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BLACK HOURS AND GOLDEN AGE IN ARMENIAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

Kulcsszavak: *Textbook, Armenia, Black Hours, Golden Age*

Textbooks play a crucial role in the study of history, as they document significant historical events and narratives, shaping the understanding of the past for future generations. By analyzing textbooks historians can show how history has been told in various eras, emphasizing narrative shifts, additions, omissions, and the influence of textbooks on the formation of national identity. Textbooks are regarded as primary sources in historical research due to their role in shaping collective memory, preserving memory and history, and national identity. My research question is what in Armenian History textbooks were presented and characterized as Black Hours and Golden Age and how are the same historical events presented in textbooks in different periods? Precisely, Black hours refer to the difficult, hard, and sufferable times for Armenians. The contrary Golden Age refers to the flourishing times of Armenian history. I chose the title Golden Age and Black Hours comparing two different sides of historical events, similar to the project of Georg Eckert Institute "Black Hours and Golden Times – European Urban Fates. Three case studies," where three cities were studied "in their most difficult situations – the black hours – and at their peak – the golden times."¹ The project was mostly about the pasts of three European Capitals of Culture: Essen, Krakow, and Vilnius. This was done to show how different European history is. The goal was to provide different perspectives on shared European history, cultural connections, and conflicts while moving beyond current national borders, and to encourage a more inclusive and open understanding of Europe's past.

I selected Armenian history textbooks from five different periods. These include the Tsarist Period, which refers to textbooks used in Armenian schools under Russian Imperial rule; the Ottoman Period, textbooks used in Armenian schools within the Ottoman Empire; the Soviet Period (Brezhnev, Gorbachev period), textbooks used during the Soviet period; the Diaspora Period, a textbook used in the Armenian diaspora in Tabriz, Iran; and the Post-Soviet Period, contemporary textbooks used in the Republic of Armenia.