

## RESEARCH ARTICLE / ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ

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# THE PROPAGANDA IN ARMENIA OF THE FIVE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLANS IMPLEMENTED IN THE SOVIET UNION

(SOVYETLER BİRLİĞİ'NDE UYGULANAN BEŞ YILLIK KALKINMA PLANLARININ ERMENİSTAN'DAKİ PROPAGANDASI)

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**Abstract:** *The Soviet Union started to carry out its five-year development plans in 1928. At this stage, it was aimed to achieve a great economic development goal within the union, especially in agriculture and industry. The Soviet Union engaged in propaganda activities to include the peoples of the socialist republics within the union in development plans. Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) was one of the socialist republics where propaganda activities for the development plans of the Soviet Union were implemented. At this stage, the Soviet Union tried to encourage Armenian people to work in agriculture and industry within the scope of development plans through propaganda posters. In the study, propaganda activities regarding development plans of the Soviet Union in Armenia are examined*

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*in the context of posters and it is aimed to reveal which propaganda messages the Soviet Union used within the scope of its five-year development plans in Armenia. 7 propaganda posters determined by using quota sampling were analyzed in the light of Karl Böhler's Organon Model (Organon Model) within the scope of the study. This study concludes that the propaganda posters did not include discourses that glorified Communist ideology or Lenin leadership cult; instead, the posters presented discourses emphasizing the importance of work and labor.*

**Keywords:** *Armenia, Soviet Union, Economy, Development, Propaganda*

**Öz:** *Sovyetler Birliği, 1928 yılında beş yıllık kalkınma planlarını uygulamaya başlamıştır. Bu aşamada başta tarım ve sanayi olmak üzere birlik içerisinde büyük bir ekonomik kalkınma hedefinin gerçekleştirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Sovyetler Birliği yönetimi; birlik içerisindeki sosyalist cumhuriyetlerdeki halkları, kalkınma planlarına dahil etmek için propaganda faaliyetleri yapmıştır. Ermenistan Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti (ESSC) de Sovyetler Birliği'nin kalkınma planlarına yönelik propaganda faaliyetlerinin uygulandığı sosyalist cumhuriyetlerden biri olmuştur. Bu aşamada Sovyetler Birliği, hazırlanan propaganda posterleri üzerinden Ermeni halkının kalkınma planları kapsamında tarımda ve sanayide çalışmasını teşvik etmeye çalışmıştır. Çalışmada Sovyetler Birliği'nin Ermenistan'da kalkınma planlarını konu alan propaganda faaliyetleri, posterler özelinde incelenerek, Sovyetler Birliği'nin beş yıllık kalkınma planları kapsamında Ermenistan'da hangi propaganda mesajlarına yer verdiğinin ortaya konulması amaçlanmaktadır. Çalışma kapsamında kota örnekleme kullanılarak belirlenen 7 propaganda posterleri, Karl Böhler'in Organon Modeli (Organon Model) ışığında analiz edilmektedir. Elde edilen bulgularda, propaganda posterlerinde Komünizm ideolojisini veya Lenin liderlik kültürünü yücelten söylemlere yer verilmediği, bunun yerine iş ve emeğin önemi vurgulayan söylemlerin posterlere aktarıldığı sonucuna ulaşılmaktadır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Ermenistan, Sovyetler Birliği, Ekonomi, Kalkınma, Propaganda*

## **Introduction**

Joseph Stalin, who came to the leadership of the Soviet Union after the death of Vladimir Lenin in 1924, implemented the First Five-Year Plan in 1928 to strengthen the economy of the union and at the same time bring it into a certain order. The aim of the five-year development plan implemented by Stalin was to pave the way for the union to become an agriculturally self-sufficient country with a developed heavy industry. The five-year plans led to significant changes in both the economic and social life of the union. The administration of the Soviet Union tried to effectively implement the five-year plans also within the socialist republics that constituted the union. In this process, it was aimed for the people in the union to adopt and support these plans. Propaganda activities were thus carried out to obtain the support of the people of the republics within the Soviet Union.

Employed as one of the most effective forms mass media of the period, posters came to the fore in the propaganda activities implemented for the five-year plans. These plans were tried to be legitimized before the masses through the visual and written elements used in propaganda posters. At this stage, in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia, propaganda posters about five-year plans were used with the aim of procuring the support of the Armenian people for these plans.

