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## Germany according to *Ancient Armenian Geography* (or *Ashkharatsuyts*)

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**Abstract:** *The information from «Ancient Armenian Geography» (Ashkharatsuyts) about Germany is unique. Despite the fact that, for unknown reasons, the Armenian source places Gaul in the east of this country (instead of the western side), nevertheless, this does not detract from the value of information about ancient and early medieval Germany. Without hesitation, we can state the importance of information about the orography and hydrography of this country. The source presents a general picture of the country's tribal world, on the basis of which the German people were formed in subsequent centuries. Particular attention is given to the Goths, who played almost the most important role in early medieval Europe. Additionally, the source discusses Germany's mining industry, particularly iron mining, which is a noteworthy aspect. This information can be considered unique, since, studying the source's descriptions about the remaining 11 European countries, we do not find any evidence about this industry. All this and other information from the Armenian source requires scrupulous study and analysis, which we have tried to do within the framework of this article.*

**Key words:** Historical Geography, Germany, *Ashkharatsuyts*, *Ancient Armenian Geography*, Movses Khorenatsi, Anania Shirakatsi, Ptolemy

### Introduction

Among the twelve countries of Europe, *Ancient Armenian Geography* (or *Ashkharatsuyts* (Աշխարհացոյց)) names Germany as the fourth country of this continent (Germania, in Armenian Գերմանիա). Claudius Ptolemy in his *Geography* (Γεωγραφικὴ Ὑφήγησις) calls the country Γερμανίας Μεγάλης θέσις. The Greek historian, as in the Armenian source, called it the fourth country of Europe. However, Ptolemy has some discrepancies with *Ashkharatsuyts*. Thus, he named Ireland (Hibernia, Ἰουερνίας νήσος, Ἰουερνία, in Armenian Իբրեմիա) as the first country of Europe along with Britain (Πρεττανία / Βρεττανία, in Armenian Բրիտանիա). The second country according to the Ptolemaic list is Spain (Ιβηρία, also Ἴσπανία, in *Ashkharatsuyts* Spania, in Armenian Սպանիա), the third Gaul (in Armenian Galia or Galius

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(Գալիա / Գալիոս), in ancient Armenian texts also Gaghia (Գաղիա)). Let us stipulate that in the matter of comparing/contrasting the information from *Ashkharatsuyts* with the mentions of ancient historians and geographers in all our previous articles, we gave preference to the information of Ptolemy. This is due to the fact that the authors of the Armenian source mention the name of this Greek historian<sup>1</sup> several times, since their views on many issues coincided.

A completely different picture is observed in Strabo. In his *Geography* (Γεωγραφικά) the first is named Iberia, the second is Celtica (Κελτική, in *Ashkharatsuyts* the country is named Gelt-Galatia (Գելլո-Գալատիա)),<sup>2</sup> the third is Britain, the fourth – Alps (Ἄλπεις ὄρει, in Armenian Ալպեր). Germany is the ninth on this list after Italy (Ἰταλία, in Armenian Իտալիա), the fifth – Southern Italy (in Armenian հարավային Իտալիա), the sixth – Sicily (Σικελία, Σίκελος, in Armenian Սիցիլիա / Սիկիլիա),<sup>3</sup> the seventh Istra (Ἰστρος, in Armenian Իստրոս, in Latin Danubius, Danuvius, in Armenian Դանուբ). So, when comparing the views of Ptolemy and Strabo, it becomes obvious that both historians have a northern geographical orientation when describing the countries of Europe, but they have different landmarks on the map: For Ptolemy, in both cases they are northern, while in Strabo, a “west-east” orientation<sup>4</sup> emerges when listing countries.

Let’s consider the order of listing European countries, according to the main work of our narrative – *Ashkharatsuyts*. Here the first country of Europe is Spain, the second is the country of the British or Britain (in *Ashkharatsuyts* the toponym Alvion or Albion is also found) together with modern Ireland (Hibernia), the third is Gaul (Galius), and, finally, Germany is mentioned the fourth. At the beginning of the fragment dedicated to Germany, we read: “The fourth natural world is Germany (Γερμανίας, Germania, in Armenian Գերմանիա), which in the east borders with Galia [near the Northern Ocean and extends to] the Sarmantine Mountains”.<sup>5</sup> As in the description of many other countries almost unfamiliar to Khorenatsi and Shirakatsi, so in this case the phrase “natural world”<sup>6</sup> is used (as Spain, Britain, Gaul, Dalmatia,

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<sup>1</sup> Hakobyan, 2015: 1.12, 1.14, 1.30ff; In *Ashkharatsuyts* the name of Ptolemy is mentioned 15 times (in ancient Armenian Քղոմեոս-Պտղոմեոսի անունը); Ananias of Shirak, 1979: Book I, 1.260-261. 1.264 ff.; Patkanov, 1877: 1.7 ff.; For more details on the authorship of *Ashkharatsuyts*, see Harutyunyan, 2013a: 1-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.16-21.

