

## THE DEPICTION OF VAHAGN ON A BAZALT STELE IN THE CONTEXT OF WORLDVIEW OF ASKANAZ AND TORGOM

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**Abstract:** The article reveals the research findings of the conceptual cognitive comparison of the works by Ancient Greek and Medieval Armenian historians in relation to Armenian rock art, linguistic and archeological data. A new approach is presented on genesis and knowledge dissemination, fundamentals of writing, ideology and worldview of the ancestors. The authors identify the unified structure of the object of study through explication of semantic and situational, logical and visual-figurative information in relation to cultural and linguistic, mythological, historical and worldview data.

**Key words:** pictorial archetype, chronological analysis, birth of the first man, fighting a dragon, prototype transformation, universal scientific paradigm

*Exult the country of thousand vishaps - Armenia,  
You saw your sun of salvation - Vahagn.  
(Hovhannisyan I., "The Birth of Vahagn")*

### Introduction

According to the German archeologists, the basalt stele relief (Fig. 1), excavated in the sacred site of Jupiter Dolichenus, on the territory of the historical Armenian Kingdom of **Commagene**<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 2, 3), depicts an unknown god [1]. The cult of Jupiter Dolichenus was widely spread in the Roman Empire in **II century AC** and the archeologists consider the stele Roman.

*"One and a half meter basalt stele depicts a bearded deity, growing from a chalice of leaves. From the sides of one of the sources grows a long horn and a tree, which the deity clasps with his right hand. The pictorial elements of the deity suggest that a fertility god is depicted"* [1]. In the beginning of Iron Age there used to be a sanctuary on this territory; the temple of god Jupiter Dolichenus was built during the Roman period, and a Christian monastery was built during the medieval period.

It is well known that Jupiter Best and Greatest Dolichenus is a syncretic deity combining features of Roman and Syrian god Baal. Dolichenus was depicted standing on a back of a **bull**, and at times with an **eagle**. The god is in **armor** and wears a **Phrygian cap** (during the excavation of the ancient temple of Jupiter Dolichenus, German archeologists uncovered more than 600 old seals and amulets, among them a "late Babylonian" seal with an eight-pointed star and the tree of life (Fig. 4). The deity holds an **axe** in his right hand, and a sheaf of **thunder-bolts** in his left hand [1].

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<sup>1</sup> Doliche, modern territory of Turkey (author's note).



Fig. 1. Basalt stele, Doliche, Commagene.



Fig. 2.

Fig. 2. Map of the Armenian Kingdom of Commagene (Doliche), where the basalt stele was excavated.



Fig. 3.

Fig. 3. The Armenian Empire during the rule of Tigran II (95-55 BC)



Fig. 4. during the excavation of the ancient temple of Jupiter Dolichenus, are uncovered more than 600 old seals and amulets (a). Late Babylonian seal with eight-pointed star and the tree of life (b)<sup>2</sup>.

According to Professor Engelbert Winter, there are particular relief elements on the basalt stele, which point to depictions from the early **I millennium BC**: “the stele provides

<sup>2</sup> © Photo: Forschungsstelle Asia Minor.

information on the ancient Eastern traditions that have survived from the Iron Age to Roman times” [1]. The finding manifests continuity of local religious traditions, as the stele was re-used as a buttress in the wall of a Christian monastery of later period.

The basalt stele depicts a **bearded man** standing in a chalice of leaves and **maize ears** (Fig. 1). The relief is ornamented with **astral symbols**. Based on the composition of the beard of the deity and the posture of the arms, German archeologists date the depiction to the **I millennium BC**. Notwithstanding, German scholars did not consider the fact that in this period the Kingdom of Commagene was part of the Armenian Empire during the rule of Tigran II (95-55 BC).

### Chronological Analysis of Historical Data

Historical characteristics of the semantic functioning of the depiction on the stele should be studied, not only based on perception of the common cultural universal tradition, but also on its correlation with the corresponding subject context. The authors consider the depiction on the stele not as an isolated sign system, but as a constantly correlated sign and informational systems in the context of their origin, emergence and dissemination in time scale.