There are several studies that have analysed the five-year development plans of the Soviet Union. Below is a list of the relevant authors and their areas of analysis:

- Hunter<sup>1</sup> and Davies and Wheatcroft<sup>2</sup>: the first Soviet five-year plan;
- Millar<sup>3</sup>: mass collectivization and the contribution of Soviet agriculture to the first five-year plan;
- Kalesnik and Davitaya<sup>4</sup>: the economic development of the Soviet geography and its tenth five-year plan;
- Papp<sup>5</sup>: foreign investment, resources, and the tenth five-year plan;

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1 Holland Hunter, "The Overambitious First Soviet Five-Year Plan," *Slavic Review* 32, no.2 (1973): 237-257.

2 R.W. Davies & S.G. Wheatcroft, "Further Thoughts on the First Soviet Five-Year Plan," *Slavic Review* 34, no.4 (1975): 790-802.

3 James R. Millar, "Mass Collectivization and the Contribution of Soviet Agriculture to the First Five-Year Plan: A Review Article," *Slavic Review* 33, no.4 (1974): 750-766.

4 S.V. Kalesnik & F.F. Davitaya, "The Tasks of Soviet Geography in Supporting Soviet Economic Development During The 10th Five-Year Plan," *Soviet Geography* 17, no.4 (1976): 217-234.

5 Daniel S. Papp, "Soviet Resources Policy: Foreign Investment, Resources and the Tenth Five-Year Plan," *Resources Policy* 3, no.3 (1977): 195-202.

- Jensen<sup>6</sup>: the Soviet regional development policy and the tenth five-year plan;
- Micklin<sup>7</sup>: the development of irrigation during the tenth five-year plan;
- Prostiakov et al.<sup>8</sup>: the Soviet economy in the tenth five-year plan;
- Viola<sup>9</sup>: the Soviet recruitment campaign during the first five-year plan;
- Rassweiler<sup>10</sup>: the Soviet labour policy in the first five-year plan;
- Andrlle<sup>11</sup>: labour industrialization and productivity policy within the scope of the second five-year plan;
- Shabad<sup>12</sup>: the geographical aspects of the Soviet five-year plan;
- Dienes<sup>13</sup>: the Soviet oil industry in the twelfth five-year plan;
- Baum<sup>14</sup>: Komsomol's participation in the Soviet first five-year plan;
- Kepley<sup>15</sup>: Soviet cinema under the first five-year plan;
- Harrison and Davies<sup>16</sup>: Soviet military-economic effort during the second five-year plan;

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6 Robert G. Jensen, "Soviet Regional Development Policy and the 10th Five-Year Plan," *Soviet Geography* 19, no.3 (1978): 196-201.

7 Philip P. Micklin, "Irrigation Development in the USSR during the 10th Five-Year Plan (1976–1980)," *Soviet Geography* 19, no.1 (1978): 1-24.

8 I. Prostiakov, A. Balashova & N. Iakunina, "Proportions in the Soviet Economy in the Tenth Five-Year Plan," *Problems in Economics* 21, no.1 (1978): 22-42.

9 Lynne Viola, "The '25,000 ers': A Study in a Soviet Recruitment Campaign During the First Five Year Plan," *Russian History* 10, no.1 (1983): 1-30.

10 Anne D. Rassweiler, "Soviet Labor Policy in the First Five-Year Plan: The Dneprostroi Experience," *Slavic Review* 42, no.2 (1983): 230-246.

11 V. Andrlle, "How Backward Workers Became Soviet: Industrialization of Labour and the Politics of Efficiency under the Second Five Year Plan, 1933–1937," *Social History* 10, no.2 (1985): 147-169.

12 Theodore Shabad, "Geographic Aspects of the New Soviet Five-Year Plan, 1986-90," *Soviet Geography* 27, no.1 (1986): 1-16.

13 Leslie Dienes, "The Soviet Oil Industry in the Twelfth Five-Year Plan," *Soviet Geography* 28, no.9 (1987): 617-655.

14 Ann T. Baum, *Komsomol Participation in the Soviet First Five-Year Plan* (Germany: Springer, 1987).

15 Vance Kepley, Jr., "The First 'Perestroika': Soviet Cinema under the First Five-Year Plan," *Cinema Journal* 35, no.4 (1996): 31-53.

