ARMENIA CHRISTIANA
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ARMENIA CHRISTIANA
ARMENIAN RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND THE CHURCHES OF CONSTANTINOPLE AND ROME (4TH–15TH CENTURY)

Translated by Teresa Bałük-Ulewiczowa

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Although we are a small country and very restricted in numbers, weak in power, and often subject to another’s rule, yet many manly deeds have been performed in our land worthy of being recorded in writing.

Movses Khorenatsi\(^1\)

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List of abbreviations

A
Agathangelos

Aa
Armenian Agathangelos

Ag
Greek Agathangelos

AB
Analecta Bollandiana

AFP
Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum

AGZ
Akta grodzkie i ziemskie z czasów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej

BAV
Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

BOP
Bullarium fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum

BP
Buzandaran Paťmutiwnk’ (see The Epic Histories)

BPol
Bullarium Poloniae

CE
Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti

CICO
Pontificia Commissio ad redigendum codicem iuris canonici orientalis. Fontes. Series III (see Acta Romanorum Pontificum)

CF DS. ACA
Concilium Florentinum Documenta et Scriptores, Acta camerae apostolicae (see Concilium Florentinum)

CF DS. EP
Concilium Florentinum Documenta et Scriptores, Epistolae pontificiae (see Concilium Florentinum)

CF DS. Fragmenta
Concilium Florentinum Documenta et Scriptores, Fragmenta protocolli (see Concilium Florentinum)

CF DS. ODM
Concilium Florentinum Documenta et Scriptores, Orientalium documenta minora (see Concilium Florentinum)

HA
Handes Amsorya

ID
Iowannes Draskhanakertsi

Joh. Eph., HE
Johannis Ephesini Historiae Ecclesiasticae

KDM
Kodeks dyplomatyczny Malopolski

KG
Kirakos Gandzaketsi

MCh
Movses Khorenatsi

MGH
Monumenta Germaniae Historica

MK
Movses Kaghankatuatsi

MPH
Monumenta Poloniae Historica
MS  Michel le Syrien (see Chronique de Michel le Syrien)
OC  Oriens Christianus
OCA  Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OCh  Orientalia Christiana
OChP  Orientalia Christiana Periodica
PG  Patrologia Graeca
PL  Patrologia Latina
REA  Revue des Études Arméniennes
REA N.S.  Revue des Études Arméniennes. Nouvelle Série
REB  Revue des Études Byzantines
RHC Doc. Arm.  Recueil des historiens des croisades, Documents Arméniens
V  Vita Gregorii Illuminatoris – Life of St. Gregory Illuminator (cycle of Agathangelos, see Agathangelos)
Va  Arabic life
Vg  Greek life
Vk  Karshuni life
Vo  Ochrid's life
Vs  Syriac life
Introduction

Today’s Armenia is a small state south of the Caucasus. However, in the past the name “Armenia” applied to a much larger territory stretching from the Black and Caspian Seas in the north to Lakes Van and Urmia in the south. Today this region is split up between Turkey, Iran, and Azerbaijan. Paradoxically, Mount Ararat (its Armenian name is Masis), an Armenian holy site and symbol of Armenia, on which according to the Book of Genesis (8, 4) Noah’s ark came to rest after the Flood, is no longer within the borders of Armenia. The Armenian nation is one of the very few ancient peoples which have survived to the present times with a historic legacy of around twenty-six hundred years. For this reason Armenia is sometimes referred to as “the cradle of civilisation.”¹ For many people the history of this land and its religion have an exotic Oriental air. Yet there are few Oriental nations so deeply rooted in Western culture. Armenia and its people appeared time and again on the pages of medieval chronicles, chivalric romances, in European diplomacy and in papal records. The history of the Armenian nation and its Christian religion is a real East-meets-West story, and that is why it has caught the interest of historians from many countries.

The Armenian Church is one of the oldest branches of Christianity. As it broke away quite early from the mainstream of Christianity in the Roman Empire, a number of ancient vestiges going back to the first Christian communities have survived in its rites and traditions. A knowledge of Armenian is virtually a must for Biblical scholars and patrologists. Many of the treatises written by the Fathers of the Church and other early Christian writers the originals of which have been lost have been preserved in Armenian translations. A good example is the famous Chronicle by Eusebius of Caesarea, which was discovered in the late 18th century in a collection of translations done by ancient Armenian translators. There are still a lot of patristic texts

extant only in Armenian manuscripts or editions. Perhaps in the future they will throw an interesting light on the history of the Early Church and Christian philosophy and theology. Armenian rites have attracted the attention of many Western liturgists interested in the origins of Early Christian ritual and devotion. Considerable progress has been made in recent decades in Armenian studies. The historiography and hagiography has been thoroughly re-examined, and the results of this critical review have brought a radical revision of the chronology accepted hitherto. Works formerly dated to the 5th century have turned out to be much later. This research has shown that the Chronicle by Movses Khorenatsi, previously regarded as the fundamental source for the early history of Armenia, comes from the late 8th, or even early 9th century (R.W. Thomson’s studies). Armenian chroniclers generally tended to use the names of historic personalities living in Armenia’s Golden Age, viz. the 5th century, as pseudonyms. The revision of the chronology of the Armenian sources has shaken Oriental historiography to the very roots, undermining many of the traditional ideas and opinions. The history of Rome and Persia, lands bordering on Armenia, needs to be looked at again, and many of the entries in renowned encyclopaedias and lexicons have to be rewritten.2

A paramount example of the historical criticism accomplished recently is the work of Erich Kettenhofen on the history of Armenia in the 3rd and 4th century.3

According to the early medieval tradition Christianity became the state religion of Armenia already in 301, before the Edict of Milan was issued in the Roman Empire, making Armenia the world’s earliest Christian country – something that Armenians and their Church are very proud of.4 2001 was declared the jubilee year of Armenia’s 1,700 years of Christianity, and the celebrations were held under the patronage of UNESCO. Critical analyses have cast doubt on this date, but recent research has revealed a much more interesting picture not at all in line with the established ideas, but not in the least undermining the glory of Armenia’s Christianity, which has turned

2 For instance, the entry on Armenia and Iran in the fairly recently published Encyclopædia Iranica, Vol. 2 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), has now been rendered “out of date.”


4 This claim is made on the grounds of the early 11th-century inscription discovered in Ani Cathedral, which says that at that time 301 was considered the year of Armenia’s conversion. The inscription was published by Karapet J. Basmadjian in “Les inscriptions arméniennes d’Ani, de Bagnair et de Marmochên,” Revue de l’Orient chrétien 22, no. 9 (1920–1921): 353. This information was disseminated in the historical literature and in the press by Archbishop Malachia Ormanian, Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople. See Michel van Esbroeck, “Chronique Arménienne,” AB 80 (1962): 423–424.
out to be much older, going back to Apostolic times and the first or second
generations of the disciples of Christ. At any rate the Church of Armenia has
for a long time regarded itself the inheritor of this legacy, expressed in its
proud title, “the Armenian Apostolic Church” (Hay Arakelakan Yekeghetsi).

The work on the history of the Armenian Church is as abundant as it is
tendentious. Both the publications by Catholic historians, such as Simon
Weber and François Tournebize, as well as those by non-Catholics such as
M. Ormanian, have tried to argue for their denominational cause: the Catholics
to prove that the Armenians acknowledged papal primacy already in Early
Christian times; and the non-Catholics to prove that the Armenian Church
has been independent since at least the 4th century. The latter regard their
Church as the only one that is truly Armenian, explaining the existence of
other denominations to which Armenians belong merely as due to external
pressure alien to their national tradition and culture.

A new outlook on Armenia's ecclesiastical history has become possible
thanks to new critical editions of Armenian historical sources published with
English, French, or Russian translations. A very substantial contribution to the
understanding to the complex Armenian relations with the Apostolic See in
the Middle Ages has been made by the Vatican edition of the papal documents,
published by Pontificia Commissio ad redigendum codicem iuris canonici
orientalis in 1944–1990. This collection covers almost the entire set of full papal
deeds (not regesta) relating to Armenians from the earliest times to the end
of the pontificate of Eugene IV. The publication of the full texts has helped to
verify many of the claims and identify hitherto unknown persons and places.

The literature on the history of Armenian Christianity is enormous, and in
many languages. The current state of research for the 7th–mid-11th century is
presented by Jean-Pierre Mahé. One of the noteworthy recent contributions
is a very thorough study of the period to the late 12th century by Peter Halfter. An excellent monograph by the French scholar Jean Richard has advanced
our understanding of the situation of Catholicism in the Near and Far East,

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5 Simon Weber, Die katholische Kirche in Armenien (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder 1903);


7 Peter Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier im frühen und hohen Mittelalter. Von den ersten Kontakten bis zur Fixierung der Kirchenunion im Jahre 1198 (Köln: Böhlau, 1996).
in particular of the 14th-century Catholic missions in those regions. Another very helpful resource is the two-volume study by the French Armenian scholar Claude Mutaian, which has supplied researchers with many new materials for the history of Armenia from the 11th to 14th century and has been written on the basis of a very broad range of sources. Its chapters on ecclesiastical diplomacy and the Armenian Church’s relations with the Georgian, East and West Syrian, Roman, and Byzantine Churches are particularly relevant for the subject addressed in the present book.

My aim in this book was to present the Armenian Church’s connections with Constantinople and the Apostolic See in the Middle Ages. The results of this alliance are still palpable today in its liturgy and customs. In view of the vastness of the subject, I give only a synopsis of the general history of Armenian Christianity, only insofar as to enable me to explain the history of my period of interest. The same holds for the political, social, and economic history of Armenia. I have tried to focus on the theological aspects of the religious conflicts and show them from both points of view. The history of the religious disputes between Constantinople, Rome and Armenia may serve as an example showing how quarrels over matters of minor importance and with no practical consequences for the Christian’s everyday life may lead astray those who indulge in them; and how ill will, haughtiness, and lack of respect for tradition can destroy co-operation and make church unity impossible to achieve. In other words the history of the relations between Constantinople, Rome and Armenia can provide a lot of food for thought for those engaged in ecumenical dialogue.

This book is divided into three parts. The first part gives a general account of Armenia’s conversion and the spread of Christianity in the country. It addresses the main issues connected with the Armenian Church’s parting of ways with the general Christian community and its repercussions for the people of Armenia, who have been deprived of a state of their own many times throughout their history. The second part gives an account of the relations between the Armenians and the Byzantine Church to the close of the 11th century, and the beginnings of Armenian relations with the papacy. The third and main part describes the tortuous career of union with Rome, including fascinating but little-known issues like the establishment of an Armenian Latin-rite Church on the territory of Persia under the Mongols in

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the 14th century, the dilemmas associated with the disputes over the validity of the sacraments, and the Armenian aspect of the Union of Florence. In the concluding remarks I attempt to give an appraisal of the Armenian policy of the two “imperial” denominations.

One of the many workshop problems I have had to deal with was the transcription of Armenian names. Modern Armenian comes in two variant forms: West Armenian, used by Armenians in the diaspora; and East Armenian, the official language of the Republic of Armenia and spoken by Armenians living in Iran. The two variants differ in their phonetics, grammar, and spelling rules. I have followed East Armenian forms, with exceptions only where the conventional name generally used in the historical literature is the West Armenian form.

To conclude I would like to express my gratitude to those who have helped in the making of this book, above all to Professor Jerzy Wyrozumski, who years ago sparked my interest in the Armenian question in the history of medieval Poland; to Professor Andrzej Pisowicz of the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Jagiellonian University, whose enthusiasm supported my eagerness to launch into research, and who taught me Armenian and advised me on linguistic problems; and Professor Maciej Salamon, Head of the Department of Byzantine Studies at the Jagiellonian University Institute of History, who helped me with access to many bibliographical items which were not readily available. This book could never have materialised if it were not for assistance from the Lanckoroński Foundation and Fundacja Janineum, and for financial support from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and the Institute of History at the Jagiellonian University, for which I am profoundly grateful.

Kraków, 2016
Part One: The origins of Armenian Christianity (to the 6th century)

Armenia’s conversion to Christianity (to the early 4th century)

In the first centuries of the Christian era the Armenian people lived on the Armenian Plateau around three great lakes, Van, Sevan, and Urmia, south of the Caucasian Mountains. This region, previously inhabited by the Urartians, had been home to the Armenians already for about six hundred years. By this time the Armenians had reached an advanced stage in their national integration, though the process had not been completed yet. There were still various tribes who spoke separate dialects living in the inaccessible ranges of the Taurus Mountains. In the first centuries AD most of the territories inhabited by the Armenians belonged to the Kingdom of Armenia, which had passed the peak of its erstwhile grandeur and was set on a path of gradual decline. The

10 The tenth-century chronicler Tovma Artsruni wrote of these mountain people, “half of them have lost their proper mother tongue, as they live in remote places. They speak to each other in a disjointed, incomprehensible language, which was so variable that sometimes they are even in need of a translator. ... On account of their uneducated and incomprehensible tongue they are called the Hut (rocks, boulders), and in accordance with this name their mountains are called the Heyt... They are Assyrian boors, descendants of Adramelek and Sanasar, the son of Senekerim, king of Assyria and Nineveh; hence they call themselves the Sasuntsi (after Samasar).” Quoted after ID, 306, no. 19. See Heinrich Gelzer, “Die Anfänge der armenischen Kirche,” in Berichte über die Verhandlungen der kgl. sächs. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Phil.-hist. Klasse 47 (1895), 153–154; Nicholas Adontz, Armenia in the Period of Justinian: The Political Conditions Based on Naxarar System, trans. Nina G. Garsoian (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1970); Jean-Pierre Mahé, “Géographie et ethnographie. L’Arménie: pays, les hommes et l’histoire,” in Raymond H. Kévorkian and Jean-Pierre Mahé, Arménie: 3000 Ans d’histoire (Marseille: Maison Arménienne de la Jeunesse et de la Culture, 1988), 18.
The Roman Empire graciously tolerated kings of the Arsacid (Arshakuni) dynasty (which also ruled in neighbouring Persia) on the throne of Armenia. But the situation changed in 224, when a new dynasty, the Sassanids, came to power in Persia in outcome of a coup. The new lords of Persia wanted to restore their empire to the power it had enjoyed under the Achaemenids. Armenia, which was located at a strategic point between Rome and Persia, became the object of a bitter power struggle and military conflict between the two rivals. In 251–253 the Persians gained the upper hand, and for almost the rest of the century Armenia was under their hegemony, though it was allowed to retain its status as a kingdom, with members of the Arsacid dynasty installed as “Great Kings of Armenia.” Despite its apparent independence, in reality Armenia was now a province of Persia and despite its official territorial integrity in fact within its borders there was a large number of semi-independent principalities ruled by aristocratic (nakharar) families holding hereditary offices of state and having their own private armies. Some of the nakharars even used the royal title of Melik. The nakharars and their clients preserved the legacy of the Armenian national culture and looked back with nostalgia to the times of the now exiled Arsacids, hoping to recover their former privileges. Politically the nakharars and their followers were not at all a trustworthy group, shifting their allegiance between Rome and Persia.

For centuries Armenia had been crossed by important trade routes for Central Asia, India, and China. Due to this the cities of Armenia, like all the municipalities in the region, were multi-ethnic. Syrians, Greeks, and Jews, who engaged in brisk trading, lived side by side with the local Armenians. The

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12 Pliny (C. Plinii Secundi, *Historia naturalis*, VI. 10) enumerated 120 prefectures in Greater Armenia “quas στρατηγιας vocant quasdam ex ipsis vel singula regna.” Ammianus Marcellinus (XXI. 6, 7) also mentioned the “Transtigritani reges et satrapae.” Apart from these, the kingdom of Armenia had four beshkhs or princes along its marches with prerogatives similar to those wielded later by the Carolingian margraves. See Karl Güterbock, *Römisch-Armenien und die römischen Satrapieen im vierten bis sechsten Jahrhundert* (Königsberg: Hartung, 1900), 8.

13 The nakharar was a prince or satrap of a given province (ashshkarh) or canton (gavar). A clan’s senior nakharars were called tanuters and the younger ones were sepuhs. The azatani were the lesser gentry, vassals of the nakharars, exempt from the duty to pay taxes. The other classes of Armenian society were the people (the ramiks), viz. craftsmen who lived in the towns, and peasants (shinakans). The social structure of Armenia was analogous to that of Iran, the neighbouring state. See Nina Garsoian, “Prolegomena to a Study of the Iranian Aspects in Arsacid Armenia,” *HA* 90 (1976): 177–234; Garsoian, “L’Arménie chrétienne,” in Kévorkian and Mahé, *Arménie: 3000 Ans d’histoire*, 110.
knowledge of Greek and Syriac was fairly widespread in Armenia, a land diversified as regards the religions practised there. Alongside the traditional local gods of Iranian origin, the deities worshipped in Armenia included the gods of Greece, Asia Minor, and Syria. As of the mid-3rd century, under Sassanian influence, Armenia was subjected to an influx of Mazdaism, a revived form of Zoroastrianism, which at this time became the official state religion of Persia. Sassanian Zoroastrianism made considerable progress in Armenia, especially among those of the aristocracy in favour of an alliance with the Persians.

For centuries there had also been Armenians who lived beyond their native land. Shifting frontiers and changing economic conditions forced them to emigrate. Some Armenian expatriates were exiles, deported by successive conquering invaders. Thus there were Armenians living in neighbouring countries, which for centuries had been vying with each other for the control of Armenia. Part of Armenia was under Roman rule already by the 1st century BC. This was the region known as Lesser Armenia, lying to the west of the Euphrates and enclosed within the mountain ranges of Pontus on the north and the Anti-Taurus on the south. Its chief cities were Sebastia, Melitene, Nikopolis, and Satara, and Armenians made up a considerable part of the local population. There were large numbers of them in vicinal Cappadocia as well. Armenians were also to be found in many places in the vast Roman Empire, including Rome, the imperial capital. The same was true of Iran and the Persian Empire. In the 5th century Armenians could be encountered as far afield as Khuzestan on the Persian Gulf.

Christianity gradually made its way into the Armenian Plateau along the main communication routes, first reaching the main cities, which were important centres for international trade. A neighbouring region which played a key role in the dissemination of Christianity to the territories inhabited by

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14 Syriac was a continuation of Aramaic, which had been used as the language of diplomacy already in Achaemenid times. The knowledge of Greek spread with the rise and growth of the cities. See Jacob Manandian, O torgovle i gorodakh Armenii v sviazi s mirovoi torgovlei drevnikh vremen (Erevan: Izdatel’stvo Erevanskogo Universiteta, 1954), 114–115; Garsoïan, “Les royaumes païens d’Arménie,” in Kévorkian and Mahé, Arménie: 3000 Ans d’histoire, 93.
Armenians was Osrhoene and its capital Edessa, where a mission arrived from the Aramaic Christian community already in Apostolic times. In the 2nd and 3rd centuries Christianity spread from Edessa via Commagene to Sophene, a western province of Greater Armenia. Another vicinal region which had a similar significance for the spread of Christianity to Armenia was Adiabene, which bordered on the Kingdom of Armenia on the south-east and which had been reached by a mission from Palestine in the late 1st century. The dissemination of Christianity was facilitated by the presence and impact of Judaism, which had been spreading in these areas since the 2nd century BC, and in the 1st century AD under the Artaxiad dynasty, when a community of Jewish merchants had been deported to Armenia. In the 1st century the princes both of Adiabene and Osrhoene were converted to Christianity. Apparently the Gospel was preached in both provinces by Addai, regarded in the subsequent Armenian tradition as identical with the Apostle Thaddaeus, who was martyred in neighbouring Artaz. Adiabene was the home of the 2nd-century Assyrian historian Tatian, author of the Diatessaron, a Gospel harmony later used by the Armenians. In 224, when the Sassanids took over power in the Persian Empire, there were already over 20 bishoprics in the lands along the Tigris. There were Armenians living in multi-ethnic Edessa, some of whom must have been converted at this time. The Christian communities of southern Armenia followed the Syrian

18 Kettenhofen, Tirdâd und die Inschrift, 83. Sophene (Armenian Cop’k’) had a mixed Armenian and Syrian population. Güterbock, Römisch-Armenien, 31.


23 The Greek apocryphal Acta Apostolorum, which St. Jerome had read and which therefore went back to the early 4th century, make Thaddaeus one of the Apostles, whereas in the Acta Edessena he is only one of the Lord’s 70 disciples. According to these texts Edessa was an Armenian and Syrian metropolis, where Thaddaeus preached Christianity and converted Jews,
customs and style, and later the Syrian Church regarded itself as the mother of the Armenian Church, which it treated as one of its offshoots.24

Christian missions also reached Armenia from the Roman province of Cappadocia, to which Lesser Armenia belonged. Many scholars think that Christianity in Cappadocia had a Greek character. But there, too, Judaism had exerted a substantial impact prior to the arrival of Christianity,25 which had Aramaic origins going back to St. Peter’s missions. While St. Paul preached to Jewish communities which lived in the Hellenic cultural milieu and spoke Greek, St. Peter addressed Jews living side by side with Syrians and speaking Aramaic. The origins of Christian communities in Pontus and Cappadocia are associated with Peter. Other Apostles apart from Peter took an active part in evangelisation in that region. There was a strong tradition in the Greek Occident and Orient of the martyrdom of the Apostle Bartholomew in the city of Urbanopolis, which is quite likely to have been the same place as Nikopolis in Lesser Armenia.26 Geographically, Pontus and Cappadocia were an extension of Northern Syria and within its sphere of influence. In the dispute over the celebration of Easter that broke out in the 2nd century the bishops of these parts fell out with the bishops of Asia Minor, who followed the Pauline tradition; instead they shared the view of the bishops of Palestine and Syria, who practised the Aramaic customs introduced there during St. Peter’s missions.27 In the 3rd and 4th centuries the bishops of these territories were still engaging in matters concerning the Church.

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27 Daniélou and Marrou, Nouvelle histoire, 56. It is believed that the missionary and organising work done by Origen’s disciple Gregory, bishop of Neo-Caesarea in Pontus, known as the Miracle-worker (Thaumaturgos), who died around 270, contributed to the establishment of Christianity in Armenia.
in Antioch. Christianity in this locality had mixed features, a blend of the Syro-Palestinian and Hellenistic traditions. Syrian Christianity was still strong in the area of Melitene in Lesser Armenia in the 12th century, though as a whole the entire region was fairly uniform culturally, and focused on Antioch where a Greek component coexisted with a Syrian component.

The first Christian missionaries in Greater Armenia and the adjoining lands preached the new religion to the Jewish diaspora. However, in the second half of the 2nd century the new faith went out of the Jewish communities and spread among the Syrian inhabitants, and thereafter among the Armenians. For centuries cultural relations and trade had connected Armenia with Syria. Thanks to Syrian and Armenian merchants Christianity spread beyond the borders of the Roman Empire and reached the peoples of Iran. Sozomen, the author of the first history of the Church, written around 440, assumed that the first Persians to convert to Christianity were those who thanks to their relations with Osrhoenians and Armenians must have come into contact and talked with the priests in those parts, and came to appreciate their moral value. On the other hand, it is perhaps an exaggeration to see a connection between the spread of Christianity and the wars between Rome and Iran (Parthia and later


30 The author of Buzzandaran Patmut’iwnk (or Pawstos Biuzand) attributes the following words, addressed to the Roman commander, to Pap, king of Armenia: “Give me back Caesarea and ten other cities which once belonged to us; and Edessa as well, which was founded by our ancestors.” (V. 32). The historical grounds for this tradition are discussed in Esbroeck, “Le roi Sanatrouk,” 241–283.


32 Daniélou and Marrou, Nouvelle histoire, 180.

The growth of Christianity in areas inhabited by Armenians took its own course, independently of the political balance of power, and initially the new, cosmopolitan religion did not arouse much interest in either of the belligerents. The Arsacids then on the Armenian throne were fairly liberal in matters of religion. In the early 3rd century the Christians of Armenia enjoyed a considerable amount of religious freedom. Before 252 a debate was held before the king in Yerevan between a group of Christians and an adherent of Manichaeism, who offered to heal the king’s son if the king received “the true religion.” This story shows that by that time Christianity had set down firm roots in the cities of the Ararat Province – the heart of the country, not just in the borderlands, as some people still think. Its main centre prior to Armenia’s official conversion was Ashtishat, the “chief throne of the Bishop of Taron” (the central canton of the Province of Turuberan), where “the first holy church and altar were raised unto the Lord.” Later the Church in Ashtishat would be referred to as “the mother of the churches of all the people of Armenia.” Not only Armenians, but also Syrians, Greeks, and Persians living in Armenia became Christians.

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38 The expression *mayr yekeghets’ets’n amenayn hayastaneayts’* (BP, III. 14) may be translated as “the mother of all the inhabitants of Armenia,” not just as “mother – of the – churches in
In the mid-3rd century the situation of Christians living on territories inhabited by Armenians suddenly changed for the worse. When the Sassanid dynasty conquered Armenia the new monarchs made Mazdaism, a revived form of Zoroastrianism, the state religion, and tried to force all their subjects to espouse it.39 Things were no better in the Roman Empire. The wave of persecution started by the Emperor Decius in the mid-250s affected the Christians of Lesser Armenia as well. There were many victims in Melitene, Sebastia, and Nikopolis.40 But some renounced their faith. When the persecution was over some of these wanted to return to the Church. Meruzanes, one of the bishops of Lesser Armenia, sought the counsel on this matter of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria (d. 264), who sent an epistle to his “Brethren in Armenia,” advising them to observe moderation and apply penances on the lapsed, depending on the enormity of the sin.41 All of this is indubitable evidence that by this time – before the 4th century – Christianity was firmly established in the lands inhabited by Armenians. Not only had it taken root in the cities but it had also been adopted by some of the powerful nakharar families and their clients the azatani.42

39 Martirosian, Mashtots, 8–12; Daniélou and Marrou, Nouvelle histoire, 180; Garsoian, L’Église arménienne, 28–30.

40 An Armenian named Poliutus, who served as a centurion in the Roman army, is reputed to have been martyred during the Decian persecution. He is mentioned in Basil II’s Greek menology (late 10th century), for 9th January (BAV Vat. Gr., 1613, p. 302); The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 100, no. 55. The name goes back to Palutus, bishop of Edessa at the turn of the 2nd and 3rd century. This is the period associated with the deaths of the 40 martyrs of Sebastia and the 45 martyrs of Nikopolis, La divine liturgie, 82. The Latin hagiography mentions a mysterious Miniatus (Minias, Minas?), the son of the king of Armenia, who was martyred at about this time and later became the patron of Florence: Francesco Gurrieri, Luciano Berti, and Claudio Leonardi, La Basilica di San Miniato al Monte (Firenze: Giunti, 1988), 114, 130, 135–136, 210, 216, 279–285; Esbroeck, “La Naissance,” 176; Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 103.

41 Eusebius of Caesarea, VI. 46. There is an ongoing academic dispute on the question of where this bishop resided – in Greater or Lesser Armenia, though the latter is more probable. Christians in the Roman Empire were troubled by the problem of how to treat apostates. The addressees of this epistle should be understood as meaning not only ethnic Armenians, but also anyone living in Roman Armenia who had lapsed, even though the name of the bishop of Armenia sounds Armenian. See Louis Duchesne, “L’Arménie chrétienne dans l’Histoire ecclésiastique d’Eusèbe,” in Mélanges Nicole (Genève: W. Kündig et fils, 1905), 105–107; Marie-Louise Chaumont, Recherches sur l’histoire de l’Arménie de l’avènement des Sassanides à la conversion du royaume (Paris: Geuthner, 1969), 83; Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 83, 103. Gelzer (Die Anfänge, 172) considered Merujan, bishop of Vaspurakan in south-eastern Armenia, a member of the Artsruni princely family.

42 Eusebius of Caesarea (IX. 8) reports in connection with the war waged by the Emperor Maximian (ca. 311/312), that Maximian’s adversaries “had been Christians since ancient
The late 3rd century brought Armenia a relative scope of independence. The treaty concluded between Rome and Persia in 298 restored the Parthian Arsacids, and the Kingdom of Armenia became a Roman protectorate. Thanks to the grace and favour of Diocletian Trdat (Tiridates) III ascended the Armenian throne. Trdat had fled Armenia as a child to avoid falling into the hands of the Persians, and had been brought up at the imperial court in Rome. According to the later hagiographical tradition, he was renowned for his physical strength and distinguished himself in battle against the Goths. On his restoration to power in Armenia he was reputed to fight against the Persians. Initially Trdat pursued a policy of religious toleration, in compliance with the tradition of his forefathers. Soon, however, under the influence of his protectors, he was obliged to modify it.

In 303, on the advice of his caesar Galerius, the Emperor Diocletian embarked on a series of drastic anti-Christian measures. The persecution was particularly cruel in the East, in the immediate vicinity of Greater Armenia. As usual, there were apostates alongside the martyrs. There were also large numbers of fugitives seeking refuge beyond the borders of the Roman Empire. The hagiographical tradition recorded in the Passio Hripsimae speaks of Christians fleeing to Armenia, supplying more evidence of the policy of times.” This information applies particularly to the nakharars, because they were the Armenian commanders. The antiquity of Christianity in Armenia is attested by the treatise De incarnatione, written around 337 by Athanasius the Great (Athanasius, Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione, ed. and trans. Robert W. Thomson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), XXII.

Iberia (eastern Georgia), which neighboured on Armenia, was put under a Roman protectorate, which ensured the independence of the Armenian provinces (satrapies) on the Tigris, which may have been an integral part of the kingdom of Armenia. Another region which also came under Roman rule was Mesopotamia along with Edessa, while Caucasian Albania, on Armenia’s northern and eastern border, was made a Persian protectorate. Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 19, 71–72, 137, 162.


Aa § 36; Ag § 16; Vk/Vs write that he was three years old at the time.

Aa § 38–45; Ag § 20; Va § 26, 34.

Aa § 123.

According to Vg, in his letter to Diocletian Trdat presented the Christian missionary Gregory as his favourite. Garitte, Documents pour l’étude du livre d’Agathange, Studi e Testi 127 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1946) 37, 71.
toleration pursued by Trdat. The extent of the exodus must have worried the Roman authorities and brought about a reaction from the Emperor himself, who wrote on the matter to Trdat, calling him to adjust his religious policy to the Imperial laws. The king of Armenia was completely dependent on his Roman protectors, and his position in Armenia was feeble. Many of the princely and aristocratic families and clans were as powerful as the king, and their political sympathies were pro-Persian. In this predicament, Trdat had to give in to the pressure and issued two edicts against “the Christian sect,” perhaps modelled on Diocletian’s edicts.

All we have to go by to trace the course of the persecution are the rather indirect hints in the hagiographical legends, in which Gregory the Enlightener (Gregory the Illuminator) and a group of 33 women led by Hripsime and Gaiane, saints of the Armenian Church, the main characters in the story, are symbolic for the fate of many Christians who gave the ultimate witness to their faith. We do not know for certain whether in Armenia their prayer houses were destroyed, their property confiscated, and whether there was a prohibition on meetings for Christian worship, though it is quite likely in view of the wave of persecution. The tradition of Gregory’s noble origins shows evidence that the persecution was directed especially against high-ranking persons, perhaps

49 Aa § 149–150; Ag § 43. Although the hagiographical sources describe the group of women led by Hripsime and Gaiane as Roman nuns, they call Ararat their πατρίς. It would be anachronistic to treat of monasticism at this time. See Gabriele Winkler, “Our Present Knowledge of the History of Agat’angelos and Its Oriental Versions,” REA N.S. 14 (1980), 126. But they could have belonged to the “estate of virgins.” Daniélou and Marrou, Nouvelle histoire, 136.

50 The dictatorial tone of Diocletian’s letter to Trdat may be observed in Passio Hripsimae (Aa § 151–152); Chaumont, Recherches, 139; Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 131.

51 Aa § 125–136; Ag § 57. Vg § 40 contains the reply sent by the king of Greater Armenia to Diocletian. In his letter Trdat emphasised his fidelity to the gods and expressed his hatred of Christians, stressing his loyalty to the Empire in which he had been brought up and thanks to which he had been restored to the throne. The letter is regarded as authentic by Garitte, Documents, 293; Chaumont, Recherches, 140; Thomson, Introduction to History of the Armenians of Agathangelos, XLVI; see Garsoïan, “Armenia in the Fourth Century. An Attempt to Re-define the Concepts ‘Armenia’ and ‘Loyalty,’” REA N.S. 8 (1971): 346.

52 “Hripsime” is presumably the Armenian version of the Greek name “Euphrosyne,” while “Gaiane” is the feminine name derived from the Greek and Latin name “Gaianus.” Nikita Emin, Sharakan (Moskva: Gattsuk, 1879), 258.

53 Vg § 35–36 relates that the fugitive women were tracked down by Diocletian’s spies. Aa § 151–152 mentions a mission sent by Diocletian with an order for the fugitives to be handed over. According to Agathangelos’ Arabic version, “the king was informed that there was a man in his kingdom … who worshipped Christ and ridiculed the gods. The king ordered him to be found.” Just as in the Empire, the grounds for people being detained or arrested were denunciations, followed by an investigation and sentencing.
royal officials. As in the Empire, they were required to offer a sacrifice to the pagan gods to prove their loyalty. We know that Gregory refused to perform such a sacrifice in the royal temple of the goddess Anahit in Erez (Erzincan), whereupon he was put to an elaborate course of torture and death. A group of several dozen Christian women headed by Hripsime and Gaiane suffered the same fate. The persecution took place primarily in the Province of Ararat, where there was a royal domain directly under the king’s rule. In the lands held by the nakharars there was either no persecution at all, or very little of it, which eventually led to the failure of the whole campaign. If the wave of persecution had raged throughout the entire kingdom it would be hard to understand the meaning of the observation made by Eusebius of Caesarea that the persecution led to a war with the Armenians, who were Christians and zealously did their duty by God. The remark shows that there was a tense situation in the kingdom. The religious policy pursued by the king and his

54 There are discrepancies in the hagiographical literature on the origins of the Illuminator of Armenia. Some accounts say he was a member of the Parthian Arsacid dynasty, and others that he was a Greek from Cappadocia. Aa § 32–34 reports that after being prompted by the Persians, Gregory’s father Anak (Persian for “evil”) murdered a relative (according to Vk it was his brother), Khosrow, king of Armenia, the father of Trdat III. In retribution for the regicide the whole family was slain, except for two sons, one of whom was sent to Persia. There is no mention of him in the early Armenian historiography, not until the 10th-century Chronicle of Zenobius of Glak is he given a name, Suren. Anak’s second son was hidden away in Caesarea, and baptised Gregory. He joined Trdat III’s courtiers when the king was still in exile in the Roman Empire (Aa § 37; Ag § 17), and he continued as one of his companions after his return to Armenia (Aa § 48–122; Ag § 21–54; Vg § 1). The Syrian tradition has Gregory as a Greek from Cappadocia. Both stories agree on the point that he was raised, educated, and married in Caesarea. Garitte, Documents, 37; Martirosian, Mashdots, 20; Chaumont, “Sur l’origine de Saint Grégoire d’Arménie,” Le Muséon 102 (1989): 115–130.

55 Under Diocletian’s fourth decree all the inhabitants of the Roman Empire were ordered to make a sacrifice to the gods, on pain of death or hard labour in the mines. Marcel Simon, La civilisation de l’antiquité et le christianisme: Les grandes civilisations (Paris: Arthaud, 1972), 232–233.

56 Aa § 48–122; Ag § 21–54. The older editions of V associate the torturing of Gregory with the persecution that started in the Roman Empire in February 303 (Vg § 1).

57 Aa § 197–210; Ag § 83–88. For potentially historical facts relating to their martyrdom, see Paul Peeters, “S. Grégoire l’Illuminateur dans le Calendrier lapidaire de Naples,” AB 60 (1942): 103–107.

58 The women who fled the Empire were said to find refuge in Vagharashapat (Nor Kāghak’ Kainē Polis, later renamed Etchmiadzin), Aa § 149–150. At Erez in the province of Akilisene (Acilisene, Yekegheats’), Gregory defied the king, but was cast into a pit of vipers at Khor-Vi- rap, “the Deep Pit” in Artashat in the province of Ararat. Aa § 48, see Mécérian, Histoire et institutions, 33.

59 Eusebius of Caesarea, IX. 8.
protectors did not win the approval of the top echelons of Armenian society, and there must have been many in opposition to the anti-Christian violence.

Nevertheless, the political situation in the Empire ruled out a radical return to Armenia’s hitherto religious policy. Diocletian abdicated in 305, but he was succeeded by Galerius, the man who had encouraged him to persecute the Christians. Maximinus Daia, Galerius’ caesar, was even more fanatical and hostile to Christians. Owing to them the persecution became even crueler, and reached an apogee in 309. It would have been highly unlikely for a vassal of the Empire to have declared Christianity the state religion at this time, though this is what many researchers still say. We have seen that the king of Armenia was required to comply with the official Roman policy on religion. It is quite true that Constantine and Maxentius, who governed in the West, had abandoned Diocletian's policy, but there is no evidence that the king of Armenia had settled matters with them over the heads of the rulers of the East.

