

PARADISE LOST

The Phenomenon of the Kura-Araxes Tradition along the Fertile Crescent

A collection of papers honouring
Ruben S. Badalyan on the
occasion of his 65th birthday

edited by

Aram Kosyan, Pavel Avetisyan,
Kristine Martirosyan-Olshansky,
Arsen Bobokhyan and Yervand Grekyan

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Ruben S. Badalyan

Foreword

Ruben S. Badalyan, a leading specialist in prehistoric archaeology of the Caucasus region, was born on September 23, 1957 in Yerevan. He obtained his Master of Arts in History from Yerevan State University in 1979. Upon completion of his studies, he began working at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography (IAE) of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR and in 2007 he was appointed as the Head of the Department of Early Archaeology of the IAE NAS RA, a role he continues to perform to date.

Ruben Badalyan obtained his Ph.D. in 1986 from IAE with the dissertation topic '*The Early Bronze Age Culture of the Shirak Plain (North-Western Armenia)*'. The study was conducted under the supervision of the well-known archaeologist Prof. Telemek Khachatryan. In 2003 he received his Dr. Habil. degree from the same Institute with the topic '*Obsidian of the Caucasus: Sources and Distribution of the Raw Material during the Neolithic-Early Iron Ages (Based on the Results of Neutron Activation Analyses)*'.

During his professional career Dr. Badalyan led various archaeological expeditions, among which the following projects are particularly worth mentioning: excavations at the Early Bronze Age site of Karnut, Northwestern Armenia (1981-2021); excavations at the Late Bronze / Early Iron Age cemetery of Horom, Northwestern Armenia (1987-1989); joint Armenian-American and Armenian-American-German excavations at Horom (IPARC – International Program of Anthropological Research in the Caucasus, co-directed by Ph. Kohl (Wellesley College, USA) and S.E. Kroll (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, München), 1990-1997); joint Armenian-French excavations at Neolithic settlement of Aratashen in Ararat Valley (1999-2004, co-director P. Lombard, Maison de l'Orient Méditerranéen, Lyon); expedition at the Neolithic settlement of Aknashen in Ararat Valley (2004-2022); joint Armenian-American project for the archaeology and geography of ancient Transcaucasian societies (ARAGATS); systematic archaeological survey and excavations in the Tsaghkahovit region, Republic of Armenia (1998-2022, co-director A.T. Smith); joint Armenian-French excavations at Kura-Araxes site of Voskeblur in Ararat Valley (2020-2022, co-director B. Perello, CNRS, Archéorient, Lyon). The excavations of the mentioned sites have been supported by local and international grants, among which the International Collaborative Research Grant (INTAS), the Smithsonian Institution International Collaborative Research Grant, the Wenner-Gren International Collaborative Research Grant, the Project Discovery Research Grant, the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus Collaborative Heritage Management Grant, and the Research Grants of State Committee of Science of Republic of Armenia are particularly worthy of a mention.

Scientific interests of Dr. Badalyan, well known for his strict methodological approach to archaeological research and perfect excavation methods, deal with the common problems of Neolithic and Chalcolithic, Bronze and Iron Age societies of

Armenia and the South Caucasus. Among 100 publications in Armenian, Russian, and English languages worth mentioning are his four monographs dedicated to the excavations and surveys in various regions of Armenia, as well as those dedicated to the history of research. Among these are: ‘*A Bronze and Early Iron Age Archaeological Sites in Armenia. I. Mt. Aragats and its Surrounding Region*’, British Archaeological Reports, International Series 1697, Oxford, Archaeopress, 2007 (co-author P. Avetisyan); ‘*The Archaeology and Geography of Ancient Transcaucasian Societies. Volume I. The Foundations of Research and Regional Survey in the Tsaghkahovit Plain, Armenia*’, Oriental Institute Publications, Volume 134, Chicago, University Press, 2009 (co-authors A.T. Smith and P. Avetisyan); ‘*Shengavit. Catalogue of Archaeological Materials from the Collections of the History Museum of Armenia*’, Yerevan, History Museum of Armenia, 2015 (co-authors S. Hovsepyan, L. Khachatryan, in Russian); and ‘*The Neolithic Settlement of Aknashen (Ararat Valley, Armenia)*’, Oxford, Archaeopress, 2022 (co-authors Ch. Chataigner and A. Harutyunyan). Dr. Badalyan is also the editor of various books and periodicals, among which especially worth mentioning are the volumes ‘*Ancient Culture of Armenia*’ published by the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography and Yevgeni Bayburtyan’s long ago written and unpublished study ‘*Sequence of the Ancient Cultures of Armenia based on Archaeological Material*’ (Yerevan, History Museum of Armenia, 2011).

Scientific problems reflected in the mentioned and many other publications have been presented by Dr. Badalyan at numerous conferences both in Yerevan and worldwide (Tbilisi, Erzurum, Lyon, Toronto, Frankfurt, New York, etc.).

Dr. Badalyan is also dedicated to disseminating his wealth of knowledge and experience to the younger generation. Since 2008 he has been lecturing on archaeology at the Yerevan State University. Among other international universities, in 2007 he was a visiting professor at the University of Chicago in the United States of America.

In 2021 Dr. Badalyan was elected Correspondent Member of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI).

Among many scientific interests of Dr. Badalyan, the study of the Kura-Araxes culture is perhaps closest to his hearth. He has dedicated most of his professional life and efforts to the investigations of this unique phenomenon of the Early Bronze Age. There is no doubt, that Dr. Badalyan ranks among the leading experts of this tradition and, thus, it is not by accident that this festschrift volume has gathered twenty-six contributions by established and emerging specialists from France, Germany, Italy, the USA, Canada, Israel, Turkey, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Georgia, and Armenia to discuss the problems of that cultural phenomenon, and in doing so it honors Ruben Badalyan’s multifaceted and extensive scientific contribution to the field of Armenian archaeology.

Volume Editors
Yerevan March 2022