INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM
(linguistic and historical origins, formation, conception)

"I learnt the language of the Armenians... to understand the language of gods... as Armenian is the language to speak with gods... and Armenia is the homeland of gods... and gods are from the Ararat plain...
God spoke to the world in Armenian. Armenian is the language to speak with God."
(George Byron)

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Abstract

The research findings reveal the profound structure, form and content of the virtual temple of knowledge – the language – as a cognitive and linguistic depository, where encoded cluster database of knowledge is stored. The methodology of the research includes comparative and historical linguistic description, linguistic typology and contrasting the achieved results with historical records and the archetypal mythopoetic and religious notions and motifs, as well as with the concepts of Metaphysics and Natural Philosophy.

Typological characteristics of the studied issues are considered in the aspect of cultural anthropology. The interdisciplinary cluster analysis of the issues under the study identifies universal linguistic categories, worldview values and their cause-effect relations.

Key words: independence, freedom, vanakvisl, va (wa)/vi (wi), vishap, cap, vahagn, cognitive science, etymology.

Instead of Introduction

In his report "Ethnogenesis of the early Slavs" the Member of the Academy of Sciences V. Sedov mentions, that the division of the Proto-Indo-European language was a multi-course process, extending over thousands of years. In the first phase the Anatolians became isolated and developed an original ethno-linguistic formation, followed by the Indo-Aryans, the Iranians, the Armenians, the Greeks, the Thracians and the Tocharians" [1].

A number of revealed language convergences and parallels in the archetypes and fundamental mythopoetic concepts and motifs, undoubtedly, indicate contacts between the ancient Armenians and not yet separated European tribes of South-Eastern Europe (Old Europe) and Anatolia. The formed linguistic community determines the root of the Armenian and European cultural and historical ecumene, as a distribution area of petroglyphs on the Araratian Mountains, which generally corresponds to linguistic (language) and archaeological data [2, 3].

Etymological Origin

Both Armenian and world scientific literature, as well as the traditions of mythological and prehistoric thinking outline an imprecise, inaccurate correlation of the archetype *dragon/vishap* and the notions *independence* and *freedom*. Neither is provided a scientifically valid etymological origin, forming the basis of the origin of words under the study. The experts stem them to loanwords in Persian and/or Indian languages [4]. Though, the indisputable fact is that

formation of these categories is based on inter-transitional forms of the fundamental motif of the plot scheme.

In mythological worldview the son of the sun fights a dragon – water absorber. A similar motif scheme, which opposes the serpent (embodying the forces of destruction) to the dragonslyer, forms the basis of old Armenian mythological motif in the song "The Birth of Vahagn". The serpent signifies the forces of evil and destruction, embodying the illusion to influence and danger to control man and his fate.

Freedom (semantic personification of access to the source of water, life) presupposes restriction of external influence: in this particular case the dragonslyer makes the influence of the serpent undergo hypertrophy, transforming it into water, and thus liberating the humankind from the threatening force of destruction. The initial concepts of influence are concentrated in a unified nonsegmented category. Constant inter-transition and interchange between the material and spiritual domains circulate within this category.

Independence (semantic personification of free access to the source of water, life) denotes the absence of necessity to fight the enemy, the forces of nature to access the source of life, water (river, lake, sea).

Mythological thinking is considered not as a purpose, but as a premise, revealing and interpreting the objective reality using the categories of earlier formed worldview layers.

The studies stretch beyond the boundaries of descriptive science, presenting "genetic" approach of detecting the structured system of proto-knowledge (Metaphisics): their contiguity, cohesion and persistency are presented in the form of a structured spiral of transitional knowledge, transformed from one form into another, but preserving the fundamental "gene" of proto-thinking. Thus the boundaries of contrastive analysis are greatly broadened contiguous to studying the universals of the cultural heritage.

The research findings show that the etymology of the notions *independence* and *freedom* stem to the Old Armenian language, as the corresponding arguments provide proof of their formation in the result of thinking process of a prehistoric man undergoing the influence of natural phenomena peculiar to the volcanic Araratian Mountains [3, 5].