<sup>3</sup> This island is often called Trinacria (i.e. “three-pointed”) because it has the shape of a triangle.

<sup>4</sup> For the orientation of the ancient Armenian map *Ashkharatsuyts*, see Harutyunyan, 2013b: 88-94. On geographical orientations, see Podosinov, 1999: 341-364.

<sup>5</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.3.22; Krause, 2002; Wolfram, 2005; Künzl, 2006; Simek, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> In *Ashkharatsuyts*, this expression is used when listing all the countries of Europe, as well as the first four countries of Libya (Africa): Mauritania (Մաւրիտանիա), Second Mauritania (Mauretania Caesariensis), Africa (Kurenakan, Κυρηναϊκή, Cyrenaica, in Armenian Վերինաֆրիկա). The Fifth Marmarian Libya is already designated as a country (Armenian trans. marble, from Arm. մարմար, that is, marble –

etc. are called in *Ashkharatsuyts*), and not vocabulary units “country” or “state”. Here the authors made a significant mistake, since to the east of Germany is not Gaul, but European Sarmatia (Σαρμάται, Sarmatae, in Armenian Եվրոպական Սարմատիա). This is the western part of Sarmatia, and when describing it in *Ashkharatsuyts* we read: “The ninth natural world of Europe is half of Sarmatia, which is located east of Germany”.<sup>7</sup> This summary of *Ashkharatsuyts* confirms that its authors could not have made a mistake and mentioned the east instead of the west. Therefore, we can conclude that in this case there is a clear mistake by the copyists of the manuscripts of the Armenian text in subsequent centuries. You can be convinced of this by studying the relevant passage in *Ashkharatsuyts* about European Sarmatia.<sup>8</sup> The Armenian source correctly notes that Gaul borders the Northern Ocean.

### Historical geography of Germany

The issue of mountains seems difficult to interpret. It is well known that Ptolemy mentions the Alpine (Alpes, from the Latin *albus*), the Sudetes (Σούδητα ὄρη, *Sudeti montes*), the Carpathian (Carpates or Karpaten, in all likelihood, comes from the name of the tribe “carps”<sup>9</sup>), and the Sarmatian mountains<sup>10</sup> in the direction “west-east”. The author writes: “From the west, Sarmatia is limited by the Vistula River [in Ptolemy Ούιαδούα (Ούιστούλα) – H.H.], a part of Germany lying between its sources and the Sarmatian mountains, and the mountains themselves...”<sup>11</sup> The Vistula River is the modern Vistula, located in the Western Carpathians, the main tributary of which is the river Black Viselka (in Polish: Czarna Wiselka). So, in this case, we can safely say that the Greek historian-geographer connects the Sarmatian Mountains with the Carpathians. How are the Alps and the Sudetes connected to the Sarmatian mountains? This question requires separate consideration. The Sudetes are the western continuation of the Carpathians, located between modern Germany, Poland, and the Czech Republic (the Carpathians extend across the territory of modern southwestern Ukraine on the border with Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, and Poland). We have already talked about the Sudetes above. West of the Sudetenland lie the Alpine Mountains, stretching

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Մարմարային Լիբիա, *μάρμαρος*, in Latin *marmoris*), after which all other countries are referred to as countries (countries of Africa, followed by 38 countries in Asia).

<sup>7</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.III, 55.

<sup>8</sup> For more details, see Harutyunyan, 2017: 25-30; 2018: 321-326. It should be noted that when describing European Sarmatia, *Ashkharatsuyts* focuses on the Sea of Azov (ή Μαϊώτις or ή Μαϊώτις λίμνη, *Maëotis palus*) and the Crimean Peninsula (Ταυρικῆ, *Cimmerium*). The peninsula in the Armenian source is also called *Chersonesos* (Χερσόνησος, *Chersonesus*).

<sup>9</sup> Καρπιανοί, Καρπι, *Carpi*, in Armenian: Կարպիանի եր. See Ptol. *Geog.* 3.5.6; Jord. *Get.* 91; Lactant. *De mort. pers.* 4.3; Zos. 1.31-37; Smyk & Filipova, 2024: 216.

<sup>10</sup> Σαρματικῶν ὄρέων, *Sarmatici montes*; Ptol. *Geog.* 2.11.7, 2.11.10, 2.11.23, 3.5.5, 7.1.