16 Mark Harrison & R.W. Davies, "The Soviet Military-Economic Effort during the Second Five-Year Plan (1933–1937)," *Europe-Asia Studies* 49, no.3 (1997): 369-406.

- Rolf<sup>17</sup>: Bolshevik festivals during the first five-year plan;
- Stone<sup>18</sup>: the first five-year plan and the geography of the Soviet defense industry.

In this study, it is aimed to examine the propaganda activities of the Soviet Union in Armenia within the framework of its five-year development plans through the posters that had been used to promote these plans. The present study aims to reveal the messages given to the Armenian people through the posters and how the Armenian people were encouraged to support the five-year development plans. To achieve this aim, the study analyses the visual and written indicators used in the propaganda posters. Within the scope of the study, it is aimed to find an answer to the following question; “What was the role of posters in the propaganda activities carried out for the five-year development plans of the Soviet Union in Armenia?” The study is important in terms of providing information about the effects of the five-year plans in Armenia, shedding a light on the propaganda activities of the Soviet Union in Armenia, and revealing how the posters encouraged the masses to work within the framework of the said plans.

### **1. An Overview of the Five-Year Development Plans in the Soviet Union**

The Bolsheviks, who took the power after the October Revolution in Russia in 1917, took action to strengthen the central authority by ensuring control throughout the country. The Russian Civil War (1917-1922), which started at this time, cost the lives of thousands of people and at the same time caused a great destruction throughout the country. The leader of the Soviet Union, Vladimir Lenin, died shortly after the Red Army defeated the White Army and the Bolsheviks gained control over the country. After Lenin’s death, Joseph Stalin, the new leader of the Soviet Union, made various attempts to control the country and prevent any opposition movements that might arise. At this stage, the First Five-Year Plan (*первая пятилетка*) was initiated in 1928 for the union to develop economically and to be able to compete against Western states. “Socialism in One Country”<sup>19</sup> put forward by Stalin laid on the basis of the economic targets of the Five-Year Plan. A link was established

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17 Malte Rolf, “Constructing a Soviet Time: Bolshevik Festivals and Their Rivals during the First Five-Year Plan. A Study of the Central Black Earth Region,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no.3 (2000): 447-473.

18 David R. Stone, “The First Five-Year Plan and the Geography of Soviet Defence Industry,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 57, no.7 (2005): 1047-1063.

19 “Socialism in One Country” (*Социализм в отдельно взятой стране*) refers to a theory adopted by the Soviet Union as a state policy, arguing that the Soviet Union should begin to grow stronger within itself. Within the framework of this theory, there is a turn to national Communism and a move away from Marxism, which argues that socialism should be built globally.

between Bolshevism and nationalism, and the fate of the revolution was left in the hands of Russia.<sup>20</sup> Within the framework of the five-year plan, the union was entering a period of rapid industrialization and a collectivization process was being experienced in agriculture.

Within the framework of the five-year plans, the Soviet Union was planned to be both a modern mechanized country in agriculture and a country with a developed heavy industry. In the plans, *kolkhozes*<sup>21</sup> were created on thousands of acres of land where hundreds of thousands of peasants would work. State-owned machinery and tractor stations were created within the Soviet Union. Villagers were also allowed to use these state-owned tractors to cultivate the land. On the other hand, the rapidly industrializing regions within the framework of the plans also brought about great cultural changes. Within the framework of the plans, the Soviet Union managed to achieve a significant increase in industrial production. As a result of the five-year plans that were put into practice, important changes began to occur in social life as well as in economic life in the Soviet Union. Although the five-year plans did not reach their goals in general terms, they achieved their purpose in terms of transforming the Soviet Union into an industrial country.<sup>22</sup>

The five-year plans initiated within the Soviet Union were not limited to the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), but also in other socialist republics. One of these socialist countries was the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR).<sup>23</sup> In Armenia, as in other socialist republics affiliated to the union, a production mobilization was undertaken within the framework of the said plans.

## 2. Propaganda Activities for Five-Year Development Plans in the Soviet Union

While the administration of the Soviet Union was carrying out the five-year plans, opposition movements against the plan took place in some places within the union. These groups opposed the steps taken within the framework of the plans. As a matter of fact, the First Five-Year Plan, and the next five-year

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20 T. Ivan Berend, *20. Yüzyıl Avrupa İktisat Tarihi*. Trans. Serpil Çağlayan, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2011), 194.