Mikayel Chamchyan [2] states 2492 BC as the date of the battle of Hayk with Bel. Parallels are drawn between Hayk Nahapet and the god **Haldi**, as well as **Aramazd** (father of Vahagn in the old Armenian pagan pantheon). The **Eruandid, Yervanduni** or **Orontid** dynasty<sup>3</sup> (c. 570 or 520-200 BC) was a hereditary Armenian dynasty of kings that ruled Armenia in **VI-IV centuries BC** as Persian (Achaemenid) satraps of Armenia, and in **323-200 BC** as kings of the **Araratian Kingdom**. Movses Khorenatsi [3] mentions king **Yervanduni/Orontes**<sup>4</sup> **I Sakavakyats** from the dynasty of ancestral kings of the **Haykazunis** (descendants of Hayk) – the father of legendary king **Tigran**. Movses Khorenatsi calls **Tigran I Yervanduni (c. 560-535 BC)** “*the wisest and most powerful of Armenian kings, whose bravery excelled every other*” [3].

After **Hayk** moved from Babylon to the land of his ancestors (the house of Askanaz – the house of Torgom), his sons conquered the lands of **Babylon** and **Assyria**, **Phoenicia** and **Cilicia** [3]. Prophet Jeremiah mentions “**the kingdom of Ashkenaz**” together with **Ararat** [4]. According to Lopukhin A. P., **Askanaz** is the patriarch/forefather of the Indo-European people inhabiting the southeastern coast of Black Sea near the western border of Armenia [4]. **Flavius Josephus** [5] calls the descendants of **Askenaz** the Astanzians and mentions that **the contemporary Greeks called them Phrygians**.

Armenian historian Hovhannes Draskhanakertsi (X century) mentions: “*Tiras from whom were born our very own Askanaz [Ashkenaz] and Torgom [Togarmah] who named the country that he possessed Thrace after himself... The sons of Tiras were Askanaz, from whom descended the Sarmatians, Riphath, whence the Sauromatians [Soramatk’], and Torgom, who according to Jeremiah called our country the House of Torgom. For at first Askanaz had named our people after himself in accord with the law of seniority. From Elishah [son of] Javan, the ancestor of the Greek, descended the Sicilians and the Athenians*”. “*And as the Thracians descended from Tiras, it became necessary to divide the inherited lands into three parts and give the possession to his sons. Thus, he acted*

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<sup>3</sup> Artashesian (Artaxiad) dynasty (ruled the Kingdom of Armenia in II-I centuries BC) is sometimes considered its branch.

<sup>4</sup> The name *Yervand* is of native Armenian origin (not Persian) (author’s note) and semantically stems to the name of the first man – Vahagn (The Birth of Vahagn), that created in the vicinity of Lake Van.

wise. *Askanaz, who at first had named our people after himself - Askanazian, got possession of the Sarmatians, Riphath – the Sauromats and Torgom, getting possession of our people, instead of the old name (Askanaz), gave it his name – the House of Torgom*” [6].

Greek historian Herodotus mentions a Phrygian tribe **Armeni**, speaking Armenian language [7]. They were wearing the so called Phrygian cap. Hayk founded the dwelling of the God (temple of knowledge) and passed it over to his grandson **Cadmus**, who ruled the territories of Phoenicia and Cilicia, Syria and Commagene<sup>5</sup>.

Thus, the map of the Armenian Empire (Fig. 3) during the rule of **Tigran II (95 -55 BC)** is in some extent relevant to the map of the lands under authority of the **Haykazunis** in **2 millennium BC**. Hayk and his descendants, preserving the traditions of Vahagn, founded sanctuaries in his honor on the territories under their governance, as Vahagn is the first man, the “forefather/patriarch” of the Haykazunis. Considering the fact, that the royal house of the Yervanduni descends from the dynasty of Hayk Nahapet, it can be stated that king **Antiochus I Theos** might rightfully call himself a “god”, as he descended from the dynasty of native kings of the Haykazunis (descendants of Vahagn, whose cult was restored and disseminated on the territories under his rule).

