (trans. into Arm. from French), Yerevan, 2001, p. 632.

⁵⁷ See Marco Polo. *Travels*, Leningrad, 1940, p. 17 (in Russian).

⁵⁸ See Morgan Jacques de, *The History of Armenia: From the Most Precise Times of Its History Till Our Days* (trans. from French), Boston, 1947, p. 304.

princely families increased and many places of learning were established by local and Roman clergymen⁵⁹. It might come as a surprise to a person who is not aware of those historical facts but it is a reality that relations between Europe and Armenia, in this particular case between Europe and Cilicia, were marked by mutual influence. Famous historian René Grousset reported that “the accord (between the Crusaders and Cilicia - L. Sh.) was immediate and long-term and the relations were anchored in equality. The ties between princes were constant. In fact, the 10th century Roman East was the Franco-Armenian East”⁶⁰.

Another author, Paul de Véou, addressing the issue of help given by Armenians to Crusaders in their war for Holy Sepulcher, wrote thus, “Armenia was a godmother of France (marraine) in Asia”⁶¹. It was those processes that made the Armenian scholar to conclude that the general development of Cilicia was taking place under the crisscross influences⁶².

It is obvious that a class of the Armenian merchants contributed to those “**crisscross influences**,” especially in the 15th-17th centuries. In fact, that class was performing the function of a connecting ring between East and West. Fernand Braudel remarked that this class took into its own hands the control over a huge flow of goods from Europe to the Ottoman Empire. The heads of those cart caravans, the so-called **caravan bashis**, were always Armenians. Fernand Braudel confirms, via a rhetorical question, “Hasn’t that cargo transportation flow brought together into a single whole the huge areas, no more, no less, than East and West?..”⁶³.

D. MECHITARISTS AS A SPIRITUAL MENTAL (EUROASIAN) BRIDGE OF ARMENIA

It should be confirmed that the spiritual and cultural connection of the Armenian people with Europe has become even closer from the 18th century on due to the efforts of the Mechitarists, the Congregation that was founded by Manuk Mekhitar from Svaz (Sebasteia) and that is still in existence. At first Mekhitar and his followers operated in Istanbul and then in Mora. In 1715 they moved to Venice, settled down in the Saint Lazarus Island and built a magnificent monastery. In 1712 the Mechitarists accepted the patronage of the Roman Catholic Church, which, however, did not prevent them from maintaining their ties with the Armenian people. The prolific activities of the Mechitarists stimulated the renaissance of the Armenian culture, national mentality and self-recognition. At the same time, the European lyric poetry, science and culture became accessible to the Armenians due to their highly skilled translations. Their translations

⁵⁹ Kyurkchian, V.M., *Armenian Cilicia*, New York, 1919, p. 13 (in Arm.).

⁶⁰ See Catholicos Karekin II, “The Armenian Church” as a service institution”, p. 151.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

⁶² See Gabrielian H., *History of the Armenian philosophical thought*. Yerevan, 1958, vol. 2, p. 110 (in Arm.).

⁶³ Braudel F., *The Material Civilization, Economics and Capitalism in the 15th-18th centuries* (trans. into Russian from French), Moscow, 1988, vol. 2, p. 146.

from the Armenian also made a contribution to the European culture. This is a classical example of cultural adequate connections, civilizations, in this case, even a dialogue of sister civilizations.

THE MISSION OF ARMENIA

Casting a glance to the Armenian fatal year of 301 Levon Shant, the greatest connoisseur of the political history of Armenia and the benefactor of the Armenian culture and civilization, wrote: "The year of 300 of Christ is the year of our siege, when the Armenian people will become a leading position with the besieged East: a Christian cape stuck first in the Zoroastrian, finally moreover in the Muslim sea. Until the mid of the 11th century the overflow of the Turanian tribes will cut the root of the cape from the West, and the Armenian people (Armenia - L. Sh.) will become a perfect island in that Turanian-Muslim sea. Every dramatic side of our life and luck is already right there"⁶⁴. In reality, on this objective basis the uninterrupted evolution of the inclusive life of Armenia, the uninterrupted flight of culture-civilization, as well as the shocking ups and downs up to the tragic 1915, took place.

Exactly 73 years ago after the proposition of Huntington's hypothesis, on June 1, 1920 during the discussion of Armenia's care in the USA Senate the Senator elected from Arkansas Joseph Robinson declared that if the Congress refuses President Wilson's proposal, then "the Christianity" (read the Western civilization - L. Sh.) in its Eastern front will get crushing blow." On the same objective basis, however, during the centuries, Armenia built its mission. "Armenia is the vanguard of Europe in Asia," long ago that proposed resolution rightly defines the Armenian people's situation in our world, Valery Brusov wrote in the tragic 1916. The Armenian people's mission, which prompts the whole procedure of its development, has been, has sought and obtained the comparison of the East and West"⁶⁵. That is, "seek and show to the world the comparison of the two eternal beginnings - the West and East, with which the whole humanity lives, and which are vividly expressed with their cooperation in the History of Armenia. To reconcile them in the high unity... is the implementation of the historical mission of the whole Armenian people"⁶⁶.

V. Brusov clarifies that Armenia in the same 1916 "is called, as fate willed it, to serve a conciliator of two different cultures: the one, on which basis the whole Christian West grew, and the one that in our days is presented by the Muslim East"⁶⁷. Hence, "The historical mission of the Armenian people should be recognized as the search of comparison of those two ancient conflicting beginnings... the cooperation of the East and West, Asia and Europe in Armenia (V. Brusov)⁶⁸.

⁶⁴ Shant L., *The Independence as a Demand of the National Existence*, Yerevan, 1991, p. 190.

⁶⁵ *Poetry of Armenia*, edited by Valery Brusov, Yerevan, 1966, p. 27 (in Russian).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

Thus, the historical events and even their brief analysis prove that it is not right to place the Armenian people and in particular Armenia into a category of the “Orthodox-Slavic civilization.” That conflicts both with historical facts and with the Armenian cultural and civilizational identity. That identity is, for sure, one of the branches of the Western Christian civilization, which is missing from the Huntington’s classification.

P.S. *Huntington himself demonstrates a historical approach in defining the Western civilization and from that perspective he assesses the territory of the Catholic Church in the process of the emergence and evolution of the Western civilization. However, those features do not become essential in his conceptual framework for defining the Western civilization proper.*