The role of Armenian Immigrants in Iranian History, Culture and Art

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Abstract: The Iranian plateau has been the place of many tribes and nations who lived adjacent to each other over centuries. Iranian tribes settled in Iran almost at the beginning of the first millennium BC and put their name on it. In the 7th-8th centuries BC, one of Iranian tribes called Maday established Ma’ad government in the northwest of Iran. Then another Persian tribe called Parseh established the Achaemenid Empire in the southwest of Iran that embraced the entire Iranian plateau, Asia Minor, and a part of middle Asia. In recent historical periods, non-Iranian tribes entered this territory and continued to live alongside Iranians. Armenians are among these tribes which were mentioned for the first time in the Achamaenid Cossacks. This tribe has always had a spiritual and material relationship with Persia. The existence of Armenian Churches in various parts of Iran such as different churcheds in Tehran, Isfahan, Qara church, the church of Holy Stefanos in Jolfa Aras (9th century AD), the Holy Mosropol Church in northern Iran are signs of the presence of Armenians in this territory.

Keywords: armenian tribes, art, culture, iranian history
Introduction

The names of some Caucasian tribes have been reflected in the geographical names of Iran. The transcaucasian countries such as Armenia, Georgia, and Ara’an were a part of the great Sassanid Empire in 3rd millennium century, and since then, the history and destiny of Iran and Caucasus were linked to each other (Pasdermajiyan, 1998:123). Armenia has been a part of Iranian kingdom throughout the history, and the beginning of the relationship of Armenians with Iranians dates back to the pre-Islamic era. Perhaps no minority can be found in the world which served to their second country that actually became their main country. The dispersion of Armenians in the world which made it easy for them to move to other places led Iranians to become familiar with western civilization. Armenians lived among Iranians for 400 years. They learned Persian language and created some works in Persian; however, they maintained their language and culture. The traffic and settlement of Armenians in ancient Iran was often easily realized; therefore, the ancient Iranian literature and culture had a tremendous effect on the exploratory soul of Armenians. Iranians also honored Armenians and mentioned their language, culture, and special art in a good manner.

Development

Iranian nations:

Iranian plateau with an area of 2600000 Km2 or about 55000 square milestones is a certain geographical unit of Asian continent, and the country of Iran with an area of 1,648,195 Km2 is located in the southwest of Asia and the Middle East region that is actually 63% or almost two thirds of Middle East, and the remaining area belonged to other nations. (Darvish-Zadeh, 2002: 65) Iran was called Arran Shotor in Sassanid era. The name of Iranian nation was Iria in the Achaemenid era and Caucasian nation used this name for itself as Iron, Ir, or Iro. The words of Aryans, Arya, Iran and son on have been taken from this word (Bosworth, 1968:98)- The country of Iran has been a huge bridge between the east and the west from the prehistoric times, and very important main ways passed from it and linked the civilizations around the world to each other. Plateaus often form the main cantor of nomadism and herding, and the plains are the cradle of civilization and the bed of the greatest human advancements, and Iran is also geographically located in an area where the establishment of civilization has been possible from a long time ago (Saidiyan, 1991:197). The geographic condition of Iran is a base for the combined civilizations, and this feature has similarly emerged throughout the lifespan of Iranian nation, and the nature of Iran has always contributed to do so. It is possible to say that two great factors have played a vital role in the emergence of evolution, majesty and revival of Iranian civilization:

The first factor is geographical factor and natural status of the country of Iran which has played a critical role in human evolutions both politically and economically from the beginning of the emergence of Iranian civilization, and perhaps it is one of the reasons which has prevented the deterioration of Iranian civilization and maintained its identity.
despite the attacks and assaults from different ethnic groups (Abrahamian, 2008:198).

The second factor is the intrinsic genius of Iran, which has prevented Iran to be completely annihilated like other ancient nations and tribes such as Sami and Yellow race degenerated after their brilliance era. Although Iranian tribes were always dominated by alien tribes due to their inherent ingenuity and intelligence after a short time, they imposed their spiritual dominance over the conquerors and attracted them so that the assailant tribes took Iranian color, and Iranian civilization regained its vitality. Many tribes and nations have existed in the Iranian plateau living near to each other over the centuries (Rashidvash, 2012:132-139). About four thousand years ago, the invasive or immigrant tribes so-called Aryans migrated from the center of Asia to the south and entered the Iranian plateau. After their settlement, three important groups of Aryans migrated to different parts: one group to the Iranian plateau (Persians in center and south, Parthians in the northeast, Ma’ads in the west and northwest), second group to the Indian Mediterranean, and third group to Europe and created modern Indian and European nations (Saidiyan, 2004:211).