<sup>11</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 3.5.5, see also 3.5.20.

along the modern borders between France and Switzerland and France and Italy.<sup>12</sup> Another noteworthy point to consider is that Ptolemy lists the Alps, Sudetes, and the European Sarmatian Mountains together,<sup>13</sup> and places the Carpathians in another place,<sup>14</sup> separately. In the first case, the Greek historian separates the Roman world from the Germanic one. By mentioning the Carpathians, he draws a “watershed” between the Germanic and Slavic worlds. But some of the Western Slavs (for example, Czechs, Slovaks) remain within the boundaries of the first division – with the Romano-Germanic world.<sup>15</sup>

Further in *Ashkharatsuyts*, we encounter the passage: “The Danube River [Danubius, in Armenian Դաւնւբ – H.H.] originates from its turn, which flows into the Pontic Sea. This river is even larger than Tanais”.<sup>16</sup> The sources of the Danube are in Germany, more precisely, in the Black Forest (Schwarzwald, in Baden-Württemberg). The expression “from its turn” means “from the turn of the Sarmant Mountains,” due to the fact that they were mentioned in the previous sentence. However, this interpretation is incorrect. Both the Sudetes and the Alps have a slight bend in their outline, which is arched. As the Black Forest adjoins the Alps, it can be concluded that the word “turn” refers specifically to the Alps, and not to the Carpathians or Sudetes. The actual source of the Danube is now known as the Swabian Alps (Schwäbische Alb) and is also located in Baden-Württemberg, similar to the Black Forest. It is quite obvious that, flowing through the territory of 10 modern European states (from Germany to Moldova, the length of the river is 2850 km), the river flows into the Pontic Sea (Πόντος Εὐξένοϋ). Moreover, it surpasses the Tanais in length (1870 km).

The following mention should be broken down into parts. The first part states: “It has three prominent mountains...”.<sup>17</sup> The German landscape is special. The northern part, adjacent to the Baltic [Mare Balticum, among the ancient Slavs known as the Vangian Sea or Sveiskoe, in German Ostsee – H.H.]<sup>18</sup> and the North Seas, is characterized by its flat terrain. Moving towards the middle of the country, we encounter

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<sup>12</sup> Musset, 1975; Dixon, 1976: 51; Demandt, 1984: 150 ff.

<sup>13</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 2.11.7.

<sup>14</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 3.5.6.

<sup>15</sup> Quite a lot has been written about the ancient Germans. See Solov'yeva, 1980. 7-27; Thompson, 2003; Todd, 2005; Musset, 2006; Kuz'menko, 2011.

<sup>16</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.23-24.

<sup>17</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.26.

<sup>18</sup> The origin of the name is still controversial. Some believe that the word comes from Latin “balteus, balteum”, meaning belt, or from the ancient Greek Βάλχία. Pliny the Elder writes about this name: “According to Philemon, the Cimbri call [this part of the ocean] - from Parapanis to Cape Rusbeia - [with the word] Morimarus – “dead sea”, and beyond this cape the Kronian Sea. Xenophon of Lampsacus reports that three days’ sea journey from the Scythian coast there is a colossal island of Balkia, the same one that Pytheas called “Basilia”. They say there are [islands of] Oyona, where the inhabitants subsist on birds’ eggs and oats. And other [islands] where people are born with horse hooves and are called hippopods [Greek. “horse legs”]. And also [the islands of the tribe] Panotii [“all-eared”], they walk naked, except that they cover themselves all with their own huge ears” (Plin. *HN* 4.95.13, also 37.35.10).

the Central German Uplands (also known as the Central German Highlands, in German *Mittelgebirgsschwelle*). While the peak height of the northern lowlands reaches a maximum of 150 meters, the Central German Uplands rise to heights of around 1000 meters, featuring formations such as the Rhenish Slate Mountains. In southern Germany, a strikingly different topography emerges. Here lies a mountainous region known as the Bavarian Plateau, which forms the northern foothills of the Alps. This is where one would find the mountains (referred to as “ranges” by Armenian authors). We have already discussed three such ranges in the southern outskirts of ancient Germany. The Alps within German territory are divided into various parts: 1) the Allgäuer Alps (in German *Allgäuer Alpen*), 2) the Bavarian Alps (in German *Bayerische Alpen*), 3) Wetterstein (in German *Wettersteingebirge*) or Northern Alps, 4) Berchtesgaden Alps (in German *Berchtesgadener Alpen*), 5) Karwendel (in German *Karwendel*), 6) Hesselberg (or Franconian Alps), 7) Black Forest (Latin: *Abnoba Mons* or *Abnoba Silva*; later, the Romans called it *Silva Marciana*; in German: *Schwarzwald*), 8) Swabian Jura (also referred to as Swabian Alb; in German: *Schwäbische Alb*). It is imperative to list all the mountains mentioned by Ptolemy. Here is his list, which we compiled in the direction “north-south” and “west-east”: 1) *Abnoba* (Ἀβνοβαίων ὀρέων), 2) *Melibocum* (Μηλιβόκου ὄρους), 3) *Asciburgium* (Asberg, Ἀσκιβο υργίου ὄρους), 4) *Semanus* (Σήμανοῦς (Σήμανος), 5) *Sudeta*, 6) *Herkynischer* (Ἑρκύνιος δρυμός), 7) *Sarmatische*, 8) *Gabreta* (Γαβρήταν,) 9) *Luna* (Λοῦναν).<sup>19</sup> If we exclude the Sudeten and Sarmatian Mountains from the last list, then 7 mountains remain, corresponding to the first list, where we listed parts of the Alps. If these mountains were given Romanized names during the Ptolemaic era, then upon becoming part of Germany, these names underwent Germanization.

