



DWELLING TOGETHER
URBAN HOUSING, NEIGHBORLINESS AND MULTILOCAL HOMEMAKING

05.07. DEPICTING THE PAST AND ITS DIVERSITY:
THE HOUSHAMADYAN WEBSITE

DR. VAHÉ TACHJIAN

To remember a native village or town, to collect written accounts, and photos and maps, of Armenian life there, to raise funds among Armenians with ties to that village, to publish a book that displayed all of this material. This was the decades-long dream of many who made up the first generation of Armenian exiles.

It was in this general environment, starting in the 1920s, that books began to appear in succession in various Armenian diasporan communities by authors attempting to revitalize the Armenian past of their native community in the Ottoman Empire. Here, the written word had become a medium towards reconstructing the past, of times irretrievably lost.

Houshamadyan is the name of a non-profit association -its main activity the Houshamadyan website- that was founded in Berlin, in 2010. It aims to reconstruct and preserve the memory of Armenian life in the Ottoman Empire through research, based mostly on the above mentioned publications.

Since its establishment, the Houshamadyan website has also become the space, where digitised copies of all kinds of memory materials (photos, objects, unpublished memoirs, diaries, etc.) related to Ottoman Armenians were sent by people from around the world. These are treasures that are kept in family collections. Each material is the glowing reflection and legacy of a particular family's lost life. At the same time, each material is a microcosm, a unique sample of the collective fate that befell the Ottoman Armenians.

Dr. Vahé Tachjian received his doctorate at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris. His articles and books examine French colonialism, Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, and refugee issues in the Middle East. He is the project director and the chief editor of the Berlin-based Houshamadyan website, which aims to reconstruct Ottoman Armenians' local history and life stories. Among his main publications: *La France en Cilicie et en Haute-Mésopotamie* (2004), *Daily Life in the Abyss: Genocide Diaries, 1915- 1918* (2017).



05.07. 6-8pm at HU Berlin (in-person) room 315 (third floor) at IAAW, Invalidenstr. 118

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