In the Beginning was the Word…

We consider the semantic features of the words under the study in three-dimensional subdivision. 1. The word **aqua** comprises *aq/ak meaning *circle* (symbol of the source[1]) and *ua meaning *water* (cf. *ua(rartu) or **Vaspurakan** – the Garden of Eden with sources of the four rivers). 2. ***Visl'** denotes *river:* ***vi** is the transitional form of *va as a result of substitution. 3. The word **vishap** (*višap*) comprises two source roots: ***vi/s** (*vi*) and **"šap"** (*shap*)[2]. "Vishap" is related to its two components – *water* (river) and *shap* (Armenian ***shapik** – *shap* + diminutive *ik* – meaning "shirt/jacket", "straitjacket", "shell"; cf. Armenian ***sapor** and Greek ***krater***; lava* – **lav* + **va* – meaning *"life-giving water"*). As the sign system elements are in constant interrelation within inner components [6], the units of the word system relate directly to both a sign and to each other, all three systems form a distinctive trinity - triangle. Thus, vishap is a personification, associative model of river (volcanic lava), which correlates with water and its shape; it envelopes, absorbs water (the body of a dragon).

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[1] The results of the rock art studies with similar semantics on the territory of Old Armenia are presented [5].

[2] The etymology of this word stems to the earlier form vēšap, Indo-European ***viš** - "poison", "bane" (cf. Sanskrit "víṣa") and ***ap(a)** - "water" (gen., pl. "apur" cf. Armenian ***apur**).

In most Indo-European languages the semantic core of the archetype of the dragonslyer is implemented in a number of notions, such as *"fight, struggle, kill, hit, smite"* (cf. Russian *drakonoborets*, English *dragonslayer*, German *drachentöter*, etc.) implying the "final" stage, static death, rest. In Armenian *vishapaqagh* (*višapaqagh* – Armenian dragonslyer) comprises "*višap*" and "*qagh*"[3]. Armenian ***qagh** (cf. Indo-European *"squel"*, *"sk'el"* and Armenian *"hskel"* – "*control, supervise*") is translated as *"hew, cut, divide, break through"*.

The study of the root verb ***kagh** is of particular interest: in Armenian language we distinguish the following meanings: *acquire, obtain, conquer, collect, accumulate*. They contain tacit positive marking and modality, which imply the meanings *"acquire/obtain sth. for further usage"*. Vahagn the Dragonslyer not only fights the dragon, but also "hews/unfolds" it, liberating water.

A number of Indo-European languages depict the concept of dragon in the similar root-forms *дракон-dragon-drachen-δράκος,* etc. This phenomenon forms a semantic lacuna: it is impossible to explicate through linguistic analysis the existence of transitional forms of transformations of a dragon/vishap into a serpent (and vice versa) in the main mythological motifs. The analysis of forms under the study in the Armenian language illustrates a paradigm of such substitutions. Consider the above-mentioned word ***vishap**: its component *iš* (ij) denotes the meanings *"serpent/snake, harmful/deleterious"* (also *odz*) in Armenian language, and the phono-root *v-* implies the marking *"superlative, too"*.

According to R. Adjarian, the Armenian words *odz*[4] *and iš* (*ēguhi - angu(h)i, eguhi, oguhi, eg'hi*) are the branches of the same root-word of Proto-Indo-European language [7]. The Armenian words *patij* (punishment), *vijak* (flow, water stream), *vrijavar* (yearning for revenge) with a unified semantic core and cognitive layer are of particular interest.

A number of linguists interpret the word *odzik* (Armenian *collar*) considering the root *odz as its basis. In the Armenian language the word **qarb** is also used in the meaning of "snake/serpent", derived from *krp, skrp, ker(el), sker* meaning "cut, slice, hew" (cf. Old Indian *krpana* – sword). The word form *(s)ker(p)* stems to Old Armenian *qer(t/ts)* and *qer(b/p) - "scrape, graze"*). The Indo-European *k/kw* transforms into *q* in the beginning of the word (exception: before "e/i"), and *p* acquires sonority after *r*, transforming into *b*.