The following information from *Ashkharatsuyts* refers to the hydrography of this country: “... and eleven large rivers, two of which flow into the Danube River”.<sup>20</sup> Of course, there are many more rivers in Germany; there are more than 700 large rivers alone. We believe that in this mention, first of all, we are talking about: 1) Rhine – Ρήνος (in Armenian Հռէնու), 2) Elbe – Ἄλβιος (Λάβιος) ποταμοῦ, *Albis*, 3) Moselle (it is believed the word took its origin from the Latin *Mosella*, i.e. small Meuse (*Mosa*), 4) Danube – Ἴστρος (in Armenian Դսւրըն), *Danubius*, *Danuvius* (in Armenian Դաւնիւր), 5) *Weser* (*Visurgis*), 6) *Saale* (in German *Saale*), 7) *Spree* (in German *Spree*), 8) *Emse* (in German *Ems*), 9) *Neckar* (*Neccarus*, in German *Neckar*, *Negger*), etc.<sup>21</sup> So, at least in the German part of its course, the Danube has three fairly large

<sup>19</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 2.11.7-26, 3.5.5 ff.

<sup>20</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.26.

<sup>21</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 2.9.14, 2.9.20, 2.11.24, 2.11.30. Suffice it to say that the Danube alone has at least 17 known tributaries. Among them are the Prut (Προῦτος – Prout), two Moravas (the left tributary, known as March in German, is 380 kilometers long; the right tributary is 563 kilometers long), the Sava (Σάβας –

tributaries: 1) Inn (length 525 km), 2) Isar (length 283 km), 3) Iller (length 163 km). We named 12 large rivers flowing through the territory of modern Germany. At present, it is difficult to give an unambiguous answer to the question: What 11 rivers did the authors of *Ashkharatsuyts* have in mind? It can be assumed that they adhered to the points of view, first of all, of ancient historians and geographers (especially Ptolemy and Pliny). Therefore, we must present Ptolemy's list. He talks about: 1) Elbe (Ἄλβιν, Albis), 2) Suebus (Συήβου (ποταμοῦ ἐκβολαί), in German Suebus Mündung), 3) Weser (Οὐισούργιος ποταμοῦ, Visurgis, Weser), 4) Labe (Ἄλβιος (Λάβης)), 5) Emse (Ἄμισία – Amisia; located in the northwest of Germany, originates on the southwestern slopes of the mountains, where the famous Teutoburg Forest is located), 6) Vistula (Οὐιστούλα (Οὐιστοῦλα), in German Weichsel; currently flows through Poland), 7) Viadua (Οὐιαδοῦα (Οὐαδοα), in German Viadua (Vadua)), this is the same as the Oder.<sup>22</sup> When comparing these two lists, only 3 names coincide – Elbe, Weser, and Rhine. However, Ptolemy in other places of his work speaks of the Rhine and the Danube. From the list of modern names there remain Moser, Sale and Spree, and from the Ptolemaic one – Suebus (we talked about the latter above; this is a conventionally collective toponym invented by an ancient historian-geographer).

Another mention from the Armenian source is related to the geography of Germany: “It also has a field called Satraben and the Ilimian desert”.<sup>23</sup> The identification of Satraben is quite complicated. Ptolemy mentions Saxony, Sabalinger, and then the settlement of Kobandoy.<sup>24</sup> The location of Saxony is well known; it is believed that Kobandoy corresponds to modern-day Copenhagen. It turns out that Satraben is the same Sabalinger, and it should be looked for along the route from Saxony to Schleswig-Holstein. From where such confidence? In the subsequent paragraph, Ptolemy speaks of the settlement Χάλοι.<sup>25</sup> Scientists believe that this is the city of Kalundborg, situated in modern Denmark (on the island of Zealand). Ptolemy refers to Sabalinger as a river, indicating that the Armenian text likely refers to the valley of this river.