21 Kolkhoz (колхоз) refers to a large agricultural enterprise organized as a cooperative in the Soviet Union. The members of a kolkhoz formally become co-owners of the means of production, whereas they do not own land owned by the state. There is also a strong state influence on kolkhozes through the kolkhoz administration appointed by the party.

22 İsmail Özsoy, "Sovyet Sisteminin Çöküşünden Tarihi ve Evrensel Dersler," *Bilig*, no.39 (2006): 167.

23 Caner Çakı, "Ermenistan Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti'nde Joseph Stalin Döneminde Kullanılan Sovyet Propaganda Posterleri Üzerine İnceleme," *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, no.61 (2018): 273.

plans created profound effects in the Soviet Union.<sup>24</sup> At this stage, the Soviet Union engaged in various propaganda activities in order to get support from the masses on the five-year plans. The propaganda activities aimed to convince people that the five-year plans were of great importance by creating the perception that these plans would lead the Soviet Union to become a strong and prosperous country. The propaganda activities also aimed to create the perception that there was a strong public opinion supporting five-year plans throughout the union.

In the process of implementing the five-year plans of the Soviet Union, there was a great need for workforce, and it was aimed that women as well as men would take an active part in working life in order to meet the needed labour force. At this stage, the Soviet Union turned towards various propaganda activities aiming for women to play an effective role in the employment process. In this context, women were encouraged to take part in working life as well as housework.<sup>25</sup> In the propaganda visuals prepared, women were depicted as working in heavy industry jobs just like men, and women were given the message that they could also work in demanding jobs traditionally attributed to men. It can be said that the propaganda of the Soviet Union aimed to create the perception that women could work in many different lines of work just like men and to ensure that women would voluntarily participate in the working life.

The propaganda activities carried out in ASSR concerning the five-year plans fit into the blueprint outlined above. In the propaganda activities carried out in Armenia, the message was given that the five-year plans would lead to abundance and prosperity in the country, and the plans were tried to be glorified in the eyes of the Armenian people.<sup>26</sup>

### **3. Method**

During the Soviet Union period, posters were employed for propaganda purposes in legitimizing the decisions taken by the Communist regime before the masses, in the adoption of the Communist ideology, and in the glorification of the leadership cults of Lenin and other Soviet leaders. Posters were also used effectively in propaganda activities for the five-year development plans of the union.

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24 V. Nicholas Riasanovsky & D. Mark Steinberg, *Rusya Tarihi*. Trans. Figen Dereli (İstanbul: İnkılap Yayınları, 2011), 537.

25 Caner Çakı & Mehmet Ozan Gülada, "Komünizm İdeolojisi Altında Ermeni Kadınların Propaganda Posterlerindeki Temsili," *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, no.66 (2020): 55.

26 Sadık Çalışkan & Mehmet Barış Yılmaz, "Ermenistan Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti'nde Basında Yer Alan Propaganda Posterleri Üzerinden Vladimir Lenin'in Kültür Liderlik İnşası," *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, no.65 (2020): 59-60.

On the other hand, in the field that examines the use of posters for propaganda purposes, examining the relevant literature reveals that this field is not limited to the Soviet Union. There are studies examining (through the semiotic method) the use of posters for propaganda purposes concerning various countries such as for Iran<sup>27</sup>, People's Republic of China<sup>28</sup>, Italy<sup>29</sup>, and Serbia<sup>30</sup>.

In this study, the propaganda activities carried out by the Soviet Union within the framework of its five-year development plans in ASSR are examined in the context of the relevant posters. Therefore, this study seeks to thoroughly investigate the propaganda posters on the said plans in Armenia. A total of 20 propaganda posters related to the subject were found as a result of research for this study. Among the 20 propaganda posters found, 7 of them were selected as the samples to be examined based on the assessment that they reflect in the best way the overall scope of this study. These 7 propaganda posters are analysed employing the semiotics method included in qualitative research methods.

Semiotics is a method that examines meanings created through indicators<sup>31</sup>. It is a branch of science that emerged in the first half of the 20th century and has become an important research method in the field of social sciences over time. The first studies in the field of semiotics were carried out by linguists Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure<sup>32</sup>, and new concepts and models were introduced to semiotics by different experts in the following periods. One of these models is the Organon Model (Organon-Model) which was introduced by the linguist Karl Bühler (Figure 1).