Over the years and as a result of political evolutions and campaign of other governments, this country has always witnessed a series of ethnic changes and blending. For example, one can refer to the campaign of Alexander Macedonian (Rashidvash.,2013:88-93). The ethnic and racial confluence in Iran is not limited to the Romans; rather other migrations were taken place in Iran by Qaznavi Turks, Seljuks, and Mongols in different historical periods. The Qaznavid Turks and Seljuks who formed the largest group of immigrants, remained in this country after entering it. The Mongol invasion of Chingiz Khan was another factor in the migration of the populous yellow-skin Mongol and Tatar tribes, resulting in a new wave of radical combination in Iran. In addition to these immigrations, Iranian government began to displace nomadic tribes like Uzbeks, Berbers and Turkmens in order to prevent the encroachment of neighbor countries. There are also other low-population tribes who migrated to Iran simultaneously or in different times. Armenians, Gorjies, Laks, Assyrians, Jews, Hindus and Kulys are among these tribes (Diakonoff, 1990:324).

Ethnical groups in Iran:

Race is applied to a group of people who have kept the common physical or biological characteristics in successive generations. Or a group of natural people inherited a common physical feature, they have the same race even with different languages and customs. According to this definition what makes difference between two races is physical inherent characteristics and nothing else. (Fakuhi, 2006:87) The early anthropologists tried to determine the multi types nature of human by classification under the title of race based on geographical location and apparent characteristics as color and the other outward marks. In 1350 B.C., scientists found physical differences among human populations and classified them into three groups with regard to the color black, white and yellow. Experts of heredity and biologists do not have a common idea about the reasons of variety in races. It means some of them know this difference resulted from heredity and others believe in environmental effects. (Rashidvash, 2014: 3852-3858).
In fact, the people of different places in the world are so mixed and it seems unlikely to determine the exact racial location. In fact, it is not out of ambiguity, because the most anthropologists and scientists believe that human has always exposed to immigration and racial integration. Racial integration is, not only a historical reality, but also in this active world it is more intensive than the past. The nations’ relations and repetitive marriages of different races during centuries and their continuous changes have caused no fixed race remains. It means we cannot point to only one factor like color of skin to determine the race of a group. Other factors are considerable such as stature, the form of skull, head, hair, face, forehead, eyebrows, eyes, nose, and size of cheek, jaw, and also scattering of people on the base of blood group (genetics).

Meanwhile, particularly white race has had much integration with other races. It is difficult for anthropologists and ethnologists to determine the race of people settled in the Iranian plateau. The reason is that it has been as an invasion field bilaterally from many years ago. On the other hand, it is as a bridge between the Far East, Middle East and Mesopotamia. Therefore, many different nations with various races have entered this plateau and placed under a unite ceiling of language. Anthropologists who study physical features are sure that some individuals with long heads have settled in Iran before Nordic. But the related documents are few and imperfect. It seems that they have had a little relation with India. They had been Soumeries or related to them, it is still possible to find the sign of old Soumeries faces among people inherited in the southeast of Iran and Indus valley. Generally, main factors of Iranians are Mediterranean’s.

Moreover, there are some considerable varieties and deviations. In the Iranian plateau, people with extended heads are two kinds: those with erect nose and some with big curved nose (every curved nose, less or much). The first group is probably related to Bedouins of north Arabia and the second have grown in the Iranian plateau. Except this group, people with small heads lived in Iran, too. They are classified in three groups: first group with erect nose, second with so much curved and high parting of head and the third with curved nose and extended faces and heads. Given to the researches, the most important characteristic of people inherited in the plateau is that they have round head with ellipsoid faces. Now among people who live, especially, in the east, there are individuals with round heads and extended faces. They live in heights and mountains more than valleys and plains. Some of them can be related to Indian Dravidians, because there are some people with round heads and ellipsoid faces. Tall stature and light color are their important features. It is resulted from intercourses with Nordic tribes. But regarding their light color, they can be known as Alp race. Moreover, today in Iran, there are northern and southern European kind, Mogul, Black and Hamite.