After 309 it turned out that the results achieved by the persecution were miserable, despite the very cruel measures that had been applied. Many Christians continued to practise their faith, and had even become more strongly committed to it. The repressive measures had aroused sympathy from pagans, many of whom had helped Christians. A consensus had come into existence between influential opponents of the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire and the opposition to the king in Armenia. The time was ripe for a change in the official policy. On his deathbed in April 311 Galerius issued an edict of toleration on behalf of the four tetrarchs, under which Christianity was recognised as a tolerated religion (religio licita). However, soon after he died Maximinus Daia, governor of Egypt and the Asian provinces, stopped the edict from being proclaimed and continued the repressive policy, making it even

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60 Chaumont (Recherches, 159–163) dates the king’s conversion to the interval between Diocletian’s abdication (1st May, 305) and Maximinus’s expedition; Richard Klein (Constantius II. und die christliche Kirche, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977, 170–173) opts for 312; Edward V. Gulbenkian ("The Date of King Trdat’s Conversion," HA 105 (1991): 84) assumes it was 305–306; Kettenhofen (Tirdād und die Inschrift, 81–91, 101–102, 123, 163) writes the king was converted in 313 or 314, and is definitely against it having been during Diocletian’s reign or shortly after his abdication; see Werner Seibt, “Der historische Hintergrund und die Chronologie der Christianisierung Armeniens bzw. Der Taufe König Trdats (ca. 315),” in Die Christianisierung des Kaukasus. The Christianization of Caucasus (Armenia, Georgia, Albania), ed. Werner Seibt (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2002), 125–133. According to the chronology of Movses Khorenatsi, the conversion must have taken place in 303/304. Brian MacDermot (“The Conversion of Armenia in 294 A.D.,” REA N.S. 7 (1970): 338) gives a very early date.
harsher.61 Around 311/312 he organised an expedition to Armenia to force the inhabitants, “friends and allies of Rome,” to “offer sacrifice to the pagan gods and demons, thereby turning friend into foe, and allies into antagonists.”62 According to Eusebius of Caesarea famine and military defeat in the war against the Armenians led to Maximinus Daia’s fall. In 312 Constantine, emperor in the West, defeated his rival Maxentius and was declared Supreme Caesar by the Senate. He had Galerius’ edict proclaimed and made his colleagues abide by it. Maximinus, emperor in the East, did so very reluctantly, but soon he engaged in a war against Licinius, who had been Galerius’ co-regent and was now governor of Illyria and the Balkans. In April 313 Maximinus was defeated and committed suicide still in the same year. Licinius, who succeeded him, entered Nicomedia and on 13th June 313 proclaimed the Edict of Milan,63 the official act of toleration. The persecution of the Christians in the East was slowly receding into the past.

The proclamation of the Edict of Milan in the Empire was followed shortly by the conversion of the Armenian royal family, which took place in 313 or 314. The reasons behind this are not fully known. Sozomen, who wrote in the mid-5th century, relates that Trdat was converted to Christianity following a miracle that happened in his household.64 According to a later hagiographical legend in Agathangelos’ cycle, the king was punished for slaying the devout Christian women by being turned into a wild boar.65 Thanks to the penance and

61 Simon, La civilisation de l’antiquité, 236–237.
62 Eusebius of Caesarea, IX 8 writes that Maximinus’ army was beaten in a war against the Armenians. Historians are not unanimous in the interpretation of this passage of Eusebius. Most are of the opinion that it applied to Greater Armenia and king Trdat. War against Maximinus would suggest an earlier date for the king’s conversion and the withdrawal of the anti-Christian policy, which would have been taken as the severance of his political ties with the Empire. But Eusebius does not name the king in question, and only mentions the Armenian Christians; hence some historians think that Maximinus’ expedition was against the Armenian satrapies on the Tigris, which were not under Greater Armenia, and their princes were the Empire’s foederati. However, Kettenhofen claims that there is no certainty that the lands on the Tigris had been split off from the Kingdom of Armenia after 298, and has put forward a hypothesis that Maximinus set off against the Armenian princes ruling Taron, who were hostile to the king’s policy. This conjecture does not rule out the emergence of a broad opposition in other parts of Armenia. See Adontz, Armenia in the Period, 25–37; Chaumont, Recherches, 159–161; Gulbenkian, “Date”, 85; Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 82, 132–133, 137.
63 Simon, La civilisation de l’antiquité, 237–238.
64 Sozomen, Ecclesiastical History, II. 8. Sozomen’s testimony is the earliest non-Armenian source on Armenia’s conversion, and the first record of the name of the king who converted the country. The source of his information is not known. Socrates Scholasticus’ History of the Church, on which he based his narration, does not contain this passage.
65 Aa § 212.
intercession of Gregory, who had miraculously escaped death,\textsuperscript{66} he was healed and established Christianity as the state religion. What we have here is a fairly late and rather stereotypical hagiographic myth, though some historians have tried to get to the truth from the legend.\textsuperscript{67}

If we are to believe Eusebius’ contemporary testimonial, we shall have to conclude that the situation in Armenia was very tense. Two rival political factions were contending against each other. One was the pro-Roman royal faction, and the other its antagonist, a Christian faction with nationalist sympathies. The latter seems to have been more attuned to the national interest and saw the new religion as an effective ideological measure setting Armenia apart both from Rome and from Persia. A change of religion would inevitably widen the distance from Iran and its culture, especially from the Persian Sassanids, who had tried to bring Mazdaism, the official state religion of Persia, into Armenia, and had been moderately successful.\textsuperscript{68} On the other hand, Christianity in its Aramaic version, disseminated in Armenia via Syria and its culture, which was closer to the traditional culture of Armenia, could become an expression of the Armenian national identity and aspirations of independence. The breakthrough in Armenia’s religious policy that came in 313/314 was not an act of loyalty to Rome. The Edict of Milan did not make Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire; neither did it make

\textsuperscript{66} Gregory is said to have been imprisoned for over a decade in a cave with snakes and scorpions (Aa § 121–136; Ag § 21). The prototype for this hagiographical episode is the biblical story of Daniel in the lions’ den (Dan 6, 17–24). The cycle of Daniel, which was popular in Early Christian art, was interpreted as an allegory of baptism, which brings salvation (Danielou and Marrou, \textit{Nouvelle histoire}, 141). In Armenian folk tradition the viper is a symbol for water, and in this case may have been an allegory of baptism; Aîvazian, “Istoryia Tarona,” 268.

\textsuperscript{67} Chaumont (\textit{Recherches}, 142) and Gulbenkian (“Date,” 86–87) speculate that the king might have “suffered from lycanthropy” (being a werewolf – viz. a mental disease). Another scholar sees an analogy between this story and the metamorphosis of Nebuchadnezzar in the Book of Daniel (4, 29–30; 6, 16–23), Garsoian, “The Iranian Substratum of the ‘Agat’angels’ Cycle,” in \textit{Armenia between Byzantium and the Sasanians} (London: Variorum Reprints, 1985), 151–189. The myth of Trdats’ conversion could also have been influenced by the legend of the conversion of Constantine, allegedly after he had been healed of leprosy by Pope Sylvester (\textit{Actus Silvestri}). This story was created in Rome shortly before 500. Peeters, “La version arménienne de l’historien Socrate,” in Peeters, \textit{Recherches d’histoire et de philologie orientales}, Vol. 1 (Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1951), 313, 335; Esbroeck, “Rome l’ancienne et Constantinople vue de l’Arménie,” in \textit{Da Roma alla terza Roma (La nozione di Romano tra cittadinanza e universalità)} (Roma: Università degli studi La Sapienza, 1982), 351–355.

\textsuperscript{68} Chaumont, “Conquêtes sassanides et propagande mazdéenne (IIIe siècle),” \textit{Historia} 22 (1973): 664–710.
Christianity obligatory. Initially the conversion of Armenia’s royal family was of no significance politically in its relations with Rome.

We cannot rule out that Trdat was compelled to change his religious policy. Christian influence among the Armenian aristocracy was strong enough to prevail over the traditional, Roman and Persian, pagan options. The decision to convert to the new religion was made at the state assembly in Vagharshapat (Etchmiadzin) in 313 or 314. During this convention the Christian faction persuaded the king to embrace the new religion. But it is doubtful whether they managed to force all the nakharars to follow suit. The Christians must certainly have obtained their consent to a policy of religious toleration, which in practice meant freedom to propagate Christianity on their territories. It would hardly have been imaginable for the monarch to impose such decisions by force on a country as decentralised politically as Armenia. At the assembly the leadership of the mission was entrusted to Gregory, and he was sent to Cappadocia to be ordained a bishop. This decision was the first intervention of the state in Church affairs. Perhaps it was not a very

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69 Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 122–123.
70 Constantine the Great was baptised on his deathbed in 337, although his legislation had referred to Christian morality already since 324; Simon, La civilisation de l’antiquité, 243, 245–247.
71 BP, III. 14 writes that “king Trdat deserves respect for having been the first to recognise the Christian faith, whether of his own will or not.” See Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 133. Curiously enough, in the Armenian version of the Passion of St. Thaddaeus, it is the princes and lords of the royal court who are converted, but not the king; see Esbroeck, “Le roi Sanatrouk,” 279.
72 The victory over Maximinus provides evidence of this faction’s power: Eusebius of Caesarea, IX.8. Christians were the majority population in the satrapies on the Tigris; see Garsoïan, L’Église arménienne, 21–22.
73 Aa § 794 states that the king summoned the army and the lords to the capital; see also Vg § 92–114. For the date see Paolo Ananian, “La data e le circonstanze della consecrazione di S. Gregorio Illuminatore,” Le Muséon 74 (1961): 73.
74 This is the tradition handed down by Sozomen (II. 8) and the hagiographical legend (Aa § 778–794). However, Sozomen saw Armenia’s conversion from the point of view of relations in the Empire in his times, viz. the mid-5th century, when the state could coerce subjects into obedience to the official Church and force “Christian heretics” to comply; see Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 102, 121–122.
75 Aa § 794–796 relates that the king summoned a national congress to appoint Gregory head of the Church. Reluctance on the part of the elected man, which is brushed aside in outcome of a vision, is a typical feature in hagiography.
76 If Aa § 794–796 is to be believed, the decision was made at the congress that Gregory would be appointed to the office of supreme hierarch or archpriest (Armenian kahanayapet). Of course at the time when this source was written there were many dioceses in Armenia with established administrative regions subject to the archbishop and formerly to the bishop with jurisdiction over the whole country. Babken Harutyunyan, “Die Diözesan-Gliederung
intrusive intervention, nonetheless it was certainly a precedent for the future. Gregory’s mission was to be addressed to the Armenian population, marking the historic turning point for the evolution of a national Armenian form of Christianity from what was originally a cosmopolitan form of the religion with Syrian roots.

Gregory arrived in Cappadocian Caesarea in 314 or 315, and during a synod attended by twenty other bishops was ordained a priest and then consecrated a bishop by Leontius, bishop of Caesarea.\(^77\) The choice of Caesarea for his consecration was probably motivated by Gregory’s personal relations, though the fact that Armenians made up a sizeable proportion of the Christian communities in Sebastia, Melitene, Nikopolis, and Satala (Lesser Armenia) could no doubt have contributed to it. In Caesarea he could count on recruiting missionaries who spoke Armenian.\(^78\) Alternative choices would have been Amida, Samosata, Nisibis, or Edessa, with which Armenia had had relations ever since the first centuries of Christianity. All of these cities were in the eastern part of the Roman Empire as well.

After leaving Caesarea Gregory spent some time in Lesser Armenia. As expected, there were plenty of men in Sebastia willing to take Holy Orders

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\(^78\) We know that such measures were taken in the next decades. In 372 Basil the Great, bishop of Caesarea, and Theodotus, bishop of Nikopolis, are said to have jointly appointed bishops for Lesser Armenia. Basil hoped that with Theodotus’ help “devout and prudent local men, with a knowledge of the local language and familiar with the other characteristics of the local people” would come forward. Somewhat later St. John Chrysostom reported from exile in Cocyus in the Anti-Taurus Mountains that it was a thriving centre for Armenian settlement. Some scholars are of the opinion that the exiled bishop of Constantinople could even have learned the local language. In the Western tradition the invention of the Armenian alphabet was erroneously ascribed to him. St. Basil of Caesarea, *Letter 99*. Translated by Blomfield Jackson. From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 8. Edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing, 1895). Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3202099.htm (accessed Oct. 31, 2016); *Roma-Armenia*, ed. Claude Mutafian (Roma: Edizioni di Luca, 1999), 79.
and set out on the mission in Greater Armenia. Gregory’s party was joined by Peter, bishop of Sebastia, whom Leontius had appointed to instal Gregory in his bishopric at Ashtishat. The city selected for the seat of the bishop of Greater Armenia was not the capital Vagharshapat, which would have accorded with the custom of the time. The choice of a place for Gregory’s residence was determined by a more ancient ecclesiastical tradition.

On his arrival in the city Gregory is reputed to have raised a martyrium (vkayaran) for the relics of St. John the Baptist and St. Athenogenes which he had brought from Caesarea, and to have baptised many of the princes and people of Taron. He left Daniel, a Syrian, as his chorepiscopus in Ashtishat and left to see the king, who was waiting for him at Bagavan at the foot of Mount Npat (Nbad, Gr. Niphates, Turk. Tapa-seyd) on the bank of the Upper Euphrates. There Gregory baptised the royal family, dignitaries, soldiers, and a large number of subjects.

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79 Aa § 800–808; Va § 114; Vg § 126, 148–151; BP, III. 14. These editions call Gregory’s companions monks, though such an epithet is anachronistic for the early 4th century.

80 There is no mention of Peter in the sources. At the time of the Council of Nicaea Eulalius was bishop of Sebastia; see Garitte, Documents, 229–230; Chaumont, Recherches, 161; Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 88, 102. However, shortly afterwards but still in the same century, there was a bishop of Sebastia named Peter. He was a brother of Basil the Great.

81 In line with this, the later tradition had Gregory raising a cathedral at Vagharshapat, with the help of the king himself. Although he had not fully recovered yet, his innate strength allowed him to wrench huge slabs of stone out of the Ararat massif for the construction. The eight stones the king brought were perhaps a symbolic expiation for the eight torments he had inflicted on Gregory before. These stones were to be used to build the martyria for the virgins who had been slain, Aa § 764–767. At the time when the Agathangelos cycle was being composed Ashtishat lost its importance as a religious and political centre; Agathangelos represented the new, “Gregorian” tradition; Garsoian, L’Église arménienne, 27, 104.

82 Esbroeck (“Le roi Sanatrouk,” 271–272) tries to prove that there were two bishoprics in Armenia, one at Taron (Ashtishat), the origins of which, he says, go back to St. Thaddaeus mission; and the other at Artashat, associated with St. Gregory’s mission. This conjecture is inadmissible. BP (III. 12, 14) considers the See of Armenia as the diocese both of St. Thaddaeus and St. Gregory. According to the chronicler every principal bishop of the country was the successor both of the Apostle Thaddaeus and Gregory, his equal (znorin nmanoyn, also with the status of an Apostle). The latter was the first of all the priests: Grigori mecin aṙachnoy kahanayapeti (IV 3). As late as the Council of Nicaea (325) Armenia was a single ecclesiastical entity (“eparchias Armenias megales”) with only one bishop (“Aristakes,” BP, III. 14; see Honigmann, “La liste,” 46; Garsoian, L’Eglise arménienne, 19, no. 74).

83 Athenogenes, bishop of Sebastia, is said to have been martyred during the persecution under Diocletian, ca. 302–305; Joseph Muyldermans, “Athénogéne,” in Dictionnaire d’Histoire et de la Géographie Écclésiastique, Vol. 5 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1931), 44–45. Kettenhofen (Tirdād und die Inschrift, 101, no. 602) has misgivings over the reliability of this account.

84 Aa § 814–835; Ag § 149; Vg § 153–159; Va § 141–147. Ter-Minassiantz (Die armenische Kirche, 8) is of the opinion that Daniel had been serving as bishop already for a long time.
According to the hagiographical tradition the Metropolitan of Caesarea sent a report to the Emperor Constantine relating what had happened. The Emperor is said to have invited both King Trdat and Bishop Gregory to Rome. The visit provided an opportunity for the renewal of the treaty of friendship and co-operation between the Kingdom of Armenia and the Roman Empire. During this visit Gregory is said to have met the Bishop of Rome and the two apparently prayed together in St. Peter’s Basilica. This meeting – if it ever took place – must have been held before 320. In that year Licinius, Emperor of the East and an avid pagan worshipper of Sol Invictus (the Unvanquished Sun), fell out with Constantine and started another wave of persecution, which only ended in 324 when he was defeated at Nicomedia. In the following year Gregory’s son Aristakes was bishop of Greater Armenia. Although we do not know for certain whether the Armenians really visited Rome, in future times the legend would serve as the fundamental part of the ideology in relations between the papacy and the Armenian Church. The King and the Bishop were both concerned for the growth of Christianity. Towards the end of his life Gregory is said to have lived as a hermit in a cave called Mane in the Sepuh Mountains, where he died around 328. His body was brought to Tortan (Tordan) on the Upper Euphrates and a church was built over his grave.

The Armenian tradition subordinated him to Gregory the Enlightener, to emphasise the status of the latter.

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85 Aa § 872–877; Ag § 164; Vk § 275; Va § 167–169. Va § 167 relates that Constantine summoned Trdat to Rome “ut tributum sibi solveret,” which presumably shows Armenia’s real political status with respect to Rome. According to Vg § 174–176, the emperor had already been baptised, and in his letter inviting Trdat described how he had been converted by Sylvester and healed by baptism; this was an influence of the Actus Silvestri. Constantine also wrote how he had sent his mother Helena to Jerusalem to search for the Cross (an influence of Inventio Sanctae Crucis), Garitte, Documents, 106–108, 327–329, 344–348; BP, III. 21; Chaumont, Recherches, 166. Gelzer (Die Anfänge, 167–171) is of the opinion that the meeting took place in Sardica; see Halfter, Das Papsttum, 25, 74; Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 124–126, 136.

86 Vg and Aa claim that the pope’s name was Eusebius, presumably confusing him with Eusebius of Nicomedia, the bishop who really baptised Constantine. Later versions of Agathangelos have the correct name for the pope, viz. Sylvester I (314–335); Garitte, Documents, 327–331; BP, III. 21; in his introduction to Armenian Agathangelos (Aa LXXIII) Thomson has misgivings whether they actually met and sees it as a reminiscence of Trdat’s visit to Nero; see Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 124–125.

87 In the Latin hagiography there is a St. Blaise (Blasius) who was bishop of Sebastia in Lesser Armenia and died a martyr’s death under Licinius. St. Blaise was very popular in Europe and the patron saint for healing sore throats; Garitte, “La passion de Saint Irénarque de Sébastée et la passion de Saint Blaise,” AB 73 (1955): 18–54.

The legend of the conversion of Armenia crystallised out in its final shape after the demise of the Arsacid dynasty and Armenia’s statehood. The most ancient Armenian hagiographical records treat King Trdat as “the Constantine of their nation,” and he was apotheosised into the ideal prince. Originally Gregory the Illuminator was somewhat in the background: Sozomen attributed all the merit for the Christianisation of Armenia to Trdat. Koriun, the author of “The Life of Mashtots,” the creator of the Armenian alphabet (ca. 443), never mentioned Gregory. Yeghishe (Elisée), who claimed to have been an eye-witness of the war of 451 against Persia for the right to practise Christianity, also ascribed all the glory for the conversion to Trdat. It was not until the fall of the Arsacids, when the Mamikonian family, who were descended on the female line from the by then extinct male branch of Bishop Gregory’s offspring, took over their political role in the aristocratic milieu, that the veneration of Armenia’s Apostle eclipsed the merit of Trdat, the monarch set on a par with the Apostles.

Armenia in the community of the Universal Church (4th century)

The Christianisation of the Armenian state and its people was fostered by a favourable geopolitical circumstance – the progress the new religion was making in the Roman Empire, where under Constantine the Great and his sons Christianity was gradually taking the place the old pagan religion had held in the ideology of the state. The new religion was turning into an additional cohesive factor reinforcing the pro-Roman faction in Armenia. Its guardian was the house of Gregory the Illuminator, who did all they could to maintain the links with the Christian Empire, which they treated as the earthly reflection of the Kingdom of God. Almost from the very beginning bishops who were

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AB 95 (1977): 355; Esbroeck, “Témoignages littéraires sur les sépultures de S. Grégoire l’Il-


Search of Tiridates,” 40; Kettenfohen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 97–98.

89 On the basis of the general opinion of contemporary historians, the date of the death of

Trdat III is taken as 330; Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 171.

90 In his description of Bishop Vrtanes’ visit to Constantius, John of Draskhanakert puts the

following words into his mouth: “let your state, strengthened in Christ, and not the godless

Persians, rule over us” (ID, XI, 66).
members of Gregory’s family and clan took an active part in Armenia’s political relations with its powerful neighbour on the West. Their authority served Rome as a guarantee that successive kings of Armenia from the Parthian dynasty would remain loyal, while the kings sent these bishops on embassies to the court of their protectors.91 During the fighting against the Persians in 338 Bishop Vrtanes prayed for victory for the Roman and Armenian allied force, and subsequently declared all those who had fallen in battle martyrs and ordered their names read out during services.92 His grandson Nerses followed suit during the battle between the Romans and Persians in the spring of 372.93 These events, regarded in the Armenian historiography as proof of the seminal contribution the Church made to the building up of the State, cannot contest the fact that the bishops engaged in acts on behalf of the Armenian state only when the issue involved the corroboration of Armenia’s connections with the Christian Empire.94 In 339 a severe wave of persecution hit the Christian minority in Persia, Rome’s rival for the control of Armenia, and it was for this reason that the war against Persia strengthened the position of Christianity in Armenia.95


93 BP, V.2–3.


Contrary to what the hagiographies claim, the spread of Christianity throughout the kingdom was no easy matter. The destruction of the pagan temples and places of worship must certainly have been a long process. In the Roman Empire a policy of this kind was not undertaken on a large scale until the times of Constantius II (337–361). Characteristically, the pagan religious sites tradition says were destroyed by Trdat and Gregory were in northern Armenia, lands ruled directly by the king, and in Taron in the south, where Christianity had set down firm roots in the families of the Armenian nakharars. Other principalities continued to be pagan. Support from the Empire made it easier for recalcitrant nakharars and priests of the old religion to make the crossing into the Christian party. Thanks to winning over the aristocracy Christianity gradually spread among their subjects, the azatani (vassals) and shinakan (peasantry), which was tantamount to its egression out of the confines of the cities and upper echelons of society, and permeation into the deeper social fabric. The aristocracy acquired an influence over Church matters equal to that enjoyed by the king. It interfered in the appointment of the chief prelate in the land, and in dioceses founded on territories within their domain effectively decided appointments on their own, convening the local clergy to attend a formal election. Major ecclesiastical matters were discussed at national synods attended by the king and nakharars alongside clergymen. Without the consent of the nakharars decisions made at the synods would have been a dead letter, or limited to the king’s domain. In this way the aristocracy was gradually coming to identify with Christianity and sharing the responsibility with the monarch for its wellbeing and development.

Initially the spread of Christianity took an apostolic form and relied on persuasion rather than on compulsion. A particularly significant aspect was

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97 Although they enjoyed the support of the royal court, the country’s first bishops risked many dangers. Gregory’s son Aristakes died a “confessor’s” death after censuring apostates; BP, III. 2. MCh (II. 91) states that he was killed by the governor of Sophene, one of the provinces in the kingdom. Vrtanes, the next bishop, fled Taron, the most Christianised province, in fear for his life at the hands of the inhabitants of Mount Sim in Sasun, whom he had been “punishing” (viz. trying to convert). The nakharars, the king’s wife, and the pagan priests were involved in the plot against his life; BP, III. 3.

98 After King Tigranes had killed Bishop Yusik (Husik), “the great nakharars convened, held a meeting and persuaded the king to summon Old Daniel,” BP, IV. 3; see Garsoian, “Secular Jurisdiction over the Armenian Church (Fourth-Seventh Centuries),” Harvard Ukrainian Studies 7 (1983): 221–250.

the winning over of the priests of the pagan cults – a truly innovative measure. This community served as the repository of the ancient national tradition. Gregory is said to have ordained sons of converted pagan priests to serve as bishops and presbyters. Temple property and movable assets were alienated to the Church, but did not pass out of the hands of their old proprietors. One of these convert families were the Albianid of Ashtishat, erstwhile priests of Vahagn, Anahit, or Astghik. Mashots, the inventor of the Armenian alphabet, also came from a noble family. The name he was given by his father, Vardan of Taron, who was probably a Christian priest by that time, contains the etymological root *mazd-*., derived (according to linguists) from the name of the Zoroastrian god, Ahura Mazda. Christian priests were promoted to a higher social status, becoming *azatani.* The Armenisation of the Christian clergy would bring profound consequences in the future. It certainly made a signal and immediate contribution to the new religion’s assimilation as part of the native culture. But there was also another side to this. Soon conflicts erupted between the native clergy and the foreigners (Syrians and Greeks). The latter were eventually marginalised. Perhaps the first clashes occurred still in the reign of Trdat III and were reflected in Agathangelos’ account of Gregory the Illuminator spending his last days as a hermit. Despite the legend of his Armenian origins, Gregory’s descendants were representatives of a locally not very popular Hellenophile tendency. Neither were the 4th-century Arsacids particularly inclined to favour the Syrian clerics, whose impact on Armenian Christianity was far stronger than that of the Greeks. In any case at this time there was not much of a difference between the Syrian and the Greek clergy. Whenever they fell out with bishops belonging to Gregory’s family and clan, the kings would appoint a member of the indigenous clerical aristocracy, descendants of Albianos of Manzikert (Manazkert), to the highest episcopal office. The influence of this group must have increased after the Sassanid invasion of 363, when the cities associated with its multi-ethnic culture were

100 The children of the pagan priests were brought up as Christians and taught the principles and rites of the new religion, Aa § 838–840.
almost completely destroyed. Native clergymen wore different apparel than their Greek and Syrian brethren in the priesthood. They dressed like soldiers, in knee-length robes, and they loved ornaments and ermine fur. Some of them took an instrumental approach to the rules and regulations of the new faith. One of the bishops happened to ordain a thief who had not even been baptised, in exchange for a horse. To make up for the deficiency, he subsequently administered the sacrament of baptism by pouring a bucket of water on the thief’s head. To humour the king he pretended to be a camel and made camel-like noises; all he was after was land and property. These clerics had no compunction when offered goods such as sheep, cattle, horses, or goats. They must definitely have continued to practise the pagan custom of *matagh* – still encountered in the Armenian Church today – of slaughtering animals as a sacrifice in various intentions such as for the repose of the souls of the deceased, which was reinterpreted as the Early Christian agape. The native Armenian clergy continued to practise the old Iranian traditions under a Christian veneer. The temples of the old pagan cults were turned into churches, and oratory chapels were erected on sacred sites, on which crosses would be added. Christ gradually acquired all the attributes of Arev-Mihr (Mithra), the Sun-god of Justice. The pagan Feast of Vardavar, originally dedicated to roses (*vard* is Armenian for “rose”) eventually became the Feast of the Transfiguration. Arsha-luis, the goddess of the dawn, mother of the visible sun and “a holy and immaculate virgin” (*surb kuys anarat*), turned into the Blessed Virgin Mary. Arevagal, the welcome for the sun, acquired the liturgical costume of matins. St. John the Baptist ousted Aramazd Vanatur (Zeus Xenios), taking his place on New Year’s Day, the first day of the month of Navasard. Thereby Christian customs slowly stood in for the old rites and rituals. A similar process took place in the law. The old customary laws were retained, augmented a century later by the addition of a set of Christian canons modifying them.

Despite the progress of Christianity, there was still a residual pagan aristocracy, and the old cult was still strong. Practices such as polygamy and

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105 King Arshak († 367) tried to revitalise life in the cities, but was not very successful; Garsoian, "L’Arménie chrétienne," in Raymond H. Kévorkian and Jean-Pierre Mahé, Arménie: 3000 Ans d’histoire (Marseille: Maison arménienne de Marseille, 1988), 111.

106 BP, IV. 14; VI. 2–4, 15.

107 BP, VI. 10.

108 One of the morning prayers popular with the common people went, “Mother of God, treasure-house of light, mother of fire...” Manuk Abeghian, Der armenische Volksgläube (Leipzig: W. Drugulin, 1899), 491–493.

109 Aa § 836.

110 Kévorkian and Mahé, Arménie, 70.
marriage with close relatives continued; funerals were still attended by acts of self-inflicted maiming and choirs of lamenting weepers; amulets continued in use and séances were held to summon the spirits of the dead. Bishop Nerses tried to combat these practices. In 365 the Synod of Ashtishat prohibited them. An effort was made to bring in new patterns of religious behaviour from neighbouring Cappadocia. To counter social opposition a network of charitable institutions – hospitals, leprosaria, orphanages, and hospices – was set up. As the synod was also a national assembly, Nerses endeavoured to persuade the nakharars who attended it to treat their shinakan peasants more considerately and reduce the economic dues incumbent on them. These reforms made very slow progress, often they were sabotaged by the lords and powerful aristocracy.111

By the mid-4th century Christianity was so firmly established in Armenia that making plans for missions to vicinal pagan peoples had become a reality. According the Armenian tradition operations of this kind in Iberia, Caucasian Albania, and among the Alans (Mazkuts) were undertaken already by Gregory the Illuminator and King Trdat III.112 Gregory’s grandson Grigoris was appar-

111 BP, IV. 4. King Arshak († 367) continued to celebrate Navasard. King Pap († 374) is alleged to have restored idol worship and the practice of pagan diabolical rituals. He closed down the charitable institutions Bishop Nerses had founded and numerous monasteries, making the monks join the army (BP, V. 31). However, not all of Pap’s measures were anti-Christian, he only abolished things that were harmful to the state, and in this respect he was only following the policy of his Roman protectors. Around 372 Basil the Great wrote most people joined in work for the Church to avoid conscription, and he considered such conduct censurable (Letter 54. Translated by Blomfield Jackson. From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 8. Edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing, 1895). Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3202099.htm, accessed Oct. 31, 2016. For more on the Synod of Ashtishat see Garsoïan, “Nerses le Grand, Basile de Cesarée et Eustathe de Sebaste,” REA N.S. 17 (1983): 159–169.

112 Vg § 92 reports that even before his baptism Trdat sent letters to the Iberian and Albanian kings, asking them to visit him as soon as possible. Va § 147 and Vg § 159 concur that the kings of the Iberians, Laz people, and Albanians were baptised together with Trdat, and that there was complete harmony between them (the other kings are not mentioned in Vk/Vs). BP (III. 5–6) relates that Gregory was appointed to the office of bishop of the Albanian and Iberian territories. In a letter from the Armenian Archbishop Giut (461–468) to Vache, King of Albania, we read that Urnayr, King of Albania, was so impressed by the great miracles and signs in Armenia, that he came with his nakharars and army to King Trdat and was baptised by Gregory. Thereupon “they consecrated a certain pious man who had come from Rome [to Armenia], and sent him out to Albania to be its bishop” MK, I. 9–10, 11–14. This information is wrong: Urnayr reigned in Albania in the 360s and 370s. Relying on Koryun and BP, Aa writes of such a broad scope for Gregory’s missionary activities. However, in Koryun this extent is attributed not only to Gregory’s, but also to Mashtots’ work; see Kettenhofen, Tirdād und die Inschrift, 16–19; Rauf B. Geiushev, Christianstvo stopka_armenia_2.indd 40

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ently consecrated a bishop at the age of 16 for the tribes of Iberia and Albania. He was killed while preaching on the shores of Lake Chaldir-gel, during a mission to the land of the Mazkuts.113 A church was built to accommodate his relics at Amaras in the province of Artsakh (modern Nagorno Karabakh).114 Contrary to what the later histories and hagiographies claimed, these early missions do not seem to have been political in character, they were not motivated by an intention to put these areas under Armenian control.115 In Trdat’s times Armenian Christianity had not yet become thoroughly “state-oriented.”116

113 BP, III. 5–6. According to MCh (III. 3), Grigoris was killed, pulled apart by horses on the Vatnian field on the coast of the Caspian Sea. For the location of the Mazkut lands, see Kettenhofen, *Tirdād und die Inschrift*, 16–21.

114 Kamilla V. Trever, *Ocherki po istorii i kulture Kavkazskoi Albanii IV v. do N. E. do VII v. N. E.* (Moskva: Izdatel’stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1959), 197; Geiushev, *Khristianstvo*, 67. The king of Iberia is said to have been converted to Christianity thanks to Miriam, a slave-girl. His name, Meribanes, was recorded by Ammianus Mercellinus in the 360s. Rufinus obtained information on the conversion of Iberia (eastern Georgia) from Prince Bakur, the king’s son (*Historia ecclesiastica*, I. 10). The slave-girl’s name is given as Nino or Nune in the Georgian hagiography, but not before the 10th century. Contrary to the Georgian version, in the Armenian tradition she was one of the companions of Hrispime and Gaiane. Some scholars are of the opinion that Gregory’s mission in Iberia was limited to the lands along the Armenian border; see Martirosian, *Mashtots*, 122, 145, 193; Garsoian, *L’Église arménienne*, 532, n. 44; Zaza Alexidze, “Four Recensions of the ‘Conversion of Georgia’ (Comparative Study)” in *Die Christianisierung des Kaukasus. The Christianization of Caucasus (Armenia, Georgia, Albania)*, ed. Werner Seibt (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2002), 9–16; Nicole Thierry, *Sur le culte de Sainte Nino*, in *Die Christianisierung des Kaukasus*, 151–158.


The Aramaic Orient gave Armenia a Christianity that did not share the intellectual categories of the Graeco-Roman world, but was similar to the Church of Jerusalem in its earliest period. Armenians considered themselves as having been converted by the circumcised (viz. Jewish Christians). As late as the 10th century a chronicler from Caucasian Albania writing in Armenian stressed their spiritual links with proto-Christianity in Jerusalem. The Law of Moses exerted a substantial influence on Armenian Church Law. The endurance of certain customs in the Armenian Church, later abandoned by the rest of Christianity including the Holy City itself, may be accounted for by the close connections with Jerusalem. From the Judaeo-Christian Church in Jerusalem Armenia took its strict fasting, including abstinence from all animal-derived foods such as eggs and fish, and the division of animals into a clean and an unclean category. Another connection with the Holy Land was the liturgical use of unleavened bread of the kind the Jews had for Passover. The custom of using pure wine (without the addition of water) is probably also attributable to Jewish usage. Until the 6th century the Church of Jerusalem celebrated Christmas on the Feast of the Epiphany, viz. January 6th, and today that tradition survives only in the Armenian Church. For the early Christians the Lord’s epiphany during his baptism in the Jordan was more important than his nativity in the flesh. The Armenian Church commemorates the day of Jesus’ offering in the Temple on February 14th, 40 days after his birth, in compliance with the Law of Moses. The Armenian church calendar and its liturgy reflect the 5th-century Jerusalem rite. Armenia adopted the Jerusalem lectionary, with instructions for the cycle

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117 In a statement on the celebration of Christmas on 6th January, he wrote that this was how it was still being held by those who had been converted by the circumcised, “for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Is. 2,3); MK, III. 14.
119 The mixing of water with the wine was not a native tradition of Palestine, but Greece. In Antiquity diverse Christian Gnostic or ascetic sects such as the Encratites and the Aquarians did not use wine in the liturgy at all, but only water. Tatian of Adiabene was an adherent of this practice. They were condemned by the Synod of Ancyra in 314, and Basil the Great queried the validity of their baptism. The canons passed at Ancyra are in the book of canons known as the Kanonagirk, which is the basis for Armenian canon law; see Joseph A. Junemann, Missarum sollemnia: Explication génétique de la Messe romaine, Vol. 2 (Lutetiae Parisiorum: Aubier, 1952), 311–312; Torosian, Sud i protses, 30.
of the liturgical year, and a selection of readings, hymns, and places designated for ceremonies.\textsuperscript{122} It was from Jerusalem that Armenia received the liturgy of St. James the Lord’s Brother, the mainstay of the Eastern rites. The veil used in this liturgy to cover the altar from the eyes of the people at certain times during the ceremony alludes to the veil in the Temple of Jerusalem concealing the sanctuary from the people’s gaze. The use of the iconostasis was not adopted in the Syrian and Armenian Churches.