By a parallel argument we can expose the Armenian word **hreštak**: *hur/hr* (Armenian "*fire, flame*") + *eš/iš* + *tak/tāk* (Armenian *"bottom, under"*, Old Armenian *"qagh"*) – "fighting the fiery serpent/evil". Taking into account the fact, that Jesus Christ instructed his disciples to acquire for him a donkey (Armenian "*eš/iš*") and he rides the donkey reaching the gates of Old Jerusalem, which symbolizes the old motif of taming/fighting a serpent (transformed into a fiery dragon, bull or donkey), which are identified in the Armenian rock art. Riding the donkey, he subdues the evil forces.

Every logical construction of the consequences of catastrophic volcanic eruptions in the ethnic traditions of cultural thinking in the cognitive paradigm of Old Armenian language reveals an invariant, cognitive algorithm of word formation as a result of typological, artistic and

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[3]In the Armenian language the Indo-European root with dual representation *"k/sk"* with transitional *"s"* in the beginning of the word is transformed from *"k"* into *"q"*.

[4] In diverse dialects is represented in the forms "*eots, eos, uts, okhts, aghdz*".

linguistic observation, examination and description of natural processes, e.g. presenting the formation process of the word **crater**[5] (cf. Armenian *"sapor"*).

Dragon-Stone – Vishapakar

Similarly, for its form and content function a vishapakar (dragon-stone)[6] with a relief depiction of a dragon is a product of native Armenian origin. It typically depicts a head of a heavenly dragon/vishap (Fig. 1) hanging atop. It shoots out flame and symbolizes water streams after the battle and victory over the dragon [5]. Its capsule tears and water streams release, fall, erupt on the earth, forming rivers and lakes. The same phenomena are observed in living organisms: the winged arrow of a hunter hits a victim, and blood flows from the body of the animal like river stream colored into red (color of blood/lava).

Fig. 1. Vishapakars in Armenia.

The Armenian word **karmir** (Armenian *red*, cf. *aryun* meaning *blood*) consists of two bases **kar* and **mir (kare mrvats)* meaning *"a stone colored in red"*. The figurative perception of *karmir* stems to the constituents **k/qar* (Armenian *stone*), which is colored in blood color (cf. *kare mrvats*) after an animal (deer, goat) is injured in the mountainous regions of Armenia. Later the associative field of a word extends to the concept of **vordan karmir** – Ararat/Armenian cochineal[7] – a scale insect indigenous to the Ararat plain and Aras (Araks) River valley in the Armenian Highlands which was formerly used in Old Armenia to produce an eponymous warm crimson carmine dyestuff (cf. Sanskrit **krmi* (worm) and **jan* (arise/appear, source).

Cinnabar (Old Greek κιννάβαρι, Latin cinnabari) refers to the most common source ore for refining elemental mercury, and is the historic source for the brilliant red or crimson/scarlet pigment, associated with blood stains (Fig. 2). Cinnabar generally occurs as a vein-filling mineral associated with recent volcanic activity. According to some sources, the Greek word for cinnabar, most likely applied by Theophrastus [8], derives from Old Persian *shangarf* (Arabicized as *zinjifrah*) meaning *"dragon blood"*. According to the authors, cinnabar acquired

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[5] Greek vase used for watering down wine. It resembles a volcanic crater.

[6] Vishap-stone (vishapakar) – basalt stele "vishap", peculiar to the Old Armenian cultural tradition.

[7] Cochineal is a scale insect, from which the natural dye carmine was derived. It lives on the roots of Aeluropus (Armenian "vordan khot") and Phragmites (Phragmites australis).

its name due to its peculiar crimson/scarlet color – *krmi*, which is also identified in the transformed figurative form of dragon blood, due to its volcanic origin. Armenian **khruk** (cinnabar) corresponds to the Old Armenian root *kr/ker* and diminutive form *uk*. The fact that the Ancient Armenians used diminutive compound in the word indicates that this people, inhabiting the mountainous region (the Armenian Highlands), had comprehensive basic understanding of the classification of rocks and minerals and their properties. The Armenian folk saying "there is blood in a stone" may be correlated with cinnabar.