27 Muharrem Çetin, Caner Çakı & Mehmet Ali Gazi, "The Examination of The Anti-USA Propaganda Posters in The Iran Revolution According to Claude Lévi-Strauss' Binary Opposition," *International Journal of Social Science* 1, no.3 (2018): 33.

28 Ferit Arda Arıca, "Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti'nde Mao Zedong Döneminde Spor Yayıncılığı Üzerine İnceleme," *TRT Akademi* 4, no.8 (2019): 394 ; Mehmet Ali Gazi, Caner Çakı, Mehmet Ozan Güllada & Gül Çakı, "Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti Kültür Devrimi Sürecinde Okuma Alışkanlığının Propaganda Posterlerinde Sunumu," *Türk Kütüphaneciliği* 34, no.3 (2020): 407.

29 Gufran Dündar, "Mussolini İtalyası'nda Spor Yayıncılığı," *TRT Akademi* 4, no.8 (2019): 310.

30 Mehmet Barış Yılmaz, Caner Çakı, & Mehmet Ali Gazi, "Nazi Almanyası İşgalindeki Sırbistan'da Antisemitist Propaganda Faaliyetleri," *Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 8, no.2 (2020): 442.

31 Mehmet Rifat, *Açıklamalı Göstergibilim Sözlüğü: Kavramlar; Yöntemler; Kuramcılar; Okullar* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2013), 99 ; John Fiske, *İletişim Çalışmalarına Giriş*, Trans. Süleyman İrvan. 5. Edition (Ankara: Bilim ve Sanat Yayınları, 2017), 122.

32 Caner Çakı & Gufran Dündar, "Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti'nde Birinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı Döneminde (1953-1957) Kadınların Propaganda Posterlerindeki Sunumu," *Uluslararası Batı Karadeniz Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Dergisi* 3, no.1 (2019): 23.



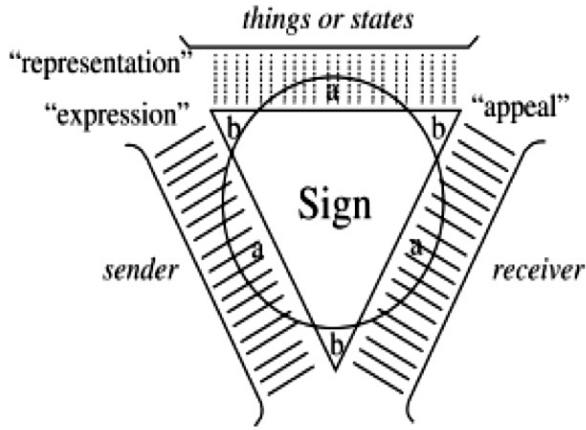


Figure 1: Karl Bühler's Organon Model<sup>33</sup>

Communication process in the Organon Model is addressed in three basic dimensions, which are; expressiveness function (*Ausdrucksfunktion*), representation function (*Darstellungsfunktion*), and appeal function (*Appellfunktion*).

The expressiveness function focuses on the source of the message directly using the indicators. This function examines how the indicators are arranged while creating meaning by the source. The representation function expresses the meanings aspired to be revealed through the indicators. It is tried to be explained which message is given to the recipient by the source. In the appeal function, with the message given via indicators, it is expressed what kind of change is intended to occur on the receiver.

## 4. Results and Discussion

In this part of the study, 7 propaganda posters on “heroism”, “future”, “employment”, “courage”, “soil”, “life”, and “collectiveness” are analysed employing the semiotics method.

### 4.1. The Propaganda Poster on Heroism

The propaganda poster with the heroism theme was made in 1948 on behalf of the Committee of Cultural and Enlightenment Institutions (*Հայկական*

33 Göran Sonesson, “The Phenomenological Semiotics of Iconicity and Pictoriality—Including Some Replies to My Critics,” *Language and Semiotic Studies* 2, no.2 (2016): 10.

ՄՍՌ Մինիստրների սովետին կից Կուլտուր-լուսավորական հիմնարկների գործերի կոմիտե) within the Armenian SSR Council of Ministers. When examined in terms of expressiveness function, it is seen that there are workers working in the cotton field in the poster. In the centre of the poster, there is an image of a man picking cotton. Visual codes reflect that the male holds the cotton seedling and smiles. It can be seen that there is also a medal on the left side of the man's chest.