Without doubt it was thanks to the Syrians that the Aramaic version of Christianity was established in Armenia.\textsuperscript{123} In Agathangelos both the rite of baptism as well as the way in which this sacrament was understood point to a Syrian origin.\textsuperscript{124} Syrian models of church architecture reached Armenia, Albania, and Georgia. The origins of the atrium-less, flat-roofed basilica with a tripartite east end (an apse with two pastophoria), and a façade with two towers and a rich sculptural decoration were northern Syrian.\textsuperscript{125} The furnishings of these churches were fairly austere, with no figural art and few religious motifs. For many centuries the Armenians clung on to this Early Christian tradition, and rejected the cult of images as pagan. The Christian terminology in Armenian has many loan words from Syriac, which was an Aramaic language: kahana – “priest,” abegha – “monk,” urbat – “Friday,” shabat – “Saturday,” yekeghetsi – “church.” The customary use of Old Testament names by the senior clergy and monks was also of Syrian origin.\textsuperscript{126}

Schools founded for the needs of the Church in Aramaic Mesopotamia, where the classical Greek culture did not set down firm roots, were entirely


\textsuperscript{123} Characteristically, as late as 641 the consecration of the principal church of Antioch was conducted on 6th January. The law of Moses came into Armenian canon law via Syrian canonical sources.


\textsuperscript{125} Armen Khatchatrian, L’architecture Arménienne du IV\textsuperscript{e} au VI\textsuperscript{e} siècle, Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques 7 (Paris: Klincksieck 1971), 13; Esbroeck, “L’apôtre Thadée et le roi Sanatrouk,” in Atti del II. Simposio Internazionale Armenia-Assiria, ed. Mario Nordio and Boghos L. Zekiyan (Venezia: Editoriale Programma, 1984), 95.

\textsuperscript{126} For Nathan, Gideon, Joel, Job, Ezekiel, Elias etc., see MK, 50, 51, 58, 72, 74, 108; Ter-Minas-siantz, Die armenische Kirche, 10–12.
religious and based on the rabbinical tradition of teaching.\[127] As in the Judaic tradition, the entire cycle of study, from the elementary to the higher level, focused exclusively on the Scriptures. There was no room in their curricula for the pagan classics. Instruction started with the psalms and progressed to the learning by heart of the entire Bible and church hymns.\[128] Schools in large municipalities conducted commentary on particular books in the Scriptures. The Syrian culture created its own type of religious instructor and exegete, adopted also in Armenia.\[129] Bishop Nerses (d. 373)\[130] saw to the foundation of schools offering Greek and Syriac, languages used in the liturgy. These schools must definitely have been organised along Syrian lines, with a *vardapet* – the Armenian equivalent of the Syrian *rabban* (teacher). After some time the schools moved to the monasteries, where students who wanted to further their religious education and obtain teaching qualifications came to listen to renowned masters. A school's reputation (its *vardapetaran*) depended on the qualifications of its masters, who often moved to a new place, followed by the more ambitious of their students.

Christians in the Graeco-Roman sphere of civilisation were content with the Western type of education and did not set up special religious schools.\[131] They learned Christian doctrine as catechumens during their preparation for baptism. Only if they had an eminent catechist to instruct them did they get a superior form of tuition, similar to the Hellenistic teaching of philosophy. A good example were the lectures given by Origen in Alexandria and later in Caesarea in Palestine. However, this kind of education was rare in the Mediterranean culture. Usually catechetics took the form of simple instruction. The Scriptures would be read during services by readers who had received a school education, and commented on by the bishop or priests specially appointed for the task.\[132] This was the type of education available to Armenians

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128 Only the Armenian translations of the *Madroshé* hymns for all-night services composed by Ephrem the Syrian, which were the prototypes for the Byzantine *kontakia*; see Joseph Gelineau, “Données liturgiques contenues dans les sept madroshé ‘De la nuit’ de S. Efrem,” *L'Orient Syrien* 5 (1960): 107–121.

129 *Kul'tura siriiťsev*, 35–46.

130 *BP*, IV. 4; see Aa § 809, 840.

131 In the reign of the Emperor Julian (361–362) when Christians were banned from teaching in the state schools, they tried to set up their own religious schools, but the project was abandoned after Julian's death; Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation*, 427–429.

132 See Socrates Scholasticus, V. 22: “On Saturday and Sunday evenings in Cappadocian Caesarea and Cyprus, after the candles have been lit, presbytes and bishops read and comment on the Holy Scriptures.”
living in Lesser Armenia, where, as in the whole of Cappadocia, there were no Christian elementary or secondary schools, only the secular schools run by teachers of grammar and rhetoric on a literary syllabus. A higher education in philosophy and theology could be obtained from renowned philosophers or bishops in established cultural institutions.133

Initially Armenian schools could not have provided a very high level of education, since ambitious young Armenians went to Roman Syria to complete their studies – first to Nisibis (its Armenian name was Mtsbin), and later, when the Persians occupied that city, to Edessa.134 But it should be stressed that in the 4th century there were differences, but not yet a conflict between Greek and Syrian Christianity. In Roman Syria these two variants of Christian culture intermingled. The liturgy of the Eastern Diocese of Antioch used both languages; and likewise, too, in Cappadocia, where there was a large Syrian community.

One of the features which is often cited as characteristic of early Armenian Christianity is the absence of episcopal celibacy and the hereditary nature of clerical offices. However, this was virtually the general practice at the time, both in Syria and Cappadocia, and even in Rome itself.135 Things were similar in Armenia’s immediate neighbourhood. In Cappadocia the clannish character of the clergy was pretty widespread. In one of his letters St. Basil censured the custom of introducing “unworthy persons into the Church ... on the score of relationship” (Letter 54).136 In the mid-5th century Socrates Scholasticus gave

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133 One of the philosophers who lectured in Athens was the renowned Armenian Proairesios, who came from Cappadocia. Half of his students were Armenians from the Empire, and one of the best-known was the future Emperor Julian the Apostate. The Emperor Honorius engaged Proairezos as tutor to the heir to the throne; see Sen S. Arevshatian, Formirovanie filosofskoi nauki v drevnei Armenii V–VI vv. (Erevan: Izdatel’stvo Akademii Nauk Armianskoj SSR, 1973), 26.

134 According to the late 5th-century Armenian historian Lazarus of Parpi, the inventor of the Armenian alphabet deplored the cost of educating Armenian children in Syria, seeing “the great effort and even greater losses incurred by Armenian children who spent a lot of money, travelled large distances, and endured many hardships to spend their days in the Syrian schools of learning,” see Martirosian, Mashtots, 73; Garsoian, L’Église arménienne, 23–24.

135 Pope Innocent I (402–417) was the son of the previous pontiff, Anasthasius (399–402). Felix II (III), who was pope in 483–492, had been married before his election and consecration. Pope Gregory the Great was his great-grandson. St. Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland, came from a family of clergymen; his father was a deacon, and his grandfather was a priest.

an accurate picture of the practices prevailing at the time: “In the East, indeed, all clergymen, and even the bishops themselves, abstain from their wives: but this they do of their own accord, and not by the necessity of any law; for there have been among them many bishops, who have had children by their lawful wives, during their episcopate.” (V, 22). Celibacy did not become the rule among bishops until the 5th century, under the impact of monasticism, so in this respect, too, Armenia was no late exception. The last married bishop from the Illuminator’s clan was St. Sahak (Isaac, d. 438).

Syrian monasticism also left a deep imprint on its Armenian counterpart. In the latter half of the 4th century the mountains and wildernesses of Armenia, Georgia, and Caucasian Albania were full of anchoritic hermits seeking a strictly ascetic life of prayer away from the world. There were many Syrians among them, pointing the way for their Armenian confrères. During severe winters they asked for refuge and respite in simple peasant cottages, the name of which, vank, later became the base for the Armenian term for “monastery” (vank’). The Syrian fondness of strict asceticism, sometimes attended by the repudiation of marriage and family life (a practice observed by the Encratites), appeared on Armenian territory. “It is said that Eustathius, who governed the church of Sebaste in Armenia, founded a society of monks in Armenia, Paphlagonia, and Pontus, and became the author of a zealous discipline, both as to what meats were to be partaken of or to be avoided, what garments were to be worn, and what customs and exact course of conduct were to be adopted. … Some of his disciples … condemned marriage, refused to pray to God in the houses of married persons, [and] despised married presbyters.” (Sozomen III.14). Before his appointment to the see of Sebastia (356), Eustathius (Eustace, d. 378) was anathematised and cast out of the community of the faithful by Eusebius, Arian bishop of Nicomedia (before 339). The Synod of Gangra (ca. 340) also put an anathema on him, and issued a letter addressed to the bishops of Roman Armenia on the value of true asceticism, continence, and virginity. However, the Syrian tradition of strict asceticism continued to be practised there. One of its practitioners was “a devout man named Atticus,” later bishop of Constantinople (406–425). “He


was a native of Sebastia in Armenia, and had followed an ascetic life from an early age.” (Socrates Scholasticus VI. 20). The pioneer of strict asceticism in Greater Armenia was James, bishop of Nisibis (d. after 338). This saintly Syrian wandered about Rshtuniq and Corduene (Gordyene), the still not very Christian south of the country and is even said to have found the remains of Noah’s Ark on the slopes of Mount Sarbad.

The foundations of Armenian monasticism in Taron were laid by the Syrian Chorepiscopus Daniel. Three of his disciples, the Syrian Shagita, the Armenian Gind, and the Greek Epiphanios, continued his work in Armenia and Syria, living in the wilderness, in caves and mountain crevices, feeding on grass and roots, and having wild animals as their only companions. The example of these masters of individual asceticism drew many followers, and crowds of people came to seek their advice or to ask for a miracle or to be healed. Although the anchoritic lifestyle of the Syrian type was widespread, by the close of the century collective forms of monastic life started to be more and more prevalent throughout Armenia. The best-known monasteries of Taron, which was the cradle of the Armenian Church, were the Monastery of the Twelve Apostles and St. Karapet’s (St. Predecessor’s, viz. St. John the Baptist’s). However, hermitages (anapats) for solitary ascetics continued to be established in the vicinity of monasteries. There is information from the 5th century suggesting that there were also Acoemetae (Acoemeti) monks in Armenia, who kept a continual vigil of prayer day and night, reciting the

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141 Sozomen (III. 14) writes of monks living near Amida, in the environs of a mountain called Gaugalion. Daniel was one of the monks.


143 The Monastery of the Holy Apostles at Mush at the feet of the Taurus Mountains was also known as the Lazarus Monastery after its first superior, of the Monastery of the Holy Translators, because of the graves of the first Armenian Bible translators located there. According to a later tradition, relics brought from Rome by St. Gregory the Enlightener were kept there. St. Karapet’s Monastery (a cave monastery), otherwise known as the Monastery of the Nine Springs, was the burial place of the Mamikonian family, nakharars of Taron and the neighbouring province of Tayk. Originally both were Syrian monasteries, and pilgrimage centres since ancient times; see Kazar V. Aivazian, “Istoriia Tarona” i armianskia literatura IV–VII vekov (Erevan: Izdatel’stvo Erevanskogo Universiteta, 1976), 46–47, 203, 213; Michel Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères Arménien* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1993), 68, no. 359; 70, no. 368. For coenobitism, see Garsoian, *L’Église arménienne*, 439–440, 457.
psalms in their choirs. Thanks to monks the Christian message reached the remotest parts of the country, preached by individual wandering ascetics or by monks living in rural monastic communities. St. Jerome, a witness of these events who settled in Palestine, wrote in admiration, “From India, from Persia, from Ethiopia we daily welcome monks in crowds. The Armenian bowman has laid aside his quiver [deposuit faretras Armenius], the Huns learn the psalter, the chilly Scythians are warmed with the glow of the faith.”

Armenia was subject to Aramaic influence also in theology. The Judeo-Christian Christological ideas, vestiges of which survive in the Armenian Creed, came from Syria and Mesopotamia. In that initial doctrine Christ was regarded as the Messiah, the Son of God, but not much thought was given to the nature of his “sonship” at first. The early Syrian thinkers such as Paul of Samosata were inclined to perceive it as a kind of “adoption,” and considered Christ as a human endowed with exceptional powers and adopted by God as His son, in whom His Divine Word (the Logos) came to dwell. Primitive Syrian Christianity was pluralist as regards theological opinions. As late as the 5th century we encounter in it numerous variants of Christian Gnosticism, such as the Barbelites, the Borborians, and the disciples of Bardesanes. Eustace, Bishop of Sebastia in Lesser Armenia, was a Macedonian, and denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit, holding that the Holy Spirit had been created by the Son to act as his servant.

Even if initially Aramaic Christianity was sympathetic to the Adoptionist idea, after the Council of Nicaea in 325 the Armenian Church came out against the Arian stance, and in favour of the divinity of Christ as one in substance with the Father. This Council was attended by Armenian bishops from Sebastia and Satala in the Roman Empire, and by the Bishop of Greater Armenia, Aristakes, the son of Gregory, who returned home bringing with him the canons compiled at the Council. The Christian communities of

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Syria, Cilicia, and Cappadocia, territories neighbouring on Armenia, were embroiled in the controversies relating to the Nicene dogma. Disputes raged on territories inhabited by Armenians as well. Basil the Great, Bishop of Caesarea and spiritual leader of the Nicenists in the 370s, was constantly concerned about the Christian communities of Sebastia, Melitene, Nicopolis, and Satala. Disputes also erupted and were engaged in with a strong political undercurrent in the Kingdom of Armenia. Arian emperors tried to bully their Armenian vassals into accepting their point of view on religious matters, as an additional test of loyalty. But Gregory’s clan, which stood at the head of the Armenian Church, were adherents of the Nicene party and resisted the pressure. This led to endless conflict between the bishops and the reigning dynasty, which sometimes got so acute that several bishops were slain. The Arsacid monarchs replaced them with Albianid appointees from the old caste of pagan priests, who were more flexible in doctrinal matters and more responsive to the needs of the state. Eventually, however, the Nicene

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149 Bishop Nerses was even said to have demanded the Emperor Valens repudiate Arianism and embrace the true religion BP, IV, 6.

150 Bishop Nerses was apparently imprisoned by the Emperor Valens and thereafter poisoned by King Pap; BP, 4–6, 8; Garsoian, <i>Nerses le Grand</i>, 167.

doctrine was victorious both in the Empire and in Armenia, though no bishop from the Kingdom of Armenia attended the Second Ecumenical Council in Constantinople (381).

For most of the 4th century the Church in Greater Armenia was in close contact with Caesarea in Cappadocia, where all the bishops of Gregory’s family and clan were consecrated. Until the Council of Nicaea these relations were the outcome of the personal contacts enjoyed by the episcopal dynasty rather than due to political partisanship. Since the times of Diocletian Caesarea had been the seat of the Pontus Polemoniacus diocese (in the secular sense of a territorial administrative unit), governed by an exarch. However, there was no overlap between the divisions on the political map and the Church administrative network. The Christian communities of Pontus, consisting of Syrians and Armenians, looked to Antioch and the Syrian provinces with which they shared an ancient Christian tradition.

The situation did not change until the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, which gave its approval to the accommodation of the ecclesiastical administrative order to the territorial divisions in the Empire. From that time on the administrative divisions were to demarcate the area of each bishop’s jurisdiction, opening up the way to the establishment of a hierarchical order. In some areas the Church had established a hierarchical structure already earlier – the bishops of the principal towns had gathered together the bishops and chorepiscopi of the Christian communities in their locality under their leadership. But the process had not been carried out everywhere at the same rate. The Syrian communities in Osrhoene and Mesopotamia, which only returned to the Empire in the late 3rd century, kept their original Christian customs, with autonomy for individual Christian communities under their bishops, chorepiscopi, or presbyters, and by the time of the Council of Nicaea still

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152 In its account of the situation in Armenia after the death of Nerses in 373, ID (XIII, 71) relates that “they did not send the new bishop to Caesarea, according to the old custom, but the law previously in force was circumvented and he was consecrated by the convocation of bishops.” Some historians are doubtful about the practice of all the descendants of Gregory who entered the ministry going to Caesarea for ordination and/or consecration, and that this was a tradition, and they point out that Gregory consecrated his son Aristakes himself. Caesarea took no part in the consecration of Gregory’s second son Vrtanes, either. However, these reports are from sources which were written after the split with Caesarea; see Garsoïan, L’Église arménienne, 36; Thomson, “Syrian Christianity and the Conversion of Armenia,” in Christianisierung des Kaukasus, 159–169.

153 Garsoïan, L’Église arménienne, 19–27.
had not managed to set up a hierarchical structure. Likewise in the Persian Empire, there could be two separate Christian communities each with their own bishop within one city.\textsuperscript{154}

Canon 4 passed at the Council of Nicaea ruled that metropolitan bishops (viz. residing in the capitals of provinces) had the right to supervise the other bishops in their province. New bishops were to be consecrated by all the bishops in the metropolis; only in exceptional cases could the number be reduced to three, on written consent of the remaining bishops and with the metropolitan's endorsement. Thereby the bishop of Caesarea acquired metropolitan jurisdiction in Cappadocia, over the dioceses of Sebastia, Melitene, Nicopolis, and Satala in Lesser Armenia. The ecclesiastic status of Greater Armenia was more complex. It was not directly part of the Empire and was not split up into ordinary and metropolitan dioceses. Its Christian communities were administered by chorepiscopi or presbyters who recognised the authority of the principal bishop who resided in Ashtishat and whose jurisdiction covered the entire country. For this reason at the Council of Nicaea Greater Armenia was incorporated in the Metropolitan See of Cappadocia, which was a higher-tier administrative unit. Bishops for the Kingdom of Armenia had to be consecrated by the prelates of Cappadocia, since chorepiscopi did not have the right to consecrate bishops.\textsuperscript{155} Thus the metropolitan of Caesarea acquired jurisdiction over Greater and Lesser Armenia. Not only did he consecrate their bishops, but he also interfered in the internal matters of these Churches.\textsuperscript{156}

The Council of Nicaea also laid the foundations for a supra-metropolitan structure. Canon 6 granted a wider scope of powers to the bishops of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and a few other metropolitan sees. A tradition has come down in the Armenian historiography that originally there were just four patriarchates, by analogy with the four Evangelists – Matthew for Antioch,

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[154] Pigulevskaia, \textit{Kul’tura siriĭtsev}, 197.
\item[155] This was the reason why the bishops of Armenia, Gregory and his successor (Aristakes) could not consecrate their successors on their own, as some historians claim; see note 64.
\end{itemize}
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Mark for Alexandria, Luke for Rome, and John for Ephesus.\textsuperscript{157} Perhaps this was a more ancient idea than the apostolic concept which evolved in the 5\textsuperscript{th} century to justify the aspirations of some of the other dioceses to a higher status within the structure of the church hierarchy in the Roman Empire.\textsuperscript{158} Nonetheless, the Council of Nicaea took the new administrative structure of the East into consideration and all the signs are that the bishop of Cappadocian Caesarea, the capital of the secular diocese of Pontus Polemoniacus and the residence of an archexarch, was on the shortlist for supra-metropolitan powers. Caesarea had transformation from an archexarch into a patriarchate on the cards.\textsuperscript{159}

Following the Council of Nicaea the establishment of territorially delimited dioceses started in Greater Armenia.\textsuperscript{160} It cannot be ruled out that some of the former \textit{chorepiscopi} acquired full episcopal status. In view of the rise in numbers, the prelate who was previously recognised as the sole bishop of the Kingdom of Armenia started to use new titles of distinction: “archpriest”

\textsuperscript{157} ID, XII, 68: “Constantius, son of the great Constantine, brought the relics of St. John the Evangelist from Ephesus to Constantinople and for this reason was bold enough to establish a patriarchate at Constantinople. Then, and due to that, the Jerusalemites dared to set up a patriarch’s throne in their city as well, thinking they had a right to a patriarchal throne because that was where they had seen the Son of God born, his ministry among the people, his baptism at the hands of John, his crucifixion and resurrection on the third day. Up to that time there had only been four patriarchates in the world.” MK, II. 48: “During his reign Justinian brought John’s relics to Constantinople and established a patriarchate there. But his proper patriarchal throne remained … in Ephesus. In exactly the [same way the throne of] Matthew was transferred from Antioch to Jerusalem, for, as the Evangelist himself says, it is ‘the city of a great king’ [Mt 5, 36], while his proper [throne] remained in Antioch.” Although both of these chronicles come from the 9\textsuperscript{th}–10\textsuperscript{th} century, nevertheless the idea of the tetrarchy (viz. there being four principal episcopal seats) may be concordant with the historical realities of the times of Diocletian and his immediate successors.

\textsuperscript{158} Hafte, \textit{Das Papsttum und die Armenie}, 84, note 79 quite erroneously thinks that ID’s information was so poor that he considered St. Luke the founder of the see of Rome. This chronicler does not say so at all, he only calls the diocese of Rome the throne of Luke the Evangelist. St. Peter, who was regarded as the founder of the sees of Rome and Antioch, is not mentioned here at all.

\textsuperscript{159} Aa § 804 gives a name to the Bishop of Caesarea who consecrated Gregory the Enlightener, calling him the Catholicos Leontius, using the term which would later be applicable to the head of the Armenian Church. Vg § 153 and Va § 141 call the Bishop of Caesarea a “patriarch,” while BP IV.4 calls him the “Catholicos of catholicoi.”

\textsuperscript{160} Aa § 835–838, 854–860 says that over 400 bishoprics were founded in Armenia already by Gregory the Enlightener, which is not true. BP VI. 4–14 enumerates 12 bishops who helped Nerses with his work. Around the mid-5\textsuperscript{th} century Armenia had a dozen or so bishops, and in the mid-6\textsuperscript{th} century there were no more than 27 of them, BP IV. 3, 15; IV. 5; Amadouni, “La Chiesa Armena,” in \textit{Enciclopedia Cattolica}, Vol. 1 (Città del Vaticano: Ente per l’Enciclopedia Cattolica e il libro Cattolico, 1949), 1964; Esbroeck, “Le roi Sanatrouk et l’apôtre Thaddée,” \textit{REA} N.S. 9 (1972): 270; Garsoïan, \textit{L’Église arménienne}, 4, 7–8, 105, 126, 133–134, 168; Krikorian, “Addendum zur Diözesan-Gliederung Armeniens im IV. Jh,” in \textit{Die Christianisierung des Kaukasus}, 98.
(kahayayapet) or “archbishop” (arkēpiskopos, episkoposapet). His status approached that of the metropolitan bishops in the Roman Empire. In the Armenian translation of the Council’s decrees the Greek word μητροπολίτης, “metropolitan,” was rendered as katōghikos (catholicos), the title that would in future be reserved for the head of the Armenian Church.

This evolution did not interfere with Armenia’s juridictive relations with Caesarea, as the bishop of Caesarea, the ecclesiastical exarch of Pontus, was the head of all the bishoprics in the diocese including those in the Kingdom of Armenia. The connection with Caesarea was not attenuated until 374, as a result of King Pap’s policy. After the death of Bishop Nerses his successor was not consecrated in Caesarea, and this event is usually regarded as the point marking the splitting off from the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical exarch of Pontus. However, the matter was by no means completely settled yet. The Armenian Church did not approve of the king’s doings, and the bishop of Caesarea continued to handle its administrative affairs. The final break with Caesarea came as a result of the fierce fighting for the control of Greater Armenia between the Roman Empire and Persia in the next century. In 377 a large part of Armenia found itself in Persian hands. In 387 when Rome and Persia divided the Kingdom of Armenia, each taking a part, the ecclesiastical boundaries were reorganised in accordance with the accommodation principle and the new state borders. Lesser Armenia and the western part of the Kingdom, including the lands of Gregory the Illuminator’s clan and the episcopal burial place at Tordan on the Euphrates, stayed in the Diocese of Pontus, which was reorganised at the close of the 4th century. New provinces were created on this area: Armenia I with its episcopal seat at Sebastia, Armenia II with Melitene as its episcopal seat, Pontus Polemoniacus (episcopal seat at Trebizond), and Interior Armenia (episcopal seat at Karin/Theodosiopolis).

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161 Aa § 873; Ag § 164.
162 N. Melik’-T’amgean, Hayots’ Yekeghets’akan irawunkē (Shushi, 1905), 256. The term “Catholicos” was borrowed from Greek and originally used for “metropolitan archbishop.” See Thomson, “Syrian Christianity,” 163.
163 Amadouni, L’autocéphalie du katholicat arménien, OCA 181 (1968): 143; Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 32. The Armenian chronicles present Kings Arshak and Pap as enemies of the Christian religion. Armenian historians think that they tried to transform the Armenian Church into a national institution; see Nalbandian, Uroki armianskoĭ drevnosti, 120–121. Garsoian (“Nerses le Grand,” 153–158), is of the opinion that the nature of Basil’s intervention was exceptional, as Greater Armenia was never under Caesarea’s jurisdiction; likewise Ter-Minassiantz, Die armenische Kirche, 7.
164 Interior Armenia was still being called Greater Armenia in the early 6th century; Güterbock, Römisch-Armenien und die römischen Satrapieen im vierten bis sechsten Jahrhundert (Königsberg: Hartung, 1900), 40–51; Garsoian, L’Eglise arménienne, 10.
In compliance with the principles observed at the time, the bishops of these cities became metropolitans. Their link with Caesarea was not severed, as the metropolitan of that city was their ecclesiastical exarch. However, after a short time the status of the exarchate of Caesarea started to diminish. After the Second Ecumenical Council (381) thanks to the support of local princes, the bishop of Constantinople extended the scope of his jurisdiction over Pontus, thereby bringing about the degradation of Caesarea to metropolitan rank. Until 451 the Armenian areas in the Roman Empire were under the jurisdiction of the patriarch of Constantinople.

The road to religious and national independence (5th and 6th centuries)

In the late 4th century, after Armenia’s dismemberment between Rome and Persia, most of the country found itself under Persian rule and was sometimes referred to as “Persarmenia.” For a time it was still ruled by princes from the old Parthian Arsacid dynasty. In compliance with the principle of accommodation, the archbishop of the Kingdom of Armenia forfeited his jurisdiction over the dioceses which were allocated to the Eastern Roman Empire. The kings of Persia put a prohibition on the consecration of bishops beyond the borders of the Sassanid Empire, and gradually took over the prerogatives held by secular rulers in the Roman Empire with respect to the Church. Severance from the Roman Empire reinforced the Armenian Church’s ties with the Syrian Church within the Persian Empire. A hierarchical structure started to grow in the Church in the Persian Empire following the Synod of Seleucia/Ctesiphon (410), at which the canons of the Council of Nicaea were adopted. As of the early 5th century the bishop of Seleucia/Ctesiphon, the city which was the capital of the Sassanid Empire, used the title “Catholicos and Archbishop of the Entire East,” and called himself the head of all the Eastern Christians, including those


of the Caucasus, who were still using Syriac in their liturgy. The character of some of the borderland bishoprics was mixed, Armenian–Syrian.\textsuperscript{167} However, the aspirations of the native clergy of these lands, as well as their dislike of foreign priests, had been growing for some time already.\textsuperscript{168} On the other hand there was a genuine threat of the Persian state authorities foisting Mazdeism upon the Christians.\textsuperscript{169} The Armenian clergy realised that Christianity had not yet set down firm roots in local society, and that the use of foreign languages in the liturgy was not making things easier. An Armenian monk and former student of Bishop Sahak and royal secretary called Mashtots,\textsuperscript{170} who was living as a hermit in the eastern part of the country near the border with Persia, decided that Christianity would be able to make progress if it were preached in a language the people could understand.\textsuperscript{171} He put his idea to Vramshapuh, King of Persarmenia, and Archbishop Sahak.\textsuperscript{172} After a few failed attempts he had undertaken locally, he set out for Amida and Edessa in northern Syria, and there in 405 created an alphabet consisting of 36 characters for all the vowels and consonants of Armenian. Rhopanos of Samosata, a Greek calligrapher, made the original set of models.\textsuperscript{173} In Roman Syria Mashtots procured letters


\textsuperscript{168} Artashes Martirosian, \textit{Mashtots} (Erevan: Izdatel’stvo AN Armianskoĭ SSR, 1988), 57.


\textsuperscript{170} Later he was given the name Mesrop (Mesrob). The biography of the inventor of the Armenian alphabet was written by his student Koryun. It is one of the most ancient, reliable sources on the early history of Christianity in the Caucasus; see \textit{Koriwns Biographie des Mesrop Maschtots}, translation and commentary by G. Winkler (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1994); Koryun, \textit{The Life of Mashtots}, trans. Bedros Norehad (Erevan: Yerevani Hamalsarani Hratarach’ut’yun, 2005).

\textsuperscript{171} Paul Peeters, “Pour histoire de l’alphabet arménien,” \textit{REA} 9 (1929): 203–237, is of the opinion that pastoral matters were not a serious issue here; if they had been, an effort would have been made already in the 4th century to bring Armenian into the Church, yet the whole of Mashtots’ work is evidence to the contrary.

\textsuperscript{172} Martirosian, \textit{Mashtots}, 101, is of the opinion that an important factor was support from the king, who sent Mashtots to Syria, funded his stay there, and promoted his later projects. The role of Archbishop Sahak came to the fore only after the fall of the kingdom, when the Church acted as a surrogate for the state.

\textsuperscript{173} The Armenian alphabet has certain characteristic features in common with the Greek alphabet. It is a phonetic alphabet with characters for the vowels; it is written from left to right; and keeps more or less to the same order for its letters as the Greek alphabet; and it has a digraph (“ow”) for the letter “u.” The earliest codices in Armenian were written in \textit{erkatagir} (“iron
of recommendation from the local bishops to the clergy of Syrian Armenia to persuade them of the value of his project.\footnote{Martirosian, \textit{Mashtots}, 80–87.}

The first work to be translated into Armenian was the Book of Proverbs. It was issued still in Samosata. There can be no doubt that translations were done to provide texts for the Christian schools. As the schools were engaged primarily on commentary to the Scriptures, translation commenced with the Syriac Peshitta revised using the Greek Septuagint.\footnote{The Peshitta, the 4th-century Syriac version of the Scriptures, is a simple translation, the common, standard or “vulgate” Bible used in the Syrian Church. The Septuagint is the translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek made in Alexandria in the 3rd–2nd century BC. Erwand Ter-Minassiantz, \textit{Die armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zu den syrischen Kirchen bis zum Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts nach armenischen und syrischen Quellen bearbeitet} (Leipzig: A. Pries, 1904), 22–26, is of the opinion that the Armenian translation of the Bible, which was originally a translation from the Syriac, was later revised on comparison with the Greek text of the Scriptures brought from Constantinople by Mashtots’ students after 431.} Subsequently a team of translators which included Bishop Sahak embarked on the translation of the Fathers of the Church, the decrees of the Council of Nicaea and the synods preceding it, and the Cappadocian liturgy of St. Basil. Still in use in the Armenian Church today and known as the liturgy of St. Gregory the Illuminator, it gives a general idea of the most ancient form of this liturgy.\footnote{In the Armenian manuscripts the Anaphora of the liturgy is attributed to St. Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria (296–373), Vartan Hatzuni, “Il rito armeno,” in \textit{Enciclopedia Cattolica}, Vol. 1 (Città del Vaticano: Ente per l’Enciclopedia Cattolica e il libro Cattolico, 1949), 1978; Charles Renoux, “Il rito armeno,” in \textit{Roma-Armenia}, ed. Claude Mutafian (Roma: Edizioni de Luca, 1999), 39.} Translations of texts on the history of Christianity started with the \textit{Chronicle} and \textit{Ecclesiastical History} of Eusebius of Caesarea. Native writings on theological subjects appeared. Mashtots’ student Yeznik of Koghb wrote a treatise against the Gnostics and Mazdeism. The Church canonised all the translators, and their feast day is still celebrated nowadays. Although Mashtots is commended for what he did for his own country, we cannot fail to notice that his project had a much wider scope and was not limited just to the needs of Armenia. He managed to persuade the kings of Iberia and Albania of its value, and with the help of local clergymen compiled alphabets for their languages. The Christian texts which were translated into these languages transformed the culture of these peoples. Mashtots “removed them from the stories of their ancestors, and the whole of their history passed into oblivion,
so that they would say they had forgotten their people and their home."\(^{177}\) By order of the princes of these lands and at their expense boys were collected from various parts, and taught the new alphabet and the Christian faith in their native tongue. Mashtots made an effort to create a Christian vanguard to protect the peoples of the Caucasus against the Persian religion, turning them into a “new Israel, one nation praising the One God,” albeit in diverse languages.\(^{178}\) In the early 5\(^{th}\) century all of these lands were Persian protectorates. Although in 428 on the suggestion of the Armenian aristocracy the Armenian monarchy was abolished as an institution, nonetheless the influence of the Armenian Christian culture in the Caucasus remained strong. Georgian writings made liberal use of the Armenian translations; in Albania Mashtots’ alphabet was not adopted, but soon Armenian acquired the status of the liturgical language. It was also spoken at the Albanian court.\(^{179}\) Mashtots also obtained the approval of the Emperor Theodosius and Bishop Atticus of Constantinople for his project, thanks to which he was able to introduce Armenian into the liturgy used on the Armenian territories incorporated into the Roman Empire.\(^{180}\) The new liturgical languages helped the peoples of the Caucasus, and especially the Armenians, to develop an identity of their own in distinction to neighbouring Christian peoples and to pursue their own, national and Christian culture regardless of shifting political borders.\(^{181}\) It was the first step on their road to independence.

The enterprise embarked on by the Armenian court alarmed the Persians. With the approval of the pro-Persian faction in the Armenian aristocracy,
the Shah ordered the Archbishop’s deposition (427–428), and relations with Caesarea were broken off.182 The Kingdom of Armenia was abolished, and the country became one of the provinces of Persia governed by a marzban (viceroy). Several Syrians followed each other in succession as head of the Church in Persarmenia. They were personally appointed by the shah.183 In 431, when the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus was debating on the Trinitarian issue, a Syrian named Samuel was the head of the Church in Persian Armenia. At this time the influence of Syrian theological ideas reaching Armenia from Edessa was strong, and the writings of the luminaries of the Antiochene school of exegesis, Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, were highly esteemed by Armenian theologians.184

Under the influence of Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, the Council of Ephesus came out against Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, Theodore’s student and a representative of the Antioch school. The doctrine that there were two persons in Christ was anathematised, while the hypostatic doctrine of there being one person (prosopa, hypostasis, persona) in Christ was approved and Jesus’ mother was acknowledged as the Theotokos, the Mother of God. Nonetheless, for some time theologians continued to be profoundly divided, not least owing to Cyril’s disputatious temper. In his arguments against Nestorius he repeated over and over again that there was but one nature in the Word Made Flesh – mia physis tou Theou logou sesarkomene (una natura in Verbo incarnato) – a formula which would have a tremendous future in the Armenian Church.185

At about this time Shah Vahram V (421–39) allowed the restoration of Sahak as head of the Armenian Church, to minister to the needs of the faithful under the auspices of the Syrian metropolitan.186 Prior to his return Sahak made a pledge to the shah that he would maintain union with his Syrian

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184 Theodore of Mopsuestia dedicated his treatise against “the Persian magic” to Mashtots, calling him a chorepiscopos; Martirosian, Mashtots, 70–71. Garsoian, L’Église arménienne, 68–70, 74–75 discusses the influence of Antiochene theological thought on Armenian philosophers and scholars.
185 The formula was coined by Apollinaris of Laodicea, a friend of Bishop Athanasius, who was a great defender of the Nicene Creed. Although Apollinaris was an adherent of the Council of Nicaea, numerous synods denounced his Christology, which was known as Apollinarism. Daniélou and Marrou, Nouvelle histoire, 253–263.
186 The Shah allowed Sahak to instruct and ordain only those who were selected by Samuel. ID, 275.
superiors and would not support “the Greek heresy.” Religious disunion in the Roman Empire was advantageous for Persia. The shah took up a stance in favour of the Nestorians. The anathema imposed on them in the Roman Empire opened up a prospect of their Church enjoying an independent existence in Persia under Sassanid protection. From that time on the decision as to which belief was the orthodox doctrine was no longer an internal matter for the Church, but was motivated politically. The overwhelming majority of the Syrian leaders in the Church of Persarmenia were in favour of Nestorius’ Christology. Those who wanted to maintain relations with the Church in the Roman Empire carefully followed developments, waiting for an opportunity to throw off the Syrian domination. Notwithstanding their admiration for the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius’ preceptor, ultimately the Nestorian doctrine failed to gain a following in Armenia.