Fig. 2. Cinnabar, "Minerals in Your World" project, the United States Geological Survey and the Mineral Information Institute.

Cinnabar was formerly used both as a source for red dyestuff and means of treatment. According to the authors, the legendary princess Medea of Colchis used this mineral to produce a healing and protective unguent for Jason, eponymously called "blood of Prometheus" [9]. Ancient civilizations believed in the existence of the elixir of youth and eternal life. Of particular interest is the fact that the Chinese Emperor Qin Shi Huang died after drinking the elixir of immortality containing mercury [10]. Armenian flower *hamaspyur* was used for medicinal purposes known to A. Shirakatsi [11].

Volcanic Eruption

During a volcanic eruption (Fig. 3) magma or lava were colored in white depending on the pressure, the composition of its components and respective conditions; bubbles, formed as a result of gas release from magma, resemble the Armenian bread **lavash** (Armenian *lav* and *ash/el* meaning *"look at lava"*). This bread is baked in the oven, set up in the ground in the image and likeness of a volcanic crater (Armenian *ojakh*, cf. Russian *hearth*). In the Armenian language *lav* has the meaning *"good/fine, kind"*, and *va/wa* – *"water"*. Thus, in cognition of ancient people there was a model transformation of the feature of the same object (*lava*) in the image of the source (water). Frequently, after volcanic eruptions, water sources, rivers are formed on the earth surface. Groundwater, protected in the form of a vishap (body filled with water - blood), flows out of the life-giving source.

Fig. 3. Volcanic eruptions (source: internet resources)

Persistent associations are formed in the genetic perception of the people: volcanic eruptions and fatal lava flow were presented in the form of a dragon/serpent, which crawled out of its house, as a rule, atop the crater or from the bottom of lake/sea (Fig. 3). In mythological motifs, killing a dragon/vishap, the old heroes liberated houses/mountains, lakes/seas, water sources. It should be considered, that horizontally standing basalt **fish-vishaps** (Fig. 4) embodied groundwater volcanoes, and vertically standing steles – **mountain and heavenly vishaps** (Fig. 1). Smoke clouds, incandescent rocks, ash reached the heaven and then rain flew, liberated from the heavenly vishap – water (cf. "blood", flowing out of the body of the heavenly dragon), forming rivers, water sources, lakes, supplying seas and oceans, etc.

The word **dragon** comprises two roots: *dr (Armenian *dur meaning "door" or *dir meaning "found/establish, put") and *ak (Armenian circle – water source). Thus, a dragon is identified with a door, a "path", overcoming which involves the road (opportunity to get water, source of life).

Fig. 4. Fish – vishap, bazalt, Armenia

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This is the cognitive value of the Armenian cultural thinking, ethno-cognitive description, modeling, exposition and interpretation of natural processes, description of the forces of nature, with which a man was fighting in the volcanic Araratian Mountains. He called himself "*(Es) hay em*" meaning "*I am a thinking and cultivated man, aspiring to freedom and independence, struggling for my human rights*". Under the conditions of a catastrophic volcanic eruptions, the man first perceived the essence and content of the necessity to fight the forces of nature, and proposed the concept of two interrelated archetypes –"*the tree of life*" and "*the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*" (Fig. 5).

Good ensures life, the acquisition of knowledge, water, fire in the hearth. Evil is the dragon/vishap, guarding access to this source, boisterous fire, lava, destroying life.

Fig. 5. Depiction of the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Urartu (Ararat)

The knowledge of good and evil suggests worldview formation, gaining knowledge, skills and abilities to rule the four forces of nature, getting fire and water, etc.

Independence

Ankakh should be translated from Armenian and interpreted as the way (path) leading to "achieving immortality", freedom and independence. The root **vis* (Old Icelandic *river, water*)[8], having sacral meaning, forms the basis of the word "independence". The denotative marker is the condition of immortality – "*ankakhutyun*" and is associated with the forces of good and light, getting water, liberating water and its sources from the forces of evil – the dragon/vishap.