As for the mention of the desert, it can be argued that we are talking about the present-day Blendov desert (Ptolemy mentions Illiberis (Ἰλλιβέριος ποταμοῦ ἐκβολαί – “the mouth of the river Illiberis”) as both a mountain and a river).<sup>26</sup> which is

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Savus), Tisza (Τίσσος – Tisza), Drava (Δράβα – Dravus, in German Drau), etc. Not all of these tributaries flow through Germany. In Germany, there are tributaries such as Lech (Λεχος – Lechos), Iller, Isar, and Inn (Aenus, Oenus). See also Korsunskiy & Günther, 1984: 117-125.

<sup>22</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 2.11.2-28, 3.5.5; Tac. *Ann.* 1.44, 2.26; Tac. *Hist.* 1.2, 3.5.21, Tac. *Germ.* 2.9, 2.38-39. Currently, it is generally accepted that Labe is the Czech name of the river Elbe. It can be assumed that the author had some other river in mind. Ptolemy locates the tribe Rugiclei (Ῥουτίκλειοι) here, where, according to the author, the city of Rugium (Ῥούγιον; currently located in Poland under the name Darłowo) was situated.

<sup>23</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.27.

<sup>24</sup> Κοβανδοῦ; Ptol. *Geog.* 2.11.11. (see ed. Ptolemy 1839).

<sup>25</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 2.11.12.

<sup>26</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 2.10.2.

located in Silesia (in German Schlesien, now part of Poland). This area of the river corresponds to the region of the Viadua or Oder (also known as Odra or Odr). In antiquity, it was inhabited primarily by Germanic tribes such as Vandals (βάνδαλοι, Vandili, in the ancient German language Vendels – Wendel, Wentil) and Quidians (κούαδοι, Quadi<sup>27</sup>). Additionally, the region was home to the Silingians (Selings, Silingae) and the Lugii, who were possibly of Slavic origin. Therefore, the desert mentioned likely existed in the territory of modern Silesia.

In the 26th paragraph of the 3rd Book of *Ashkharatsuyts*, we read further: “... and iron ore [in the Armenian text, the word “erkatktrutyun” (երկաթկտրույն) is used, which is literally translated as “iron cutting”]<sup>28</sup> – H.H.].” However, this mention is not directly connected to the main text of the source. Therefore, in all editions of *Ashkharatsuyts*, it is placed in square brackets. The sentence begins by discussing the tributaries of the Danube. However, it then abruptly shifts to discussing iron in Germany without providing any explanation for the connection between the two topics. Since iron is mentioned in the description of the Danube, it suggests that this mineral must be sought within its basin. In Germany, the Danube flows through the territory of the plain (flächenländer) of the Black Forest, where ores of lead (plumbum, in Armenian արձիճ (archich) or կապար (kapar)), silver (argentum, in Armenian արծաթ (artsat)), and cobalt (cobaltum, in Armenian կոբալտ) were discovered.<sup>29</sup> In terms of density, iron has a density of 7.87 g/cm<sup>3</sup>, cobalt 8.86 g/cm<sup>3</sup>, silver 10.50 g/cm<sup>3</sup>, and lead 11.35 g/cm<sup>3</sup>. When considering the hardness of these metals, lead is the weakest at 1.5, followed by silver at 2.5, cobalt at 3.75, and iron as the hardest at 4.0.<sup>30</sup> It’s possible that when mentioning the term “erkatktrutyun,” the Armenian authors were referring to cobalt as a “rival” of iron.

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<sup>27</sup> Plin. *HN* 4.28; Cass. Dio 77.12; Zos. 6.3; Procop. *Vand.* 1.2.2-3; Jord. *Get.* 91; Ptol. *Geog.* 2.11.26.

<sup>28</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.26.

<sup>29</sup> In modern Germany, iron ores are found in the Ruhr region (Ruhrgebiet), Lower Saxony (Niedersachsen), Salzgitter, and Eisenhüttenstadt.

<sup>30</sup> Here we cannot talk about the metal germanium, which was discovered in 1869. All this data is provided on the Mohs scale.

## Population of ancient Germany

Finally, the last piece of information refers to the peoples living there: “Eight peoples live here, one of which is the Gothic people”.<sup>31</sup> Many historians of antiquity and the early Middle Ages discuss the ethnographic map of Germany. If one were to solely rely on *Ashkharatsuyts*, they might assume there were only seven other peoples living in the territory. However, further research has shown that there were actually many more. It is customary to categorize all Germans into three groups: Western, Eastern, and Northern.<sup>32</sup>