The chronological analysis of historical data in relation to the mythological data proves the undeniable fact of rather dominance than influence of state ideology and culture of the Haykazunis on Commagene for a long period. The area under the study and the excavated “Roman” artifact depicting an unknown god does not refer to the paradigm of Oriental (Indo-Iranian, Assyrian-Babylonian or Roman) ideology and culture, but to the paradigm of the following old Armenian traditions.

The results of the comparative analysis of the relief depiction on the stele, the motifs of “The Birth of Vahagn” with the motifs identified in the Armenian petroglyphs (10-5 millennium BC) and stone vishapakars<sup>6</sup> show that **the main visual archetypes of the mentioned stone artifacts and the archetypes of the song are identical and are “genetically related units” of a whole, designating the various stages of transformation of the figures originating from the same source.** They complement and develop cultural and ideological paradigm (originated in Armenia) of **cosmogony model of the genesis**, illustrating the major principles of **Natural Philosophy** and **Metaphysics**, the interaction of the **four forces – elements** of nature [8]. The relief on the stele depicts neither a Roman god nor Indo-Iranian Mitra<sup>7</sup>, but the first man, transformed into old pagan god Vahagn – the dragonslayer, thunderer, savior of mankind, liberator of water, with peculiar pictorial elements symbolizing the sun, fire and light.

In the sanctuary dating to the **epoch of the Armenian rule of Commagene** (beyond Euphrates) on Mount **Nemrut** in the southern part of Malatya an artifact is discovered, recording **Vahagn** as **Artagnes** and identifying with **Heraclites**. In 62 BC atop Mount Nemrut the king of Commagene **Antiochus I Theos** from the Armenian Yervanduni dynasty built a tomb – a sanctuary, surrounded by immense 8-9 meters high statues: among them is the figure (statue fragment) of **Aramazd (Zeus)**, personified “Commagene” and King Antiochus, Apollo and **Vahagn (Hercules)** by the sides.

After the victory of Hayk over Bel, the territories of Commagene, Phoenicia and

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<sup>5</sup> According to Greek mythology, Hellenized Cadmus had two brothers – Cilix and Phoenix, and a sister Europa, who is later abducted by Zeus.

<sup>6</sup> Dragon-stones.

<sup>7</sup> Is associated with Mihr in the Armenian pantheon(author’s note).

Cilicia were under the rule of the descendants of Hayk Nahapet (descendant of Vahagn) – the founder of the Armenian statehood. According to M. Khorenatsi (5 century), Hayk founded the dwelling of the God (the temple of knowledge and sanctuary) near Lake Van. The stele is excavated on the territory of the Armenian Kingdom of **Commagene** (Fig. 2, 3), dating from **163 BC** to **72 AC**, after which the territory was attached to the Roman Empire.

The comparative analysis illustrates that formal and mostly transformational paradigm allows to reveal and give a comprehensive interpretation of the main motif depicted on the stele. The depiction is studied not only as a conceptual core and semantic component of the denotative meaning of its cognitive matrix, but also reveals the modality of the content and its relation to the corresponding worldview and historical paradigm of the genesis of cognitive ability of culture as a phenomenon that our ancestors had [24].

### **The Archetypal Analysis of the Motifs in the “Birth of Vahagn”**

It is well known that an archetype is not a figure as studied in itself. It is first of all preconceptual implication in relation to prior knowledge and worldview of our ancestors. It is materialized in figurative and artistic forms. Word expression actualizes an archetype in our mind, creating figures and relating them to the already known ones and to tacit knowledge. Revelation of cognitive mechanisms of archetypal figure formation allows the authors to present a coherent picture of the study.