No bishops from Persia, including Persarmenia, attended the Council of Ephesus. Officially the decisions made at Ephesus were not implemented in the Church on Sassanid territory. In 424 the Church in Persia had declared its canonical independence and prohibited its members from consulting “the Western Fathers” on matters of the faith. Mashtots’ student Yeznik, who had left Edessa for Constantinople, reported to his master that the new Council had laid down that Christ was to be worshipped as “the True God, Only-Begotten Son of God” and that Mary was to be acknowledged as the Theotokos (Mother of God), not as the Christotokos (mother of the man Jesus), and that Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, had been deposed. Around 432 the popularity of the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia in Armenia, promoted by theologians like Ibas, head of the catechetical school of Edessa, made Akakios, Bishop of Melitene (in Armenia II) write a series of letters to Archbishop Sahak and the Armenian aristocracy, warning of the spread of heresy and pointing out that Nestorius’ views were derived from Theodore’s teachings, especially from his treatise on the Incarnation. Akakios was worried that these works were approved by the Syrian leaders of the Church in Persarmenia. In early 435 a group of adherents of the traditional Antiochene exegetics arrived in

190 Garsoian, L'Église arménienne, 412–414, Appendix I. 1 (Akakios’ letter to Sahak); 414–417 (Sahak’s reply); I. 3, 417–420 (Akakios’ letter to the Armenians); see also Garsoian, L'Église arménienne, 108–109. Garsoian thinks that Nestorius’ adversary, Bishop Rabbula of Edessa, might have sent a letter to Sahak, who could have learned of the tension in Edessa from Mashtots’ students Yeznik and Joseph, who had spent some time there. Ter-Minassiantz, Die armenische Kirche, 23–25.
Persian Armenia from Cilicia, a bastion of opposition to Cyril of Alexandria and his school of theology. They brought with them the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia and claimed that Nestorius had not been anathematized on theological grounds, but out of envy.\footnote{Meletius, Bishop of Mopsuestia, was exiled to Melitene. Garsoian, \textit{L'Église arménienne}, 92–93, 111–113.}

At about the same time Mashtots' students Yeznik and Koriun brought copies of the documents issued at the Councils of Nicaea and Ephesus to Armenia. Put in this predicament, Sahak and Mashtots, who had been in favour of the Antiochene exegesis at first, sent two priests, Leontius and Habel, on a mission to Proklos, Patriarch of Constantinople. The venture was kept secret from the Persian authorities, and the emissaries were to ask for instructions on matters of the faith, especially on the orthodoxy of some of the ideas propounded by Theodore of Mopsuestia.\footnote{Garsoian, \textit{L'Église arménienne}, 114.} The Patriarch responded by writing the \textit{Tomus ad Armenios}, a treatise on the orthodox faith, in which he stressed the unity of the Son of God.\footnote{Garsoian, \textit{L'Église arménienne}, 420–431, Appendix I. 4 (the Armenian version of \textit{Tomus ad Armenios}); see also Garsoian, \textit{L'Église arménienne}, 106–107.} As a result the ideological mainstays of the Church in Armenia transferred their allegiance to the party in opposition to Nestorius, against the wishes of their Syrian superior.\footnote{Garsoian, \textit{L'Église arménienne}, 432–437, Appendix I. 6 (Sahak and Mashtots’ reply to Patriarch Proklos’ letter). Garsoian rejects Winkler’s conjecture in \textit{An Obscure Chapter}, 112–144, that the decrees of the Council of Ephesus were adopted in Persarmenia during the Synod of Ashtishat in 435/436, which was presided over by Samuel, Metropolitan of Syria and attended by Metropolitan Sahak. Garsoian, \textit{L'Église arménienne}, 101–106, 116; Michel van Esbroeck, “Y a-t-il un concile d’Ašţišat en 435–436?,” \textit{REA N.S.} 27 (1998–2000): 393–398.} Sahak sent a reply to Proklos in which he repudiated the “Jewish” teaching that there were “two sons” in Jesus Christ.\footnote{For the evolution in Sahak’s dogmatic position, see Garsoian, \textit{L'Église arménienne}, 121–124.} Opposition was rising among the Armenian theologians to their Syrian superiors, the aim being to remain in union with the Church in the Roman Empire. The main figures in this group were Sahak and Mashtots, the spiritual leaders of the Armenian Christians.\footnote{Winkler, “An Obscure Chapter,” 148–155; Garsoian, \textit{L'Église arménienne}, 120, 124.} However, soon they lost these leaders, who died within a short interval of each other, Sahak in 438, and Mashtots in 439. For centuries Armenian Christians would come to Oshakan near Yerevan to pay their respects at the graveside of Mashtots, the inventor of the Armenian script. On the death of Sahak the patriarchal line of descent from Gregory the Illuminator became extinct.\footnote{For the situation in the Armenian Church following the death of Sahak, see Garsoian, \textit{L'Église arménienne}, 124, 126–127.}
Doctrinal disputes in the Armenian Church soon receded into the background in view of the new Persian policy on religion. In an attempt to unite his state ideologically, Shah Yazdegerd II (439–457) ordered all his subjects to embrace Mazdeism. The Caucasus rose up in defence of Christianity, which by that time had become an integral part of the local culture. The Armenian aristocrats at the head of the uprising turned to the Roman Empire for help. Their leader was Vardan Mamikonian, Archbishop Sahak’s grandson. On 26th May 451, in outcome of treachery, the insurgents were defeated in battle on the Avarayr Plain in the canton of Artaz in Vaspurakan. Vardan was slain on the battlefield. The Church canonised all those who fought in the battle, endowing them with the title of the Holy Vardanank’ (Vardanids). Nonetheless the work of Sahak and Mashtots now bore fruit. Although many renounced their faith, the majority of the Christians did not surrender. Joseph, the new Armenian Archbishop Elect, laid down his life for the faith. He and his bishops were martyred in Persia. At this time one of the translators translated Marutha’s of Maypherkat Syriac martyrlogy of the Eastern Martyrs into Armenian, observing a parallel between the contemporary situation and Shapur II’s persecution of the Christians in the previous century. Yazdegerd II’s policy was an utter failure. The Persian army could not crush the uprising, as the insurgents went underground and resorted to guerrilla fighting. Those who had embraced Mazdeism turned out to have done so only for opportunistic reasons. Eventually the Shah backed down and allowed the Christians to practise their religion freely. Although the insurgents had not received any assistance from the Roman Empire pro-Roman sympathies continued to be strong.

The fighting to defend the faith strengthened Armenian Christianity. In the same period a group of translators educated in renowned centres of learning in the Roman Empire was busy on the rendition of more works into Armenian.


200 The Empire did not give the uprising military support owing to the threat it was facing from the Huns. Clotaitre L. Sanspeur, “La neutralité de Byzance face à l’insurrection arménienne contre la Perse (450),” REA N.S. 16 (1982): 151–153.

201 Alexandria and Beirut alongside Athens were the chief cultural centres at the time. See Michael Whitby, “John of Ephesus and the Pagans: Pagan Survivals in the Sixth Century,” in Paganism in the Later Roman Empire and in Byzantium, ed. Maciej Salamon (Kraków, 1991), 121.
Whereas initially they had laboured exclusively on Christian texts, now they
turned to the ancient grammarians, rhetoricians, and pagan philosophers, trans-
lating the *Techne grammaticike* by Dionysius Thrax, Aphthonius’ *Chreia*, Theon’s
*Progymnasmata*, Porphyry’s *Isagoge*, Aristotle’s treatises on logic, the works of
Philo of Alexandria, Plato, and the Neoplatonists. These were literal, Hellenising
translations, and are referred to as the “Hellenophile trend.” The interest in
Greek philosophy endowed Armenian Christianity with a more intellectual char-
acter, facilitating participation in the ongoing doctrinal debates. The reception of
the ancient philosophers did not have an easy time. The conservative adherents
of traditional asceticism of the Syrian type launched a barrage of attacks against
the more outward-bound intellectuals. The former did not even want to hear
of the Greek Fathers of the Church and were not at all interested in doctrinal
subtleties. They banished Ghazar (Lazarus) of Parpi, the superior of the monastic
community of Vagharshapat, and his books were “thrown to the moths.” After
some time the situation of the innovators improved, perhaps under the impact
of similar processes ensuing in Syrian Christianity. Nonetheless Armenian
monks continued to treat the study of philosophy as “extraneous” learning, an
introduction to the Scriptures, and only a few embarked on it.

While the Christians of the Caucasus were giving their lives for their faith,
in the Roman Empire of the East disputes were going on concerning Christo-
logical issues which had not been settled at the previous council. At the
next Council, held in Ephesus in 449, Dioscorus, Cyril’s successor at the See
of Alexandria, enforced the adoption of a dogma on the single, divine nature
of Christ (viz. the Monophysite dogma). At the Council of Chalcedon in 451
Dioscorus was anathematised for having resorted to violent measures, and the
council at which he had presided was declared a latrocinium (robber council).
The Council of Chalcedon again addressed the problem of the relationship
between the divinity in Christ and his humanity. The legates of Pope Leo the
Great made a major contribution to the discussion, and Leo’s tome *Epistola
dogmatica ad Flavianum* provided the foundation for a new Christological
definition. Contrary to the teaching of the Alexandrian theologians, the

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202 Sen S. Arevshatian, *Formirovanie filosofskoi nauki v drevnei Armenii V–VI vv.* (Erevan: Izda-

203 Arevshatian, *Formirovanie*, 192–193, 213; Aĭvazian, “Istoriia Tarona” i armianskaia literatu-

204 In the late 5th century a school was set up “ubi divina lex per magistros publicos, sicut apud nos in mundanis studiis grammatica et rhetorica ordine et regulariter traditur” (Junillus Africanus); see Pigulevskaiia, *Kul’tura siriĭtsev*, 143–144.
Council of Chalcedon approved the doctrine of the Saviour having two distinct and unmixed natures (physis) yet united in one person (hypostasis, prosopon, persona), and that the two natures differed in properties and operations.

The new Christological formula led to further divisions among Christians, though this was certainly not what the Emperor had wanted. It was not accepted either by the Egyptian Church, or by some of the Syrians, who saw it as similar to the Nestorian teaching and the repudiation of what Cyril of Alexandria had enforced at Ephesus. In the ecclesiastical and political scope, the Council of Chalcedon was an assault against the privileged position of Alexandria and its exegetic school in the East, hence the Egyptians treated it as a humiliation of their nation.205 Opposition to the decrees of Chalcedon was rising, and a considerable number of Greeks found themselves among its opponents.206 In Palestine and Egypt there was bloodshed over the issue. The successors of the Emperor Marcian, who had convened the Council of Chalcedon, amended their religious policy out of concern for unity in the state and with the intention of securing Church unity. In 475 the Emperor Basiliscus issued a decree signed by about 500 bishops from the East repudiating Pope Leo’s dogmatic Epistola and the Council’s resolutions. To put an end to all the disputes, in 482 the Emperor Zeno gave his approval to the Henotikon, an admirably edited dogmatic formula which censured Nestorius and Eutychus, who was regarded as the creator of the Monophysite doctrine, and reiterating Cyril of Alexandria’s 12 anathemas, but not mentioning the nature of Christ at all. The Henotikon was intended as an edict uniting all Christians.207 To gain the sympathy of the Monophysites Zeno banished the Nestorians, who obtained sanctuary in Persia.208 The quarrels over the Christological formula accompanied the Empire of the West in its swan song and demise. In the Acacian schism the bishops of Rome, upholders of the Chalcedonian decrees, broke off relations with the Empire of the East and its Church.209

In this complex situation new efforts were continually being made to define the relationship of the godhead to the manhood in Christ, and they were leading to further division among the opponents of Chalcedon. The atmosphere of uncertainty made it very difficult to tell what was orthodox and what unorthodox. Evagrius Scholasticus gave the best description of the situation, writing that “the synod of Chalcedon was neither openly proclaimed in the most holy

206 Christological disputes may not be presented as a conflict between the “Greek” and “non-Greek” world. There were many Greeks among both the Nestorians and the Monophysites.
207 Daniélou and Marrou, Nouvelle histoire, 267.
208 Halft er, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 52.
209 Dvornik, Byzantium and the Roman Primacy, 43–50.
churches, nor yet was repudiated by all: but the bishops acted each according to his individual opinion. Thus, some very resolutely maintained what had been put forth by that synod, and would not yield to the extent of one word of its determinations, nor admit even the change of a single letter, but firmly declined all contact and communion with those who refused to admit the matters there set forth. Others, again, not only did not submit to the synod of Chalcedon and its determinations, but even anathematized both it and the tome of Leo. Others, however, firmly adhered to the Henoticon of Zeno, and that too although mutually at variance on the point of the single and double nature; some being caught by the artful composition of that document; and others influenced by an inclination for peace. Thus the churches in general were divided into distinct factions, and their presidents did not even admit each other to communion.210

None of the bishops of Persarmenia took part in the Council of Chalcedon due to the uprising going on in their country. The only Armenian bishops present were those from the part under the Roman Empire. The Armenian bishops who put their signatures to the Council’s documents were John, Bishop of Sebastia (Armenia I); Constantine, Bishop of Melitene (Armenia II), and Manasses, Bishop of Theodosiopolis from the part of Armenia once belonging to the Arsacid kingdom (Magna Armenia). The Council was also attended by bishops from the Roman Armenian satrapies, suffragans of the eparchy of Mesopotamia. Many of the bishops of Byzantine Armenia put their names to Emperor Leo I’s “encyclical,” in which he ordered churchmen to accept the Chalcedonian decrees (458). So it can hardly be said that the Armenians did not know the deeds of the Council of Chalcedon.211

Nevertheless, the situation in Persarmenia after the uprising was very complicated. There were two rival theological movements in the Church, the Dyophysite (Nestorian) concept, and the Monophysite tendency.212 The leadership of the Church in Persarmenia was in the hands of representatives of the Albianid episcopal dynasty from Manzikert – Melite (452–456) and Moses (456–461), who were sympathetic to the Antiochene theological tradition. They were undoubtedly loyal to Persia as well.213 It was not until the times of their successor, Giut (Giwt) of Arahez (461–471/478), that there was a return to

213 Garsoian, L’Église arménienne, 127.
a Hellenophile policy. Giut was fluent in Greek and even established relations with Emperor Leo, which brought about his deposition by the Shah in 471. He spent the rest of his life in isolation at Vanand near the border with the Roman Empire, where he died in 478.214

In 481 another insurrection broke out in Armenia, in connection with an uprising in Iberia (Georgia). Fighting between Armenians and Persians lasted until 484. At the peace talks conducted in that year the prerogatives of the nakharars were restored, and they were entrusted with the government of Persarmenia. Around 485 Vahan Mamikonian was appointed marzban, i.e. (viz. representative of the Persian authorities). The Shah's guarantee of religious freedom allowed Archbishop Hovhannes (John) Mandakuni to move to Dvin, the marzban's seat.215

Nestorian influences grew even more in Persia when Zeno banished the Nestorians from the Roman Empire, and especially after 489,216 when the Nestorian teachers and their students were removed from Edessa.217 Failure to eradicate Christianity from their realm and force Christians to convert to Mazdeism persuaded the shahs to try to establish their own Christian Church, for those who were being persecuted by the Church in the Roman Empire. For this the Nestorians were an expedient asset. The Monophysites had not been persecuted since the promulgation of the Henotikon.

In 484 at the synod of the bishops of Persia at Gundishapur (Bêth Lapat) in Khuzestan the Persian Church adopted the teachings of Nestorius and condemned Monophysitism. It also expressed its esteem for Theodore of Mopsuestia.218 The next synod, in 497, recognised the primacy of the bishop of Seleucia–Ctesiphon over the rest of the bishops of Persia.219 Soon the Persian Church was making attempts to impose Nestorianism on the Armenians and other Christians in the Caucasus.220 The communities under attack took this as a grave danger. Not only had their Churches declared Nestorianism heretical; but what was at issue was their independence of the Church promoted by the Persian state. There was an inherent connection between the struggle against Nestorianism and the endeavour to preserve an independent status.

215 Garsoian, L'Église arménienne, 130, 161.
216 They went to Nisibis, where they established a new centre for theological studies; Pigulevskaia, Kul'tura siriîtsev, 59–71.
219 Pigulevskaia, Kul'tura siriîtsev, 202–203.
220 Sarkissian, Council of Chalcedon, 161–163; Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 53.
Already in the 480s Armenian theological works were being written claiming that there was not much difference between the Chalcedonian formula and the Nestorian concepts. This was a justifiable position to take in view of the fact that the Council of Chalcedon had treated two Greek terms, *prosopon* and *hypostasis*, as each other’s equivalent and meaning “person.” Nestorius had taught that there were two *prosopon* in Jesus Christ. On the other hand his antagonist Cyril of Alexandria had used the terms *physis* and *hypostasis* in his argument against Nestorius. So since *prosopon* was the equivalent of *hypostasis* that meant that Christ had two persons, just as Nestorius had taught. This is why in his exile in Upper Egypt he considered himself for all intents and purposes rehabilitated by the Council. The opponents of Chalcedon were aware of this as well, and they stood firm, insisting on the expression *mia physis (una natura)*, convinced that they were defending the faith as defined at Ephesus. This was also the opinion of the Armenian theologians who acknowledged Cyril’s doctrine of the one nature.221 There were various reasons why the Armenians did not consider the declarations made at Chalcedon very important. Perhaps they did not even try very hard to procure the original versions of its decrees.222 Its validity was being questioned by many, and Zeno’s *Henotikon* treated even Monophysite interpretations as admissible.223 It was impossible to foresee which of these concepts would ultimately win. In different circumstances the Council of Chalcedon might have been decried as a *latrocinium* (robbers’ council), as had happened in the case of the 449 Council of Ephesus. At any rate the Armenians of Persian Armenia regarded the Chalcedonian formula as too close to the doctrine of Nestorius, which had been condemned at Ephesus. The Armenian translation of Pope Leo’s epistle to Flavian endowed it with a distinctly Nestorian sense.224

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221 Sarkissian, *Council of Chalcedon*, 164–195, 211–212, 235–236. KG (I. 35) writes that after the death of the devout Emperor Theodosius Marcian succeeded to the Empire and summoned the Council of Chalcedon with 636 bishops attending it, to destroy the true religion, and the whole world is still full of their blasphemies.


223 After Severus’ accession to the Patriarchate of Antioch in 512, in 513 the Synod of Tyre interpreted the *Henotikon* in a distinctly anti-Chalcedonian spirit; Daniélou and Marrou, *Nouvelle histoire*, 267.

224 Halfter, *Das Papsttum und die Armenier*, 53–54. Peter the Iberian, the grandson of the King of Iberia Bakur the Great and founder of the Iberian monastery in Bethlehem (409–488),
At about the same time Monophysitism, which had gained the support of Emperor Anastasius, became virtually the official doctrine of the Empire. In 506 the Emperor issued an edict against the Chalcedonian brand of Dyophysitism, which was considered identical with Nestorianism. This event coincided with the end of the Roman-Persian war of 502–506, which opened up an opportunity for the restoration of relations between the Christians in both empires. In Persia religious toleration was reinstated. The early 6th century saw the revival of Nestorian monasticism in Persia. A ring of Nestorian monasteries again appeared in the south of Persarmenia, becoming centres of teaching propagating the doctrine of the “Persian School” of Nisibis. A more radical form of Nestorian propaganda was disseminated by Armenian-speaking merchants from Khuzestan. The Armenian hierarchs were particularly concerned about the influence of the Christology promoted by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius, Diodore of Tarsus, and Ibas of Edessa, which had been implanted in the south of Persarmenia still by Barsauma, Metropolitan of Nisibis (d. around 495).

In 506 the bishops of Persarmenia assembled at Dvin for a synod presided over by Archbishop Babgen of Otmus (491–516). Many of the nakharars attended alongside 21 bishops. The matters on the synod’s agenda were primarily Christological issues, the aim being to give grounds based on the Scriptures for its position on dogma, “to preserve the traditions and precepts of the holy

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was another great opponent of the Council of Chalcedon. Under his influence the bishops of Iberia gave their support to the Armenian position and accepted the Henotikon; Boghos L. Zekiyan, “La rupture entre l’Église géorgienne et arménienne au début du VIIe siècle,” REA N.S. 16 (1982), 161. According to Garsoian (L’Église arménienne, 162–164), this took place at a joint Georgian, Albanian, and Armenian synod at Vagharshapat in 491. See ID, XVI, 77: “Babgen, the great Patriarch of Armenia, called a synod of the bishops of Armenia, Iberia, and Albania at Nor Kaghak [Vagharshapat], in the holy cathedral church, mother of all the Armenian churches; this synod judged the Council of Chalcedon on the principles laid down by St. Gregory. This is how at that time the one devout faith was endorsed, and the Council of Chalcedon rejected, equally for all in the land of the Romeans [viz. Romans], Armenia, Iberia, and Albania.” MK, II.47: “By order of the devout Greek Emperors Zeno and Anasthasius, Greece, the whole of Italy, Armenia, Albania, and Iberia, having united, anathematised the Council of Chalcedon and [Pope] Leo’s letter.”

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225 ID (XVI, 77) wrote the following about Anasthasius: “by the practice of these and deeds even more righteous [than the ones done by Zeno] that pleased God, he endorsed the teachings of the holy fathers, and in his epistles anathematised all the heretics, along with the Council of Chalcedon.” KG (I, 58) wrote as follows, “After the Emperor Zeno power passed to Anasthasius, who sided with Zeno and the true believers, for he intended to call a council against the unrighteous Council of Chalcedon to confirm orthodoxy. But he soon died, poisoned by venom.”

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226 Evagrius Scholasticus, XXXVII; Sarkissian, Council of Chalcedon, 207–208.

Fathers unchanged and in perpetuity.” Syrian Monophysites took part and complained about the persecution they had suffered at the hands of Nestorians in the reign of Shah Peroz (459–484). The group included a renowned polemicist, Simeon of Bet Arsham, later known as the Persian Debater. The Syrians informed those assembled that Kavadh, the new shah (488–531), had permitted them to practise the faith professed by the Greeks, Armenians, Georgians, and Albanians. Hence they asked the fathers of the synod to draw up a dogmatic letter to confirm the orthodoxy of their faith. The synod fulfilled their request, and issued a letter addressed to “the orthodox believers in Persia,” declaring that the doctrine of the Syrian Monophysites was in full agreement with the doctrine of neighbouring peoples, including the Church in the Roman Empire. 

Thereby the Armenian Church distanced itself off completely on the dogmatic issue from the Church of Persia which enjoyed the support of the shahs. This letter was not of much help to the Syrian Monophysites, as they continued to be persecuted by the Nestorians, who claimed that the Council of Chalcedon had confirmed their orthodoxy. A year or two later another Syrian delegation arrived in Armenia asking for support. Again Archbishop Babgen and other prelates complied and wrote another dogmatic letter to the Christians in Persia. In it they upheld the validity of the first three ecumenical councils and repudiated “the falsehood of Nestorius and his like at Chalcedon,” invoking the twelve anathemas propounded by Cyril of Alexandria and the Emperor Zeno’s Henotikon interpreted from the Monophysite point of view. They took the occasion to censure all who had been anathematised by the first three ecumenical councils as heretics, including Eutyches, whose Christological views had led to the convening of the Council of Chalcedon and who was generally regarded as one of the creators of the Monophysite doctrine. They also condemned the chief representatives of the Dyophysite theology in the Roman Empire – Nestorius, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Diodore of Tarsus, Theodoret of Cyrus, and Ibas of Edessa, as well as a few from the

228 Garsoian, L’Église arménienne, 443, Appendix II. 1.
229 Garsoian, L’Église arménienne, 438–446, Appendix II. 1 (the act of the Synod); the act was drafted in two language versions, Armenian and Persian; 450–456, Appendix II. 3 (the epistle of Simeon of Beth Arsham relating to Barsauma, Bishop of Nisibis, and the Nestorian heresy). See Ter-Minassiantz, Die armenische Kirche, 32–39.
231 Garsoian, L’Église arménienne, 446–450, Appendix II. 2.
232 Since the 480s the Armenian historian Lazarus of Parpi had been countering the teachings of Eutyches, who denied the co-existence of the body of Christ with his human body; Sarkissian, Council of Chalcedon, 170, 211. Eutyches was put on the Henoticon list of heretics; Garsoian, L’Église arménienne, 188; Zekiyan, “La rupture,” 166–172.
“land of Persia” – Barsauma, Metropolitan of Nisibis, and the Catholicici of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, Aqaq (Acacius, Acace) and Babai. Like the Syrian Monophysites, the Armenian bishops were worried that the Chalcedonian formula would reinforce the Nestorian position, and that they would be absorbed in the Syro-Persian Church, which enjoyed the support of the state.

Opposition to the official doctrine of the Persian Church thrust the Armenian Church onto the road for independence, which would eventually take it up to the idea of a national church. But its disavowal of the Council of Chalcedon was an incidental move, and it was not regarded as a breach with the Church in the Roman Empire. The Armenians asserted that they were united in faith with the Greeks. But for as long as Zeno’s edict was in force communion with the Church in the Empire was not illusory. Until the early 6th century Armenia regarded itself as an integral part of the universal Church.

However, in 519, the Emperor Justin revoked the Henotikon and confirmed all the decrees passed at Chalcedon. Monophysitism was condemned as heresy, and the bishops adhering to it were deposed and deported. This policy was undoubtedly applied also in the part of Armenia under Byzantine rule, since under canon law heretics were barred from episcopal appointments. However, the Emperor's influence in ecclesiastical matters did not reach beyond the imperial borders, while Persia supported those tendencies in Christianity which were proscribed in the Empire.

The Emperor Justinian (527–565) made resolute endeavours to restore religious unity on the grounds of the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon, though he did try to establish a modus vivendi with the Monophysites. Following in Zeno's footsteps, on 15th March 533 with the approval of Pope John II, he issued his confession of faith. It was published in the second edition of his Code of Laws in 534. It did not mention Chalcedon or the two natures in Christ, but it put the Christological dogma in a formula referring to the Passion: “One of the Trinity suffered for us in the body” (Unus de Trinitate...). Since Monophysites still continued to associate Chalcedon with Nestorianism, the Emperor decided to distance Chalcedon off from the theology of Nestorius. In 543/544

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235 Garsoïan, L‘Église arménienne, 190.

236 KG (I, 58), wrote, “And after him [Anasthasius] Justin ascended the throne; an ignorant and godless man, he inundated the country with the blood of true believers and set up Chalcedon; he put down and persecuted anyone who thought that the Word Incarnate had one nature.” ID, XVI, 77: “Justin … instigated grave and harrowing persecution against the holy and righteous men, he again spilled blood upon the bosom of the Holy Church.”
he condemned the Three Chapters (Tria Kefalaia), a collection of works by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrus, and Ibas of Edessa, the precursors of Nestorianism. The Fifth Ecumenical Council, which Justinian convened in Constantinople in 553, again condemned the Three Chapters and Theodore of Mopsuestia. This Council was attended by bishops from Byzantine Armenia. However, when the Emperor realised that his conciliatory efforts were not getting anywhere and that the Monophysites wanted an outright condemnation of the Council of Chalcedon he initiated a wave of religious persecution. The Monophysites went underground.\textsuperscript{237} Armenian chroniclers were severely critical of this otherwise outstanding emperor. They wrote that under a Jewish influence he moved the Feast of the Annunciation from 14\textsuperscript{th} February to 25\textsuperscript{th} March, foisting this change on the Church of Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{238} They alleged that the forces of Nature came out in opposition against this “unrighteous” emperor: for 18 months the sun subsided and shone only for 3 hours a day, the harvests failed, and epidemics decimated the population.\textsuperscript{239} Justinian deprived Byzantine Armenia of what was left of its legal autonomy, turning it into one of the provinces of the Empire and intending to erase its national distinctiveness. His reforms led to the outbreak of an uprising, and there was an attempt to assassinate him. Justinian responded by resettling the Armenians in other parts of the Empire.\textsuperscript{240} Towards the end of his life he started to press for the recognition of the assertion that Christ’s human body was not subject to decay which, as we shall see, was an idea that also the Church in Persarmenia favoured.\textsuperscript{241} Justinian’s successors vacillated between granting toleration to the Monophysites and pursuing a policy of repression.\textsuperscript{242}

In Justinian’s times, especially after 532, when the wars with Persia were over, Persarmenia was beyond Byzantium’s sphere of interest. There is not much information available on its religious situation in this period. There

\textsuperscript{237} Daniélou and Marrou, \textit{Nouvelle histoire}, 273–274.

\textsuperscript{238} The celebration of Christmas on 25\textsuperscript{th} December was probably introduced in Jerusalem at this time as well. For Justinian’s church reform, see Daniélou and Marrou, \textit{Nouvelle histoire}, 295.

\textsuperscript{239} This chronicler regards the Emperor’s consort Theodora as a true believer. Under her influence the Emperor would have restored the true faith (Monophysitism), he writes, had it not been for his fear of the “Dyophysites” (viz. adherents of Chalcedon), KG, 1, 59–60.

\textsuperscript{240} Peter Charanis, \textit{The Armenians and the Byzantine Empire} (Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1963), 14.

\textsuperscript{241} Daniélou and Marrou, \textit{Nouvelle histoire}, 273.

\textsuperscript{242} Justinian’s successor, Justin II (565–578), continued his predecessor’s religious policy. During his reign the Monophysite Churches of Alexandria and Antioch made a definitive breach with the imperial Church. Their existence was ignored, and Orthodox Greeks (Melchites) were installed in those patriarchates. As a result in each of them there were two separate lines of patriarchs. After some time the Monophysite patriarchs became heads of the Coptic Church in Egypt and the Jacobite Church in Syria respectively; Daniélou and Marrou, \textit{Nouvelle histoire}, 273–274.
can be no doubt that the chasm separating Roman Armenia from its kindred under Persia only deepened. As a result Persarmenia became the religious centre of the Armenian Church, if only for the reason that Dvin was where its spiritual leader resided. The revocation of the *Hentikon* meant a breach in the communion between the Church in Persarmenia and Constantinople. However, the Armenian sources from this period give no information on this issue. At this time the two Churches were going through different problems. The Church in Persian Armenia was still engaging in battle from the Monophysite position against Nestorianism, which was spreading among the Christians in the Sassanid Empire. In addition it had to face another threat: a split within the Monophysite party, which had emerged in the Roman Empire.

After 523 the separation only deepened, in outcome of disputes between the followers of Severus of Antioch and Julian of Halicarnassus over whether Christ’s human body was corruptible. According to Julian, who was bishop of Halicarnassus in Caria, on his incarnation Jesus took a body like the one Adam had prior to committing the original sin and did not experience human needs or suffering; his body was immortal and not subject to decay. However, to redeem mankind, of his own free will and not out of necessity he accepted hunger, exhaustion, pain, and death, in a miraculous way suspending his body’s incorruptibility and impassibility. Hence his passion and death on the cross were real, not just apparent. This doctrine is known in history as Aphthartodocetism. Julian’s adversary, Severus, patriarch of Antioch (d. 538), said that Christ’s body was human and as such theoretically subject to decay. However, it did not decay thanks to the power of Logos.

The Church in Persarmenia was dragged into the quarrel between the followers of Severus and Julian by the Syrians, for whom this was an issue of paramount importance. The Syrians were counting on Armenian support in view of the status of the Armenian aristocracy in Persia. The Armenians came out in favour of Julian’s theology. At the request of his Syrian adherents, around 552 Catholicos Nerses II consecrated a bishop for them – the monk Abdisho from the monastery of Sareba (Sarepta) in Sasun. A fairly abundant...
correspondence accumulated between the Armenians and the Syrians in this connection. The Syrians turned to Nerses II “like children to their father,” and he confirmed their orthodoxy and communion in the faith. In his letter the Catholicos expounded the dogmas of the faith and condemned heresy. Apart from Theodore of Mopsuestia, Diodore of Tarsus, and Nestorius, he also condemned Pope Leo’s dogmatic letter to Flavian and the Council of Chalcedon, which had allegedly admitted the teaching that there were two natures (\(\text{bnut\text{\textsc{iwnk}}}\), \(\text{kerpar\text{\textsc{ank}}}\)) and two persons (\(\text{d\text{\textsc{emk}}}\)) in Christ – in other words the Nestorian dogma. In addition he condemned Eutyches and Severus of Antioch, in other words radical and moderate Monophysitism. It is obvious from Nerses’ letter that not only did he voice his approval of Julian’s theology, but under the influence of other Monophysites he also augmented the liturgical chanting of the \(\text{Trishagion}\) (“Holy God, Holy One, Holy Immortal One”) by adding the phrase “you who were crucified for us.” On his return from his consecration Bishop Abdisho got down to vigorously countering and pursuing his adversaries. In his letters to Nerses II he warned the Catholicos against the followers of Severus, who intended to come to Armenia and try to persuade Nerses to come over to their side. So he kept sending Nerses detailed discourses on the “orthodox” faith with lists of diverse “heretics.” In each of his letters he cursed the Council of Chalcedon and Leo’s epistle, on account of their teaching “that there were two natures and two persons in Christ.”

But for the Church in Persarmenia the main concern was Nestorianism. More and more radical theological ideas, condemned even by the synods of the Church of Persia, were appearing among the Persian Nestorians in Khuzestan. Imported to Armenia by merchants, they were winning support even in Dvin, the political capital of Persarmenia. Their congregation, which had a bishop and assembled in the Church of St. Gregory the Persian, adhered to an extreme Christological dualism, virtually bringing an additional person into the Holy Trinity. Around 553 Nerses attempted to convene a synod on this matter, but the response from the bishops was inadequate and the synod failed to materialise. A synod did not meet at Dvin until 21st March,

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246 Garsoïan, \(\text{L’Église arménienne}\), 457–473, Appendix III.
248 Garsoïan, \(\text{L’Église arménienne}\), 461, Appendix III. 2; 464–465; III. 3; 465–469, III. 4; 469–471, III. 5; 471–473, III. 6; 471, III. 5.
249 At a synod in 554 Joseph, the Nestorian Catholicos of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, anathematised those who assumed there were “two sons” in Christ, thereby “introducing quadruplicity” in God; Garsoïan, \(\text{L’Église arménienne}\), 227.
the Palm Sunday of 555, with 18 bishops attending. In the “Pact of Union” it excommunicated Nestorianism, and the Nestorian community of the Church of St. Gregory the Persian was disbanded. This did not mean that the influence of this trend vanished from the Armenian Church completely. After the synod there was still a need to send letters to the bishops of Mardpetakan and Artsrunik, which may suggest that they did not approve of the purposes for which the synod had been called.

The synod also condemned the Council of Chalcedon, the adherents of which were expelled from the Armenian communion. This was done in a very solemn manner. In a letter to the bishop and faithful of Syunik, Nerses II’s successor, John II (558–574), recalled the event: “We convened in this church [viz. Dvin Cathedral] and together we anathematised and cast out of our holy Church the unrighteous Nestorians, Chalcedonians, and other heretics. Before the holy and glorious altar, before the life-giving, holy Gospel and the salvific holy Cross we decided to remove ourselves completely from communion with them and not to listen to their words of death.” Those who wanted to recant and disavow Nestorius and the Council of Chalcedon were assigned appropriate types of penance. Pope Leo’s Tome and Severus’ “books on the corruption” (of the body of Christ) were also anathematised. Thus the

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250 Garsoïan, L’Église arménienne, 474–476, Appendix IV. 1, (Nerses II’s letter censuring the bishops who had not complied with his appeal of 553). For the date of this synod, hitherto considered to have taken place in 552, see Narratio de rebus Armeniae, 156–157.

251 The patron of this church, the Persian Manachihr Razhik, the son of a Zoroastrian priest, was a convert and took the name of Gregory at baptism. In 549 the Persian authorities had him executed for this. Garsoïan, L’Église arménienne, 476–477, Appendix IV. 2.

252 Garsoïan, L’Église arménienne, 479–481, Appendix IV. 3.

253 For these reasons I can hardly go along with Garsoïan (L’Église arménienne, 238, 249–250), who claims that the anathema cast on the Council of Chalcedon was only a marginal point of the synod’s agenda, because it was not the reason why the synod had been called. By anathematising the Council of Chalcedon, the Synod of Dvin was repudiating heresy of the Nestorian type (according to her), and there was no formal breach with Constantinople until the early 7th century, while the Caucasian Churches, which had a negative attitude primarily to Nestorianism, did not assume a final position on Chalcedon. However, Garsoïan herself argues that sources contemporary with the events do not confuse Nestorians with Chalcedonians, which would happen later. So to press her case, she challenges the trustworthiness of Narratio de rebus Armeniae and later sources which claim that due to Syrian influence the Council of Chalcedon was anathematised at the Synod of Dvin. The only source she considers reliable for the history of this synod is the “Pact of Union.” Yet it is clear from sources created not long after this synod that Nestorianism had not been the only item on its agenda. In contrast to the Jacobites (adherents of Severus), the Julianist Syrians were subsequently called Gregorians, viz. adhering to the doctrine of Gregory the Enlightener, the founder of the Armenian Church; Ter-Minassiantz, Die armenische Kirche, 53.
Armenian synod sided with the followers of Julian\textsuperscript{254} and adopted the doctrine that Christ the Word Made Flesh had a single nature, with which he was crucified and died. In connection with this teaching the synod ordered the inclusion of the words “you who were crucified for us” in the *Trishagion*, which had already been done before in some places.\textsuperscript{255} The chief instigator of these measures was the Syrian Bishop Abdisho, who attended the synod bringing the anti-Chalcedonian tracts of Timothy Ailuros and Philoxenes of Mabbug, which were later translated into Armenian.\textsuperscript{256} It cannot be ruled out that the Church in Persarmenia summoned the synod of 555 in response to the decrees

\textsuperscript{254} Garsoïan, *L’Église arménienne*, 485–486, Appendix V. 1; V. 2 (letter to Abas, Catholico\[a\]s of Albania); MK, II. 7. In this second letter the Catholico\[s\] of Armenia made a clear distinction between the Nestorians and the Chalcedonians. Garsoïan (*L’Église arménienne*, 213–214) claims that the Church of Persarmenia took a moderately Julianist position.