If we “follow in the footsteps” of Pliny the Elder, we will find an almost identical picture. The ancient encyclopedist writes: “The Germanic tribes fall into five groups: 1) the Vandilii, part of which are the Burguidions, Varins, Charins, and Gutons; 2) Ingvaons, to which the Cimbri, Teutones and the Chauci tribes (*Chaucorum gentes*) belong”.<sup>33</sup> In this case, the Armenian source almost accompanies Pliny. However, the problem becomes more complex when we begin to examine the works of other ancient authors. Strabo speaks of almost 30 tribes that lived beyond the Rhine. Here is a list of the most frequently mentioned: Bructeri (Βρούκτεροι, Brukteroi), Gutons (Γούτωνοι, Gutonoi), Gamabrivia (Γαμαβρίουοι, Gamabrivoi), Germondura (German-duri, also Hermunduri, Hermanduri, Hermunduli, Hermonduri, Hermonduli)<sup>34</sup>, Zoums (Ζούμοι), Caucas (Καυκοί),<sup>35</sup> Campsians (Καμψιανοί), Kaulki (Καυλκοί), Cimbri (Κίμβροι, Kímbroi, variations Kimbern or Cimbern), Lugians (Λοῦγοι, Lugii, variations of Lugi, Lygia, Lygia, Lugions, Lygians), Lombards (Λαγκόβαρδοι), Marcomanni (Μαρκομανοί, Marcoman(n)i), Mugilons (Μουγίλωνοι, Mugilonus), Suevi (Σοήβοι, Suevi, Suebi), Sugambri (Σούγαμβροί, Sugambrer), Semnones (Σέμωνες, Σέμνονες, Semnones), Sibins (Σιβίνοι, Sibirius), Teutons (Τεῦτονες, Teutoniae, Teutonavar), Tulingi (Tullingi), Ubi (Ubi),<sup>36</sup> Usipetes (Usipetes, Usipii, variant readings Ουσιπέται, Ousipetai, Ουσίπιοι, Ousipioi), Khavbs (Χαῦβοι, Khavbus, variant readings Katti, Kattai, Katy, Cathay, Chatti), Khatts (Χάττοι, Khattus, variant readings Chattay, Chattoi), Khattuarii (Χαττουάριοι, Χαττουάριο, Khattuaris, variant readings Chasuaria, Hasuaria, Attuaria), Cherusci (Χηροῦσκοί, Χηρούσκοι, Χαιρουσκοί, Cherusci), Eburons (Ἐβούρωνες, Ἐβουρωνοί, Eburonus).<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.25.

<sup>32</sup> Heather, 2006: 201 ff.

<sup>33</sup> Plin. *HN* 14.99. See Grakov, Moravsky & Neusykhin, 1937: 47-55; Krivoguz *et al.*, 1959: 6-18 (auth. Kogan).

<sup>34</sup> Tac. *Germ.* 2.41.

<sup>35</sup> Amm. Marc. 31.4.12. See Grakov, Moravsky & Neusykhin, 1937: 169.

<sup>36</sup> Ptol. *Geog.* 2.11.8-25; Tac. *Ann.* 12.27.1-2. See Grakov, Moravsky & Neusykhin, 1937: 83-126.

<sup>37</sup> For all these tribes, see Strab. 7.2.2-4, 7.3.1. Kolosovskaya, 2000: 98; Korsunskiy & Günther, 1984: 191-194; See Grakov, Moravsky & Neusykhin, 1937: 34-40.



Strabo attests to his lack of knowledge regarding the tribes of the Germans residing far from the Roman borders. In contrast, Gaius Julius Caesar, who had the opportunity to communicate with the Germans during the Gallic War, also documented the names of the tribes living there. Only 10 tribe names coincide with Strabo's list. Additionally, Caesar mentions the Batavians (Βαταβοί, Βατάουοι, Batavi)<sup>38</sup>, Vangiones (Ουαγγιόνες, Vangiones),<sup>39</sup> Caerosi (Caeroesi, Ceroesi, Cerosi), Condrusi (Condrusos), Latobici (Latovici), Sedusii, Tencteri (Τάνκτηροι, Τέγκτηροι, Tencteri, Tenchteri, Tenctheri, Toncteri, Tenkteroi).<sup>40</sup> Without going into details, we can state that Tacitus, Ammianus, Diodorus, Pliny the Elder, Ptolemy, Zosimus, Procopius of Caesarea, Gregory of Tours, Jordanes and other authors mention additional ancient Germanic tribes beyond those already mentioned. Here is the list: Avarins (Avarnas, Avarps Αύαρινοί, Άβαρηνοί, Άβαρινοί, Αύαρηνοί), Aduatuks (Aduatici, Atuatikoi (Ατουατικοί), Alemanni (Alamanni), Angles (Angli), Angrivarii (Angrivari), Bavarians (Baiovari, Baiovarii), Bastarns (also called Peevkins, Βαστάρνας, Βαστάρναι, Βαστέρναι, Basternei, Bastarni), Belgae, Bucinobantes (Bucinobantes, Bucinobanti), Vandals (Βάνδαλοι, Vandili, Wandali, Uuandali), Varini (Ούίρουνοι, Ουάρνων, Varinnae, Viruni, Wærne/Werne, Warnii), Visigoths (Visigothi, Wisigothi, Vesi, Visi, Wesi, Wisi; also Tervingi, Thervingi, Thoringi), Heruli (Eruls, Elurs, Verli), Goths (Γόθοι, Gothi, Gonthi, Got(h)ones, also Gutones), Crimean Goths (Τετραξίται, Τραπεξίται, Tetraxite Goths), Gutes, Danes, Quadi, Morini, Nahanarvals (Nahanarvali, Nahavali, Naha-Narvali, Nahana-vali), Nemets (Νέμητες, Nemetes), Nuithones (variants include Teutones, Euthiones (Jutes)), Ostrogoths (also Greutung, Greuthungi, Ostrogothi, Austrogothi), Osi (Osii), Saxons (Saxones<sup>41</sup>), Silingi (Sillings, Silingae), Sitons (Sithones), Sciri (Scirians, Skiren, Sciren), Tubantes, Franks (Franci), Frisii (Frisiavones, Frisones), Chamavi (Chamāves or Chamaboe (Χαμαβοί)), Harii, Jutes (Luti, Lutæ). While this list identifies at least 70 distinct tribes, there were likely even more.