Here is a fragment from the song, describing the birth of Vahagn, translated into English:

*“In travail were heaven and earth,  
In travail, too, the crimson sea!  
The travail held in the sea the small red reed.  
Through the hollow of the stalk came forth smoke,  
Through the hollow of the stalk came forth flame,  
And out of the flame a youth ran!  
Fiery hair had he,  
Ay, too, he had flaming beard,  
And his eyes, they were as suns!”*

According to B. Zulumyan [9], the song contains old layers of archetypal cognition and mythological cosmogony worldview. All the main **semantic units of the song are archetypes**. “At least seven archetypes can be identified in the “Birth of Vahagn”: sky, earth, sea (water), reed (tree), young god (infant), birth, fire (sun)” [9]. The prototype of a number of phenomena, divinized by diverse Indo-European nations, is established due to linguistic reconstructions: Indo-Aryan **Diaus-piter** is etymologically identical to the Roman-Latin **Jupiter** (cf. Armenian “*nahapet*”), Illyrian **Deypatir**, Greek Zeus (pater), German **Tyr**, Hittite **Tiwaz** that stems to the Indo-European **deius**<sup>8</sup> (light sky) + **pater** (father), denoting the fact that the anthropomorphized sky deity was worshipped in the common Indo-European period as one of the supreme gods. Almost all the nations divinize in this or that extent the sky, the morning dawn and the powerful trees. In a particular historical period Armenian-Greek-Hellenistic relations had an interrelated character, revealing common archetypes in religious, mythological and linguistic culture. A number

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<sup>8</sup> In Armenian **\*du** – you, **\*us** – shoulder, **\*tir/ter** – father, master, cf. **\*pa** + **\*ter** (father, masculine principle) and **\*ma** + **\*ter** (mother, feminine principle).

of scholars identified linguistic similarities, originating in V-IV millennia BC [10]. Despite the capacity to change the plain of expression in a unified form in the content of cultural traditions, the semantic core remains unchanged.

The relief depicts Vahagn with all specific pictorial elements, symbolizing the genesis and interaction of four forces of nature (Fig. 1). The pictorial relief elements are visual illustrations of **semantic archetypes in the song, as a unique determinant, indicating the preservation of old traditions, specific old Armenian values, invariant to the world's intangible heritage of worldview archetypes in the song**. They are the sky and the earth, sea (water), a chalice formed by leaves (lotus) and maize ears, wood, astrological symbols, bearded man – the God-man, a defender in armor (the body comes out of the stylized vegetal elements, symbolizing the act of birth); fire – solar disk and solar barge, the morning star (the symbol of the dawn, sunrise); eight-pointed rosette – a typically Armenian ornamental symbol of life and fertility; the serpent<sup>9</sup> - a dragon (the symbol of the forces of evil, death and darkness).

The identified motifs of the first man, possessing supernatural divine peculiarities of Vahagn, are universal in some of its manifestations for the Indo-European pantheon. Common character of the Indo-European pantheon of deities dates to the period of language separation from the Proto-Indo-European root, as mythology and language are indivisible, and this connection is more preserved in the early stages of its development. According to Academician V. Ivanov [10], the traits peculiar to Indo-European (Indo-Iranian-Greek-Armenian) mythological thinking are preserved in the most comprehensive and pure form in the text of the Armenian song. This conclusion is consistent with the ideas of Academician N. Marr, emphasizing exclusive fact of perpetuation of Japhetic linguistic values in the Armenian language [21, 22]. Certain traits of the Indian Indra and the Iranian Verethragna, Greek Zeus, Hercules and Prometheus, Roman Jupiter and Hercules, Syrian Baal, Assyrian-Babylonian Baal are developed under the influence of the traditions of Vahagn in Indo-European, Assyrian-Babylonian and Sumerian-Akkadian mythologies.

The name **Vahagn** reveals primary affinity of four forces of nature (symbolizing the Creator), which are transformed into the structure of the name [11, 12]. Vahagn is the first man, thunderer, dragonslayer, defender, liberator of heavenly and earthly waters, symbol of fertility, the forefather of mankind, lawgiver, teacher. Thunder and tree are his peculiar pictorial elements<sup>10</sup>.