Poster 1<sup>34</sup>: The Propaganda Poster on Heroism<sup>35</sup>

Considering the representation function dimension, it is revealed that the male visual in the poster is used as the metonym of the entire male population that can be employed in Armenia. The images of women on the background of the poster are also used as the metonym of the population involved in agricultural employment in Armenia. The star on the left chest of the man in the poster can create the perception that he was an Armenian soldier who fought in the Red Army against the Axis States during the Second World War. There may be an opinion that he was rewarded with a medal for taking part in the war. As a matter of fact, the preparation of the poster three years after the end of the Second World War and the “heroes” written code on the poster cause this perception to strengthen. In the poster, the message is given that the civilian people, who showed heroism during the Second World War and served their homeland, are now serving their homeland in production within the framework of their five-year development plans. The smile of the man on the poster creates the perception that he is happy with his work, and in this way,

34 The poster reads; “Long live the heroes of socialist labor - they are the most precious children of our homeland (Փառք սոցիալիստական աշխատանքի հերոսներին - մեր հայրենիքի լավագույն զավակներին և դուստրերին)”.

35 “The Propaganda Poster on Heroism,” *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed September 24, 2020. <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:907>

a general idea eventuates that the Armenian people support the five-year plans. When the function of appeal is examined, it is revealed that the Armenian people's work within the framework of five-year plans is identified with heroism. In Armenia ruled by socialism, individuals working in the fields are presented to the masses as ideal citizens. In this way, it seems possible to conclude that people are aimed to contribute more willingly to the five-year plans.

#### 4.2. The Propaganda Poster on Future

The future propaganda poster was prepared by Rafael Pogosi Nanushyan in 1955. Considering the expressiveness function, it is seen that there is a visual of a man smiling and holding a paper in the poster. The person in the poster is depicted as wearing a kind of hat.



Poster 2<sup>36</sup>: The Propaganda Poster Future<sup>37</sup>

When the representation function is examined, it can be argued that the message is given that the person in the poster is an Armenian worker. The perception that Armenia has a brighter future can be formed on the basis of working with the writings on the paper in hand of the worker. With the smile

36 The poster has the caption; “For a brighter future (*Լուսավոր վաղվա օգտին*)”.

37 “The Propaganda Poster Future,” *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed September 25, 2020.  
<https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:233>

of the man in the poster, it can be stated that the idea that the worker wants to ensure Armenia to have a brighter future and is therefore happy to work. Considering the function of appeal, it can be said that the message is given in the poster that Armenians can work and live in a more prosperous Armenia, and that Armenians are encouraged to work at this stage.

### 4.3. The Propaganda Poster on Employment

The employment propaganda poster was prepared by Khachatur Hovhannesi Gyulamiryan in 1956. When examined in terms of expressiveness function, it is seen that there is an image of a smiling man in a wheat field in the centre of the poster. The man in the poster is depicted wearing overalls and a medal in the shape of a star on his left chest. There is a large ear of wheat in front of the male.



Poster 3<sup>38</sup>: The Propaganda Poster on Employment<sup>39</sup>

Considering the representation function dimension, the image of the man with a medal on his left chest depicts a soldier who fought in the Red Army during the Second World War, as in the first poster examined within the scope of the study. In the poster, the message is given that an Armenian man who served his country at the fronts is now serving his country by working in the field. The smile of the man in the poster creates the perception that he is satisfied with his job. When examined in general, an opinion may arise through the poster that working in agricultural employment is a service to the country,

38 The poster reads; “What makes a human perfect is the work (*Մարդը աշխատանքով է զեղեցիկ*)”.

39 “The Propaganda Poster on Employment,” *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed September 24, 2020, <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:44>

just like fighting at the warfront. The presence of a wheat ear in front of the man stands out as a symbol of agricultural production in Armenia. When examined in terms of the appeal function, it can be argued that what makes a human perfect, through the written code on the poster, is to work. In this way, it is tried to attribute value to working people and thus to encourage people to work. It can be said that a perception is being created that labour is respected and that even people who are at the front for their country during the war can work in the fields. As a result, it is aimed for people to willingly take part in agricultural employment.