\textsuperscript{255} MK. III. 24: “Bishop Abas … it was he who was ordered by the Synod of Dvin to acknowledge Christ’s single [indivisible], divine and human nature, and to add the word ‘crucified’ to the words ‘Holy God.’” KG, X, 134: “Bishop Abas … it was for his sake that a decision was taken at the Synod of Dvin to say of God [Most] Holy ‘O Immortal One, Who was crucified,’ and ‘one Divine and Human nature.”

\textsuperscript{256} This information is reproduced literally in *Narratio de rebus Armeniae* § 70–74, which is a Chalcedonian source: “[Those who took part in the Synod of Dvin] decided to anathematise the Holy Council of Chalcedon as well as the Nestorian council, on the grounds of Bishop Abdisho’s letter. At the same time they translated … the works brought by Abdisho, written by Timothy [Ailuros] and Philikos the Syrian [Philoxenes of Mabbug] against the Council of Chalcedon and those who profess two natures in Christ, our God. Persuaded by these writings, at the same synod, which was held in the city of Tibin [Dvin], they decided to say, ‘One nature of God the Word and the Flesh,’ and that He [Christ] had been crucified and died with the same immortal nature. As a result they added ‘You Who were crucified’ to ‘God [Most] Holy,’ in accordance with Peter Fullo, who had suffered from Sabellius’ [disease]. And by casting anathemas they decided to break away from communion with Jerusalem and New Rome [Constantinople], and those who profess two natures in Our Lord Jesus Christ.” A similar version is to be found in a fairly late source, the so-called “Letter of our fathers on the Synod of Dvin and the Council of Chalcedon,” where we read that at this time Timothy’s “commentary to the second letter” and Philoxenes’ book were translated into Armenian, and diverse tracts were written against the Council of Chalcedon. Also an order was issued for the expression “You Who were crucified for us” to be added to the *Trishagion*. Garsoïan, *L’Église arménienne*, 481–483, Appendix IV. 4. In a letter to Abas, Catholico\[s\] of Albania, John IV, Patriarch of Jerusalem, called Abdisho “the leader of the Armenians and their synod to perdition,” Garsoïan, *L’Église arménienne*, 491, Appendix V. 3. In the light of the above I can hardly agree with the claim put forward by Garsoïan, *L’Église arménienne*, 218, 261 that “neither the Syrian mission nor Abdisho insisted on an anathema on Chalcedon.” She challenges the reliability of John IV’s letter, claiming that he had overestimated the significance of the correspondence exchanged between the Syrians and the Armenians, and treating it as a set of dogmatic documents. However, what the Patriarch of Jerusalem probably had in mind was the Synod itself, not the letters that preceded it, which incidentally he probably had no knowledge of. Ter-Minassiantz (*Die armenische Kirche*, 46, 49–59) surmises that the anathema cast on the Nestorians applied to the Chalcedonians as well.
of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, which had been held in Constantinople in 553 and had condemned the precursors of Nestorianism. By accepting the anathemas declared at that Council, the Armenian synod applied them to the Council of Chalcedon as well, which the Monophysites maintained had condoned Nestorian doctrine.

A new ecclesiastical calendar was most probably adopted at the Synod of Dvin. Since the 532-year calendar cycle compiled by Andrew of Byzantium marking out the date of Easter and the feasts determined by it ended in 552, the Armenian Church adopted a new cycle of its own, starting on 11th July 552, which was taken as year one. John of Draskhanakert, a later Armenian historian, wrote with pride, “Thus having compiled a calendar of movable feasts in the Armenian tongue, we never again had the need to be like a beggar begging for alms and take the ritual of the inexorable mystery [viz. the date of Easter] from other peoples.” The Armenians rejected Justinian’s reform of the calendar adopted at Byzantium. A group of scholars under the leadership of Aeas of Alexandria had calculated a new paschal cycle, which was then amended by Irion (Hieron?), the Emperor’s court astrologer. The Armenians said that Irion had spoiled the calculation done by Aeas and his advisers, as a result of which in the Greek calendar the spring full moon fell on Saturday, 5th April four times in the 532-year cycle, coinciding with the Jewish Passover, with Easter on 6th April. According to Aeas’ original calculation the full moon should fall on Sunday, 6th April, with Easter Sunday coming on the next Sunday. The Armenians adopted Aeas’ original computation and dubbed the Greek Pasch “crooked” (Cržatik). Since the Council of Nicaea was said to have anathematised those who celebrated the Paschal Feast together with the Jews, the Armenians stressed that they were the only ones to have avoided excommunication, even though they were under Persian rule.

At the Synod of Dvin Archbishop Nerses finally accepted the title of Catholicos, emphasising the independence of the Church of Persarmenia from the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the (Nestorian) Catholicos of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. Ideologically, the title indicated that the Armenian Church was

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257 The calendar was not introduced immediately, but only in 584, during the pontificate of Catholicos Moses, ID, XVI, s. 78; KG, I, 60; after the Polish edition of Arakel of Tabryz (Księga dziejów, translated from the Russian version by Witold Dąbrowski and Andrzej Mandalian; introduction by Wojciech Hensel (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1981); Hafeter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 60–61; Mahé, “L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 397; Alden A. Mosshammer, The Easter Computus and the Origins of the Christian Era (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 246–277, 429.

258 KG, I, 60–61, 253, 290. The first discrepancy over the computation of the date of Easter occurred in 665; see Mahé, “L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 397.
in communion (*katholiké*), with the Church of Jerusalem, the Parent Church of the whole of Christendom. Communion with the Church of Jerusalem was expressed by the preservation of the customs which had been abolished in Jerusalem in the reign of Justinian, and which the Armenians had never abandoned. To defend the claim of the Armenian Church's independence they employed the legend of the Apostle Thaddaeus’ mission, which was to underpin the apostolic provenance of the Armenian Church and its independence of other apostolic Churches.

The Synod’s decrees were an opportune development for the Persian authorities. According to a later record made by Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople, Shah Khosrow Anushirvan expressed his gratitude to Nerses by allowing him to adopt one of his sons, and the Armenian bishops were granted the right to administer the collection of taxes in Persarmenia.

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262 François Tournebize, “Arménie,” in *Dictionnaire d’histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique*, Vol. 4 (Paris: Letoury et Ané, 1930), 303. In the opinion of Garsoian (*L’Église arménienne*, 378) there are no historical grounds for the information on the adoption of the shah’s son. In the mid-6th century Persia united the lands of Trans-Caucasia and put them under one marzpan. The tax-collecting privilege granted to the clergy gave rise to a conflict with the nakharars; Kamilla V. Trever, *Ocherki po istorii i kul’ture Kavkazskoi Albanii IV v. do n. e. do VII v. n.e.* (Moskva: Izdatel’stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1959), 232.
Part Two:
Under pressure from Constantinople

The Armenian Church and the Empire of the East
(6th to 9th century)

After the Synod of Dvin only the Churches of Iberia and Albania, and some of the Syrian Monophysites adhering to the Aphthartodocetic doctrine were still formally in communion with the Armenians of Persarmenia. But rifts were already beginning to show. When Catholicos John II (558–574) demanded Abas, Catholicos of Albania, insert the addition “you who were crucified for us” in the Trishagion, the latter refused, saying that it was against the position taken by his predecessors. Moreover, there were similar problems with the Bishop of Syunik, who must have shared the views of the head of the Albanian Church, and perhaps also with the Catholicos of Iberia.1 Chalcedonianism

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1 Garsoïan, L’Église arménienne et le grand schisme d’Orient, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Subsidia, Vol. 100 (Lovanii: Peeters, 1999), 486–490, Appendix V. 2 (letter of Catholicos John II to Catholicos Abas); Narratio de rebus Armeniæ, § 85. The Albanian chronicle, later revised by the Monophysites, handed down two traditional assertions: on Abas’ expulsion of the heretics from Albania under the influence of Catholicos John II’s letter (MK, II. 7–8), and on Abas’ resistance to the decision taken by the Synod of Dvin (III. 24). Abas received a letter from John IV, Patriarch of Jerusalem (570/575–593), encouraging him to endure in the true religion jointly professed with the See of Rome, which had been founded by St. Peter, and whose bishops had always been true believers. Catholicos John II’s letter to Vrtanes, Bishop of Syunik, and Prince Mihr-Artashir is in the official collection of letters, Girk’ t’ght’ots’, 78, 81, a French translation is in Garsoïan, L’Église arménienne, Appendix V. 1, Narratio de rebus Armeniæ, § 86–89; see also François Tournebize, “Arménie,” in Dictionnaire d’histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique, Vol. 4 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1930), 303; Erwand Ter-Minassiantz, Die armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zu den syrischen Kirchen bis zum Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts nach armenischen und syrischen Quellen bearbeitet (Leipzig: A. Pries, 1904), 60; Rauf B. Geiushev, Khristianstvo v Kavkazskoj Albani (Baku:
had set down firm roots with the Armenian subjects of the Roman Empire as well. The 6th-century Armenian monks who said the liturgical office in their native language in the monastery founded by St. Saba in Palestine, most certainly embraced the Chalcedonian Christology. Many Armenians followed it because they were convinced of its truth, not only for fear of imperial repressive measures or due to the intrigues of ambitious individuals. After the fall of the uprising against the Persians Catholicos John II and Armenian church leaders went into exile in Constantinople, and there he is said to have embraced Chalcedonianism, despite the threats sent to him in many letters from Persarmenia. The Catholicos died in exile in 574, and his companions settled in Pergamon, where there was still a large colony of Armenian Chalcedonians in the 7th century. The Armenian “schism” was limited only to Persarmenia and the Sassanid Empire.

From this time on all changes whatsoever in the Armenian Church depended on the way the political situation between the two countries developed. Shah Khosrow II Parviz (591–628), who owed his throne to Emperor Maurice (582–602), was not averse to the Christians of both countries maintaining relations. In this period a substantial part of Persarmenia and Iberia lay within the borders of the Empire of the East, with only two Armenian provinces,
Vaspurakan and Syunik, left outside. In this situation the Emperor tried to pressure all the Armenians into embracing Chalcedonian orthodoxy. In 591 he ordered a synod summoned to Karin–Theodosiopolis, to which all the Armenian hierarchs and vardapets were invited. Catholicos Moses II (574–604), who resided at Dvin, which was not far from the Byzantine border but on the Persian side, turned down the invitation, with the memorable words, “I shall not cross the River Azat [the border], and I shall not eat the baked bread or drink the warm water of the Greeks.”

It was an allusion to the Byzantine liturgical practices – the use of leavened bread and wine with a small amount of warm water added in the celebration of the Eucharist. It showed how much the Armenians were attached to their liturgical customs, attributed already then to St. Gregory the Illuminator; the Armenian hierarchs would not relinquish them willingly. The Emperor could make only his own subjects embrace orthodoxy.

In response to the intransigent attitude demonstrated by the Catholicos of Persarmenia, the Emperor appointed a catholicos for his own Armenian subjects, John III of Bagaran (592–610/615), who decided to make his residence in Avan, a place near Dvin but on the Byzantine side of the border. So alongside the Monophysite Church of Persarmenia, there was now an Armenian Chalcedonian Church. It was the first schism in the history of the Armenian Church. But the situation was highly complex, since not all the bishops of Persarmenia were of the same intractable opinion as their catholicos. Bishop Peter of Syunik ordered his successors to receive their consecration and the myron (chrism) from the catholicos of Albania until such time when the schism was over. Other bishops of Persarmenia did not recognise the validity of ordinations administered by the Chalcedonian catholicos. During the schism the Byzantine Church tried to incorporate the Church of the part of Armenia within the Byzantine Empire into the imperial Church and put it under the authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople on the grounds of Canon 28 of the Council of Chalcedon. But the Armenians

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6 Narratio de rebus Armeniae, § 102, 40. This statement is usually regarded as the earliest record of the Armenian custom of using pure wine. However, prior to that time it had already been censured in the homilies of Eutychius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who died in 582. See Gérard Garitte, “Un opuscule grec traduit de l’Arménien sur l’addition d’eau au vin eucharistique,” Le Muséon 73 (1960): 297.

7 Narratio de rebus Armeniae, 40–41; Sebeos, Storia, Italian translation by Claudio Gugerotti (Verona: Casa Editrice Mazziana, 1990); § XIX; MK, II. 46.

had such a strong sense of their separateness that even the Chalcedonian Armenians stood up in defence of their independence.9

For some time the Greeks had been conducting a dispute with the Armenians over the celestial hierarchy, which was said to be reflected in the ecclesiastical hierarchy on earth. It was evidently an influence of the treatise by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. An Albanian historian wrote that they were constantly asking who was their patriarch, as there were only four patriarchs on earth – the throne of Mark in Alexandria, the throne of Matthew in Antioch, the throne of Luke in Rome, and the throne of John in Ephesus.10 According to the Greeks the hierarchy on earth should have nine orders: patriarchs, metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, presbyters, deacons, acolytes, ostiaries, and readers. In this classification the lands of the Caucasus, which had never had dioceses or metropolises, missed out on two of the earthly orders. An attempt was made to settle the matter and grant the catholicoi of the Caucasus the appropriate titles, but it led to quarrelling. The Iberian Church, which had had fairly close relations with Armenia hitherto, refused to submit to the authority of the Armenian catholicoi, who in turn proclaimed himself a patriarch, reserving the office of metropolitan for the catholicoi of Iberia, and the title of archbishop for the catholicoi of Albania. On the advice of his prince, Kirion, head of the Iberian Church, decided to transfer to the Chalcedonians, while his Albanian counterpart procrastinated.11

During these disputes the fundamental grounds on which the Churches claimed the right to autocephaly were the apostolic origins of the respective patriarchates, and this was probably the time when the legend linking the Apostle Thaddaeus with Gregory the Illuminator was created. The founder of the Church of Armenia was reputed to have been miraculously conceived on the site of Thaddaeus martyrdom. Gregory’s mission was presented as a continuation of the Apostle’s mission,12 and it was for this reason that the

11 MK II. 48. Ultimately the offices held by Armenian archbishops and metropolitans assumed a titular character. No formal institution of suffragan bishops subject to the metropolitan’s authority was ever created, but such honorific titles were used with respect to the bishops of particularly important sees, and hence in the sources they are alternately called bishops or archbishops. Garsoian (*L’Église arménienne*, 287–288, 314) claims that disputes over order of precedence occurred in the Caucasus at a later time.
12 ID VIII, 63.
Armenians claimed the bishops of Iberia and Albania should be subject to the authority of Gregory and his successors. The bishops of Iberia and Albania reacted by creating apostolic legends of their own. The nationalisation of the Churches of the Caucasus had made considerable progress. Meanwhile among the Armenian aristocracy resentment was growing to the Empire of the East and its Church. Emperor Maurice was not inclined to trust his Armenian magnates, either, and treated them as politically untrustworthy. He is even said to have suggested to the Shah that they be removed from the border zone. He had many of them deported to Thrace, where they were to defend the Empire against the Avars.

The outbreak of war with Persia in the early 7th century brought an end to the schism in the Armenian Church. The first phase of the war went in favour of the Persians. Not only did they manage to take the Caucasus, but Syria and Palestine as well. The True Cross, the principal Christian relic, was removed from Jerusalem. Shah Khosrow II ordered all the Chalcedonians to leave the East. At the beginning of the war the Persians had deported the Armenian Chalcedonian catholicos, who died in captivity. In 607, on the initiative of the shah, who had managed to regain control of Armenia, a synod of Armenian bishops was called. It met in Dvin and condemned the Council of Chalcedon and Leo’s Tome. Catholicos Abraham (607–615) no longer had a Chalcedonian rival, but that did not make it easy for him to get all of his compatriots to switch to the anti-Chalcedonian option. Some of the dissidents emigrated to Tayk (Tao), which was in the Iberian political sphere, and some to lands under the Roman Empire. The Bishop of Syunik acknowledged the authority of the Catholicos, and was rewarded with the title of Metropolitan. The breach with the Church of Iberia had become

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14 MK I. 6, 27. Yeghishe, a disciple of the Apostle Thaddaeus, is reputed to have been the Apostle of Albania. The conversion of the royal court of Iberia was apparently effected by a Roman slave-girl, who was later given a name – St. Nino (Nune); Artashes Martirosian, Mashtots (Erevan: Izdatel’stvo AN Armianskoi SSR, 1988), 140–150, 191–201.


16 Sebeos, XXXIII; ID XVII, 83; MK II. 48; MS X. XXV, Vol. 2, 379–381.

17 Garsoian, L’Église arménienne, 506–515, Appendix VI (documents relating to the end of the Armenian schism and the election of Catholicos Abraham I).

18 Narratio de rebus Armeniae, § 112–115, 41–42.

A reality. After the synod held in Dvin in 609 Abraham sent a pastoral letter to all the bishops under his authority prohibiting any contact whatsoever with the Iberians, on pain of excommunication. He ordered Armenians “neither to pray with them, nor to eat, drink, or associate with them in any manner; neither to hire wet-nurses from them nor to send out wet-nurses to them; not to go on pilgrimage to the renowned Cross of Mtskheta, nor to the other [Cross] at Manglisi; not to allow them in our churches, nor to commune or unite with them.” The only exception he made was for trade and commercial relations. According to the chronicle of John of Draskhanakert, the decision was made because the Iberians had betrayed “the apostolic legacy of St. Gregory the Illuminator” and had exchanged the true faith for “the token faith of Leo, who regarded Jesus Christ as a human being.” A similar anathema was put on the Albanians. It would take a long time for the Church of Eastern Georgia, on which Armenian culture had exerted a considerable influence, to find a road of its own, in an endeavour not only to provide grounds for its claim to apostolic origins and autocephaly, but also to create its own theological and hagiographical literature independent of the Armenian writings. The Persian authorities distinctly favoured the Armenian Monophysites. Armenian sources claim that at the synod of

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20 Garsoian, L'Église arménienne, 27, 582, Appendix VII.

21 MK II. 46–47; ID XVII, 81; See Bishop Ukhtanes of Sebastia. History of Armenia. Part II: History of the Severance of the Georgians from the Armenians, translation, introduction and commentary by Zaven Arzoumanian (Fort Lauderdale, 1985). For records on the breach between the Armenian and the Iberian Churches, see Garsoian, L'Église arménienne, 516–583, Appendix VII; see also Mahé, “La rupture arméno-géorgienne au début du VIIe siècle et les réécritures historiographiques des IXe–XIe siècles,” in Il Caucaso Cerniera fra culture dal Mediterraneo alla Persia (secoli IV–VII): Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo 43, Vol. 2 (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull’alto Medioevo, 1996), 927–961. Some historians hold that the reversal in the Iberian policy on religion was prompted by their continuous relations with the Church of Jerusalem, where there was a large colony of Iberian monasteries. Thanks to this they had access to the genuine documents of the Council of Chalcedon. Vahan Inglisian, “Chalkedon und die armenische Kirche,” in Das Konzil von Chalkedon, ed. Alois Grillmaier and Heinrich Bacht, Vol. 2 (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1953), 373–375; Jean Mécérian, Histoire et institutions de l’Église arménienne, évolution nationale et doctrinale, spiritualité – monachisme (Beyrouth: Impr. Catholique, 1965), 62, 72. This conjecture does not seem warranted, as there were also numerous Armenian and Albanian monasteries in Palestine. MK (II. 52) writes of over a hundred, under the care of Armenian and Albanian princes. These monasteries were not subject to pressure from the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, as the princes had paid a substantial sum of money to the Emperor Justinian. There had been an Armenian bishopric in Jerusalem at least since 637. For Armenians in the Holy City, see Kevork Hintlian, History of the Armenians in the Holy Land (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1976).
Christian bishops in Seleucia-Ctesiphon Khosrow II ordered all his subjects to espouse the Armenian religion.\textsuperscript{22}

Many religious buildings were erected in Persarmenia in the last Sassanid reigns. Komitas, the new catholicos (615–628), restored the roof of Vagharshapat Cathedral, said to date back to the 4th century, in the old Arsacid capital. He had a martyrium built for the miraculously recovered relics of St. Hripsime. He also founded the Cathedral of St. Gregory the Illuminator in the vicinity of Dvin. This was the time when Agathangelos’ legend of the conversion of Armenia crystallised out in its mature form, associating the work of St. Gregory the Illuminator with the country’s old capital. It presented Gregory not merely as a missionary operating in the Kingdom of Armenia, but as the Apostle of the entire Armenian nation. The author of the canonical Agathangelos version emphasised the fact that the Armenians were converted before the conversion of Constantine the Great – their Christianity preceded the Emperor’s baptism.\textsuperscript{23} In a miraculous vision at Vagharshapat St. Gregory the Illuminator was said to have been given the leadership of his nation by Christ.\textsuperscript{24} The Catholicos of Albania opportunistically acknowledged Komitas’ authority and anathematised the Council of Chalcedon. Following the breach with the Georgian Church and in view of the vacillating attitude of Albania, the Armenian Church became the representative and guardian of the interests only of its own nation.\textsuperscript{25}

The situation changed in favour of Byzantium after Emperor Heraclius’ victorious military expeditions. In 628 the Emperor occupied part of Persarmenia, recovered the True Cross, and negotiated peace with the Persians.\textsuperscript{26} The triumph, and particularly the recovery of the holy relic, increased his authority very considerably. Heraclius graciously granted the request of the Princess of Syunik for a piece of the Holy Cross,\textsuperscript{27} appointed governors for Armenia


\textsuperscript{24} Aa § 8.

\textsuperscript{25} Garsoïan, \textit{L’Église arménienne}, 373–374. For further developments of the situation in Armenia, see Mahé, “L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 389–391.

\textsuperscript{26} Nina V. Pigulevskaia, \textit{Kul’tura sirţiţsev v srednie veka} (Moskva: Nauka, 1979), 212–213. Thanks to his influence at the caliph’s court, the Armenian Prince Smbat Bagratuni forced the Albanian Church to adopt an anti-Chalcedonian position. Mahé, “L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 388.

\textsuperscript{27} This famous relic was later kept in the Monastery of the Holy Symbol at Hatsun. Psevdo-Shapukh Bagratuni, \textit{Istoriiia anonimnogo povestvovatel’}, 62–66.
and Albania, and tried to reconcile with the Monophysites. Encouraged by the Emperor, Patriarch Sergius of Constantinople, devised the doctrine of Monoenergism, which said that Christ had two natures, but operated on the basis of one “energy.” The new dogmatic formula appeared to bring the antagonistic groups closer to each other, especially as it won the support of Pope Honorius I. The Emperor, who came from an Armenian family himself, attempted to make the Armenians adopt Monoenergism.

In 632/633 on the Emperor’s order a synod of the Church of Armenia was called at Theodosiopolis. Heraclius attended in person. The bishops of Armenia, along with the Catholicos Ezr (Ezra, 630–641) at their head, did not have much to say and dared not oppose the Emperor, who threatened the Catholicos that should he not attend he would be deprived of jurisdiction over the Armenian territories under the Empire. Ezr did not want a repetition of what had happened in Maurice’s reign and after being reassured that the Greeks were not Nestorians accepted the new symbol of faith, which no longer entailed anathemas against the Council of Chalcedon. He also agreed to introduce changes in the Armenian rite to bring it in line with Byzantine practices. The Armenian singularities in the liturgy and calendar must have been abolished at the time. The Emperor endowed the Catholicos with several shafts in a salt mine at Koghb (Kolb), which prompted later Armenian historians to censure him very severely for “selling the true faith down the salt mine.” Ezr’s name used to be entered in the list of catholicoi with the initial letter inverted, as a sign that he had subverted the faith and brought an end to the Armenian Church (the Armenian word ezr means “end”).

The anti-Chalcedonian faction could not do much for as long as there were imperial troops stationing in Armenia, and the Empire was imposing its will on the last, weak kings of Persia. At any rate Chalcedonianism had been espoused in Roman Armenia in the neighbourhood of Karin–Theodosiopolis, by Armenians who called themselves Armenian Romans (Hay-Hoṙom) and celebrated their liturgy with the amendments introduced by the synod. The catholicoi of Albania also acceded to the Chalcedonian faction at around this

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28 *Narratio de rebus Armeniae*, § 121–122; Sebeos (XLI; and also ID XVIII; KG I, 66) writes that Catholicos Ezr “changed the entire orthodox Church rite, and replaced it with a reading according to Artemon.” In the mid-3rd century Artemon (Artemas) had argued in Rome against the divinity of Christ. In the opinion of contemporaries, the liturgy of Antioch and Jerusalem had been composed by James, the Lord’s brother, while the Alexandrine liturgy had been compiled by St. Cyril of Alexandria. Mahé, “L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 392–393.

29 The Church of Etchmiadzin drew a profit from this gift right until the 19th century.

30 KG I, 66.
time. However, it soon turned out that the new Christological formula did not have the support of all concerned, in particular the successors of Honorius in Rome were against it. Faced with an imminent Arab threat, Heraclius made another overture to the Monophysites. In 638 he published an ekthesis declaring that after the Incarnation Christ had only one will (the concept is known as Monothelitism). But this formula, too, failed to gain universal approval and only gave rise to more confusion. In 648 Heraclius’ successor Constans II forbade further discussion on Christ’s “energies” and “wills.” Due to increasing Arab expansion the chief Monophysite centres found themselves beyond the borders of the Empire and the disputes faded into the background. The first Arab invasions rolled over Armenia, and Ezr was killed.

For as long as the political balance of power in Armenia was precarious, communion with the imperial Church was preserved – at least in theory. But the tables turned once the Arabs started winning. The most powerful Armenian nakharars betrayed the Empire and put themselves under the protection of the invaders. A pact was made guaranteeing Armenia autonomy and the right to practise the Christian religion. The Caliphate appointed Theodore Rshtuni governor, who forced Catholicos Nerses III (641–661) to reinstate the traditional doctrine and rites, even though the Catholicos was personally in favour of communion with Byzantium. Constans reacted by sending troops into Armenia. In 653 during his stay in Dvin Greek priests celebrated the liturgy in the patriarch’s cathedral, saying the Chalcedonian creed. The Catholicos received communion alongside the Emperor, thereby expressing his loyalty. But once the Emperor had left he was forced to flee from Theodore, and after his return somewhat later was obliged to be far more restrained in religious matters.

In the 7th century Armenia was governed by a sort of joint Byzantine-Arab rule, and there were no major changes in the country’s ethnic breakdown. Administrative power was in the hands of nakharars, appointed patrikios (patricians) and kouropalates (curopalate) by Byzantium. There was disunion in the Church and diverse rites were practised. Catholicos Nerses III gave an order for the music of Armenian hymns, the sharakans, to be standardised.

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32 Ezr built the Church of St. Gaiane in Vagharshapat, ID XVIII, 86; see also Mahé, “L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 393–394.
33 The Iberians (Georgians) cherished the memory of this catholicos on account of his pro-Chalcedonian views; see Arutuunova-Fidanian, Armianie khalkidonyt, 80.
34 Sebeos, XLVIII–XLIX; ID, XIX.
35 Trever, Ocherki po istorii i kulture Kavkazskoi Albani, 237.
in accordance with the octoechos (eight-mode) system used in the Byzantine chants. He was shocked by the confusion he saw during a service on the Feast of the Transfiguration (Vardavar) when the cantors of one diocese did not know the hymns sung in other dioceses. He earned a reputation for commissioning the building of Zvartnots Cathedral near Vagharshapat, next to which he intended to set up a residence for himself. At Dvin he also restored the Chapel of St. Sargis (Sergius), which had been gutted by fire; and the place where St. Gregory the Illuminator is reputed to have been imprisoned at Khor Virap. In that century a new type of religious building appeared in Armenia – the domed basilica with a pyramid roof, characteristic for subsequent Armenian religious architecture. In view of the discrepancy between the Greek and Armenian dates for Easter, the next catholicos, Anastasius (661–667), wanted the Armenian calendar revised to give it a “fixed nature, like the calendars of other nations.” He entrusted the reform to Ananias of Shirak, who had been educated in Trebizond. However, the Catholicos died and the calendar was never implemented. Ananias also wrote a treatise on the Epiphany, in which he argued that Jesus’ Nativity and Epiphany should be celebrated on the same day, 6th January. The political breach with the Roman Empire of the East worked to the advantage of the Anti-Chalcedonianists, whose power gradually grew, also in neighbouring Albania. At this time the Church of Albania was at its peak, even venturing on missions among the Khazars. Although it used Armenian for the language of its liturgy it endeavoured to pursue a policy independent of the Church of Armenia, officially belonging to the Chalcedonianists. Chalcedonianism became permanently established in Iberia, where the king managed to impose it.

In 688/689 the Emperor Justinian II again invaded and occupied Armenia, deporting Catholicos Sahak III (677–703) and five other bishops to Constantinople, where they were forced to sign a formula of union, which they retracted under pressure from other bishops when they got back to Armenia. The Greek Church again demanded the Armenians’ assent to the Chalcedonian

36 KG I, 69. The editor of this collection of hymns was Basil Tchon, and hence the hymns were called Tchonyntir (Tchon’s selection); Mahé, “L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 394–396.
37 ID XIX, 43–47.
40 Geiushev, Khristianstvo v Kavkazskoi Albanii, 77–78.
41 Narratio de rebus Armeniae, § 144–147.
Christology. Meanwhile Monoenergism and Monotheletism, which had been foisted upon them previously, were declared heretical and condemned at the Sixth Ecumenical Council in Constantinople (680/681), which expanded the Chalcedonian definition by supplementing it with the doctrine of Christ having two energies and two wills. The Quinisext Council of 692, which met in Trullo, the domed hall in the imperial palace, condemned Armenian liturgical and disciplinary practices, the use of unleavened bread and pure wine for the Eucharist, the combined celebration of Christmas and Epiphany, the *matagh* animal sacrifice, and other customs. This synod, which the Greeks considered a completion of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, was not acknowledged by the Church of Rome, either, because it also condemned some of the Latin liturgical practices. The Byzantine Church saw the mixing of communion wine with water as a symbol of a union of the divine and human natures in Christ, and therefore regarded the Armenian use of pure wine as an indication of the Monophysite heresy.\(^{42}\) Under pressure from the Emperor another Armenian synod met at Theodosiopolis, and rejected the Trullan decrees. However, the Emperor did not enforce the implementation of the reforms, not wanting to give offence to the *nakharars*, since he was counting on their participation in the fighting against the Arabs.\(^{43}\)

The Chalcedonian option collapsed completely under the impact of political developments. On recovering their influences in Armenia, the Arabs repealed the autonomy it had enjoyed hitherto. In 695 Catholicos Sahak III (677–703) was accused of favouring the Greeks, arrested and deported to Damascus, where he died, having made an abortive attempt to reconcile the Armenians and the Arabs.\(^{44}\) In Armenia an uprising broke out. Its leader was Smbat Bagratuni, whom Justinian II had appointed curopalate of Armenia in 691 and who had now escaped from Arabian captivity. The Arabs responded with a policy of repression and in 705 murdered a group of Armenian aristocrats, whom they had perfidiously enticed into attending meetings in the churches of Nakhchivan and Khram. The Arabian *vostikan* (administrator) responsible for the supervision of the local political and religious institutions and organisations settled in Dvin, the residence of the governor and catholicos


\(^{44}\) ID XXI–XXII, 94–97. Ter-Minassiantz, *Die armenische Kirche*, 73 claims that Sahak III was not an adherent of Chalcedonian theology, and attributes the authorship of an anti-Nestorian tract to him (137–141).
of Armenia. Those who wanted a radical breach with the Roman Empire and a return to the Armenian Church’s pristine customs now came to the fore. They were able to voice their opinion aloud, as a substantial part of the territories inhabited by Armenians was now under Arabian rule. Elia (Elias) of Archesh, who was elected catholicos in 703, used his influences at the Caliph’s court to weed the adherents of imperial orthodoxy out of Albania. Since his letters to the Albanian aristocracy urging them to give up the “heresy that worships [Christ’s] humanity” were of no avail, he turned to the Caliph for help, describing Nerses Bakur, his opposite number in Albania, as a rebel and supporter of the Greeks, and contending that Nerses’ congregations were “praying for the Emperor of the Romans and attempting to hand over our country to him.” The response was instantaneous. Thanks to Arabian assistance Nerses Bakur was deposed, arrested, and deported to Baghdad, where he died. The bishops and aristocracy of Albania were forced to bind themselves in writing, in the Caliph’s presence, that they would never consecrate the head of their Church without the consent of the catholicos of Armenia. Simeon, the new catholicos of Albania appointed at the synod called by Elia, got rid of “Nerses’ schism.” At the Caliph’s request he drew up a list of members of the local aristocracy, so that they could be punished if they repudiated the “orthodox” (viz. Monophysite) faith. All the books belonging to the previous catholicos were destroyed, and from that time on – according to a chronicler – the Albanians lived side by side with the Armenians, professing “the true religion.” Nonetheless still in the same century the policy pursued by the Arabs resulted in the Islamisation of most of the country, and hence in a dramatic fall in the number of dioceses and monasteries.

The course political developments in the East took favoured the rise of the anti-Byzantine faction in Armenia. The Empire sustained a series of distressing defeats in clashes with the Arabs and lost large parts of territory to them. While the Arabs were besieging Constantinople in 717 a new catholicos was elected for Armenia. Like his predecessor, the appointee, John III of Odzun, supported the Arabian option. The Caliph (Umar II) granted John many privileges, such as tax exemption for the clergy, whereupon the latter “started persecuting all the Greeks living in Armenia, both officers and men.” In other words he

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45 Previously this duty was performed by the catholicos of Iberia (Georgia), who was faithful to the Chalcedonian doctrine; Geiushev, Kristianstvo v Kavkazskoi Albanii, 79.
47 Geiushev, Kristianstvo v Kavkazskoi Albanii, 53–56.
48 KG I, 72. Mahé (“L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 401) is probably not right to challenge the reliability of this account.
oppressed the Byzantine Theme of the Armeniacs, a military organisation founded for the defence of the Empire’s eastern border.⁴⁹ Its Armenian officers and rank-and-file were most certainly supporters of the alliance with Byzantium and the buttress propping up the declining Chalcedonian faction. The Catholicos had pledged loyalty to the Caliph on behalf of all his coreligionists.

In 726 John of Odzun called a synod to meet at Manzikert to organise ecclesiastical relations in the new political situation, sever the remaining links with the Empire, and reconcile with the Syrian Jacobite Church on Monophysite grounds. For this purpose Athanasius, the Syrian Patriarch of Antioch, sent his representatives to attend the synod.

