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HANDWRITING AS AN OBJECT OF DIAGNOSTIC RESEARCH

(Почерк как объект диагностического исследования)

Глубокое изучение диагностических качеств почерка, изучение и создание таких базовых данных будет иметь большое значение в широком аспекте — для выявления преступлений и укрепления законности, в узком аспекте — для совершенствования качества судебно-почерковедческих экспертиз, расширения стоящего перед ними круга задач.

In the struggle against crimes and other antisocial phenomena of special importance is the implementation of forensic handwriting expertises for the activities of law enforcement agencies. Forensic handwriting expertises can be of two types-identification and diagnostic. Both of them have common provisions that include knowledge about the anatomy of writing movements apparatus, writing movements biomechanics, the structure of their system and its regulation by nervous centers, the formation and activity of the functional-dynamic complex of writing movements. However, regularities determining the quality of handwriting as an object of forensic handwriting diagnostics have not been studied sufficiently. If in case of identification researches there is already a definitely formed opinion about the essential qualities of handwriting such as individuality, stability, variation, which give an opportunity to observe handwriting as a source of information about the identification of the performer of the handwritten record, there is no such complete picture of diagnostics yet. Only relatively recently there has been formed an opinion in forensic handwriting about the changeability of handwriting and the influence of some "diverting" factors on the writing process.

Let's try to briefly introduce the system of tasks set before forensic handwriting diagnostic expertises.

1. Disclosure of personality features (social-demographic and psychological characteristics). The problems of this group are problems of diagnostic classification.

These are:

- to determine sex;
- to determine age;
- to determine individual psychological characteristics.

2. Determination of conditions for handwritten record performance. The problems of this group are considered to be diagnostic; their coordination is usually based on the classification of such searchable diagnostic conditions, the main contents of which are the so called “diverting” factors.

They are:

- the revelation of the existence or absence of the fact of being unaccustomed to hand-written record performance (internal stressful condition, fatigue, alcoholic or drug intoxication, hand or eye disease, external unusual position, moving vehicle, inadequate lighting, absence of spectacles, writing in cold conditions etc.);
- changing the writing hand (usually not being used to writing with the left hand);
- copy writing of fonts;
- calligraphy, copy writing of low-processed handwriting;
- keeping the writing instrument far from the writing surface;
- the deliberate distortion of one’s own handwriting by writing quickly. Changing the direction, general properties and structure of the letters;
- copying the handwriting of a specific person.

The program of forensic handwriting diagnostics theory development can include the following directions:

1. To generalize the accumulated knowledge about forensic handwriting diagnostics and to form the conception of diagnostic researches in forensic handwriting.

2. To develop the scientific bases of modern forensic handwriting, to fill them with knowledge about diagnostic researches.

The scientific bases of modern forensic handwriting include:

- a) the knowledge about handwriting as an object of forensic expert diagnostic research
- b) the knowledge about diagnostic features

3. To perform diagnostic experiments and to create fundamental basis for experimental development.

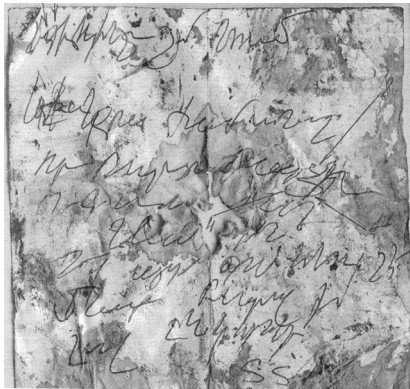
Here we have a lot of work to do as the examinations based on the theory and practice of forensic handwriting expertises and the developments done on their basis refer to the records made in the Russian language and are not applicable for Armenian texts.

4. To create methods and methodologies of diagnostic research of handwriting on the basis of experimental developments.

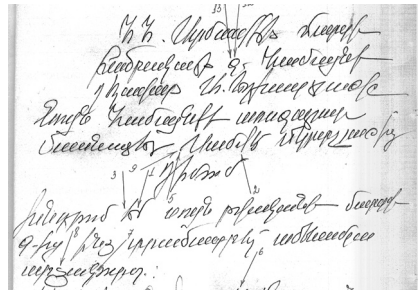
A lot of work was done by the experts of handwriting department of the “National Bureau of expertisis” of Armenia for the study, analysis, genera-

lization of literature, methodical manuals, internet materials concerning the diagnostics of forensic handwriting examinations. Moreover, the explanatory dictionary of the basic terms of the theory and practice of forensic handwriting examinations was compiled by the head of handwriting, author's and questioned documents expertises department. The dictionary is unique in its kind in the legal sphere of Armenia.

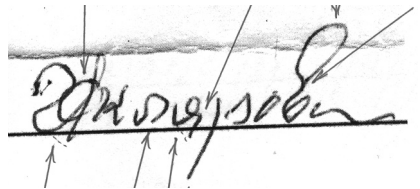
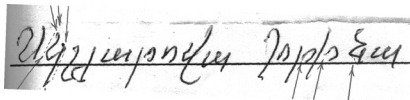
In addition to the above mentioned theoretical work, considerable practical work was also done. From the scope of the multiple examinations were separated, analysed and summarized those handwriting examinations, before which were set tasks of diagnostic nature (see the attachments below).



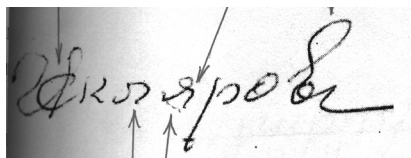
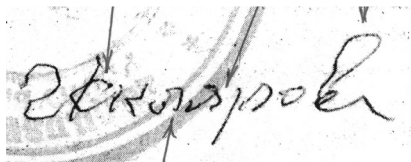
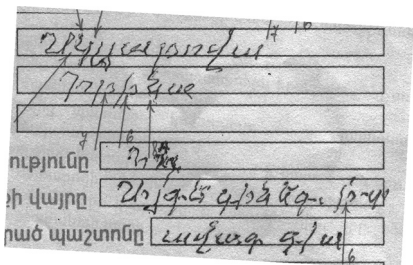
Pic. 1. The handwritten letter of the person being in psychological stress before committing suicide



Pic. 2. The sample of the above mentioned person's handwriting performed in normal psychological condition



Pic. 3. Handwritten record and signature performed in will in old age



Pic. 4. The samples of the above mentioned person's handwriting (handwriting performed in old age)

The deep study of the diagnostic qualities of handwriting and the creation and study of similar databases will be of great importance for crime revelation and strengthening of legitimacy in a wide sense and for the improvement of the quality of forensic handwriting examinations and the expansion of the scope of its tasks in a narrow sense.

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