The presence of these people on the form of Asian, European and African shows the physical relations between Iran and the other three continents. There are some documents that indicate Iran has been the place of the life from the Stone Age. There were considerable amalgamations among different races resulted from extensive cultural relations and connections. Excavations and comparative studies have clarified it. It seems that present residents in this plateau, are more related to people in the west and northwest of Iran. As a result of anthropological studies and measurements in Iran, one basic branch called white race has been determined (Rashidvash, 2013:216-226).
race of people in the Iranian plateau. Ancient Iranians (Homo Iranicus) are the genius brothers of original mankind (Homo sapiens) grown in the southwest of Asia physically and culturally, namely the cradle of direct ancestors of Aryans. Iranians are among the oriental race called Indo-European who have immigrated to this plateau from Axus and Caucasian mountains in the late of second thousand B.C. (Saidiyan, 2004: 97) They were called Aryan in the history. It took 1000 years for Aryans to enter to this plateau in different small and large groups and finally in the first thousand B.C., they were replaced and then made various sovereignties. Some sects of oriental races entered Iran on the way of Caspian Sea, have settled in the central Asia and Iranian plateau. Parthian is among this group. A group of vanguards moved toward India valley. Western branch passed to the north of Caspian Sea and entered Atropatgan on the way of Caucasian had a main role in the political and social life of Iranians. They are the founders of Aryan Media and Achaemenian dynasty (Bitov, 1992:231).

The Iranian plateau started a new life with fresh Aryan tribes and made the ancient age of Iran; it lasts 1000 years. This time is regarded as the golden period in the history of Iran. At the present time, a nation can settle in a country with clear boarders or they can be separated for historical events and their races can be divided among some countries or can be scattered in different areas for immigrations. There are some examples for the first and second types in the Middle East made a big Iranian nation in the past and the third ones are among Arab and Turkish people. In Iran, with these geographical boarders, there are several nations in which their characteristics are presented in their race and language. Given to lingual dialects and geographical scattering, they have several branches (Rashidvash, 2011:118-133). According to lingual dialects, they are Turkish, Baluch, Kurd, Hyrcanian, Larestani, Lor, Azeri, and some others. Thus, this collection is applied to Iranian nation. All of them have an Aryan and Iranian ethnic root, common past of one thousand years, history, culture, land inherit, and common language. None of them can be known as a separate nation.

Although there are some differences between their dialects and languages, but lingual similarities are to some extent that the collection of their dialects has made a common language as Persian language. This language can not be related to any Iranian branch; it belongs to all of the Iranian people. Generally, there are three special races in Iran:

Persians who have settled in Alborz and Zagros mountains in south and north to Spid River. The Lors live in the west parts of Iran and have thick hair and lighter skin physically. Most of them are tall. Their skulls are pressed and round. They have extended and thin face. Their foreheads are a little big, have thick and semicircular eyebrows, also the big, wide, lowly noses inclined to the ground. Their chins are inclined down and seem a little big. They have small cheeks with more distance between them. The hair color is as the same as chestnut and have thick beard, unmixed race on the view of quality and they are accounted among the Aryan race. The Kurds are the other group of Iranian nation settled in this area. There are three theories about their origin. First theory: they are among Indians and European races immigrated in the 7th century B.C. Second theory: it emphasizes on their native and lingual nature as if they know Kurds as the relatives of other Asian nations like Khaleds, Georgian and Armenians. Third theory: Kurd race is the diagram of Zagros, Gouti, Lolubi, Kasi, Orartouie and other tribes who
settled in Zagros or Kordestan in the past. They joined Indo-European nations and have the same race. [9] People in southern parts of Iran have darker skin than usual Arabs in Iraq. Perhaps they have the most similarity with early people of northern Arabia and desert of Syria regarding the color of skin. Evidently, there are individuals with dark skin, too; but it does not cause any mistake with black people (Saidiyan, 1991:234).

People of Mazandaran and Gilan who are settled in the Caspian seaside villages and separated from Persians in Alborz valleys by northern climate condition of Alborz. They are original Iranians. Their difference with Persians is resulted from the separation on the side of Alborz and geographical climate condition, not for race. They have medium stature with dark and pale appearance, black eyes, black and thick hair and beard.