Its canon 9 confirmed the fundamental prerogatives pertaining to the office of catholicos: the exclusive right to bless chrism and consecrate bishops. Although the synod revoked communion with the Greeks, a considerable revision was effected in the Armenian Church’s doctrine. Aphthartodocetism was repudiated and its followers, the “Julianist sect,” were anathematised. So, too, were the followers of Severus, who asserted that “Christ’s human body was corruptible.”⁵⁰ There was a return to Cyril of Alexandria’s traditional wording on the single nature of the Word Incarnate, interpreted in a moderately Monophysite manner and close to the Chalcedonian teaching.⁵¹ The Christological formula adopted at the synod said that Christ, the True God, hypostatically took flesh and was made man, the only-begotten Son, a sole hypostasis (person) and single nature of the Word Incarnate.⁵² Following the incarnation he was truly God and genuinely human. As a human he suffered and died, in a body truly susceptible to pain and suffering, yet “of his divine nature he was

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⁵⁰ Even before the Synod of Manzikert started, one of the Syrian Aphthartodocetic monks had brought an accusation to the Catholicos against all the Jacobites of professing “that heresy,” Tournebize, “Les cent dix-sept accusations presentées à Benoit XII contre les Armeniens,” Revue de l’Orient chrétien 11 (1906), 360. Catholicos John of Odzun denounced the Julianists in a treatise “against the phantasts,” Garsoïan, L’Eglise arménienne, 205; Mahé, “L’Eglise arménienne de 611 à 1066,“ 402–404. In the opinion of Ter-Minassiantz (Die armenische Kirche, 70, 79–80, 88–89), from this time on the Armenian Church was rather inconsistent in its denunciations of the Julianists (and later of Julian himself), while at the same time observing some of the chief tenets of their doctrine. Up to this time Julian of Halicarnassus had been regarded as a holy man.
⁵¹ Catholicos John of Odzun claimed that “Our Lord Jesus Christ concealed his divine glory as with a cloak under the body he took from us”, ID XXII, 99. The Severians praised the unity of Christ, and held that his divinity and his humanity were separate in him only in the logical sense, but not in the real sense; Jean Daniélou and Henri I. Marrou, Nouvelle histoire de l’Eglise, Vol. 1: Des origines à Grégoire le Grande (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1963), 268.
⁵² “Hypostatic union,” understood as the personal union of two natures coexisting in Christ without mixing, changing, dividing, or separating, was adopted at the Council of Chalcedon.
above suffering.” In this formulation the word “nature” corresponded to the Greek concept of “hypostasis” and the Latin “persona,” hence from the point of view of Chalcedonian Christology it was a perfectly orthodox avowal of faith.53 Somewhat earlier, at a synod held in Dvin in 719, all the clergy was ordered to return to the primitive Armenian rite “established by St. Gregory,” celebrate the Eucharist using unleavened bread and unadulterated wine (*khanut’iwn*), and celebrate Christmas and Epiphany together on 6th January. A “Feast of the Prophet David and the Apostle James” was introduced for 25th December, “the day on which other nations had Christmas.” The Catholicos himself wrote a special *sharakan* for this feast day.54 The addendum “you who were crucified for us” was reinstated in the *Trishagion*, and was now to be sung three times. Several other decisions were made concerning the cycle of Holy Week and fasts. John of Odzun wrote a commentary to the liturgy cleansed of the Byzantine contaminations.55 He also compiled the *Kanonagirk’ Hayots*, the Armenian Church’s code of canon law.56

The Byzantine Church did not remain silent to these developments. Germanos, Patriarch of Constantinople (717–729), sent a letter to the Catholicos, in a futile effort to persuade him that in the light of Cyril’s other writings his formula assumed hypostatic union and the distinction of two natures. The Armenian clergy responded through Stephen, the young Bishop of Syunik, with a treatise on the oneness of the nature, energy, and will in the person of Christ, and a defence of the Armenian liturgical practices.57 The representatives of the Syrian Patriarch could not have been pleased with the outcome of the synod of 726, either, for like the Greeks they did not approve of the Armenian customs. Nonetheless, officially they acknowledged their Church’s dogmatic communion with the Armenians.58

53 One of the denounced views listed in the anathemas appended to the profession of faith was Theopassionism, viz. that the Saviour’s divinity was subject to suffering; see Tournebize, “Les cent dix-sept accusations,” 362–363.

54 ID XXII, 98; KG, II, 72; Nikita Emin, *Sharakan* (Moskva: Gattsuk, 1879), 47. For the Synod of 719, see Mahé, “L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 401–402.


58 In compliance with the teachings of Severus of Antioch, the Jacobite Church held that *theoretically* the human body of Christ was corruptible. The Syrian Church was also critical of the admixture of water with the wine and the use of unleavened bread for the Eucharist, the celebration of Christmas together with Epiphany on 6th January, the denial of Holy Communion to the laity (except for children, and except at Easter), the absence of icons in the
writings were destroyed after the synod, and only fragmentary vestiges have come down to the present times.\textsuperscript{59} Thereby the Armenian Church finally developed into an independent branch of Christianity. The decrees of this synod became the foundation of Armenian orthodoxy, and John of Odzun the Philosopher (\textit{Imastaser}) has come down in history as the catholicos who gave the Armenians a religious identity distinct from other nations.\textsuperscript{60}

Notwithstanding their tax exemption, the predicament of the clergy of the Armenian Church under Arabian rule was difficult. The catholicos could not even reside in Dvin, which was the capital of the Arabian province of Arminiya – for fear of the local Muslims. The situation was so unstable that the bishops of all the Churches preferred to reside in fortified and not readily accessible monasteries rather than next to their municipal cathedrals. Christian clergymen were not permitted to appear in public in their ecclesiastical attire. Often services had to be held clandestinely, in haste, and in secular dress, so as to secure the chance for an unimpeded getaway at any time. No icons were put up in churches for fear of reprisals by Muslims, who were hostile to any sort of images of human figures. At any rate this was the time of the controversy over icons in Byzantium, whose emperors held images as idolatrous. In the mid-8\textsuperscript{th} century the caliph’s plenipotentiary started collecting taxes from the clergy. The uprising which broke out over the new fiscal liabilities was brutally put down. The clergy were persecuted, many churches were demolished, and attempts were made to force the ringleaders of the rebellious aristocracy to convert to Islam. Those who refused were tortured to death. The Armenian Church had new martyrs, thereby reinforcing its tradition of independence. Each new catholicos had to ask the caliph to confirm his election, and paid through the nose for the favour. One of them, Joseph II (795–806), was obliged to sell several villages belonging to the catholicosate to raise the sum required. The next uprising, which broke out a hundred years later, was quelled just as harshly. The insurgents were given a choice between apostasy and death. Although most opted for Islam, many gave their lives for their faith and their names were entered in the roll-call of martyrs. In the mid-8\textsuperscript{th} century Arab tribes started to be resettled in Armenia. Together with the apostasy of some of

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\textsuperscript{59} Arutjunova-Fidanjan, “The Ethno-Confessional Self-Awareness,” 346.
\textsuperscript{60} Garitte, “Un opuscule grec,” 308–309.
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the indigenous aristocracy, this led to the Islamisation of some areas of the historical Greater Armenia.\textsuperscript{61}

In the late 8\textsuperscript{th} century Georgia reoccupied the provinces of Tayk (Tao) and Klarjeti, the population of which was largely Armenian. Georgians, along with their clergy, started settling in these areas. Georgian monks took over Armenian churches and monasteries which had been left in ruins after the Arab invasions, and converted Monophysite Armenians to “the true religion.” The operation was supported by the Georgian Bagratid dynasty, which had Armenian roots. As a result “Georgian” Chalcedonianism spread among the local Armenians.\textsuperscript{62} Although the “converts” continued to use Armenian as the language of their liturgy, they submitted to the ecclesiastical authority of the catholicos of Georgia and regarded their countrymen who had not left the national jurisdiction as “Monophysite heretics.” In the 9\textsuperscript{th} century, once their position was firmly established in northern Armenia, the Chalcedonians tried to disseminate their “orthodoxy” in central Armenia as well.\textsuperscript{63}

In the 860s, in outcome of the political disintegration of the Caliphate of Baghdad and fighting among the Arabs, the princes of Armenia managed to acquire more freedom in domestic matters. The rise of local Muslim emirs encouraged the caliph to counteract their growing power through the Christian princes. One of the families enjoying the caliph’s favour were the Armenian Bagratids, whose political status had already been considerable in the previous century. The foundations of their power had been laid by Smbat Bagratuni, who had held the office of commander-in-chief (\textit{sparapet Hayots’) of Armenia. He was succeeded in this office by his son Ashot, who subsequently obtained the title of “prince of princes” (\textit{ishkhan ishkhanats’) from the caliph, which meant that he was the chief prince of the Arabian province of Arminiya, covering Armenia, Georgia, and Albania. These titles gave him a privileged status with respect to other local lords in the Caucasus, including Islamic princes. Ashot tried to improve his status by entering an alliance with the Byzantine Empire, especially as some of the Armenian princes had already sought Byzantine support before. Perhaps the “prince of princes” was trying to win the Emperor’s acknowledgement of his supremacy in Armenia. In this period Byzantium was taking advantage of the decline of the Caliphate and recuperating the western parts of the country. In connection with this, Armenian bishops in the region regarded as heretics were being removed from


\textsuperscript{62} Arutjunova-Fidanian, \textit{Armianie khalkidonity}, 78–79.

\textsuperscript{63} Arutjunova-Fidanian, \textit{Armianie khalkidonity}, 77.
office. Prince Ashot offered sanctuary to Sahak of Asun, one of the deposed bishops, and in this situation embarking on negotiations with Byzantium seemed indispensable.

The rapprochement with the Empire commenced with negotiations on dogmatic issues. There can be no doubt that the initiative was Ashot’s, who persuaded Catholicos Zachary (855–877), who was residing at Shirakavan under Ashot’s protection, to embark on dialogue with the Byzantine Church. Zachary owed his elevation to Ashot’s father, Smbat. To reinforce his position with respect to the Imperial Church, Ashot sent an embassy to Rome for the verification of the orthodoxy of his faith. News had been reaching the Orient of a conflict which caused a split between the two great Churches of the East and West. Despite the remoteness and centuries of separation, the Armenians held the Patriarchal See of Rome in great respect and recognised its leadership in the Universal Church.65

Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople appealed to Catholicos Zachary to renounce heresy and accept the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon. He sent his legate, John, Archbishop of Nikè (Thrace) to Armenia, with a letter expounding the meaning of the Christological theology developed at Chalcedon.66 John must have had a good knowledge of the Armenian customs, as he had written a treatise on the Nativity and Epiphany.67 The issue must certainly have been on the agenda for discussion, along with other liturgical differences.

To establish their positions on these points, in 862 a synod of the Armenian Church convened in Shirakavan, with the Deacon Nana, a representative of the Syrian Church, attending.68 The letter from the Patriarch of Constantinople was the basis for discussion. In it Photius called for the acceptance of the Chalcedonian dogmatic formula, the condemnation of the heresies of Eutyches, Severus, and Dioscorus, and of the erroneous notions on the Holy Trinity and

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64 This place is now known as Bassüregel, and is in eastern Turkey near the border with modern Armenia; Nicole Thierry and Michel Thierry, “Notes sur les monuments arméniens en Turquie (1964),” REA N.S. 2 (1965): 173.
65 See Part III.
67 The treatise was addressed to Zachary, PG 96, 1435–1450.
susceptibility of Christ’s body to suffering. Although the Church of Armenia had already anathematised some of these as heretics before (viz. Eutyches, Severus, and Julian of Halicarnassus), nonetheless the obstinate adherence to Cyril of Alexandria’s statement on the single nature of the Word Incarnate and the commemoration of Dioscorus in the liturgy raised suspicions that the Armenian Christology was still contaminated with false teachings. The vardapets presented 15 canons at the synod to defend the purity of their doctrine. They dissociated themselves from Monophysitism and said that on its Incarnation the Word was still God but became truly human, and was one person (hypostasis) comprising two natures, one in substance with the Father as regards divinity, and with Man in his humanity (except for sin). This definition was almost identical to the Chalcedonian statement. The fathers of the synod emphatically rejected the teachings ascribed to Eutyches on Jesus’ human body. They also came out against the Theopassionist theory, viz. that his “divinity” suffered on the cross.

Like other Monophysites, the Armenians had been adding the phrase “you who suffered for us on the cross” to the Trishagion, which in the eyes of the Greeks automatically meant that they subscribed to this heresy. The Trishagion

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72 “Si quis iuxta Eutychis stultitiam temere dixerit, carnem divini Verbi fuisse de coelo allatam, aut alterius, quam nostrae substantiae: vel naturam divinam cum carne confusam, aut in carne conversam; ideo vanam reddiderit nostram redemptionem: anathema sit; … Si quis … dixerit … Filium non carne, sed divinitate passum iuxta Eutychis et Manicheorum ineptias … anathema sit,” Balgy, *Historia doctrinae*, 218.
is a hymn in honour of the Holy Trinity, so this appendage meant that the entire Trinity, One God, suffered and was crucified. To defend itself against such accusations, the synod said that anyone who claimed that the Holy Trinity suffered on the cross was a heretic. Certain similarities have been observed between the synod’s statements and the Western doctrine on the Holy Spirit and his origin _ex Patre Filioque_. Perhaps this is evidence of an attempt on the part of the Armenians to draw an advantage from the conflict between Rome and Constantinople in their bid for ecclesiastical communion. Nonetheless the synod also tried to please the Patriarch. Characteristically, although it called for loyalty to the first three ecumenical councils, it also admitted the potential acknowledgement of subsequent councils, including Chalcedon, as canonical. Those the synod condemned were the detractors – individuals or groups who were aware of the decrees passed at these councils, but were set on undermining them by interpreting them in a Nestorian way for their own advantage or acclaim.

The synod was defending its traditional teaching, trying to reconcile it to the Post-Chalcedonian orthodoxy. It admitted two potential positions: the acceptance or the rejection of Chalcedon, the latter as long it was taken on the grounds of conscience and a deep conviction that it was the right thing to do. This was a very realistic approach. Armenian society had developed a deep-rooted resentment of Chalcedon, which was regarded as a pseudo-council that had condoned Nestorianism. The very word “Chalcedonian”

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73 “Si quis sanctam Trinitatem passabilem dixerit, aut crucifixam … anathema sit,” Balgy, _Historia doctrinae_, 217. In 861 the Synod of Rome anathematised Theopassionism; see Part III, Chapter 8.

74 “Patrem a nullo principio; Filium a Patre; et Spiritum Sanctum ab utriusque essentia existentem, et utrique coequalem,” Balgy, _Historia doctrinae_, 217.

75 At this time the _filioque_ issue was artificially blown up by Photius. It was a problem for the Frankish, not the Roman Church. In Rome the Creed was chanted without the word until 1014.


77 “Si quis Chalcedonensem Synodum aliasve post illam sequentes, contrarias, aut repugnantes esse cognoverit doctrines Apostolorum, vel Prophetarum, vel trium sanctorum praecedentium conciliorum, et tamen prae humana captanda benevolentia, aut suis privatis commodis, eas nequauquam anathematizaverit: anathema sit … Si quis sanctam Synodum, aut alias eam subsequentes, videlicet quintam, sextam et septimam, concordes et consentientes fuisse cognoverit doctrinis Apostolorum et Prophetarum, et trium Sanctorum praecedentium conciliorum; et temere nihil minus praesumpserit, easdem synodos anathematizare, aut calumniose dicere, fuisse turpi Nestorio consentaneas, sciat hujusmodi anathema in ipsummet cadere; cum inscriptum sit: Qui innocentem execratur, execratur animam suam, et in caput sui ipsius exercratio revertetur: quin etiam et anathema ipse sit,” Balgy, _Historia doctrinae_, 219.
automatically connoted the Nestorian heresy, hence great care was taken to avoid the need to use it. If the traditional Armenian theology were interpreted in a Chalcedonian spirit without mentioning the Council it would be possible to achieve unity in the faith. This tolerant approach offered a prospect for the future recognition of the decrees of the later ecumenical councils. In point of fact, at this time there were no basic theological differences to settle between Constantinople and Armenia, only terminological misunderstandings or misrepresentations. Undoubtedly the Armenian theologians avoided using the expression *erku bnutciwnk*; (*duae naturae*), for the word *bnutciwn* stood for the concept of “nature,” which in the West was rendered by the terms *hypostasis* or *persona*. Despite the efforts made by Armenian theologians sympathetic to Chalcedon, there was no word in the Armenian church usage serving as the equivalent of *physis* and *natura*. For the Armenians Christ had one “nature” (*mi bnutciwn*), consisting of two … “natures” (*erku bnutciwnk*). For the West the expression “one nature” was tantamount to Monophysitism, while for the Armenians “two natures” (*erku bnutciwnk*) meant “two persons” (*duae personae*), in other words Nestorianism. So it is easy to see that no understanding could be reached on the basis of terminology. The synod rejected Photius’ main demands – withdrawal of the controversial addendum from the *Trishagion* and unconditional acceptance of Chalcedon. Initially both parties were full of good will, but later they reverted to their old positions. As late as 867 Photius bragged in a circular addressed to the other patriarchs of the East that he had got the Armenians to embrace “the true faith,” but it was wishful thinking, as just a little later he felt obliged to write another letter to the Armenians against Theopassionism and exhort them once more to recognise the Chalcedonian decrees. For the same old reasons the Armenians dodged making such promises, which would have been impossible to keep in their circumstances. Bishop Sahak, who had been banished by Byzantine troops, wrote a letter to Photius trying to persuade him that the person of Christ was not “in two natures” but “composed of two natures,” and to explain why Leo’s Tome was a Nestorian tract that admitted “two persons” in Christ. Thereby Sahak tried to show that it was the Greeks who were “the heretics,” quoting large passages from Timothy Ailuros’ book against Chalcedon. There was stalemate in the negotiations with the Empire, while not much later (around

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885) the Caliph bestowed the royal title on Ashot, and it was even endorsed by the Emperor Basil I.

After Ashot's death the kingdom of Armenia was split up between two aristocratic houses, the Bagratids and the Artsrunids, played off against each other by the Arab governor who resided in the area. The Artsruni kingdom was known as Vaspurakan. Ashot's successor Smbat Bagratuni was suspected of wanting to form a political alliance with Byzantium, as he had promised to send Catholicos John to Constantinople for a Chalcedonian training and for consecration there. However, the Catholicos was not keen on this, despite the oppression he had suffered from the Arabs, as he was afraid of losing the confidence of his congregations, especially the aristocracy, who controlled episcopal appointments, which were treated as assets belonging to particular lordly families. Aristocratic power was almost as strong as the king's power, and there were slim chances of carrying out church reform without their general consent. But consent was never unanimous. At any rate the Catholics were deeply convinced that Chalcedonian Christology was tainted with Nestorianism. The political rift was widening. Catholicos willing to accept the Chalcedonian Christology generally forfeited incumbency. Around 992, during the pontificate of Catholicos Sargis I of Sevan, the patriarchal seat was moved to Ani, the new capital of the Bagratid kingdom, where a magnificent cathedral was raised along with so many churches that the place was dubbed "the city of a thousand and one churches." Royal and aristocratic protection secured comfort and safety for catholicos. But the situation was short-lived. In the mid-10th century the Byzantine Empire renewed its eastward expansion and annexed some of the provinces of Greater Armenia. The process intensified in the early 11th century. The Empire acquired particular Armenian kingdoms

81 Catholicos Vahan (ca. 967–969) was deposed by the synod called by King Ashot III Bagratuni (952/953–977) for adhering to the Chalcedonian doctrine and putting icons in the patriarchal church in Argina. The catholicos who had brought in Chalcedonian theology in the Artsrunid kingdom kept his office there. One of his students was the distinguished poet Gregory of Narek; Tournebize, "Arménie," 310; see the editions of his poetry translated into English, Grigor Narekatsi. Lamentations of Narek: Mystic Soliloquies with God, edited and translated by Mischa Kudian (London: Mashtots Press, 1977); in the Russian translation by M. O. Darbianian-Melikjan and Lena A. Khanlarian, Grigor Narekatsi, Kniga skorbnykh piesnopienii (Moskva: Nauka, 1988); Mahé, "L'Église arménienne de 611 à 1066," 413–425, 428.

82 Tadevos Kh. Khakobian, Ani stolitsa srednevekovoĭ Armenii (Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Erevanskogo Universiteta, 1985); For the seats of the catholicos, see Mahé, "L'Église arménienne de 611 à 1066?", 418, 434; Ani Baladian, "Ani. La ville aux mille et une églises," in Les douze capitais d'Arménie, ed. Patrick Donabédian and Claude Mutafian (Paris: Somogy éditions d'art, 2010), 162–164.

by purchase, and in exchange their kings and lords obtained lands on imperial territory. The resettlements also involved the migration of the lower echelons of society. Large numbers of Armenians appeared in Cappadocia, Cilicia, northern Syria, and Mesopotamia.  

The Byzantines treated the Armenian hierarchy as heretical. During their military expeditions they frequently resorted to brutality, burning and looting the churches of the “heretics,” and trying to establish imperial “orthodoxy” on the lands they conquered. They set up military themes – Taron, Vaspurakan, and Iberia – and a network of orthodox metropolises and sees, doubling the country’s ecclesiastical structure. A Chalcedonian cathedral was raised in the capital Ani. Chalcedonian Armenians were put under the authority of the catholicos of Iberia (Georgia), but continued to perform liturgical rites in Armenian, apart from the Trishagion, which was sung in Greek and of course without the Monophysite addendum. They also regarded themselves as the rightful inheritors of the orthodox legacy of the primitive fathers of the Armenian Church. They received preferential treatment from the authorities, and were promoted to prominent civil and military administrative offices for the implementation of imperial policy. They also engaged in criticism of their countrymen who professed the national religion. Speakers of Armenian who entered Greek or Georgian monasteries became theological experts on the Armenian “heresy.” In the late 9th century, Nikon, superior of the Monastery on the Black Mountain adjacent to the River Amanos, defended Armenian Chalcedonian monks against the charge of unorthodoxy for using Armenian in the liturgy. He wrote that with [the help of ] God the fathers and patriarchs were still using their services in the battle against heretics whenever any matter was raised at a synod against Armenian heretics, because they [Chalcedonian Armenians] knew the Armenian language and treatises. “And it still used to

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85 When Emperor Roman III Argyros was crossing the Amanos near Black Mountain during his campaign against Antioch in 1028 he noticed some of the local Armenian ascetic monks, and asked his officials, “What’s that assembly of heretics? … I don’t need their prayers! Fetch bowmen from each of their monasteries to serve my empire.” “He was very fond of the Chalcedonian provisions, and hated everything that had anything to do with the true faith,” the Armenian chronicler Aristakes Lastivertsi commented. See Povestovanie vardapeta Aristakesa Lastiverttsy, translation and commentary by Karen N. Yuzbashian (Moskva: Nauka, 1968), VI, 71.

86 Alexandr P. Kazhdan, Armiane v sostave gospodstvuushchego klassa vizantiiskoi imperii (Erevan: Izdatelstvo Akademii Nauk Armianskoi SSR, 1975); Arutiunova-Fidanian, Armianie khalkidonity, 38, 45.
happen quite recently in the presence of the reverend patriarchs that just a few of them would prevent Armenian heretics from uttering a single word or even moving their tongues, though there were quite a lot of heretics present.” For the purpose of polemic Chalcedonian monks translated Armenian works into Georgian, and from Georgian into Armenian. They also translated from Greek into Armenian.87

The activities of Chalcedonian proselytes put the Armenian Church in a very difficult situation. Pressure was continually being applied on the catholics, bishops, kings and aristocracy to renounce the “Monophysite heresy.” They were summoned to Constantinople for theological discussions, sometimes by means of coercion.88 The Byzantine authorities expelled Catholicos Khachik II (1054–1060) from Ani for refusing to accept the Chalcedonian decrees, and interned him in one of the Armenian monasteries.89 For a long time the election of a successor was prevented. It was not until 1065 that the imperial authorities gave their consent for an election to be held. The new catholicos was Vahram Pahlavuni, who had earlier held high offices in Byzantine administrative authorities, so he was expected to toe the line. The office would stay in his family until the early 13th century. He took the name of Gregory II (1066–1105), with the ambition of becoming a second Illuminator for Armenia. He had been thoroughly educated, and had a good knowledge of Greek literature, philosophy, and theology. He received the byname of Martyrophile (Vkayasêr) for his addition to the Armenian martyrology of more lives of saints drawn from the Greek tradition. However, he turned out a disappointment for the Byzantine authorities, as he was not in the least inclined to comply with the Greek diktat. He looked to the Armenian ex-kings staying in Cappadocia for assistance. The imperial Church refused to acknowledge his patriarchal status, treating him as an ordinary archbishop. The national Church reacted to the wave of apostasies by denying their Chalcedonian countrymen the right to call themselves Armenians; even though they still retained their Armenian culture they were referred to as Iberians (Georgians) or Greeks, depending on which ecclesiastical jurisdiction they were under. And they were hated more than native Greeks and Georgians.90 The official Church of the Byzantine state set up Armenian Uniate communities which pursued activities that were subversive

87 Arutiunova-Fidanian, Armianie khalkidonity, 48.
89 Povestvovanie vardapeta Aristakesa Lastivertsy, X, 86.
90 Arutiunova-Fidaian, Armianie khalkidonity, 59–68; Arutiunova-Fidaian, “‘Ivir’ v vizantii-skikh istochnikakh XI v.,” Vestnik Matenadarana 11 (1973): 46–66. Armenians subject to Georgian rule were known as tsad, tsat, tsovdey, or tsondey (nicknames for heretics).
with respect to the Armenian national Church. On the other hand, the resettlement of the Armenian population to other parts of the Byzantine Empire also had an unintended effect – Armenian monasteries and bishoprics spread and were established in places as distant as Cappadocia, Cilicia, Mesopotamia, and Syria, confirming the attachment resettled Armenians had to the faith of their fathers. Sometimes, in places like Antioch, they clashed with members of other denominations over religion. In 1079 the last Armenian king was slain in an act of revenge for the killing of the Greek archbishop of Caesarea, who had called his dog “Armenian.” The authorities did all they could to expunge the national ingredient from Armenian Christianity. As he was setting out to war against the Seljuk Turks, who had been laying waste Byzantine Armenia since the mid-11th century, the Emperor Romanos Diogenes is reputed to have said that when he returned home after the victory he would eradicate the Armenian faith. He did not get the chance to put his boast into practice. In 1071 he was defeated in the Battle of Manzikert and fell into captivity. Seljuk hordes swarmed over the eastern expanses of his empire. The disaster was one of the causes of the Crusades, which would bring the Armenians a new partner, the Latin Church.

Relations between Armenians and the Patriarchate of Rome to the Crusades (4th–11th century)

Armenia’s religious relations with Rome go back to Late Antiquity. There were Armenian Christians in Rome already in the 4th century. In 527, after Justinian had reconquered Italy, Armenian contingents were stationed there,
and stayed for a long time, sources recorded. Beside the soldiers there were also officials of Armenian descent, and Armenian merchants. A large number settled in the Greek-speaking south of Italy. They made the cult of St. Gregory the Illuminator popular in Naples, which belonged to the Empire of the East until 1137. The Apostle of Armenia and the martyrs Hripsime and Gaiane are mentioned on a stone calendar dated to 847–877 found there. There is still a district and a church in Naples today named after St. Gregory the Armenian. He is also one of the city’s patron saints, as well as of Palermo and Nardò. Two other, rather mysterious Armenian saints, Liberius and Minas (Miniato), sons of Armenian kings from an unknown period, were venerated in Italy. There is a stone church called Santa Maria de Armenis, probably from the 8th century, in Forenza. There were Armenians in Calabria and Tarento still in the 9th century. A substantial Armenian community lived in Bari in the 10th century; they had their own church and were doing business there before 1005.

There are even earlier, 6th- and 7th-century records of Armenians – from Persarmenia! – in northern Italy, at Ravenna. Classe had a district called “Armenia.” The Curia of Ravenna holds two records dated 552 and 575 naming Sahak (Isaakakios), Byzantine exarch of Italy, whose marble tombstone in San Vitale has come down to our times. The surviving fragment

93 Procopius of Caesarea (De bello Persico, I. 15, in Procopii Caesariensis Opera, ed. I. Havry, Vol. 1, ed. Gerhard Wirth (Lipsiae G. B. Teubneri, 1963)) recalls that the renowned eunuch Narses, commander of the Byzantine military expeditions to Italy, who brought the destruction of the Kingdom of the Ostrogoths to completion and was subsequently Justinian’s exarch for Italy, originally came from Persarmenia.

94 The first record of an Armenian community in Naples is quite late, 1328. However, there is evidence for an earlier Armenian presence in the city. The existence of the Armenian Monastery of St. George is recorded for 921. Roma-Armenia, ed. Claude Mutafian (Roma: Edizioni de Luca, 1999), 238.

95 Paul Peeters, “S. Grégoire l’Illuminateur dans le Calendrier lapidaire de Naples,” AB 60 (1942): 91–130. There are three commemorations of St. Gregory the Illuminator in this calendar: on 30th September, and 2nd and 3rd December. Unlike other calendars, which have St. Gregory’s feast-day on 2nd December, in Naples his main feast-day was celebrated on 3rd December, as in Armenia.

96 There is a 10th-century record for this church. It was built on the site of the ancient Temple of Ceres, near the old forum. Today it is still proud of having the relics of its Patron Saint, Roma-Armenia, 238.


99 Roma-Armenia, 198.
of the Greek inscription praises him as “a great ornament of the whole of Armenia.”  

A document dated November 639 tells us that one Paulacis, of the numerus Arminiorum and commander of the unit at Verona, made a donation to the Church in Ravenna. Armenian pilgrims crossed Italy on their way to the shrine of St. James at Santiago de Compostela in Spain, St. Martin at Tours in France, or St. Bavo at Ghent, Belgium. Some Armenian ascetic monks on a pilgrimage eventually settled in one of the Italian monasteries. One of the best-known was Simeon of Sophene, who came to Italy from Jerusalem, visited Rome, Compostela, and Tours, and finally, in 1013, settled in the Benedictine monastery at Polirone near Mantua. In Pisa and Lucca he converted Jews, died in 1013 at Polirone, and is one of the patrons of Mantua. David (Davino), another 11th-century Armenian making the pilgrimage from Jerusalem to Compostela, never reached his destination. After visiting Rome he died in Lucca. In the 12th century he was canonised by Pope Alexander III, in what was the first official canonisation (the equivalent of today’s beatification) in the Church of Rome.

The principal place was of course Rome – the splendid and renowned, universal metropolis, “the gateway to the world,” as Armenian scribes and historians still called it in the 13th century. Traditionally Armenians regarded Rome as a city of learning and the repository of priceless ancient manuscripts. The Armenian clergy was well aware of the paramount role Rome had played in the establishment of the true faith in the first few ecumenical councils. The documents of the Council of Nicaea spoke of the primacy of the bishops of the Empire’s old capital. The same was affirmed by the resolutions of the Synod of Sardica, as entered in an early 8th-century Armenian book of canons, which allowed appeals to Rome regarding local disputes. Agathangelos’ history of the conversion of Armenia and diverse lives of St. Gregory the Illuminator gave a description of the visit to Rome made by the king of Armenia and the

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102 Simeon was highly esteemed by Boniface III, Margrave of Canossa, and Richilda, his first wife. Mahé, “L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 435.
104 MCh II. 89; III. 34, 61.
105 Nonetheless, the Armenians were reluctant about recognising the See of Rome as the foundation of St. Peter on his own, but jointly with St. Paul, which was in line with the Early Christian tradition; see Francis Dvornik, *Byzantium and the Roman Primacy* (New York: Fordham University Press, [1966]), 29, 32.
country’s Illuminator. In the early 7th century a life of St. Gregory was written in the circle of the Chalcedonian Catholicos John of Bagaran (591–604). According to this hagiography the Illuminator was ordained and invested with his ecclesiastical office by the Patriarch of Rome, and the ceremony took place in Rome. Yeghishe’s History of Vardan and the Armenian War said that when the insurgents rising up against Persia in 451 turned to the emperor with a plea for help they pointed out that they had received Christianity from the archbishop of Rome. Actually this remark did not apply to the pope, but that is how it could have been understood later. As of 678 there was an Armenian legend that Constantine had been converted by Pope Sylvester (Actus Silvestri). Two popes earned themselves a permanent place in the Armenian Church’s canonical legacy: Julius I, who had upheld the true faith at Nicaea and was referred to as “the leader of the people of the West on the road of life;” and Leo I, the spiritual leader at Chalcedon, whose “Jewish letter” helped Dyoophysitism on its way to victory in the Christological dispute. Armenians knew that Rome was where the Apostles Peter and Paul preached, died as martyrs, and where their tombs were located. That is why Armenians


109 The hierarch in question in this particular case was not the Bishop of Rome, but the Archbishop of Caesarea, which was in the Eastern Roman Empire, and this is why he was called the “Roman Archbishop.” Simon Weber, Die katholische Kirche in Armenien (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1903), 521. Even Halfter (Das Papsttum und die Armenier im frühen und hohen Mittelalter: Von den ersten Kontakten bis zur Fixierung der Kirchenunion im Jahre 1198, Köln: Böhlau, 1996, 78) thinks this remark applied to the Pope.

110 Paul Peeters, “La version arménienne de l’historien Socrate,” in Recherches d’histoire et de philologie orientales, Vol. 1 (Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1951), 310–336 313, 335. Movses Khorenatsi knew this translation (II. 83), and this is one of the reasons why he is regarded as a later chronicler, although he presented himself as a student of Mashtots, who flourished in the 5th century.

111 Nina G. Garsoïan, L’Église arménienne et le grand schisme d’Orient, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Subsidia, Vol. 100 (Lovanii: Peeters, 1999), 146, 449; Esbroeck, “Roma l’ancienne et Constantinople vue de l’Arménie,” in Da Roma alla terza Roma (La nozione di Romano tra cittadinanza e universalità) (Roma: Università degli studi La Sapienza, 1982), 355; Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 69, 79. The Armenian author of a treatise against the doctrine of Christ having two natures also invoked the authority of Julius I, Bishop of Rome; see Erwand Ter-Minassiantz, Die armenische Kirche in ihren
came on pilgrimage to Rome, which they considered Christianity’s second most sacred sanctuary, after Jerusalem. There was an Armenian hospice in Rome, perhaps already in the 7th century. Around that time there were probably two Armenian monasteries in Rome. One, the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Andrew, was situated near the Renate Monastery.\textsuperscript{112} The second, the Monastery of St. Paul ad Aquas Salvias, stood on the site of the present-day Tre Fontane Trappist Abbey, where according to tradition St. Paul was beheaded; it was said to have been founded by Narses, exarch of Italy, in the reign of Justinian.\textsuperscript{113} But the bishops of Rome must have known of Armenians in the city well before that time. In a letter of 599 to the bishop of Ancona, Gregory the Great mentioned one Bahan (Vahan), an officer in the Pope’s service (\textit{filius noster … magister militum}).\textsuperscript{114}

Armenians who settled in Byzantine Italy were not subject to the authority of the catholicos, but to the local ecclesiasts, Greek or Latin.\textsuperscript{115} They were benefactors of local churches, and if they had a place of worship of their own it was subject to the jurisdiction of the local hierarchy. Fluent Greek made it easier for them to integrate into the local community. Hence their sense of Armenian national identity could not be kept up for very long on Italian soil, unless it was refurbished by a continual flow of new arrivals from the eastern part of the Empire. There can be no doubt that the Armenians living in the West adhered to the Chalcedonian Christology. Moreover, at this time the Church of Armenia was in communion with the universal Church on the grounds of a union entered in 632 at the Synod of Theodosiopolis. The hegumens of the two Armenian monasteries in Rome signed the documents of the Lateran Synod of 649, at which, in the presence of Pope Martin I, Monophysitism and


\textsuperscript{112} The Renate Monastery of St. Andrew and St. Lucy was probably situated on the Esquiline Hill. As late as the 10th century it was still one of the Greek monasteries; see Bernard Hamilton, “The City of Rome and the Eastern Churches in the Tenth Century,” \textit{OChP} 27 (1961): 9.

\textsuperscript{113} Its hegumen called it the monastery “of the Cilicians” (\textit{dei Cilici}), no doubt in connection with St. Paul, who came from Tarsus in Cilicia. Narses is also regarded as the founder of the Armenian Cathedral in Torcello; Boghos L. Zekiyan, “Le colonie armene del Medio Evo in Italia e le relazioni culturali italo-armene (Materiale per la storia degli Armeni in Italia),” in \textit{Atti del primo simposio internazionale di arte armena (Bergamo 28–30 Giugno 1975)} (Venezia: San Lazzaro, 1978), 833–834; \textit{Roma-Armenia}, 198, 222.

\textsuperscript{114} BAV Pal. Lat., 266, f. 121; \textit{Roma-Armenia}, 198.

\textsuperscript{115} The Pope lost his jurisdiction over Byzantine Italy in 732–733; he was divested of it by the iconoclast Emperor Leo III. In the 11th century it was restored to the papacy, chiefly thanks to an alliance with the Normans, and the Greek hierarchs were replaced with Latin bishops; see Dvornik, \textit{Byzantium and the Roman Primacy}, 96, 103.
Monothelitism were anathematised. In other words their position on these two doctrines was more uncompromising than that of the Armenian and Byzantine Churches at the time. Later the only Armenians to come to Italy were subjects of the Empire of the East and orthodox by religion. After the Arab conquest arrivals from Persarmenia stopped. From that time on all the Latin West ever heard about Armenian Christianity was what the Greeks reported, and quite naturally it was not favourable information. When Pope Nicholas I (858–867) received a letter from Ashot, “Prince of princes” of Greater Armenia, he wrote back deploring the fact that although Ashot himself was orthodox by religion, alas – as Nicholas had heard – his subjects, both lords and simple folk, professed heresies, particularly Theopassionism, which had been condemned at the Synod of Rome in 861. The Pope instructed him that this heresy was a logical consequence of Monophysitism, because once you assumed that Christ only had a divine nature then you would have to conclude that it was his divinity that suffered on the cross. To help Ashot counteract the heresy the Pope attached a copy of the new Greek translation of the Dogmatic Epistle of Leo the Great to Flavian, which contained an outright condemnation of the teachings of Eutyches. In a circular letter of 866 Nicholas appealed to the bishops of the East for an effort to bring the Armenians back onto the right path. On the other hand, the fate of this first direct exchange of correspondence shows just how difficult keeping in touch was. The Byzantine authorities stopped the Pope’s emissaries and the letter never reached Ashot, whom Nicholas was trying to get involved in his tussle with Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople. The fact that an Armenian prince of the Bagratuni dynasty, and later king of Armenia, sought support in Rome, shows just how highly esteemed the Roman patriarchate was in the Armenian East.