### **Analysis of the Depiction on the Stele Relief**

The bottom of the relief stele depicts a common “source of strength” – earthly and solar disks. They are depicted above the sea and solar barges. The heavenly solar barge symbolizes the concept of perpetual motion, solar cycle, rhythms of light and darkness. A typical Armenian symbol, an eight-pointed rosette, is depicted in the middle of the solar disc, which symbolizes eternal life, the power of love, the union of feminine and masculine principles – the syncretic concept of Vahagn and his bride Astghik (literally “little star”), which are depicted in the form of overlapped winged right-facing crosses (pattern of life-giving) in the tradition of Armenian rock art.

The archetype of sea is the figure of sea, air, sky and earth set in flames, in travail – the picture of a catastrophic natural phenomena [13]. The description of the relief depiction

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<sup>9</sup> Incorrectly interpreted by some experts as a horn (author’s note).

<sup>10</sup> It should be mentioned, that the concept of Zeus (Greek Heraclites, Roman Hercules and Jupiter) does not include solar properties (author’s note).

and the song motifs is the picture of the thunder-sky during terrestrial and submarine volcanic eruptions. The red reed (mentioned in the song) or the leaves of lotus (depicted on the relief) symbolize the act of birth, volcanic eruption or thunder. The thunder<sup>11</sup>, the union of four forces of nature, gives birth to the hero with supernatural powers. The hero fights the dragon and defeats the forces of chaos, evil and darkness. Vahagn directs to the forces that detain life-giving source, embodied in the concept of serpent (dragon), and fights the dragon in the name of life. The released water flows to the earth, nourishing it. Vahagn is depicted on the stele as a conqueror, defender and savior. He is holding the tree [of life] in his left hand as if defending it. The whole picture embodies transformation and unity of the conceptions of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life.

The considered motif (Fig. 1) of the stele depiction may be interpreted as **sunrise** (with the interpretation of cycle, motion, sail of the **solar barge**) and as an **act of fertilization**, resulted in **emergence and blossom of life** (illustrated in the semantics of **eight-pointed rosette**). It is considered through the prism of the **sunrise**, the **morning dawn**, fighting and banishing shadows, chaos, the forces of darkness. The **morning star** (the attribute of dawn and the sky) is depicted to the right sight of the solar disc. The motifs in the “The Birth of Vahagn” combine a number of functions: **sun and light, fire and thunder – thunderer, dragonslayer, defender, liberator of water, fertilizer and creator**. According to V. Ivanov, “a reed may refer semantically to the same perception as the further developed concept of flame and man deity” [13].

*“Referring to Jung's theory of archetypes, all actions and concepts identified in the song “The Birth of Vahagn” have parallels in the inner world of a man: sea – mother’s womb, hollow hearth of aquatic plant symbolizes the birth of a child; water – the place of origin of life, etc. Infant is light bearer; he fights the darkness, i.e. the original mental suffering – unconscious, lower world, embodied in the concept of vishap/dragon. The light of reason illuminates the dark soul of a prehistoric man, suppresses affects, harmonizes the inner world, transforming chaos into cosmos”* [9].

The peculiar, invariant trait of the song motifs, stele composition structure, their invariant, single entity form the ontological function of the genesis, birth of the first man, and illustration of the sources of his supernatural abilities, **integrating the union of four forces of nature and their properties**. Semantics of the interaction of four forces of nature is peculiar to the characteristics of nature, volcanic mountains of the Armenian Highlands, where erupting incandescent stones, raging flames of fume and fire, rivers of lava flew like fiery serpents, destroying life, flora and fauna, lakes and seas, when artificial solar and lunar eclipses were considered the result of a serpent/dragon swallowing the stars and planets, the sun and the moon.

The principles of Natural Philosophy and Metaphysics, cosmogony interpretation of the exploits of Vahagn expand the semantic field of the text of the song and the interpretation filed of the relief motifs. Primordial chaos forms four classical elements, which are in constant interaction and interconversion: **water, air, fire and earth**. The text of the song and the relief depiction implement all four classical elements. “The Birth of Vahagn” *“describes the picture of the genesis in its triple aspect in a descending scale – from cosmos to man”* [14]. The authors identify and reveal such regularities in the compositions of Armenian rock art [15-17].