In addition to all the listed tribes, *Ashkharatsuyts* also mentions the Franks (Franci) when describing Gaul.<sup>42</sup> In the *History of Armenia* by Movses Khorenatsi there is no mention of the Franks; the author mentions Gaul only once. This suggests that Anania Shirakatsi, the second author of *Ashkharatsuyts*, added the reference to the Franks.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Tac. *Germ.* 1.29; Tac. *Hist.* 4.12.

<sup>39</sup> Tac. *Germ.* 1.28; Tac. *Hist.* 4.70; Tac. *Ann.* 12.27; For more details on the work of Tacitus *Germania*, see Grakov, Moravsky & Neusykhin, 1937: 187-201; Thompson, 1958: 2-29; Reinhard, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> For all these tribes, see Caes. *BCiv.*, Caes. *BGall.*; see also Tac. *Germ.* 1.28-29; Tac. *Hist.* 4.12.70; For more details, see Grakov, Moravsky & Neusykhin, 1937: 10-33; Thompson, 1958: 15 ff.

<sup>41</sup> Thompson, 1928: 136, 171-172.

<sup>42</sup> Gregory of Tours. *Hist.* 1.39, 2.9; Lebek, 1993: 256; Korsunskiy & Günther, 1984: 126; Sommerfeldt, 2016.

<sup>43</sup> Anania Shirakatsi, 270; The name "Frank" has been mentioned since the 11th century; however, in the Armenian environment and literature, this word acquired a completely different meaning. Preachers of the Catholic Church began to appear in the Armenian Cilician state, spreading their faith instead of the Armenian Apostolic (Armenian-Gregorian) Church. These Armenians began to be referred to as "Franks"

Our point of view is confirmed by the information from *Ashkharatsuyts*: “... half of whom [i.e. the Franks - supplemented by us – H.H.] live in Galius, and the other half in Germany”.<sup>44</sup> This is the only mention of the Franks in the Armenian source.

To all of the above, it should be added that the time of presentation of *Ashkharatsuyts* almost completely coincided with the Great Migration of Peoples (4th-7th centuries). These were troubled times in the history of almost all of Europe. The authors of *Ashkharatsuyts* in those distant times, naturally, could not know in detail about all the migrations that took place in early medieval Europe.<sup>45</sup>

Finally, in *Ashkharatsuyts*, there is a description of the fauna of Germany: “It has a wild horse”.<sup>46</sup> This is very similar to the description of Gaul and Dalmatia. In *Ashkharatsuyts* we read: “[In Galius] there is a white wild buffalo”.<sup>47</sup> It can be speculated that this refers to an aurochs. As for Dalmatia, the Armenian source mentions: “In Dalmatia there is a predator called brnos, as well as an ox, which defecates on hunters and thereby kills them”.<sup>48</sup> We are talking about some unknown animal. A more reasonable interpretation is the mention of the wild horse of Germany. The expression “wild horse” suggests that in Europe the domestication of the horse was still ongoing, while in the countries of the ancient East the horse had long been a domestic animal.<sup>49</sup>

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(Ֆրանկ) or “Frangs” (ֆրանկ). Today, a large number of Catholic Armenians reside in southern Georgia, specifically in Java-khetia/Javakheti (in Armenian Ջավախք). This territory is currently known as the Samtskhe-Javakheti region.