When independent Armenian states were set up in Greater Armenia the Armenian Church had the protection of its own secular rulers and no longer had

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116 The two were Talassius, presbyter and hegumen of the Armenian Monastery near Renate, and George, hegumen of the Ad Aquas Salvias Monastery; Zekiyan, “Le colonie armene,” 833–834.
117 “Quia vero passionem eius praedicant et naturam in eo humanam inesse diffidunt, quid alid innuunt, nisi quod deitati eius passiones crucis et reliquarum contumeliarum obprobria dant,” Nicolai I. Papae Epistolae, ed. Ernst Perels, MGH Epistolae, VI (Berolini: Weidmann, 1925), no. 87; CICO I, no. 321 (the letter’s addressee was misidentified as the Emperor Michael III); see also Haltfer, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 87.
119 Nicolai I. Papae Epistolae, 567, nos. 98, 98a.
120 Haltfer, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 84–110.
to seek support in either Rome or Constantinople. In the West a preconception was built up under Greek influence that almost all the Armenians had fallen away from the Catholic (viz. Universal) Church.\textsuperscript{121} They also owed this stereotype to their Chalcedonian compatriots, adherents of the authority of the Eastern Orthodox patriarchs or of the catholici of Georgia. Henceforth Armenian monks arriving in Rome were treated with distrust. Simeon of Polirone was nearly torn to pieces by a devout Roman mob when he was praying in the Eastern fashion in the Basilica of St. John Lateran during the synod held there in 981. His life was saved by a bishop from the borders of Armenia (\textit{ab Armeniae finibus}) and the resolute intervention of Pope Benedict VII. Incidentally, before he came to Rome Simeon had taken the trouble to obtain a testimonial of his orthodoxy from Arsenius, Patriarch of Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{122} Presumably the old Armenian monasteries in Rome had been closed down by this time, since there was no-one in Rome who could understand Simeon’s speech. Perhaps this is why Armenian monks of the Chalcedonian orientation stayed at Greek monasteries.

In the 11\textsuperscript{th} century many Armenians resettled in outcome of Byzantine expansion onto Armenian territories, and some of them, probably on a voluntary basis, migrated to other parts of the Byzantine Empire for commercial reasons. Some settled in southern Italy.\textsuperscript{123} This time non-Chalcedonian Armenians also came, alongside Orthodox Armenians. Numerous religious disputes must have occurred in this community. Macharus, a Chalcedonian Armenian, who lived in Frigento near Benevento, accused his fellow countrymen and the Armenian Church of heresy. The matter must have taken a turn for the worse, as the Armenians asked their catholicos for protection. Gregory II the Martyrophile sent an envoy, a presbyter named John, to the West to deal with this matter. John probably reached Rome in late 1079.\textsuperscript{124} It was the first official embassy

\textsuperscript{121} Still in 1074 all that the Pope Gregory VII, knew about the Armenians, was that “fere omnes a Catholica fide oberrant,” CICO I, 787 (no 376); \textit{Das Register Gregors VII}, ed. E. Caspar, Epistolae selectae in usum scholarum ex MGH separatim editae, 3\textsuperscript{rd} ed. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1967), Vol. II/1, Lib. II, no. 31, 167. Isidore of Seville’s \textit{Etymologiarum sive Originum libri XX}, which was a popular encyclopaedic work in the West, misinformed its users that the Armenians had been converted in the reign of the Emperor Justin II (568–578), and the error was passed on by other medieval chroniclers; see von den Brincken, \textit{Die Nationes Christianorum Orientalium}, 182.


\textsuperscript{123} Zekiyan, “Le colonie armene,” 833.

\textsuperscript{124} In the opinion of Halfter, \textit{Das Papsttum und die Armenier}, 120, the envoy was dispatched to try to win the Pope’s support for the Catholicos in the dispute between the Armenians and the Byzantine Church. However, Byzantium was going through too serious a crisis in the
from Armenia for many years, and the first ever from a catholicos. During an audience John asked the Pope to punish Macharus the heretic, who had been banished from Armenia and was now denigrating the Armenian Church in the eyes of the Latin Church. Before Pope Gregory VII fulfilled the request he tested the envoy to check his orthodoxy, and when the latter had got through successfully, Gregory sent a letter to Roffredo, Archbishop of Benevento, to start inquisition proceedings in the matter, in which his suffragans and the abbot of Monte Cassino were to take part. Soon the Pope had more detailed and unfavourable information available on the Armenian Church, of a kind that could only come to light during legal proceedings. The judges he had appointed must have asked the Greek clergy resident in Italy for an opinion.

We have a good idea of most of the charges. In a letter dated 6th June 1080 the Pope urged the Catholicos to renounce the dogmatic errors and abolish certain liturgical practices. What he had learned was first and foremost that the Armenians do not mix water and wine during the celebration of the Eucharist, although no Christian who knew the Holy Gospels was in any doubt that water had flowed out of the Lord’s side together with blood (*nemo Christianus, qui sacra novit evangelia, dubitet e latere Domini aquam cum sanguine emanasse*). In addition they made their chrism out of butter instead of balm, accorded the heretic Dioscoros the veneration due to a saint, even though he had been condemned at the Council of Chalcedon, and added the expression *qui crucifixus es pro nobis* to the Trishagion. Gregory VII appealed

aftermath of the Battle of Manzikert (1071) to engage in a religious feud with the Armenian national Church. Nonetheless, the business with which the Catholicos' emissary arrived was important for southern Italy, with the territory of the Patriarchate of Rome. Only there could the Greek clergy and the Chalcedonian Armenians pose a threat to the non-Chalcedonians at that particular time.

125 CICO I, 789 (no. 379): “de Armenia expulsus gravem contra Armeniam eiusdem haeresis gignat latinoae apostolicae catholicaeque Ecclesiae suspitionem, immo vero iudicium.”

126 CICO I, 789–790 (no. 379). This letter has no date. Its editor has dated it to 1080, but if the Pope replied to the Catholicos' request on 6th June 1080, the inquisition proceedings must have finished by that time, and therefore the Catholicos' envoy must have arrived, and the Pope must have decided to start an inquiry at least by the end of 1079. Mutafian, *L'Arménie du Levant*, Vol. I, 555.

127 In the late 10th century Monte Cassino Monastery was still serving as a venue for meetings between Greek and Latin monks for theological discussions; see Hamilton, “The City of Rome,” 14.

128 CICO I, 790 (no. 380): “Proinde quoniam vestram, scilicet Armeniorum, Ecclesiam a rectitudine fidei, quam ab apostolis et sanctis Patribus traditam universalis Ecclesia tenet, in quasdam pravas exorbitasse sententias nobis relatum est, profectu nimium paterni affectus compassionem doliimus.”

129 In reality the Armenians used sesame oil to make chrism.
to the Catholicos to remove this addition, and to clarify his position on the first four Ecumenical Councils, which were for the Church like the four Gospels.\footnote{CICO I, 791 (no. 380).}

The Catholicos’ envoy could certainly have refuted many of the allegations.\footnote{CICO I, 791 (no. 380): “haec autem licet presentium portitor, tuus legatus, ita esse coram nobis negaverit.”} His profession of faith must have been interpreted in the spirit of Chalcedonian Christology, which complied with the views of Catholicos Gregory II. In line with the Armenian teaching, the envoy must have denied that the expression added to the Trishagion referred to all three persons of the Holy Trinity. Nonetheless, the Pope insisted on a retraction in this matter, on the grounds that whatever gave an occasion for offence should be removed, especially as none of the other Eastern Churches used this phrase, nor did the holy Church of Rome – except for the Armenians (nulla Orientalium [ecclesiarum] praeter vestram, sed nec sancta Romana habet Ecclesia).\footnote{In reality this addendum was used in the liturgy of the West Syrian and Coptic Churches, but the papacy did not recognise them as orthodox.} Although the Pope did not acknowledge the Armenian Church as orthodox, nevertheless his attitude was more balanced than that of the Greeks.\footnote{In the opinion of some historians, this pope took a sympathetic attitude to the Armenians and regarded them as well-nigh orthodox. But in fact he regretted that the Armenian Church was not yet in communion of the faith with the Universal Church. Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 118–119, presents a more complex picture of the Pope’s opinion on Armenian Christianity.} He did not accuse the Armenians either of Monophysitism or of Theopassionism, as Nicholas I had. The Greek attacks regarding liturgical bread even made him sympathise with the Armenians, because the Roman Church used unleavened bread, as well. Moreover, the Pope told the Catholicos how shocked he was that on this count the Greeks brought accusations of heresy against the Church of Rome, which is infallible in matters of the faith, and none of its popes had ever professed heretical teachings.\footnote{When Gregory VII wrote this, the case of Honorius (625–638), who had been denounced at the Sixth Ecumenical Council in 681 for adopting the Monothelitic heresy, seems to have slipped his mind.} In the matter of Eucharistic bread the Pope was exceptionally tolerant. Defending the Roman practice, he said that he neither reproved the Greeks for their leavened bread, nor repudiated the practice, since, as the Apostle said, all things are pure for those who are pure (nos … ipsorum fermentatum nec vituperamus nec reprobamus sequentes apostolorum dicentem mundis esse omnia munda – emphasis mine, K.S.).\footnote{Elsewhere the Pope wrote of the Greeks: “scientes eorum procacitatem non modo vobis [viz. you Armenians] hanc velut calumniam obicere, verum etiam simili de causa, graviori vero iniuria, hucusque contra sanctam Romanam Ecclesiam insurgere, quae per beatum}
he had no gestures of indulgence for the Armenian liturgical singularities. He did not accept the Armenian symbolism, and expected changes in all the points on which the Armenian Church differed from other Churches, especially from the Roman Church. For Gregory VII liturgical reform was a condition which the Armenians had to meet to be admitted to the orthodox community. It is quite certain that neither did the Catholicos make any offers of union, nor did the Pope appeal to him to enter communion with the Roman Church, but rather with the entire Universal Church. The Pope was still observing the old tradition in ecclesiology. For Gregory VII “the Universal Church” meant the entire community of all who were united in the faith, under the leadership of the Church of Rome, the Mother of all Churches (omnium ecclesiarum Mater), which was infallible on the grounds of the promise Christ had made to Peter. This community included the other Churches with their own patriarchs – the pentarchy of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. It was for this reason, too, that the Pope did not call the Catholicos a patriarch, but just an archbishop. However, he did not deny his jurisdiction over the Church subject to his authority and trusted in his good intentions, encouraging him to keep on working to firmly establish orthodoxy.

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Petrum quasi quodam privilegio ab ipsis fidei primordiis a sanctis Patribus omnium mater Ecclesiarum astruitur et ita usque in finem semper habebitur,” CICO I, 792 (no. 380).

136 For new elements in this idea, see Dvornik, Byzantium and the Roman Primacy, 101.

137 The Pope had a hazy idea of the religious disputes going on in Oriental Christendom. But he thought they could be resolved on the basis of “the faith of the Apostle Peter,” at the council which would follow the victorious crusade he was planning. In his letter of 7th December 1074 to Henry IV, King of Germany, he wrote “Constantinopolitana Ecclesia de sancto Spiritu a nobis dissidens concordiam Apostolice Sedis expectat, Armeni etiam omnes fide oberrant, et pene universi orientales praestolantur, quod fides apostoli Petri inter diversas opiniones eorum decernat,” Das Register Gregors VII, Vol. II 1 Lib. II, 167, no. 31, CICO I, 787–788 (no. 376). See Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 114; Mutafyan, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. I, 555.

138 The Pope invoked the letter of Gregory the Great addressed to “maioribus Ecclesiis Alexandrinæ, Antiochenæ aliisque.” At the time the Schism between the Churches was not yet unavoidable. In 1089, when asked by the Emperor Alexios Komnenos whether a canonical decision had been made to break relations with Rome, the participants of the Synod of Constantinople said it had not. Dvornik, Byzantium and the Roman Primacy, 102.

139 The Pope called him the “Synnadensis archiepiscopus,” CICO I, no. 379, 380; he knew from Presbyter John that the Catholicos was staying at Tzamandos in Cappadocia, in the domain of Gagik, ex-king of Vanand (†1079), see KG X, 271, no. 258; and Armianskie zhitiia i muchenichestva V–XVII vv., translation, introduction and commentary by Knarik S. Ter-Davtian (Erevan: Izdatelstvo Nairi, 1994), 85, 90–95.

140 CICO I, 791–792 (no. 380): ”Quapropter fraternitas tua ecclesie, cuius sibi cura comissa est, tenendum putet et credat sufficere, quod catholic in orbem terrarum diffusa Ecclesia Spiritu sancto illustrante edocta sentire cognoscitur et tenere declaratur […]. Omnipotens Deus, cuius est quicquid recte sapimus, sentimus et credimus, ipse mentem tuae fraternitatis
There the mutual relations ceased. According to Armenian sources Catholicos Gregory II went on pilgrimage to Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, Egypt, and finally, in 1074, he arrived in Rome, visited the graves of the Apostles, and had a personal meeting with Pope Gregory VII. If this indeed happened, it must have been after 1080.141 But it is quite true that in the 12th century Armenians in favour of a rapprochement with Rome invoked the example given by Catholicos Gregory II.142 However, there were no major results from this first direct contact between the Armenian Church and the See of St. Peter – geographical distance was the obstacle. The Crusades would change this.

Between Constantinople and Rome (12th century)

Before the Armenians and their Church found themselves exclusively within the sphere of influence of the papacy, for the entire 12th century – the age of the first crusades and the slow decline of the Empire of the East into political impotence – they remained suspended between the two rival traditions – Byzantine and Latin. Of the two Byzantium was still the more active with respect to the Armenians, but already at that time the papacy’s rising political influence in the East was a sign of the change to come. Relations between Rome and Armenia, and Constantinople and Armenia were superimposed on, and intermingled with each other. Under pressure from the Byzantine Patriarchate and Empire, the Armenians sought doctrinal support in Rome, while the bishops of Rome were flattered by this recourse to their jurisdiction.

It was a period of rapid political change in the Near East. In the aftermath of the Manzikert disaster, Byzantium slid down into chaos, and virtually the

142 Angèle Kapoian-Kouymjian ("Le Catholicos Grégoire II le Martyrophile (Vkayaser) e ses Pérégrinations," Bazmavep 132 (1974): 318) mentions an as yet unpublished document which relates that in the 11th century an Armenian ecclesiast arrived in Northern Italy with his retinue, and made a salient contribution to the building of a domed church in Milan. This author thinks the churchman in question was Gregory, but Halfter (Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 121, n. 177) and Mutafian (L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. I, 555) are sceptical about this conjecture.
whole of Armenia and Anatolia passed into the possession of victorious Seljuk hordes. Power in the enclaves free from the Turkish yoke transferred into the hands of military leaders – Chalcedonian Armenians, whom the Empire later recognised as its magistrates, lavishing a variety of titles on them. Honours were also bestowed on Armenian aristocrats true to their national religion, the ancestors of the future royal dynasties of the Rubenids and Hethumids, who had managed to seize power in the mountainous areas of Cilicia.\textsuperscript{143}

The chaos in the Armenian sphere was further aggravated by the crusades, the result of which was the emergence of Latin entities in the Near East – the County of Edessa, the Principality of Antioch, the County of Tripoli, and the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The attitude of the Armenians to the crusaders was enthusiastic, whose arrival they saw as the fulfilment of the prophecy that Jerusalem and their country would be liberated from the yoke of the non-believers.\textsuperscript{144} Regardless of their denominational differences they helped them as much as they could. And they were the first victims of the crusaders’ unrestrained greed. Some of the minor principalities were wound up and their territories incorporated in the Counties of Edessa and Antioch.\textsuperscript{145} By the close of the first generation of crusaders only the mountainous parts of Cilicia were still in Armenian hands. The rest had been taken by the Franks. It was not until 1131–1132 that Leo I of the Rubenid dynasty took the coast of Cilicia from the Normans of Antioch. In 1135 he was compelled to hand it back, in return for his release from Antioch. However, the incident did not bring about a serious crisis in relations with the newcomers.\textsuperscript{146}

Soon numerous bonds of family relations had joined the Franks with the Armenians. Unlike other Eastern Christians, the Armenians had a nobility, which put them on a par socially with the new lords of Syria and Palestine.\textsuperscript{147} They also enjoyed a reputation as first-rate warriors. By the mid-12\textsuperscript{th} century

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\textsuperscript{144} Anneliese Lüders, \textit{Die Kreuzzüge im Urteil syrischer und armenischer Quellen} (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964), 17–23.


few of the families of European knights had not married into the Armenian nobility.\textsuperscript{148} Initially they contracted marriages with Chalcedonian Armenians, but later also with those who professed the national religion. Both groups were united for a shared purpose – fighting against the Muslims, and a mutual dislike of the Greeks.\textsuperscript{149}

In these difficult times Catholicos Gregory II moved to a new residence many times. For a while he found sanctuary in one of the monasteries on the Black Mountain on the banks of the Amanos in the border zone between Syria and Cilicia.\textsuperscript{150} The age was ripe with usurpers, self-declared catholicoi with the backing of various princes taking advantage of Gregory’s long voyages.\textsuperscript{151} Finally Gregory II settled in the Karmir Monastery (Karmirvank) in Syria to lead a contemplative life. His duties were performed by his coadjutor Basil (Barsegh), who tried in vain to return to the old residence of the catholicoi in Ani. Before he died Gregory II committed his nephews, the future Catholicoi Gregory III and Nerses IV, to Basil’s care. Basil carried out his predecessor’s last will, giving them a sound theological education under the vigilant eye of Stephen Tgha, a vardapet and author of numerous commentaries on the New Testament.\textsuperscript{152} On his deathbed in 1113 Basil recommended the elder one, Gregory, as his successor. The eighteen-year-old Gregory was first elected; and then ordained presbyter and consecrated bishop and catholicos all in one day. But his young age and hasty elevation without the requisite intervals between successive appointments provided a pretext for the validity of his incumbency to be challenged. David, Archbishop of Aghtamar, the son of Prince Tornik of Sassoun, whose family traced their descent from the Artsruni royal family of Vaspurakan, called a synod of his supporters and had himself declared catholicos. David was excommunicated at a synod in Karmir Monastery, but the schism proved enduring and the catholicosate of Aghtamar survived until the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, though its jurisdiction was limited to the locality around Lake Van, and politically subordinated to the sultan of Egypt.\textsuperscript{153}

\textsuperscript{150} Mutafian, \textit{L’Arménie du Levant}, 1, 55–56.
\textsuperscript{151} Tournebize, \textit{Histoire politique et religieuse de l’Arménie} (Paris: A. Picard et fils, 1910), 166.
\textsuperscript{153} At a later time the Latin antagonists of the head of the Church of Caucasian Albania regarded him as an Armenian anti-catholicos. Such an opinion is erroneous, since it is well-known
Relations between the Frankish princes, the Latin bishops, and the Armenian Church were quite good. There was a large Armenian population in the Latin states, and on their territory they had their own hierarchy, with archbishops in Edessa and Jerusalem, and a bishop in Antioch who resided in the Monastery of the Infant Jesus on Black Mountain. The Franks were tolerant and treated all who venerated the Cross as Christians. The Frankish authorities also had political reasons to back the Armenian Church. Armenian colonies dispersed throughout the Islamic lands and in Byzantine possessions were subject to the authority of the catholicos, and could provide invaluable information on enemy movements. In 1100 Armenian bishops took part in the military campaigns of Bohemond I, Prince of Antioch. In 1103 Gregory II’s coadjutor Basil paid a visit to the County of Edessa. Not only was he given a welcome with honours by Duke Baldwin II, but he also received numerous endowments for his Church.154 The Armenians acknowledged the Counts of Edessa as their lawful princes; and conversely, they were treated with great trust. An Armenian was regent during the imprisonment of Joscelin I by the Muslims; subsequently, in 1123, Armenians liberated Joscelin from captivity in Kharberd Castle. Joscelin II used to be called king of the Armenians.155 This friendly reaction contributed to Gregory III’s decision to transfer his residence to the fortress of Tsovk, which was in the Edessan sphere of influence.156 The threat from Byzantium, which had started on an endeavour to recover its territorial losses in the East, reinforced the ties between the Franks and the Armenians, who also saw Rome as their potential ally in the ecclesiastical aspect against the Greek bishops in Cilicia.157

Catholicos Gregory III established direct relations with Rome still in the pontificate of Honorius II (1124–1130).158 At that time the relations of the

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that he was the inheritor of a separate legacy, the tradition of ancient Albania; in the 7th century it succumbed to a certain degree of Armenianisation, but only in its liturgy.

154 The only incident bespeaking relations of the opposite kind recorded in the sources was Duke Baldwin’s imprisonment in 1108 of the Archbishop of Edessa, who was tried for treason and sentenced to have his eyes put out. However, the sentence was not carried out, as the Armenians ransomed their hierarch. Yet it was the only incident of its kind. Hamilton, *Latin Church*, 88; Hamilton, “Armenian Church,” 64.


156 The fortress was owned by the Pahlavuni family, which produced several catholicoi. Mutafian, *La Cilicie*, Vol. 1, 375.


158 There is a mention in the *Liber pontificalis* from Sis of Pope Honorius II’ letter to Catholicos Gregory III. In this letter the Pope apparently demanded the Armenian Church add water to the communion wine and celebrate Christmas on 25th December; Boghos L. Zekiyan, “Le colonie armene del Medio Evo in Italia e le relazioni culturali italo-armene (Materiale per
Armenians with the Byzantine Church became extremely strained.\textsuperscript{159} During his eastern campaign of 1137–1138 Emperor John Komnenos devastated and abolished the Cilician state of the Rubenids and sent the chief members of the dynasty to Constantinople as hostages. During the campaign Armenian monasteries in Cilicia were ravaged and Byzantine soldiers burned the sacred books of the “heretics.” Antioch was captured from the Franks.\textsuperscript{160}

In this situation relations with Rome were intensified. Alberic, Bishop of Ostia, Pope Innocent II’s legate, called a synod to Jerusalem for Easter 1141. He paid a visit to Catholicos Gregory III to invite him to attend. The invitation turned out to be extremely opportune. The Armenian delegation decided to ask the Pope to confirm that their Church was orthodox and that they were true believers. On the way to the synod the head of the Armenian Church stopped at Antioch, where he was given a warm welcome by the Latin magistrates. The whole city came out to meet him with lamps and torches, and he was led into the cathedral and “seated on the throne of the Apostle Peter.” The welcome was even warmer in Jerusalem. “The Frankish people governing the city at the time, and their patriarch … reinforced their friendship with our nation,” wrote Kirakos of Gandzak in Greater Armenia a hundred years later.\textsuperscript{161} The Catholicos arrived in Jerusalem with his brother Nerses and a large retinue of vardapets. During his visit the Armenian colonies in Jerusalem and Acre were granted permission to build hospices for their pilgrims. In Jerusalem the Armenian Cathedral of St. James was redeveloped and embellished.\textsuperscript{162} Armenians had enjoyed access to the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre for a fairly long time already, and they had their own chapel next to the court of the new Latin basilica.\textsuperscript{163}

\textsuperscript{159} Mutafian, \textit{L’Arménie du Levant}, Vol. 1, 556.


\textsuperscript{161} KG I, 95. The chronicler William of Tyre wrote that the Catholicos stayed in Jerusalem because he was subject to the authority of the Latin Patriarch of Antioch. GT, IV. 9, 245.


\textsuperscript{163} When the Crusaders took Jerusalem the Armenians, along with other Oriental Christians, were expelled from the holy places. They were readmitted in 1101, when the “holy fire” did
During the synod the Catholicos’ personality and theological education made a tremendous impression on those assembled. Although the Synod of Jerusalem recognised the Armenian profession of faith as perfectly orthodox, the Catholicos was nevertheless obliged to promise to carry out many reforms in his Church. On his return to the papal court Bishop Alberic gave the Pope an extensive report on what had happened, and Innocent II sent a letter dated 25th September 1141 to Catholicos Gregory III. In it he explained why it was necessary for the Armenians to acknowledge the primacy of the Church of Rome, the mother of all Churches, confirmed in the true faith by the Apostle Peter. The Church Peter had founded had never succumbed to heresy, the Pope wrote, and no errors had ever let it stray from the Apostolic path. Peter had been called Kephas – for he is the rock and head of all the faithful, and these rights pass down to all of his successors, the supreme pastors among their colleagues. This was why Innocent called the Armenian Church to join in communion with the Apostolic See and be obedient to it, thereby confirming that it professed the true faith, as the Catholicos had done in Jerusalem. From Innocent’s letter we learn that Gregory III had promised to use wine mixed with water for the Eucharistic liturgy and to celebrate Christmas on 25th December. Innocent enclosed a velum (chalice veil) and a bishop’s crosier with his letter as gifts for Gregory and invited the Catholicos’ brother Nerses, or another clergyman who had a knowledge of Latin to visit him.

The invitation turned out to be extremely opportune. In 1142 John Komnenos organised a second Cilician expedition against the Armenians. At this

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164 At this time the Armenian Creed was translated into Latin. A similar procedure was carried out for the West Syrian (Jacobite) Church. The Greeks, who had accused both Churches of heresy, did not turn up at the Synod. Of all the sources with an account of the event, only the chronicle of Michael the Syrian writes that the Armenians were “shown up” as Julianist heretics; MS, Vol. 3, 255–256. See Peter Hamilton, Latin Church, 185, and Peter Haffter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier im frühen und hohen Mittelalter: Von den ersten Kontakten bis zur Fixierung der Kirchenunion im Jahre 1198 (Köln: Böhlau, 1996), 129–131, on the tendentiousness of this account. For the political aspect of these events see Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 557.

time political relations between Byzantium and the Franks were so bad, and the Muslim threat so great, that the Armenians expected they would persuade the Church of Rome to accept their point of view.\textsuperscript{166} 

Prior to their arrival in Italy they conducted negotiations with the local episcopacy in Greater Armenia. Presumably the talks concerning their acknowledgement of the Pope's primacy went well, though there was no agreement on liturgical reform. In the autumn of 1145, prior to the Second Crusade (1146), the Catholicos' envoys, perhaps with his brother Nerses as their leader, arrived in Viterbo and were given an audience by the new Pope, Eugene III (1145–1153) at Vetralla.\textsuperscript{167} They complained that the Greeks were raising objections against their liturgical practices – the use of undiluted wine for the liturgy, and celebrating Christmas and Epiphany on the same day, and asked the Pope to arbitrate.\textsuperscript{168} There can be no doubt that they were trying to defend their traditions, making a distinction between dogma and ritual. However, they did not get what they wanted. The Pope took a negative attitude to the Armenian customs, even though he did not associate them with dogmatic errors. In a letter to the Catholicos he wrote of the need to mix water with the wine, invoking the authority of Popes Alexander and Julius, and the Church Fathers Cyprian and Ambrose.\textsuperscript{169} According to Otto of Freising the Armenians had an occasion to witness a miracle and see for themselves that the Roman liturgy was right. During a ceremony celebrated by the Pope on 18\textsuperscript{th} November 1145 the Armenian bishop saw a halo around

\textsuperscript{166} According to Mutafian the Catholicos took part in the Synod of Jerusalem to conclude an alliance between the Armenians and the Latins against Byzantium. The Armenian archbishop of Edessa gave his full support to the Franks during the siege and fall of the city in 1144 to the Turks under Zengi, Atabeg of Mosul and Syria. Edessa fell on 23\textsuperscript{rd} December 1144. Nerses, the brother of Catholicos Gregory III and later himself Catholicos, composed a tearful elegy to mourn the fall of the city. Count Joscelin II assisted by Baldwin of Marash made an abortive attempt to recover Edessa after the death of Zengi. After the death of Baldwin of Marash in the Battle of Edessa in 1146 his confessor, the vardapet Basil, wrote a funeral obituary for him. Hamilton, \textit{Latin Church}, 202; Mutafian, \textit{L'Arménie du Levant}, Vol. 1, 75–76, 557–558.

\textsuperscript{167} Catholicos Gregory III wrote a letter to Pope Eugene III, but its text has not survived. Mutafian, \textit{L'Arménie du Levant}, Vol. 1, 557.


\textsuperscript{169} There is a reference to the Pope's no longer extant letter in the records of the Synod of the Armenian Church held at Sis in 1307; Balgy, \textit{Historia doctrinae}, 309, Appendix VIII.
the Pope’s head and two doves flying up.\textsuperscript{170} Although the outcome of the negotiations did not fully satisfy the Armenians, the envoys acknowledged the Pope’s supremacy over their Church, and the Apostolic See confirmed the orthodoxy of Armenian Christianity.\textsuperscript{171} The Armenians even sought the Pope’s advice on the baptism of children of non-believers for superstitious reasons.\textsuperscript{172} Quite soon afterwards, taking advantage of the disintegration of the Latin County of Edessa, Catholicos Gregory III purchased a mighty fortress called Hromkla or Rumkale (Roman Fortress) on the Euphrates from Beatrice, wife of Count Joscelin. It would provide a safe haven and political independence to him and his successors until 1292, in spite of being surrounded by a ring of Islamic territories.\textsuperscript{173}

At about the same time the Rubenids recovered part of Cilicia, and in 1158 the Byzantine Empire recognised them as its vassals.\textsuperscript{174} As soon as political relations relaxed an agreement was reached between the Armenian and Byzantine Churches. Dialogue started during a meeting at Mamistra (Mopsuestia), Cilicia, in 1165, between Nerses, the Catholicos’ brother, and the Protostrator Alexis, son-in-law of Emperor Manuel and Duke of the eastern provinces of the Empire.\textsuperscript{175} Manuel took a personal interest in the progress made. In the same period he established relations with the West Syrian Church and the Church of Rome. Although what stood behind these moves was cool political

\textsuperscript{170} Ottonis episcopi Frisingensis Chronica, VII. 32, 362–363.

\textsuperscript{171} Apparently the Armenians offered to conduct talks with the Pope “ex parte illius ecclesiae subiectionem omnimodam consultando,” Ottonis episcopi Frisingensis Chronica, 361, VII. 32.

\textsuperscript{172} There was a tribe of pagans who sent their children to the Armenians for baptism, only to bring them up as pagans. Hafner, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 104, speculates the people involved were the Alans, or the half-pagan, half-Christian Zanarks. There were also Muslims who received baptism from the Armenians; see KG VII, 128; CICO VIII, no. 57, 126. In the 14th century the Armenian hierarchy confirmed the custom of administering baptism to Muslims. According to popular notions, God allowed demons to enter the bodies of Muslim children who had died and appear to the living “propter confirmationem fidei Christianorum et ut error Sarracenorum manifestum sit Christianis.” Baptism was believed to prevent this from happening; CICO VIII, 175 (no. 58).


\textsuperscript{174} Mutafian, La Cilicie, 396–398; Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 77–79; Der-Nersessian, “Kingdom,” 638–642.

\textsuperscript{175} Acting on his brother’s request, Bishop Nerses endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation between two Armenian princes, Toros II Rubenid, and Oshin of Lambron (a Hethumid), who were feuding with each other, and on this occasion visited Mamistra; see KG X, 96–97; Armianskie zhitiia, 101–102, 434, note 33; Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 547.

At the Emperor’s request Nerses sent the Armenian profession of faith and a commentary explaining the Armenian liturgical practices to Constantinople. This account, featuring a high level of compromise, gives an idea of the theology of the Armenian Church at that time. It began with a dogmatic exposition of the theology of the Trinity and Incarnation. Nerses vehemently denied the allegations of Apollinarist and Monophysite heresy. He argued that the Church of Armenia de facto adhered to the teaching that there were two natures in Christ, although it used Cyril of Alexandria’s traditional formulation of “the single nature” of the Word Incarnate. The disputes were due to terminological confusion, not to the essential aspect of the issue, which Armenians understood in exactly the same way as other Churches. As regards the phrase added to the *Trishagion*, he explained that the Armenian Church did not address it to the whole Trinity, but only to the person of the Son of God. He pointed out that the passage immediately following the *Trishagion* in its liturgy was an invocation to the Mother of God—the-Word (the *Theotokos*) asking for her intercession between humans and her son (“Take up our prayers to your Son and our God”). The hymn sung in the Armenian Church in honour of the three persons of the Trinity was the *Cherubikon*. He also explained the Armenian theological teachings on Christ’s human body, his suffering and death on the cross, the relationship between his divinity and his human body,
showing that Armenians concurred with the teaching of the orthodox Church on all these matters.

Nerses also embarked on the defence of the Armenian custom of combining the celebration of Christ’s Nativity with his Epiphany (Theophany), viz. his baptism in the Jordan. He presents a very interesting discourse which deserves an in-depth discussion. Nerses claimed that originally all the Apostolic Churches celebrated the two feasts together. After some time some of the Churches separated them, and other Churches followed their example. But the Armenians kept to the original tradition, because that was what they were taught by their Apostle, Gregory the Illuminator. However, Nerses did not stop at the traditional argument.

On the basis of St. Luke’s Gospel177 and the Jewish calendar he calculated the date on which St. Elizabeth conceived as October 5th. Since the Annunciation came 6 months later (according to the Evangelist), it must have occurred on April 6th, not March 25th, as the Latin and Greek Churches would have it. If the 9 months of Mary’s pregnancy were added to that, it turned out that the Lord’s Nativity occurred on January 6th. Nerses also claimed that the Evangelist (Lk 3, 23) tells us that Jesus received baptism in the Jordan on his thirtieth birthday, which would confirm the tradition that he had been born exactly on the same day 30 years earlier. Nerses denied the allegation that Armenians celebrated the Annunciation on 5th January and that hymns in honour of the Virgin Mary were not sung in Armenian churches. He justified the custom of using undiluted wine for the Eucharist by the tradition going back to Gregory the Illuminator, who had taken it from his predecessors, the Fathers of the Church. During the Last Supper, he wrote, Jesus took up the chalice and said “This is my blood,” and never mentioned water, following on with “Henceforth I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine,”178 and the fruit of the vine was wine, not water. On the custom of adding water to the wine to commemorate the blood and water that flowed out from Christ’s side when he was pierced with the lance, Nerses recalled that in his commentary to St. John’s Gospel, St. John Chrysostom wrote that the water symbolised the water of baptism, and the wine stood for the mystery of the divine liturgy. The Armenian Church accepted this symbolism, and celebrated the mystery of the blood of Christ using undiluted wine. In Nerses’ opinion, however, different liturgical practices did not necessarily invalidate the Eucharistic liturgy, so long as it was performed with a pure soul and for the glory of God. The wrath of God, he said, would fall on unworthy priests, regardless of whether the wine

177 Lk 1, 9–24.

178 Mt 26, 29; Mk 14, 25.
they used was diluted or not. He also justified the Armenian use of sesame oil, which was in plentiful supply in Armenia, to make chrism, whereas olive oil was unavailable since the climate precluded the cultivation of olive groves. Nerses did not see anything wrong in this, since, he said, the power of God’s grace came not through the material composition of the chrism, but through the prayers said over it, just as the type of wine (whether black, red, or white) had no effect on transubstantiation.