#### 4.4. The Propaganda Poster on Courage

The propaganda poster on courage was prepared by Aram Borisovich Zakaryan in 1958. Considering the expression function dimension, it is seen that there are three visuals of men moving in one direction in the poster. One of the men in the poster is depicted with a bag on his back and a hammer-like tool inside the bag. When examined through visual codes, it is seen that men have a determined facial expression. On the background of the poster, there are indicators that create a perception that the place where the men are located is a mine.



Poster 4<sup>40</sup>: The Propaganda Poster on Courage<sup>41</sup>

When examined in terms of representation function, the indicators on the background of the poster lead to the perception that the men in the poster are Armenian workers employed in mines in Armenia. The decisive progress of the men creates the perception that they are trying to perform a difficult task

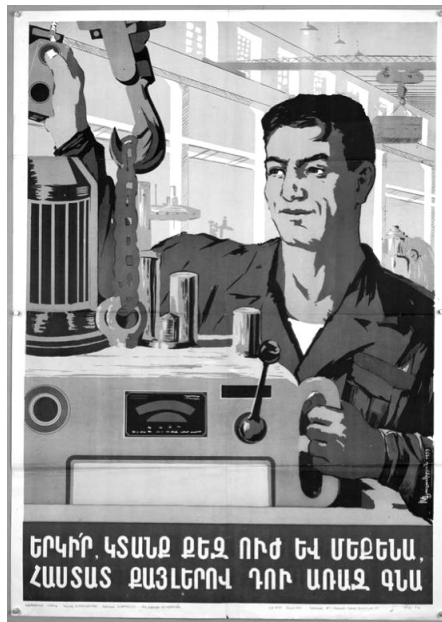
40 The poster reads; “Towards work, towards courage (Դեպի աշխատանք, դեպի խիզախում)”.

41 “The Propaganda Poster on Courage,” *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed September 24, 2020.  
<https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:402>

such as working in mines with determination. Considering the appeal function dimension, the idea that Armenians go to work willingly and decisively arises from the visual and written codes on the poster. Through the creation of a general perception through the poster, it can be stated that the idea is formed that the Armenians who are employed to work in the mines are willing and determined to perform their duties. In this way, it can be argued that the willingness of Armenians to work bravely in the mines is being encouraged.

#### 4.5. The Propaganda Poster on Life

The life propaganda poster was prepared by Khachatur Hovhannesi Gyulamiryan in 1956. When examined in terms of expressiveness function, a man is depicted in the poster as operating a machine in boiler suit. It is seen that the man in the poster is smiling. From the visual codes on the poster, it is perceived that the place where the man is located is a factory.



Poster 5<sup>42</sup>: The Propaganda Poster on Life<sup>43</sup>

Considering the representation function dimension, the person working in the poster represents Armenians working in the industrial sector in Armenia. The

42 The poster reads; “Our country is advancing with firm steps with life, power and the tools used (*Երկիր, կյանք քեզ ուժ եւ մեքենա, հաստատ քայլերով դու առաջ գնա*)”.

43 “The Propaganda Poster on Life,” *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed September 24, 2020. <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:172>

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fact that the man in the poster is in front of the machine and his smile leads to the perception that he is satisfied with his job. It can be inferred that the written codes in the poster emphasize the vehicles in the factories. Herein, a thought may arise that the production in Armenia is mechanized and the country is on the way to industrialization. With the smile of the Armenian man, the perception that the Armenians in general are also satisfied with this process can also be formed. It can be said that it is aimed to draw an ideal worker profile for men to be employed in the industrial sector in Armenia, by presenting the man in the poster in a clean overall and a clean shave. When the function of appeal is examined, it is stated that Armenia has taken firm steps forward with industrial production, and emphasis is placed on the employment of Armenian men in the industry. The growth and development of Armenia is associated with the production in the industry. In this way, it can be argued that the Armenian people are encouraged to take part in industrial employment in order to ensure the growth and development of their country.

### 4.6. The Propaganda Poster on Soil

The propaganda poster on soil was created by Khachatur Hovhannesi Gyulamiryan in 1959. Considering the expressiveness function, the poster depicts a man holding a work tool with a proud attitude. The perception that the male is a mine worker is inferred through the visual codes in the poster. As in the other posters, it is seen that the man in this poster is smiling.



Poster 6<sup>44</sup>: The Propaganda Poster on Soil<sup>45</sup>

44 The poster reads; “Earth, I’m extracting copper from within you... (Քն խոր ընդերքից պղինձ եմ հանում, երկիր քեզ դեպի բարձունք եմ ստանում)”.