Azeri people who form all population of northwestern and west of Iran are settled in a place called Azerbaijan (Atropatgan). Although there are some people with Persian language among them; but most of them are Turkish. It is worth mentioning that there are many differences between Iranian Turks and other Turkish nations. Iranian Azeri people are not Turkish unlike common beliefs, but they are original Iranians with Aryan race. Anthropological, genetics and historical studies have proved this matterz (Minorsky, 1953:265).

**The race of Armenian tribes:**

Armenia is located in the South Caucasus between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, which is considered as the border between Asia and Europe. The Armenia’s neighbors are Turkey in the west, Georgia in the north, the Republic of Azerbaijan (the republic of Qarabag) in the east, and Iran and Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan (a part of the republic of Azerbaijan) in the south. The country of Armenia is located between the northern circuits of 38 degree and 42 degree and eastern meridians of 43 degree and 47 degree. Armenia is a mountainous and rainy country and it is also a landlocked country. The Swan sweet water lake is the largest lake in the country, which covers a relatively large area of the middle part of the country. The area of Armenia is 29,743 square kilometers and has a population of about 3060000. From the point of view of anthropology, the Armenians belong to the Armenoid race from Eurasian race (oruropei). They are considered as Indo-European nations. The main habitat of these ethnic groups is located on the Armenian plateau, that is, in a region located in the north of Mesopotamia, east of Minor Asia, and northwest of Iran plateau. There are different ideas on the origins of Armenians. The first view is that these tribes have come to existence by the gradual integration of the immigrant Indo-European tribes (Armen tribe) with more indigenous tribes residing on the Armenian plateau such as Khurian, Hurrian, and Hayasa. According to the other view, Armenians have lived in their mainland in the Armenian plateau since their inception. However, they came from the integration of different tribes. Based on the anthropological studies on the Neolithic period, the Armenia plateau was inhabited by tribes belonged to the Armenoid race whose heirs are today’s Armenians. Some part of Indian and European tribes migrated from Armenia plateau and Asia Minor to Europe, middle Asia and India from Neolithic to Eolithic period, and the other part including Hitan, Armenians, Greeks and Iranians, remained in the main habitat (Bouzend, 2004:31).
There is a story about the origin, emergence and name of Armenians in narratives that are not far from the historical facts. Based on the myths quoted by Moses Khorni in the 5th century, Armenian people named their dynast as Hay because of the name of Hayek. However, the name used by other tribes, namely Arman, has been taken from the name of Aram who was one of the descendants of Hayek. In the late second millennium and the beginning of the first millennium BC, the tribes residing on the Armenian plateau, which are referred in different names on Cuneiform inscriptions, was formed in political-governmental unions. Later, Armenia was formed as a nation and got stronger, especially at the time of the ideal rule in the 6th to 9th century BC, which is called Urattu in Arami. Throughout its history, Armenia has been the venue of Jahanbakhsh battle and leader of numerous rival empires. From 2700 years ago, this region has been the empire of Iran, Alexander, Roman, Byzantium, Mongols, Tatars, Ottomans, and Russians. During this time, various kingdoms of Armenia managed to rule over this land for about 1700 years.

The majority of people of Armenia are the followers of Armenian Archipelago which is known as Gregorian to the Iranians and it is considered as Armenian national church. The Archipelago church is one of the first churches in the Christian world and it is considered as a part of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The first messengers of Christianity entered the country of Armenia after the emergence of Christianity and from the 1st century AD, and began to promote this religion. The acceptance of Christian religion by Armenians has two important aspects. On the one hand, the conversion of this nation to Christianity is considered as the turning point of the history of Armenia, and in fact, all the changes and evolutions witnessed by this nation have been largely affected by this historical event. On the other hand, and from the viewpoint of Christian history, this event is also of particular importance, because Armenians are the first nation which accepted Christianity as the official religion of the country in 301 AD (Ghuzanlou, 1983:84).

**Armenians in Iran**

Iran has been faced with a combination of different ethnic groups in demographic context due to its location in the passageway of historical migrations. The historical migration among three continents of Africa, Asia and Europe has led to the settlement of different ethnic tribes, racial combination and the emergence of ethnic groups in this land. The first Armenian group in Iran in the 6th century BC was at the service of central Achaemenid government in the form of army regiments after Islam. Apart from these, a group of businessmen and craftsmen also went to Iran for work.