<sup>44</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.20.

<sup>45</sup> Krivoguz *et al.*, 1959: 19-49 (author Kogan).

<sup>46</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.27.

<sup>47</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.21.

<sup>48</sup> *Ashkharatsuyts*, 3.33.

<sup>49</sup> See: Kurskaya, 2023: 37 ff. (Chapters: Horses of Antiquity, Celtic World, Horses of the Middle Ages: Europe, Near and Middle East). Here, it is sufficient to mention the name of Kikkuli (c. 1350 BC), who wrote a work on horse breeding and training. The use of horses in armies radically changed the course of history. It is no coincidence that V. Kurskaya coined the expression “A dog is man’s friend, but the horse made history” as the epithet of her monograph; In the 13th century, the work *Healer of Horses and Donkeys* was translated from Arabic into Armenian, indicating people’s concern for the health of these animals.

## Conclusions

Despite its concise and limited nature, the information about Germany in *Ashkharatsuyts* is valuable when interpreted through a hermeneutic lens, which emphasizes close reading and drawing meaning from the text. This source offers a unique Armenian perspective and can complement the work of ancient historians and geographers. Similarly, descriptions of other Western European countries like Spain, Britain, Gaul, and Dalmatia in *Armenian Geography* provide additional insights. We assume that this work served not only as a textbook for schools in early medieval Armenia (possibly also for schools in other countries). According to its content, this source can be called General Geography. *Ashkharatsuyts* demonstrates a broader approach to geography, potentially moving beyond chorography (from the words  $\chi\omega\rho\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\gamma\rho\acute{\alpha}\phi\omega$  – land description). It suggests the inclusion of additional elements that might be considered the foundation of early general geography. The new science included geomorphology, geosciences, orography, hydrology (hydrography), climatology, physical geography of continents, oceans and seas, economic and social geography, cultural and other areas of this ancient science. General geography is a gigantic breakthrough compared to historical geography. In the formation of this new branch of geography, one can state the enormous role of *Ashkharatsuyts* or *Ancient Armenian Geography*.

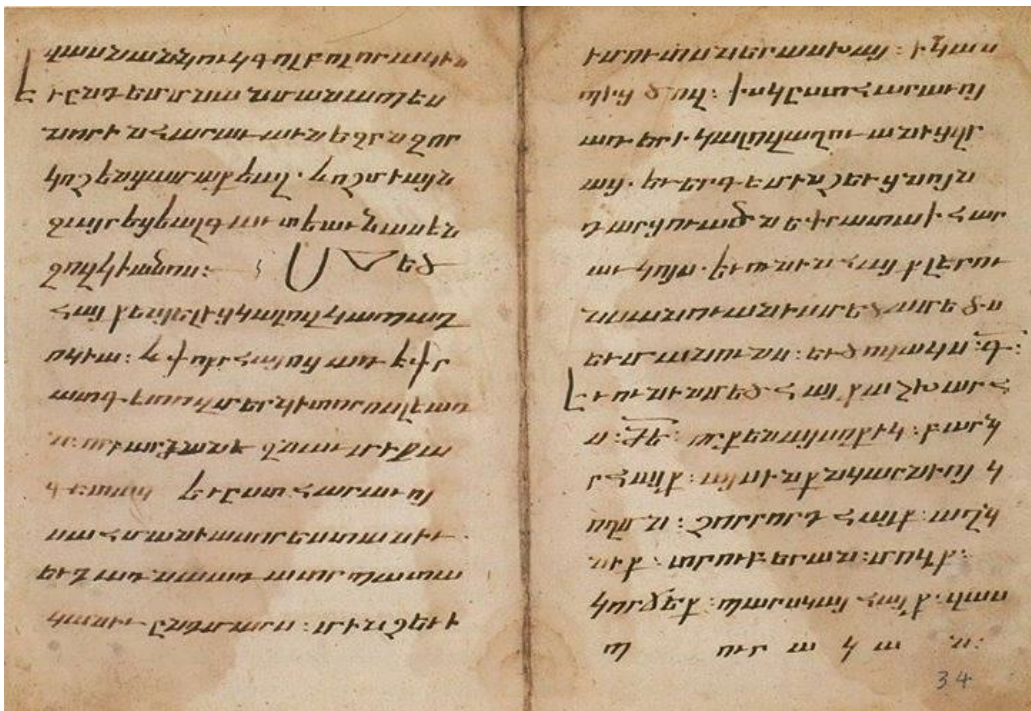


Fig. 1. A fragment from a manuscript of *Ashkharatsuyts*, dated on 1178. Matenadaran, Zmmar no 204, kk. 33v-34 [Public Domain: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ashxarhatsuys.jpg>].

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