45 “The Propaganda Poster on Soil,” *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project* accessed September 24, 2020. <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:361>

When analysed in terms of representation function, it is revealed that the man in the poster represents the Armenian man working in the mines in Armenia. In this respect, the mine in the background of the poster is used as the metonym of the mines in Armenia. The man in the poster wearing his overalls, a miner's helmet, and holding a work tool in his hand, creates the perception that he is content with his job. When considered at the level of the appeal function, the visual codes on the poster can create a perception that a challenging task is not as difficult as it actually appears. It can be said that, in conclusion, it was aimed to encourage the Armenian people to work in the mines.

#### 4.7. The Propaganda Poster on Collective Farm

The propaganda poster on the Collective Farm was prepared in 1970. There is no information about the artist of the poster. When examined in terms of expressiveness function, it is seen that wheat ears are positioned in the centre of the poster. There is an image of a smiling woman in overalls on the wheat with a star-shaped medal on her left chest. Under the wheat are images of a harvester and a truck. There is a mountain image on the background of the poster.



Poster 7<sup>46</sup>: The Propaganda Poster on Collective Farm<sup>47</sup>

46 “Long live the heroes of collective farms (*Փառք կոլտնտեսային դաշտերի հերոսներին*)” is written on the poster.

47 “The Propaganda Poster on Collective Farm,” *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project* accessed September 24, 2020. <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:207>



Considering the representation function dimension, it is revealed that unlike the other posters examined within the scope of the study, there is a female visual in the centre of the poster. The fact that women are in front of the visual and the fields on the background give the message that women are also employed in the fields in Armenia. At this point, the woman image in the poster is highlighted as a representation of all Armenian women employed in the agricultural sector in Armenia. The woman's smile creates a perception that Armenian women are happy to take place in agricultural employment. The presence of the images of a truck and a harvester emphasizes the mechanization of agricultural production in Armenia. When the appeal function is examined, it is revealed that Armenian women working in the field are represented as heroes through the written codes on the poster. Herein, an emphasis is placed on collective farms and it is inferred that Armenian women working in collective farms are being glorified through posters. In this whole process, it can be argued that the work of women in collective farms is praised in the poster, and it is aimed that Armenian women contribute to agricultural employment.

## **Conclusion**

In the propaganda posters examined in the study, it is revealed that it is aimed to support the Armenian people in their employment activities within the framework of their five-year development plans through different subjects and contents. In the posters, it is seen that the Armenian people are represented through the images of people directly involved in employment. Six of the propaganda posters examined in the study depict images of smiling people, and while one poster depicts people with more neutral facial expressions. Therefore, the posters on the whole raise the perception that the Armenian people are satisfied with their work and in fact love to work. Reflecting people as happy to work can be seen as an incentive for other people to take part in five-year development plans.

Propaganda posters prepared in the Soviet Union often feature statements that glorify the ideology of Communism and highlight the leadership cult of Lenin or Stalin. On the other hand, it is seen that the posters examined within the scope of the study do not use ideological discourses, and furthermore, there are no images of Lenin or other Soviet Union leaders. It is revealed that visual and written codes which emphasize the importance and power of labour are used in posters. At this stage, based on the findings of the study, the idea that the propaganda activities implemented in Armenia within the framework of five-year development plans were prepared over a propaganda content that glorifies work outside of socialism and the Lenin cult. Apart from the glorification of the work in the posters, it is understood that industrialization

and mechanization in Armenia are also emphasized. Through the posters, a perception is created that mechanization in agriculture and the industrialization of the country will make Armenia a prosperous country. In this way, it can be concluded that within the framework of five-year development plans, it is aimed to support mechanization in agriculture and industrialization in the country by the Armenian people.

The study is important in terms of providing information on the social and economic impact of the Soviet Union's five-year development plans in Armenia. On the other hand, the main limitation of the study is that the five-year development plans are examined only through propaganda posters and generalizations derived from these findings. In this respect, future studies will provide a more comprehensive analysis of the issue, through different mass media and the role of five-year plans in Armenia. On the other hand, it is thought that future studies will contribute to the academic literature on the five-year development plans of the Soviet Union by comparing the propaganda activities for the five-year development plans implemented in other Soviet socialist republics other than Armenia, with the findings of the present study.

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