Armenians lived in Attorpathan, Iran, (northwest of Iran) as native inhabitants. With the beginning of the rule of Parthians, the political and social connections became stronger between Iranians and Armenians during the reign of Parthians, and a number of Armenian merchants and aristocrats who had kinship with the people inside Iran resided in different cities. (Abrahamian, 2008: 286) With the fall of Parthian government in Armenia and division of that land between two countries of Iran and Rome, the main part of Armenia was put under the rule of the Sassanid government.

The first large Armenian migration to the center of Iran was taken place at the time of the rule of Sassanid government in 3rd and 4th century AD and majority of
immigrants settled in the southern parts of the country. In the post-Islamic Iran and with the beginning of Seljuk attacks to Armenia in the years 1048 and 1049 AD, about 150000 Armenians were taken to Iran as captives. Many of them were killed on the way and a number of them were sent to Egyptian slavery markets, and the survivors settled in various parts of northwest and central regions of Iran. During the Mongol invasion to Iran, Armenians were also massacred along with Iranians, and their number declined however, the population of Armenians was increased in Iran during a short time as the result of bringing new Armenian prisoners by Mongols, and they established communities in different cities of Iran at the end of the reign of Mongols when a relative peace was established in the country (Bouzend, 2004: 126).

During the reign of Ilkhanid in Iran in 1256 AD, the largest aggregation of Armenians was in the capital of Iran, Soltanieh, where Armenians were engaged in industrial and commercial activities. With the domination of Aq Ghoyonlus and Qara Ghoyonlu on some areas of Iran in 1406, long wars began and desecrated Iranian people, while the Armenians suffered from the greatest damage so that all the Armenian communities living in the central and western parts of Iran were disintegrated for a short time. In the late 16th century and at the beginning of the reign of Safavid in 1501 AD, Armenians mainly concentrated in the northwest of Iran and a few numbers of them began to trade in the central part of Iran. In the year 1768 and at the time of the reign of Zandieh in Iran, the Armenians of Tehran built their first church so-called Tadeus and Bartoqimus in Tehran.

At the time of Safavid rule over Iran, Safavid kings gave concessions to Armenians and the most important of these concessions were as follows:
- Celebrating religious ceremonies
- Granting budgets to build and decorate the churches
- Allowing Armenian men and women to dress like other people
- Granting loans to Armenian merchants
- Extreme punishment for Iranians who mistreated Armenians.

In the period of Qajar in 1796, a remarkable evolution took place in the situation of the Armenians of Iran, and Armenians eventually could find the rights of an Iranian citizen as the result of their valuable services during this period that had been deprived from them for many years.

In this period, that is, in 18th century, the territories located in the northwest of Iran in the Caucasus region including Armenia were separated from Iran following Golestan and Turkmenchai treaties, and the Armenians immigrations to Armenia officially began. After the end of World War II, the Armenian government was reluctant to return other Armenians from other countries to Armenia, and more than 30000 Armenians immigrated to their country by 1946. The migration of Armenians was stopped in 1947 due to many problems. However, it mildly continued in 1950s and it was agreed between Iran and Soviet governments that Iran would cooperate with all Armenians who wished to return to Armenia, so that the total number of Armenians who returned between 1922 and 1972 was 65000 people. The immigration followed a new trend after 1979.
Culture of Iran’s Armenians

Armenian culture has grown and developed based on the culture of tribes who lived in the mountainous land of Armenia from long time ago. Therefore, the culture of Urarturs had a great role in the development and growth of this culture. Urarturs were from Armenian ancestors who ruled Caucasus region from about 1500 to 600 BC. Some parts of Armenian culture have formed based on Armenian geography, literature, art and music. During two centuries in the following of Armenia’s Christianization, that is, in the fourth and fifth centuries, Armenia achieved a great progress in the field of cultural life. Before the acceptance of Christ religion, the cultural life of Armenia followed the culture of other tribes.

The realization of the most important cultural manifestation of Christianity was the invention of the Armenian alphabet. This was done by Archbishop Sahak I who commissioned his deputy, Mesrup Mashtutes, to devise a special alphabet for Armenian language in order to make it possible to translate the holy books into Armenian language and script. This invention of Armenian alphabet was one of the most important and influential events in the history of Armenia, which culturally gave life to Armenian literature. The development of Armenian literature began with the invention of Armenian alphabet and then the translation of the bible into this language.(Saidiyan, 1991:324).