In cognition of the ancient people who gained cultural skills, the symbol of fertility, water, is associated with the feminine principle. In Old Armenian/pagan mythology it is transformed into the concept of beautiful Astghik (Armenian "*little star*") – the symbol of love and fertility, granting the people birth of a boy (Armenian *tgha/tghik* meaning "boy").

Vahagn, beloved of Astghik[9], is a knight and a hero, personifying the forces of good, liberating water. The dragonslyer hero (vishapaqagh) fights and kills the dragon/vishap (forces of fire, death, compiling the notion of a volcanic eruption), symbolizing a "straitjacket" for the forces of fire, death and chaos.

Saying "Vahagn", exult Armenia, the country that gained independence, we imply the paradigm of being in the linguistic construction: **agn* denotes fire, implemented in the name of

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[8] Cf. the Armenian **viz* meaning *neck*, linking man's body and head. It also applies cognitive meaning in interpreting the word **vis*, connecting the two elements of the Armenian ethnos – the Aesir and the Vanir with their homeland.

[9] According to N. Marr, the motif of love of Vahagn and Astghik is the prototype of the story about Tristan and Isolde.

the hero, liberating water (cf. "hreshtak") *va*. All four forces of nature are represented in the cognitive name of the hero – the first man, the dragonslyer (vishapaqagh) and thunderer. The old motif of the song "The Birth of Vahagn" illustrates and describes the way he bridled the forces of nature.

Mythology plays a crucial role in transfer of source personal nouns into the target language. Calque borrows inner form of a word based on the semantic derivational model (word formation based on the words having identical meanings). In the process of realization of these transfers, the key words drop their initial external form of the word and restructure to the norms of the target languages, spreading beyond the territory where it was created. The motif of the dragonslyer fighting a dragon/serpent is identified in nearly every cultivated people. Thus, the concept "vishapaqagh" (cf. *"kakh"* in "ankakh", "ankakhutyun") implies both the notion of a dragonslyer and the notion of fighting/killing it, gaining independence from the forces of evil, embodied into the integrated concept of a dragon.

September 21 – is the victory day of Vahagn fighting the vishap (symbolizing also the victory of Hayk over Bel), the day of gaining independence and freedom for the Armenian nation and Armenia, the independence day for not a single nation, but the whole cultivated humankind.

Freedom

Freedom ("*azatutyun*") is gained through acquiring independence from the forces of evil and the forces of nature. The Creator does not foredoom to dependency. A man, personifying dependency on his will and the decisions he makes (tyrant, despot, lord, master, etc.), resembles a dragon that guards the water source. A nation oppressing other nations resembles a dragon, which limits access to the water sources, natural resources. A class, party, state, which exploits human labor, class or people, also represents the concept of a dragon.

Instead of conclusion

The acquired results of the areal-linguistic analysis, using the method of contrasting the proto-linguistic systems, allowed reconstructing an adequate and composite pattern of formation of the notions "*independence*" and "*freedom*". The affinity of the Armenian with other Indo-European languages is studied through the prism of not only linguistic data and word stock, covering the main cognitive layer of old civilizations, but also mythological and historical records and the formed main archetypes. The research combines the comprehensive units of mythical cognition with historical, archeological and etymological data, studied through the linguistic prism. This very characteristic of the Armenian language, concurrently hiding and revealing, applies "sacred" nature, thus, establishing a distinctive temple of knowledge (core) in every word.

The Armenian language, as a whole, is a system of task-oriented complex of conceptual cognitive word units and cognition-intensive concepts, representing a comprehensive, multipolar, multilevel, multinuclear processor, which contributes to generating the layers of tacit knowledge in time and space. It is a virtual temple of knowledge.

The first record in the history of civilization, describing the fact of fighting for independence and freedom for men is presented in the song "The Birth of Vahagn". The dragonslyer, thunderer, courageous hero challenges the forces of classical elements and fights the

huge and tremendous fiery dragon/serpent (the force of darkness and death, chaos and evil) and liberates water.

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