

Landlocked Countries: Armenia

by Geir Sør-Reime



Armenia is one of the Caucasian states, sandwiched between Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Iran. Once a large kingdom, today's Armenia has an area of just 11,484 square miles and a population of around 3 million. The capital city is Yerevan.

Mount Ararat, although located in Turkey, is in many respects the symbol of Armenia. The mountain is visible from Yerevan and has been the motif of several Armenian stamps.



Armenia 2005 genocide (Sc. 707)

During WW I, Armenians living in Turkey were subject to a terrible genocide, still denied by Turkey. Armenia issued a 2005 stamp on the 90th anniversary of the atrocities and depicting a damaged stone cross.



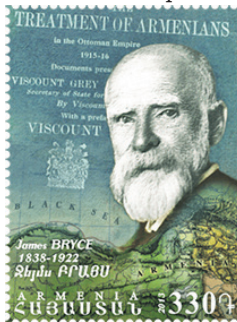
Armenia 1992 Mt. Ararat (Sc. 430a) 1st issue after independence

In 2007 a souvenir sheet featured the memorial site for the victims of the genocide, 40 years after



Armenia 2007 genocide (Sc. 759)

the erection of the site. The genocide was also the theme of a 2013 souvenir sheet, featuring the writer and survivor of the genocide, Aurora Mardigian (1901-94). Also, in 2013 at the centenary of the genocide in 2013, two stamps portraying James Bryce (British MP who condemned the genocide already in 1915) and Johannes Lepsius



Armenia Sc. 949, James Bryce



Armenia Sc. 951, Aurora Mardigian



Armenia Sc. 948, Johannes Lepsius

(German missionary who tried to prevent the genocide) were issued. In 2014, a further stamp portraying John Kirakosian (author of the "The Armenian Genocide"), and another honoring Danish Mothers of The Armenian Orphans, as well as a stamp featuring an



Armenia Sc. 1058, genocide Nemesi

souvenir sheets depicting orders and medals relating to genocide, as well as a souvenir sheet dedicated to the members of the Operation "Nemesi" (plan to assassinate Ottoman perpetrators of the genocide and Azeri officials responsible for massacres of Armenians). The Armenian Genocide Museum was also featured on two 2015 stamps. Two further stamps remembered Armenian resistance, at Mount Musa.



Armenia Sc. 999, genocide monument in Boston

Armenian Genocide monument in Boston. Similar monuments in Paris and Montevideo were also issued. In 2015, two



Armenia Sc. 1047a, genocide museum



Armenia Sc. 1046a-b, Mt. Musa Resistance



Armenia Sc. 1036, genocide Henry Morgenthau



Armenia Sc. 1034, genocide Orphanage in Nicosia

There were also four further stamps focusing on the genocide: one portraying Henry Morgenthau



Armenia Sc. 1037, genocide American Near East Relief Committee;

Armenia Sc. 1032a, genocide Forget-me-not



Armenia genocide Bodil Bjorn



Armenia 2015 Philatelic Exhibition Centenary of Genocide (postal card)

Sr. (U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman empire during WWI condemning the genocide), one portraying Anatole France (French journalist and author, condemned the genocide) one an Armenia-Cyprus issue showing the Melkonian Orphanage in Nicosia (page 1), and one stamp honoring

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I REMEMBER AND DEMAND



Ամենուրեք Հայոց ցեղասպանության 100-րդ տարեկիցի խորհրդանշան
Forget-me-not - Symbol of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide

the American Near East Relief Committee.

In 2015, Armenia also issued a definitive series depicting a forget-me-not flower as a symbol of the centenary of the genocide. An icon dedicated to the martyrs of the genocide was depicted on a 2017 stamp. A 2021 stamp showed a portrait of Norwegian missionary Bodil Bjorn who saved many Armenians from the genocide.

The WWI genocide is also reflected on postal cards. In 2015 a card was issued for the Yerevan meeting of the International Association of Genocide Scholars, and the



Armenia 1996 Nansen (Sc. 534);

Nansen passport & stamp for Armenian refugees



been honored by Armenia for his efforts on two stamps, one from 1996 and one from 2011.

The Nansen passports for stateless persons were made available for Armenian refugees from 1933 onward. The League of Nations issued special revenue stamps for these passports, initially with the portrait of Nansen, later simple labels were used,



Nansen passport stamp initial design

including for Armenian refugees. In 1935, Norway issued four semi-postals for the Nansen Office for Refugees. Nansen was also portrayed on Norwegian 1961, 2001 and 2011 stamps.



Norway 2001 Nansen (Sc. 1312)

In 1922, both Greek and Armenians were annihilated in Smyrna on the Turkish coast. This last phase of the Armenian and Greek genocides was commemorated on a 2022 postal card.

The modern Armenian state emerged following WW I and the dissolution of the Ottoman and the Russian empires. It was born in bitter fights both with the neighboring aspirant states and between white and red armies.

The Republic of Armenia was established in May 1918, after an attempted confederation of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan only lasted between February and May 1918.