From the first outstanding works of Armenian literature is the translation of some books of Aristotle, and writing the book “History of Armenia” by Moses Khourani, which is translated into French, German, and English. The Armenian churches were the place of training Armenian youths from ancient times. In Iran, Armenians established classrooms in churches. Some schools were established in Tehran, Isfahan’s Jolfa, Tabriz and Armenian villages in Iran from the second half of the nineteenth century. The first modern school was founded in Tabriz in 1854. Later, the number of Armenian schools reached to 40 schools in Iran. All Armenian schools were closed in Pahlavi era. All lessons were taught in Persian after reopening of these schools, and only the lessons of language, literature of history and religious lessons were taught in Armenian language. Bringing the industry of printing in a mechanized from to Iran was another activity of Armenians’ cultural activities. The establishment of first printing office in Iran that its name was heard throughout the Middle East is considered as an influential step and bold measure to promote the arts and culture of this land.

The role of Armenian merchants in Iran’s economy:

The presence of a large number of Armenian merchants, craftsmen and artists in Jolfa in the 17th and 18th centuries made this region the largest commercial, cultural, artistic and industrial center which affected the economy of Iran. The business was expanded among Armenian merchants by granting loans to them. They brought goods such as small sewing machines, minced rings, artificial pears, oil paint curtains, patterns of Christ’s image, printed books on religious and commercial fields, geographic maps, theater, and other artistic disciplines as well as their thoughts and experiences from Netherlands and England to Iran.
Armenians gradually established a commercial center and quickly gained the monopoly of silk trade throughout Iran. Even at that time, Armenian merchants were often employed as Iran's ambassadors in Europe. Armenian artists including famous goldsmiths, burlap weaver, and carpet weaver also settled in Iran. Many Armenians were engaged in various occupations such as goldsmiths, masonry, blacksmithing, hair dressing, shoemaking, watchmaking, cartography, book publishing and so on (Minorsky 1953:193). The city of Nakhchivan was the important center of gold making, needlework, carving, carpet weaving, pottery, miniature, and book decorating. Armenians also had hand in the arts of miniature, oil paint painting, and wall painting. The works of painting can be seen in the interior view of the churches.

**Printing industry**

One of the honors of Armenians was the establishment of first printing office of Iran and Middle East with hand-made and primary tools by Khalifa Khachatur Gosarati in 1636, and the first book entitled as “Acts of Fathers” was printed. They designed the printing machine, printing ink and letters by themselves and the first book was composed of 572 pages. There were many painters among immigrant Armenians who continued to engage in artistic activity in the new Jolfa. The cooperation of these artists with each other and their artistic activities led to the formation of new Jolfa School in painting and book designing. The new Jolfa School was the first step in linking the medieval traditional visual arts of Armenians to the European art. In this school, traditional painting became the painting of the twentieth century. The condition for portrait painting and naturalism was provided in the art of painting, and painting came out of the pictography framework of religious books and interpreted in a new way. This change was due to the Armenian lifestyle and their perception from their arts and sociocultural ties with Iranians and Europeans.

**Conclusions**

Over the centuries, the Iranian plateau has been the place of many tribes and nations who lived adjacent to each other. Iran and Armenia have had deep historical and cultural links with each other because of their position in a common civilization area. The Armenian nation which has come to existence from integration of tribes settled on Armenian plateau has had various links with its neighbors, especially with Iranian people since its inception. These relationships have always been more extensive than common links between two nations and the neighboring government, which have resulted in the richness of the culture, history, and language in both nations. After settling in Iran, Armenians accepted many Iranian customs. Some Armenian celebrations and rituals rooted in ancient Iran are the evidence of this fact. Since Armenians were active and hard-working people, they engaged in various agricultural, industrial, commercial and political activities in the country of Iran. Although the emergence of Christianity and the predominant tendency of Armenians toward Christianity changed the Armenian culture and civilization, it never succeeded in changing the moral and emotional characteristics of these people. In this regard, whether in pre-Islamic or post-Islamic periods, Armenians traveled to Iran and many of them lived throughout this country.
References.