A comprehensive description of the main motif of the poem-song “The Birth of Vahagn” is described in “Armenian History”: *“This wonderful song presents the origin/birth of cultivated life as a process of unity of four opposing polar elements in the*

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<sup>11</sup>Thunder (M. Abeghyan) is related to plants and is frequently depicted in the form of a thorn, blackthorn.

heaven and on the earth: the earth, the water (sea), fire (flame, smoke) and air (sky)” [18]. The song describing the birth of Vahagn, and figurative motifs of the stele originated precisely in the area of the Armenian Highlands – on the territory of Sea Van. It is not accidental that by the will of Zeus Prometheus is punished in the Caucasus Mountains. The Greek Argonauts sail to Colchis and steal the Golden Fleece. Blinded by the beauty of Europe (sister of Cadmus), Zeus abducts her from Phoenicia. Cadmus (grandson of Hayk and prior of the dwelling of the God) creates the Phoenician and later the Greek alphabets [19]. Tiras<sup>12</sup> (grandfather of Hayk) moves from the Armenian Highlands of Van region to Europe, “*the Thracians descend from Tiras*” and “*he calls the country he rules by his name – Thrace*”. Askanaz resettled from his house on the coast of the Black Sea, leaving the house to his younger brother Torgom. Later Torgom renamed it into the house of Torgom. The rulers of Armenia, the Yervanduni dynasty of the Haykaznunis, as the heirs of the founder of the house of Torgom, had authority over Commagene and founded the Armenian Kingdom there. After long quests, the ruler of Sweden Sveigdir<sup>13</sup> finds the country of his ancestors from Van (the Vanir), Vanaland, and marries a girl from the Vanir (the Kingdom of Van or the house of Torgom). Aesir **Odin**<sup>14</sup>, descendant of Askanaz (from him descended the Sarmatians), moved to Scandinavia from the Black Sea coast and together with the Vanir founded the Swedish royal dynasty (konungs) [24].

In various mythologies the world-tree (egg, mountain, rock, lotus) arises at the moment of separation of the earth from the sky. It gives birth to a man [25]. A number of mythological plots are based on the motif of birth of the eternal infant from the water plant, which expands perception of the song motifs and depictions on the stele. The stele depicts lotus leaves “giving birth” to a bearded youth. His clothes remind the clothes of the Armenian king Antiochus from the Commagene sanctuary (Fig. 5). It is decorated with eight-pointed stars. This pattern reflects the integrity and unity of ideological, religious features in the song and the stele relief. The song describes the act of creation and the traits of the hero. Apart from the act of creation, the relief illustrates the pictorial elements of the hero (deity), describing the nature of his deeds.

The birth of Vahagn (described in the song) and his depiction on the stele relief form a synthetic picture of the **sunrise**. The Armenians from Van had a wedding custom: they rose to flat roofs at the dawn and praised the birth of the sun. The World Tree is embodied in the form of a reed or a lotus in the tradition of the ancient Egyptians, Sumerians and the people who inhabited riverside areas. The Egyptians used papyrus reeds for different purposes, mainly for manufacturing writing material.

**Cyperus papyrus practically disappeared in its native habitat.** Theophrastus’ “History of Plants” states that it grew not only in Egypt and Syria<sup>15</sup>; according to Pliny’s “Natural History”<sup>16</sup>, **cyperus papyrus was a native plant of the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates**. The Armenians, who inhabited the territories near the sources of the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, had a distinct idea of the world tree as a reed, various forms of crosses of birth and wingless crosses of death. Moreover, Armenian petroglyphs (10-5 millennia BC), vishapakars (dragon-stones, basalt steles, 5-2 millenia BC), that were

<sup>12</sup> Tiras – father of Askanaz, Riphath, Torgom and Javan.

<sup>13</sup> Sveigdir – according to Armenian tradition **\*s(h)v**ey and **\*dir** (found/establish), cf. Armenian **\*himmadir** – founder.

<sup>14</sup> Hero, mythological figure in Norse mythology (author’s note).