The Republic of Armenia at first lasted until December 1920, and the republic did not issue any stamps of its own, just overprints (with an Armenia "H" for the Armenian name of the country: Hayastan surcharges on Russian imperial stamps. All



Armenia, left to right, 1919 60k Type 1, Imperf, Sc. 1a; 1919 5k imperf, Sc. 34a; 1919 3.5r perf, Sc. 4a



Left to right: Armenia 1919 3k Sc. 92; 1920 10r on 3k, Sc. 146; 1920 5r on 14k, Sc. 187 overprints are hand stamped.

Armenia issued a 2018 souvenir sheet commemorating the centenary the first Republic of Armenia, and in 1994 a stamp for the 75th anniversary of the first Armenian stamps and in 2019 a stamp commemorating the centenary of the first stamps of this republic.



2018 1st Republic centenary



Left, Armenia 2019 1st republic first stamp; right, Armenia 1994 75 anniversary of first stamps (Sc. 479)



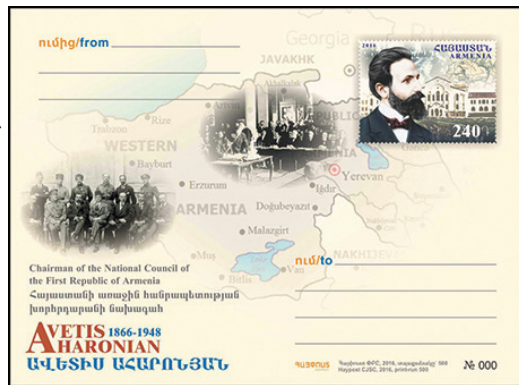
A short-lived Communist ruled ended in mid-February 1920, and the Republic was re-established and lasted until early April 1920.

The Republican government had ordered a distinct set of 10 stamps in Paris, but before these could be delivered to Armenia, the Communist had again taken over and established the Armenian Soviet Republic, lasting from April 1921 till March 1922, when it joined the Transcaucasian Federation of Soviet Republics.



Armenia 1920 1st republic unissued stamps

A 2016 card was issued for the 150th birth anniversary of Avetis Aharonian, chairman of the national council of the short-lived first Republic of Armenia.



2016 Avetis Aharonian (postal card)

Syunik is the southernmost province of modern Armenia and was part of the first Republic of Armenia 1918-20.

When the Bolsheviks took over Armenia, a Republic of Mountainous Armenia 1920, mainly covering the Syunik province was proclaimed. The Republic of Mountainous Armenia was incorporated into Soviet Armenia in July 1921. The centenary of



Armenia 2020 postal card, Autonomous Syunik



the establishment of the autonomous Syunik was commemorated on a 2020 postal card.

The centenary of the Treaty of Sèvres which awarded a large area in Turkey west of present-day Armenia to Armenia was also commemorated on a 2020 card. The transfer of Ottoman territory to Armenia never materialized.



Above, 1920 Treaty of Sèvres 2020 card indicia;



Left, Armenia 1921 Soviet republic overprint, Sc. 299

In August 1921, the Armenian Soviet Republic issued its own overprints on Russian Imperial stamps. The overprint shows a hammer and sickle on a five-pointed star, and all are surcharged 5000 rubles.

In 1922 and 1923 three sets of pictorial stamps were printed for use in Armenia as part of the Transcaucasian Federation of Soviet Republics, but they were not issued un-surcharged. The original 1922-23 series had values reflecting the high inflation at the time, and when issued, they were surcharged in gold kopecks and rubles. (See page 4.)

In October 2023, the separate issues of the three Caucasian Soviet Republics were replaced by general issues of the Transcau-

casian Federation, but already in 1924, these stamps were replaced by ordinary Soviet issues.

The design of the distinct stamps of the Transcaucasian Federation included Mount Ararat (Armenia) as well as oilrigs (Azerbaijan) in their design.



Left, Armenia 1922 unissued 5000r, Sc. 308;
right, 1922 issued surcharged 300,000k, Sc. 331



Transcaucasian Federation 1923, left, Sc. 20;
right, same design in gold kopecks, Sc. 28



Left, Armenia 1921 unissued, Sc. 288; right, 1922 20k on 500k, Sc. 380

The Transcaucasian Federation was one of the four Soviet states to form the Soviet Union in 1922, but by the 1936 Constitution of the Soviet Union, the Federation was dissolved, and the three republics became separate republics of the Soviet Union.

During Soviet times, there were several stamps with motifs and themes relating to Armenia.

After the re-establishment of the Armenian SSR (Socialist Soviet Republic) in 1936, the arms of it were depicted on a 1938 series of stamps depicting the arms of all of the then eleven Soviet republics.

The 1940 All-Union Agricultural Fair was honored with a set of 17 stamps, including one for each constituent republic, Armenia included. In 1955, similar stamps were issued for another agricultural exhibition and 16 stamps showing pavilions of the union republics (at that time still 16), including the Armenian SSR.

The arms of all Soviet republics were again depicted on the 1947 series of 17 stamps issued for the Supreme Soviet elections.



Left to right: 1938 Armenian SSR Arms, Sc. 647; 1940 Agricultural Fair, Armenia Pavilion (Sc. 802); 1947 Armenia Arms, Sc. 1104

To Be Continued