<sup>15</sup> Boar, R. R., D. M. Harper and C. S. Adams. 1999. Biomass Allocation in *Cyperus papyrus* in a Tropical Wetland, Lake Naivasha, Kenya. 1999. *Biotropica* 3: 411.

<sup>16</sup> Pliny the Elder. Natural History; [http://annales.info/ant\\_lit/plinius/](http://annales.info/ant_lit/plinius/)



transformed into various Pre-Pagan and Pagan steles, cross-stones (1 millennium BC), and later into the Christian medieval cross-stones, reflect different stages of cognition, ideology, worldview and art of cognitive pictorial description of the invariant pattern of the genesis (creation of the world), acts of birth and death [7, 20], which have universal character.

The basalt stele is a work of art, that synthesis knowledge, abilities and skills of the ancestors, the level of development of their ideology, knowledge and art processing. Perhaps, due to the contribution of this circumstance, the builders and masters, priests of old sanctuaries, temples, as well as servants of Christian churches preserved the amazing artifact, hiding it from prying eyes in the buttress of a Christian church. It should be noted that a number of characteristic features of Vahagn passed to pagan gods, to Urartian Haldi and Shivini, to Mithra, to Aramazd and later to Christ. Thus, “**ancient Eastern traditions**” root back to the Armenian sources, proving the fact provided by Academician N. Marr, describing the significance, information content, information- and knowledge-intensivity of Armenian cultural traditions [21, 22].



Fig. 5. Artifacts from the tomb in Commagene (a, b), built by Armenian king Antiochus I Theos descending from the house of the Yervandunis (king's clothes are ornamented with rhomboid patterns – ornaments in the form of eight-pointed stars), [http://www.galenfrysinger.com/-mount\\_nemrut.htm](http://www.galenfrysinger.com/-mount_nemrut.htm). Gold coin from the National Library in Paris (c), 362 BC, depicting Yervand I (wearing a Phrygian cap). Below the relief depiction of a lion's head is an eight-pointed star and solar barge (d). Above the lion's body there are a number of eight-pointed stars.

According to C. Jung, an archetype is an unconscious mean of transmitting the most valuable and crucial human experience from generation to generation. It contains the experience of situations, in which a **man manifests his human nature** (experience to endue meaning to things, natural phenomena, human relationships, etc.), i.e. cultural experience [23]. The findings of the comparative analysis of old artifacts reveal archetypes, illustrating the stages of figurative transformations of different cultural heroes on the territory of historical Armenia from the period of the houses of Tiras, Askanaz, Torgom, Hayk and Tigran Yervanduni till the era of medieval Christian Armenia [8, 11, 17].

### Conclusion

The authors identify a unified invariant structural paradigm, forming the basis of worldview pattern, by explication of pictorial and linguistic, semantic and contextual information in comparison with historical data. This interdisciplinary method allows to not only interpret the matrix of the depiction under the study, but also to identify and transfer previously tacit meanings of the context by systematic worldview patterns and principles of Natural Philosophy.

The artifact, excavated on the territory of the historical Armenian Kingdom of

**Commagene** by German experts at the site of the sanctuary of Jupiter Dolichenus, the basalt stele with relief depicts Armenian deity Vahagn. The relief illustrates the concept of interaction of four main forces, elements of nature, based on the principles of Natural Philosophy and Metaphysics. The existence of identical archetypes in the artifacts of cultural heritage under the study proves permanence of cognition, transformation of cultural traditions, knowledge, experience and cognitive ideology of the residents of the houses of Askanaz and Torgom (the Armenian nation).

Non-trivial scientific results are obtained through the analysis. The new approach provides a basis for interpreting the informative field, having previously unambiguous interpretation in modern science. Form transitions in the prototypes of pictorial, mythological and worldview motifs were also revealed in the culture of pre-existing people, which change the plain of expression within the refracted archetype, but almost completely retain the plain of content. This approach of description and interpretation of the material involves not only its consideration within the discipline under the study, but also reveals its relations to and interactions with the associated disciplines and its role in the system of universal scientific paradigm, ensuring the principle of systematic approach in the frameworks of this study.

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