However, he did admit that not all Armenians venerated icons, which were a controversial issue among the people – he spoke of “the two peoples of Armenia.” But on behalf of the ecclesiastical authorities he censured the “slandering” of icons, and said that there were images of Christ and the saints in the churches obedient to the ecclesiastical authorities and on the liturgical vestments, and that the Church made its faithful, who were “ignorant and stupid,” venerate icons. He also denied the allegation that his Church ascribed a special importance to the nails of the cross; they were used, he said, for strictly technical reasons, to prevent wooden crosses from falling apart. On the other hand, he censured the use of nails in metal or stone crosses, which were made of one piece of material. He denied the allegation that Armenians blessed the same crosses every year, and cited the liturgical formula used on the occasion. He also defended the Armenian practices of fasting, claiming that for Lent Armenian theologians prescribed abstaining from milk and fish, foods derived from the animal kingdom. However, envisaging the problems such strict fasting might cause, they permitted their faithful to have fish and dairy products on Saturdays and Sundays. Nerses also explained the specifically Armenian fast called Arachavork or St. Sarkis’ fast, which lasted 5 days before Septuagesima at the end of the year. Malevolent Greeks had been accusing the Armenians that this fast was in honour of a magician called Sarkis, a donkey, or a dog. It was the first fast to be instituted in Armenia, by St. Gregory the Illuminator on his release from prison after 13 years spent there, and it was brought in to take God’s punishment off the king who had persecuted him. It was named after St. Sarkis (Sergius), a Cappadocian martyred in Persia, whose martyrdom was commemorated on January 30th, and his feast day was

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celebrated on the Saturday following the *Arachavork* fast.\(^{181}\) The theological dialogue promised to be so interesting that the Emperor invited Nerses to Constantinople to continue it.\(^{182}\)

After the death of Catholicos Gregory III in 1166 negotiations were continued at Hromkla (Rumkale), with the participation of Theorianos the imperial theologian, John Atman, Abbot of the Chalcedonian monastery at Philippopolis, and the well-known chronicler Michael the Syrian representing the Syrian Patriarch of Antioch. The talks were presided over by Nerses, now the new catholicos (1166–1173). Despite opposition from the Syrian delegation, Nerses IV and a group of bishops and *vardapets* from his retinue assented to the Christological formula of there being “two natures in the person of the Word Incarnate.”\(^{183}\) The dialogue with Theorianos, the imperial theologian, was continued; however, union with Constantinople was not Nerses’ aim. All he wanted was to take his Church out of isolation and into the universal Christian communion of faith. The first step was to be reconciliation with the Byzantines, who were the busiest and most vociferous in bringing allegations against the Armenians and their religion.\(^{184}\) However, in 1172/1173 Cilicia slipped out of Byzantine hands and the Armenian state under the Rubenids became independent. Notwithstanding, Nerses summoned a synod of the Armenian Church, which was to bring the ecclesiastical dialogue with the Greeks to a closure.\(^{185}\) The catholicos wrote a special synodal address to his clergy on religious reconciliation.\(^{186}\) Following the death of Nerses,\(^{187}\) the synod was presided over by a new catholicos, Gregory IV Tgha (1173–1193). The synod convened in Hromkla in April 1178. The catholicos of Albania and numerous bishops from Greater Armenia, Cilicia, and the diaspora attended.\(^{188}\)

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\(^{181}\) KG II, 97–111; see also KG I, 59 (on the Annunciation). Nerses of Lambron, the Armenian Archbishop of Tarsus, put all the correspondence exchanged between the Emperor Manuel and Catholicos Nerses Shnorhali and his successor Gregory IV together in a single collection; see *Armianskie zhitiia*, 83, 103.


\(^{183}\) In line with the tradition of the Armenian Church, initially Nerses said that the Chalcedonian formula meant the acceptance of Nestorianism, and invoked the words of Cyril of Alexandria: “una natura in verbo incarnato;” *Armianskie zhitiia*, 105–106.


\(^{185}\) Hamilton, *Latin Church*, 205.

\(^{186}\) It was intended for the Armenians living in the East (Greater Armenia), West (Cilicia), and in the “Land of the Middle” (Syria), as well as in the diaspora; *Armianskie zhitiia*, 103, 105.

\(^{187}\) Nerses was buried at Hromkla, next to his brother Gregory III, in the Cathedral of St. Gregory the Enlightener, which his successor Gregory IV built. The new catholicos had the body of their predecessor, Gregory II, translated there; *Armianskie zhitiia*, 106–107.

were two notable absentees – the episcopally ranked abbots of the monasteries of Sanahin and Haghpat in the north of Greater Armenia on territory belonging to Georgia. For them rapprochement with the Greeks was unacceptable and would have meant the betrayal of the native tradition.189

The synod approved of the Chalcedonian Christological formula, as always without mentioning the Fourth Ecumenical Council, but it resisted calls for liturgical amendments.190 In 1174 Gregory IV managed to convince the Emperor to withdraw these demands since, he argued, for many in the Armenian Church the preservation of the idiosyncrasies in their liturgy was more important than reconciliation with the Greeks.191 The death of Emperor Manuel in 1180 meant that the resolutions of the Synod of Hromkla were not endorsed by Byzantium, and Manuel's successor, Andronikos I (1180–1185) did not continue his policy. The old animosities and allegations of Monophysitism were revived in their full viciousness, and Byzantine magistrates

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189 At this time the Kingdom of Georgia was expanding into Greater Armenia, and within its framework vassal principalities were being set up under the rule of local Armenian families. One of the most important of these was the Zakarian family, and Armenian Christianity enjoyed a privileged status in their dominions. Traditional theological studies were revived in the monasteries of Sanahin and Haghpat, and their monks and vardapets had to counter the influence of Chalcedonian doctrine coming from the Georgian court. The Petriconda Monastery founded at this time by Gregory Pakurian of an Armenian family worshipping in the Chalcedonian (Georgian) tradition, is believed to have been established to conduct a mission in the Armenian Monophysite colony at Philippopolis (modern Plovdiv, Bulgaria). See Édouard Dulaurier, “St. Nerses de Lampron. Notice sur sa vie et ses écrits,” in RHC Doc. Arm. I, 567; Ter-Mikelian, Die armenische Kirche, 101–104; Tournebize, Histoire politique, 255–256; Tekeyan, Controverses christologiques, 35–47; Lévond Movséssian, “Histoire des rois Kurikian de Lori,” RÉA 7 (1927): 246–256; Viada A. Arutiunova-Fidanian, Armianie khalkidony na vostochnykh granitsakh Vizantiiskoi impierii (XI v.) (Erevan: Aĭstan, 1980), 78; Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 158, 160. Both Armenian monasteries expanded and were redeveloped in the 1180s. The cultural and religious role of Haghpat Monastery is described in the History of Armenia by Kirakos of Gandzak (KG I, 86–95).


191 Tekeyan, Controverses christologiques, 35–37. For the demands made by the Greeks, see Grumel, Les Regestes, no. 1124. The view that in the interests of the whole of Christendom the Armenians should make a concession on the issue of Christmas and move its celebration to December 25th was still held by Nerses IV, but he recommended patience and circumspection so as not to hurt the feelings of the people. One of the Armenian requirements was a postulate hard to accept for the emperor – that the patriarch of Antioch should be put under the authority of the catholicos of Armenia. Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 549.
launched a new round of persecution against Armenians resident on imperial territory.\textsuperscript{192}

With matters turning out this way, it was necessary to seek assistance in Rome. Catholicos Gregory IV sent an embassy to Pope Lucius III (1181–1185) to lodge complaints against the Greeks. At its head stood Gregory, the Armenian Bishop of Philippopolis, who had witnessed the persecution of the Armenians in that city. The embassy asked for another testimonial confirming the Armenian Church’s orthodoxy. Their meeting with the Pope took place in Verona, where in late 1184 an important congress was being held with Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and numerous ecclesiastical and secular dignitaries.\textsuperscript{193}

Apart from the Emperor the Chancellor of the Kingdom of Germany, Konrad von Wittelsbach, Archbishop of Mainz, and the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem were present. The Armenians were very well received. In a letter to the Catholicos, issued in Verona on 3\textsuperscript{rd} December 1184 Lucius III took the Church of Armenia under the tutelage of the Roman Church (\textit{tutela Romanae ecclesiae}).\textsuperscript{194}

He acknowledged the very fact that Armenian Christianity had survived amid pagans as a sign of Divine protection. Still, he again appealed to the Armenians to use wine mixed with water for the sacrament of the Eucharist, and to celebrate Christmas on 25\textsuperscript{th} December. There was also a new requirement: to adapt certain feast days in the Armenian calendar to the calendar used in the Latin Church. Lucius instructed the Armenians on the application of chrism, the holy oil. In the Roman Church, he wrote, it was blessed once a year, on Holy Thursday, subsequently to be mixed with baptismal water, for the anointing of the newly baptised, altar stones, the hands of clerics during the ordination ceremony, and the heads of bishops at their consecration. The best term for the consecration of bishops was Whitsunday, the Pope wrote, and the Ember Saturdays for the ordination of clerics. He appealed to the Armenians to follow these Latin customs\textsuperscript{195} and enclosed a copy of the Roman Ritual, containing the texts used during the blessing of sacramentals.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[194] “Nunc ergo vos coetumque vestrum affectu, amore ac benevolentia Ecclesia haec Romana tuetur,” Balgy, \textit{Historia doctrinae}, 56.
\item[195] Balgy, \textit{Historia doctrinae}, 54–56. Characteristically, the Pope did not mention Extreme Unction at all. On the consecration of chrism in the Armenian Church in the 14\textsuperscript{th} century, see CICO VIII, 127–128 (no. 57); 202 (no. 58) (with an explanation of the teaching of the Armenian Synod on this issue).
\end{footnotes}
and descriptions of the administration of the sacraments. Lucius also sent the Catholicos, whom he addressed as “Patriarch,” a pallium and his own bishop’s mitre, as a token of his special favour. The embassy left Verona and went to Tarsus in Cilicia, where in October 1185 the Pope’s gifts were handed over to the Catholicos. Gregory IV felt profoundly honoured. The memory of the Pope’s gesture stayed with the Armenians for a long time. In the late 13th century the chronicler Mekhitar of Ayrivank in Greater Armenia was still referring to it. Contrary to the Roman tradition which laid down that a bishop’s pallium should be put into his grave, the Pope’s pallium was handed down to successive Armenian catholicoi until the 1230s, when it disintegrated completely through wear and tear. Some historians have seen this conferral as the ratification of ecclesiastical union between the Armenians and the Roman Church.

Contacts between the Armenians and the West escalated after the fall of Jerusalem in 1187. In this period the Armenian state in Cilicia became a significant political entity in the Near East. Its ruler, Leo II of the Rubenid dynasty, the son of Stephen, was still considered a vassal of Bohemond III, Prince of Antioch. Preparations for a new crusade drew the papacy’s attention to Cilicia, which was seen as a good ally for the war against the Muslims, especially as it had become very like the European Latin states. Its state and feudal system was based on the Western model, and it had adopted the Western lifestyle, manners and customs. As a result the gulf separating Cilicia from

196 CICO I, 811–813, no. 395. Clement III’s letter of 29th May 1189 shows that the Ritual was sent at the request of the Catholicos.
200 CICO III, 335, no. 258; Half ter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 154.
201 Hamilton, “The Armenian Church,” 69; Hamilton, The Latin Church, 206. Hamilton’s conjecture is corroborated by the fact that at this time Lucius III put the Armenian and Greek clergy of the Diocese of Baniyas (Velania) in the Patriarchate of Antioch under the jurisdiction of the Latin bishop; CICO I, no. 67.
204 Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 89.
Greater Armenia had become so great that Nerses had even written of “our two peoples.” There was also a Latin hierarchy in Cilicia, with roots going back to the late 11th century. It had been organised shortly after 1099 by the papal legate Daimbert of Pisa, in what was then under the Principality of Antioch and known as Cilicia Campestris. When Byzantium recovered this territory the Latin bishops were expelled, but they returned on the decline of the Empire of the East, in the reign of the Armenian Ruben III in Cilicia. In Tarsus there was a Latin bishop already by 1178. Effectively there were two metropolises in Cilicia, at Tarsus and at Mamistra, under the authority of the Latin Patriarch of Antioch.

In the eyes of the West the image of Armenian Christianity was becoming more and more favourable, and its attitude to Armenia more and more tactful and delicate. With the prospect of joint military action against a common enemy all the differences faded into the background. Pope Clement III (1187–1191) devised a plan to get the Armenians to join in an operation to recover Jerusalem and the Holy Land. He sent letters to the Catholicos and the Prince of Armenia, encouraging them to take an active part in the Third Crusade. Three years after the fall of Jerusalem the letters, issued by the Pope in the Lateran on 29th May 1189 – two to the Catholicos and one to Leo II, the ruler of Cilicia, almost identical in content with the Pope’s letter to the Patriarch – reached their destination in Cilicia. The Pope asked the Catholicos to personally take the command of the Armenian forces setting out to defend the holy places.

No detailed records survive on the Armenian contribution to the Third Crusade. Clement III definitely overestimated their potential and loyalty to the interests of the West. Leo II, the ruler of Cilicia, certainly pinned his hopes on this undertaking, and helped the Crusaders as much as he could. His aim was

207 The Latins of Tarsus had their own cathedral (St. Paul’s); it was one of the earliest historic edifices of the period of the Crusades. Friedrich Hild and Hansgerd Hellenkemper, Neue Forschungen in Kilikien (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1986), 182; The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, 182.
208 Hamilton, The Latin Church, 48–49, 408; Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 240.
210 CICO I, no. 395; Mutafian, La Cilicie, 168–170.
to put Cilicia into the system of Crusader states in the Near East. The Emperor Frederick Barbarossa promised to elevate him to the rank of king. He sent his envoys to Leo from Iconium, where he had received emissaries from the Catholicos, whom he told that he had a crown for the one indicated by the head of the Armenian Church. Nerses of Lambron, Archbishop of Tarsus, even had the Latin coronation rite (ordo coronandi) which he had received from his guest, the Bishop of Münster, translated into Armenian for the occasion. Leo sent Archbishop Nerses to Hromkla to seek the advice of Catholicos Gregory IV. From there Nerses was to set off to welcome the Emperor. Leo also sent out envoys to escort the Crusaders to the best routes and passages. His hopes of the crown were dashed completely on 10th June 1190, when Barbarossa drowned while bathing in the River Kalykadnos (Salef, Göksu), not far from the border of Cilicia. Philip of Suabia, who had accompanied his father the Emperor, on hearing that Leo had withdrawn from further travel, sent a letter to him with threats. The Catholicos was even suspected of having warned Saladin twice of the approaching German Crusader forces. Leo did not give up and joined the expedition led by the English King Richard the Lionheart, which took Cyprus from the Byzantines; and subsequently participated in the siege of Acre. Clement III died in 1191, and the Third Crusade ended with no major successes and a peace concluded with Saladin in 1192.

In 1195 the Emperor Henry VI announced another crusade. In 1197 Konrad von Wittelsbach, Archbishop of Mainz, was appointed papal legate.

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211 Vetter, “Nerses von Lampron’s Bericht,” 290–291; CICO I, no. 395. According to Nerses, the Emperor Frederick “promised in a document with a gold seal to set up an Armenian king;” see Armiantskie zhitiia, 126, 440, note 41.


213 Armiantskie zhitiia, 119, 126. Bishop Nerses was sent out to escort the Catholicos, but on the way to Hromkla he was ambushed by a band of Turcoman thieves, who took the only extant copy of the commentary to the liturgy and church rites from him. Although he later recovered it, he was so shaken by the incident that he had several more copies made. Andrea B. Schmidt, “Kloster Skevra (12.–14. Jahrhundert) im Schnittpunkt kirchlichen und kulturellen Wandels in Kilikien,” in Das Lemberger Evangelar: Eine wiederentdeckte armenische Bilderhandschrift des 12. Jahrhundert, ed. Günther Prinzing and Andrea Schmidt (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1997), 121–123.

214 The Catholicos had to take his own political situation into account. Not only was he residing in a fortress surrounded by Muslims, but he owed even his election in 1173 to the support of Nureddin, Emir of Aleppo. Mutafian, La Cilicie, 166–167; Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 176 note 21. Mutafian (L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 95) sees this as a political tactic.

215 Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 177; Mutafian, l’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 93–94 (only one English source corroborates Leo’s participation in the Cyprus campaign).
He had good working relations both with the Pope and the Emperor, and was also Bishop of Sabina and Dean of the College of Cardinals. The Armenians could have known of the Emperor’s plans for a crusade still in 1194, when the Armenian envoys were at Henry’s court in Milan. These plans must certainly have inspired Leo of Cilicia. He decided to speed up his effort to gain the crown, initially taking Byzantium into account as well. In 1196 his endeavour to reach an agreement with the Empire of the East led to a theological meeting at Tarsus. In spite of the open attitude of Nerses of Lambron, Armenian Archbishop of Tarsus, who was ready even to give up some of the Armenian “singularities,” the talks came to nothing. Nerses had a poor opinion of his Greek partners, and thought they were ignorant and slaves to “the letter of the law.” In the end the Armenians put two conditions to the Greeks: they wanted the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch to submit to the authority of the Armenian Catholicos, and they wanted the Greeks to use unleavened bread for the Eucharist.216 Their overtly arrogant attitude was proof that they were now playing the Roman card. If they were to dilute their wine with water, they demanded concessions from the Greeks over the Eucharistic bread, which was to be the same as in the Latin Church. Naturally enough, the Byzantine theologians found these conditions unacceptable and the negotiations were broken off. In 1197 Nerses yet again went to Constantinople for dialogue on ecclesiastical issues. Although religious reconciliation was not achieved, nevertheless thanks to Nerses’ efforts Emperor Alexios III Angelos sent a royal crown to Leo II.217 It was the last serious attempt to reach an agreement with the Greek Church. The Byzantine Empire’s political crisis meant that henceforth the Church of Rome was the only viable partner for the Armenians.

In this period, after consulting with the principal barons of the realm, Leo II sent an embassy to the West, to the Emperor and the Pope, since – as the Armenian chronicler Kirakos of Gandzak informs us – he wanted to receive the crown only from the Franks.218 In late 1196 Leo’s envoys put his request to the Pope, Celestine III (1191–1198), and afterwards set off for Apulia in the Kingdom of Sicily, for a meeting with Emperor Henry VI. The meeting probably took place in late January 1197.219 Konrad von Wittelsbach was appointed papal legate for the coronation. The Pope gave him letters to

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219 Halfter, *Das Papsttum und die Armenier*, 194, 198–199.
Leo II and the Catholicos. Before setting sail for Acre the papal legate met
the Emperor in Calabria, where presumably the final details were arranged,
including that the coronation would be performed on behalf of the Emperor
by his envoy, the Chancellor Konrad von Querfurt, Bishop of Hildesheim.
Konrad von Wittelsbach sailed for Acre in early April, while in early October
Konrad von Querfurt left for Cyprus, where he crowned Aimery (Amalric)
de Lusignan, a vassal of the Empire. But for reasons unknown neither of the
Konrads went directly to Cilicia.

When news reached him that the German crusading forces had arrived
in Acre, Leo sent his chancellor, John, Archbishop of Sis, to claim the crown
he had been promised. His embassy met the Crusaders in Beirut, which had
just been taken from the Muslims. The German princes there decided that
Leo would be crowned by Konrad von Wittelsbach, who thereby became
the plenipotentiary of both the Pope and the Emperor. Together with the
Armenian envoy he set off for Cilicia by sea, taking with him the costly crown
founded by the Emperor and blessed by the Pope.

On the day before the coronation the legate tried to compel Leo and
the Catholicos to make a stronger commitment to the reform of Armenian
Christianity. The 13th-century chronicler Kirakos of Gandzak listed three of
his demands: 1. The Armenian Church would henceforth celebrate Christmas
and saints’ days on the days they fell; it had become customary to transfer feast
days to the nearest Saturday or Sunday if they happened to fall on a day of
fasting, or for other practical reasons. Konrad was not asking the Armenians
to adopt the Roman calendar, as some historians claim, but to keep strictly to
the Armenian calendar.

220 Both documents have been lost. Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 206, reconstruc
ted their content in the basis of later papal documents; see Gabriele Winkler, “The Politic
al Influence of the Holy See on Armenia and its Liturgy,” in The Romanization Tendency,
ed. J. Vellam (Kottayam, Kerala, India, 1975), 113.

221 Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 216.

222 Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 217–220.

223 For instance Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 209.

224 An echo of this requirement made by the Pope is to be found in one of the eight ecclesia
tical canons which were sent form Cilicia to Greater Armenia shortly afterwards. Canon 2
recommended that the feast of the Annunciation, Dormition, Elevation of the Cross, and
the feast days of martyrs be celebrated “on the day of their commemoration, irrespectively
of when they should fall,” KG V, 120–122. This passage is usually misinterpreted owing to
the bad and fragmentary French translation of Kirakos’ chronicle.
Christmas and Easter there would be a ban on all foods except for fish and oil. Konrad threatened to impose a fine on Armenia if these three conditions were not kept.\footnote{KG III, 116. In Mutafian’s opinion (L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 98), the legate also wanted “dogmatic” concessions, since the Church of Rome considered the Armenians heretics. However, it seems that at this time Rome was not aware of any dogmatic differences and recognised the Armenians as orthodox.} What is striking about Konrad’s demands is the absence of two of the issues that always cropped up whenever Armenians had conducted theological discussions with their mighty ecclesiastical partners. It will be worthwhile considering why they were omitted. Could the chronicler have passed them over in silence, because they were problematic for his Church, and mentioned only the ones which were uncontroversial for him? Some historians, such as B. Hamilton and P. Halfter, think that the legate must have called for the removal of the additional “you who were crucified for us” from the \textit{Trishagion}. But he need not have, since the theological issues involved were not yet appreciated in the West, and above all the hymn was not used in the Western liturgy; only the Greeks were sensitive to this problem.\footnote{Hamilton, \textit{The Latin Church}, 203–204; Halfter, \textit{Das Papsttum und die Armenier}, 209–210.} It was quite a different matter with the mixing of water with the wine (\textit{commixtio}). It would be hardly imaginable for Rome to withdraw a demand which had been invariably put to the Armenians on every occasion. An account made by Vardan Aigektsi, a \textit{vardapet} who took part in Leo’s coronation (d. 1230/1240), says the following: “The great archbishop who came from Rome and in our presence consecrated Leo king, celebrated the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass using pure wine, and told us that it was a Roman tradition to use undiluted wine for a king’s coronation Mass.”\footnote{This text, which Halfter does not know, is from no. 8356 in the Matenadaran manuscript, and has been published in Armenian by Hakob Anasyan – \textit{Manr erker} (La Verne, Calif.: University of La Verne Press: American Armenian International College, 1987), 216–217. See Emanuel A. Pivazian, “Vardan Aigektsi,” in \textit{Vidnye deiateli armianskoî kul’tury (V–XVIII veka)} (Erevan: Izdatel’stvo Erevanskogo Universiteta, 1982), 235–244.} This could not have been true if understood literally. The legate did not know the Armenian liturgy, so he could not have celebrated Mass in the Armenian rite. He must have said Mass in the Latin rite, of which \textit{commixtio} is an integral part. Yet the \textit{vardapet’s} insistence in his attempt to convince his readers that here things were different must mean something. Presumably it was a reaction to the discussion on this point at the meeting the day before. Abel Oghlukian’s conjecture\footnote{Abel Oghlukian, \textit{Altarmenische Aussagen zur Eucharistielehre}, Ph.D. Diss. (Wien, 1992), 115–116.} that it was an ecumenical gesture on Konrad’s part is unlikely since, as we know from Kirakos’ relation, he had made tough demands, not at all ecumenically.
We know from other sources that the legate had required the king to send a certain number of boys under 12 to school to learn Latin.\textsuperscript{229} This condition was surely not an expression of a Latinising tendency, but an attempt to break down the language barrier, which would continue to make communication difficult still for a long time to come.

However, the legate’s demands met with opposition from the bishops, who included not only Armenian prelates from Cilicia, but also the archbishop of the Sultanate of Rum. They were unanimous in rejecting them as unacceptable. There is no knowing how things would have turned out if it were not for Leo’s intervention. He persuaded the bishops to accept the terms by equivocation, promising them that the Armenian liturgy and practices would remain intact.\textsuperscript{230} Having overcome their resistance in this manner, he notified the legate that the Armenians consented to the Pope’s and Emperor’s terms. Then Konrad made a further demand: he wanted twelve bishops of Cilicia to pledge to keep the conditions. Again, on being persuaded by the king, they consented to this.\textsuperscript{231} Now there was nothing standing in the way of the coronation he had wanted so much.

Leo was crowned king in a ceremony held on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6\textsuperscript{th}, 1198, in the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Tarsus, after first being anointed by Catholicos Gregory VI Apirat. He took the name Leo I.\textsuperscript{232} The coronation itself was performed in the Latin \textit{ordo coronandi}, most probably

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{229} Simon de Saint Quentin, \textit{Histoire des Tartares}, ed. Jean Richard (Paris: Geuthner, 1965), 87: “Porro archiepiscopus quidam Theutonicus, videlicet Moguntinus, attulit eidem Leoni coronam sub tali condicione, ut omnes pueros infra XII. annos existentes ipse Leo poni faceret ad litteras Latinas.” This could certainly not have applied to all the boys under twelve. This kind of education could have been provided by the Latin schools attached to Tarsus and Mamistra Cathedrals. Brincken, \textit{Die Nationes Christianorum Orientalium}, 190, was not right to see this condition as a step towards the Latinisation of the Armenian rite.


\textsuperscript{231} Hamilton, “The Armenian Church,” 71, 75; Hamilton, \textit{The Latin Church}, 336. Halfter, \textit{Das Papsttum und die Armenier}, 203, 227, assumes that an act of union was drawn up in an official document signed by the King, the Catholicos, and 12 bishops. He tries to reconstruct its text on the basis of secondary data. However, all that Kirakos of Gandzak writes on this matter is that the legate required the 12 bishops to take an oath, but he does not mention a written document (KG III, 116). So it is doubtful whether there ever was such a document. For Rome it would have been invaluable, and would have surely been kept safely in the pontifical archives, along with other documents relating to King Leo.

\textsuperscript{232} A debate is going on among historians on the date of the coronation. Was it 1198 or 1199? Halfter, \textit{Das Papsttum und die Armenier}, 234–236 and Mutafian, \textit{L’Arménie du Levant}, Vol. 1, 99–100, opt for 1198. The latter historian has provided more evidence and arguments in support of the claim that the king was invested with two crowns – by both the Emperor of the East and of the West.
by Konrad von Wittelsbach. Sometimes doubts are raised as to Konrad’s personal participation in the ceremony. However, in a letter to Innocent III the Catholicos wrote, “[archiepiscopus Maguntinus] coronavit [my emphasis – K.S.] regem … Leonem et nobis reddidit coronam, quam nos perdidimus a longe tempore.” The Pope wrote to Leo that he had received the crown from the hands of Konrad: “diadema regni recepisti de manibus eius” [my emphasis – K.S.]. However, the German historian Günter Prinzing is not convinced by the sources since, he says, there is no mention of this in the Armenian chronicles. Yet these documents are contemporary sources, and take precedence over later chronicles. In point of fact Vardan Aigektsi wrote that not only did Konrad crown the king, but he also celebrated the Latin Mass. P. Halfter speculates that on behalf of the Pope, his representative Konrad von Wittelsbach consecrated the crown which earlier had been blessed by the Pope. Next he delivered the apostolic blessing (benedictio apostolica) for the king and all present. The ceremony was combined with the baptism of Raymond Roupen, the future heir to Armenia and Antioch, administered by Konrad von Wittelsbach. The invited guests who attended the ceremony included the bishops of Armenia, the Greek metropolitan of Tarsus, and Michael the Syrian (Michael the Great), patriarch of the Syrian Orthodox Church, whose residence was not far from Cilicia, in the Monastery of Mar Bar Sauma near Melitene, along with numerous barons, knights, tribes and families, as well as representatives of neighbouring countries with gifts from their princes for the new king. To express his gratitude to the Church of Rome for its support, and following a hint from Konrad von Wittelsbach, Leo officially confirmed and augmented the assets and foundations of the Latin Church in his kingdom; soon appointments were made to the two metropolitan sees of Tarsus and Mamistra. The

235 See note 85.
236 Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 263, attributes a considerable amount of importance to this act, indicating the temporal value of the blessing; see also 277–279.
238 KG III, 116.
239 At the time of the coronation the two Latin metropolises did not have archbishops yet, since no archbishops representing them attended the ceremony. Albert, Chancellor of the
Tarsus coronation was seen in the West as a great victory for the Church of Rome.\textsuperscript{240} In reality Leo I was acknowledged as king by the grace of Emperor Henry VI, and the new kingdom became a fiefdom of the Empire.\textsuperscript{241} The Pope’s contribution was limited to the blessing (\textit{benedictio}) of the crown and the bestowal of the Apostolic See’s protection (\textit{protectio apostolicae sedis}) on the new kingdom, which meant that Rome recognised the local ecclesiastical jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{242} In return the King endowed the Roman Church with several properties, including Paperon Castle, which was most probably returned to him to hold in fief.\textsuperscript{243} The death of Emperor Henry VI in 1197 and the unrest in Germany in connection with the election of his successor induced Leo to look more and more to Rome for support and military assistance. This is why already by the 13\textsuperscript{th} century Armenia gave the impression of having become a feudal dependency of the papacy.

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Principality of Antioch, was Archbishop of Tarsus in 1186–1190; Giorgio Fedalto, \textit{La Chiesa latina in Oriente}, Vol. 2 (Verona: Casa editrice Mazziana, 1976), 146, note 218. The stylisation of some of the sources has made many historians go wrong by assuming that a Latin church organisation was established in Cilicia at this time. For instance, J. Richard (\textit{La papauté}, 49) claims that the agreement on ecclesiastical matters envisaged the handing over of two metropolises, Tarsus and Mamistra, to the Church of Rome. This claim is erroneous, as in both cities there were Latin, Armenian, and Greek cathedrals alongside each other.


In his letter of 23\textsuperscript{rd} May 1199 to Pope Innocent III Leo used the title “per eandem [Dei gratiam] et Romani imperii gratiam rex omnium Armeniorum,” CICO II, 555–556, Appendix I, no. 5; \textit{Die Register Innocenz’ III. 2. Pontifikatsjahr}, no. 210 (219). He adopted the formula used in the honorific title of the Catholicos, emphasising his ambition to extend his authority to all the historical territories of Armenia.

Halfter, \textit{Das Papsttum und die Armenier}, 262–293 rejected the opinion that at this time Armenia became a fief of the Holy See. Armenia was never mentioned in the \textit{Liber censuum Romanae Ecclesiae}. According to Halfter in practice “protection” meant that the Holy See had the right to confirm the succession to the throne of Armenia.

Simon de Saint-Quentin, 88: “Leo dedit Ecclesia in dotem casale Estelice, castrum Paperon et alia multa casalia pluraque alia.” According to a later source, these properties were offered in token of Armenia’s submission to the papacy; see Brocardus, “Directorium ad passagium faciendum,” RHC Doc. Arm. II, 488: “Ces Armenins de la Basse Armeanye … ont reçu la couronne et le nom royal des Pappes et des empereurs. Et lors, en signe de subjection, par acte et par convenance, ilz ont donné a l’Église de Romme auculns tres bons chasteaux et fors.” Quite soon, however, they were taken away from the Church: “Mais puis qu’ilz ont acquis le nom royal et la gloire, ilz ont retrait leur main … car ilz ont osté les chasteaux que par avant ilz avoient donnez a l’Église.” Later Paperon (Baberon) Castle, along with nearby Lambron, belonged to the Hethumid family. In Leo’s times the King’s uncle, Baron Bakuran, was lord of Paperon. See Halfter, \textit{Das Papsttum und die Armenier}, 270–274.
Historians have assessed this phase in Armenian-Roman relations in diverse ways. Opinions differ on when exactly ecclesiastical union was accomplished. The points that are stressed are its political aspects, and the insincerity on the part of the Armenian leaders, whose motive for seeking the Pope's backing was political shrewdness for quick and calculated gains. The Armenians are regarded as having paid only lip-service to papal primacy, and that the union was just a delusion on the part of Rome.

It is claimed that the most formidable obstacle to union was the issue of Rome's primacy. However, this hypothesis is untenable. We should ask what the recognition of papal primacy meant at the time. Still in the late 11th century the concept of primacy was envisaged even by members of the Latin Church in accordance with the old scheme, which derived it from the apostolic tradition—the popes were seen as successors to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles. The political aspects of Rome's ascendancy due to its status as the capital of the Roman Empire, which had played a key role at the Council of Nicaea, had been discarded a long time ago. The apostolic idea lay at the basis of the appeal the Crusaders lodged to the Pope on capturing Antioch. They asked the pope to leave Rome and take up residence in the Apostle Peter's original seat. Until the mid-12th century the concept of the pentarchy—the leadership of the concert of bishops of the five cities, Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, headed by the pope—was not strange to the Western ecclesiology. In the 1140s a scandal erupted in Antioch, caused by Ralf of Domfront, that city’s Latin patriarch, who refused to recognise the primacy of the pope on the grounds that he himself (Ralf) was the incumbent of “St. Peter’s throne.” The schism in the Latin Church at the time was an opportune moment for noncompliance. During his investiture ceremony in 1135 he put the pallium on himself, without waiting for the pope to put it on him. His example caught on: the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem followed suit in a copycat move. The matter was settled on 2nd December 1140, in a synod presided by Innocent III’s legate, Alberic, bishop of Ostia. The ambitious

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patriarch of Antioch was deposed. These facts show the vestiges of the old idea of the Church's organisation, involving the independence of the individual patriarchates, with Rome not interfering in their internal affairs. Originally the election of a patriarch did not require confirmation by the pope, and elective synods merely wrote letters notifying the other patriarchates of the election and asking only for admission to communion in the faith.

The Byzantine Church had consistently denied the Armenians communion in the faith. Gregory VII had taken a similar attitude under the influence of his Greek sources of information. Rome's position changed very substantially after the establishment of the Latin Church in the Near East and direct relations with the Armenians. The Latin Church itself was now being accused of heresy by the Church of the Eastern Empire. The Greeks were criticising it not only for the addition of *filioque* to the Nicene symbol, which had been introduced without consultation at a council, but also for a variety of liturgical and disciplinary practices. The situation was conducive to a mutual sense of solidarity. Gregory VII's successors had no reservations about the orthodoxy of Armenian Christianity. No charges of Monophysitism or Theopassionism were brought against the Armenians. Subsequent Armenian historiographers saw the Synod of Jerusalem of 1141 as a revival of the legendary relations between Gregory the Illuminator and Pope Sylvester I. There is no doubt that henceforth the Armenians were convinced that the Church of Rome had confirmed their orthodoxy and that they had been admitted to communion with the Universal Church. In his elegy on the fall of Edessa Nerses wrote, “O Rome, magnificent and honourable mother of cities, capital of the great St. Peter, head of the Apostles; O unassailable Church, built on Kephas the Rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.” In his writings when he was Catholicos (1166–1173) he stressed his loyalty to the Church of Rome and its popes, successors of St. Peter. Pope Lucius III confirmed the Armenian Church's orthodoxy and its communion with the Universal Church several times in

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247 Pope Innocent III thanked the Lord for keeping them in the pure faith. The 13th-century chronicler Vardan the Great recorded that Catholicos Gregory IV asked the Pope to remain in a communion of prayer with him and asked for an apostolic blessing, *RHC Doc. Arm.* I, 438; KG I, 95. In 1199 Catholicos Gregory VI wrote to Innocent III, “Quia nos sumus vestri et vos estis *memores* [my italics, K. S.] nostri, efficiatis tantum erga nos, quod nos gratias referamus Deo, qui nos redemit sanguine suo. Et quod gratiam agamus sanctae cruci Domini nostri, qui fecit totum mundum, Jesus Christus defendat vos et omnes vestros ab omni malo, et nobis det vestram benedictionem,” CICO I, Appendix I, 554–555, no. 4.

248 *RHC Doc. Arm.* I, 228.

a letter to Catholicos Gregory IV in 1184, even taking it under the tutelage of the Roman Church (tutela Romanae ecclesiae).250 The Armenian envoys in Verona received Holy Communion from the hands of the Pope. The pallium given to the Catholicos was a token of unity in the faith.251 Honoured by these distinctions, Gregory IV asked the new pope, Clement III (1187–1191) for some chrism blessed by him, which in the Armenian Church was an expression of ecclesiastical communion,252 tantamount to unity.253 On the other hand, the want of regular, direct contact with Armenian Christianity meant that theologians in the West did not realise that there were relevant theological differences. Disputes among the Eastern Christians seemed trivial and easy to resolve if the primacy of Rome was accepted. There was no awareness that the Armenians did not recognise the Chalcedonian decrees, nor indeed those of subsequent councils considered ecumenical, and that they accorded the veneration given to saints to individuals acknowledged as heretics, such as Dioscorus. This state of blissful ignorance, not tainted by centuries of prejudice, gave rise to a sense of unity in the faith.

As of the Vetralla meeting between the envoys of the Catholicos and Innocent II in 1145 a belief emerged in the West that the Armenian Church had recognised the primacy of Rome.254 The Armenians raised no objections against primacy understood as the primacy of the bishops of Rome in the episcopal hierarchy; it was not contrary to their tradition.255 In fact Rome had

250 “Qua propter et vos, dilecti Fratres et filii, qui in gremio hujus vestrae Matris quiesciteis, fide musque ejus re cole lentis,” [my italics, K.S.]; Balgy, Historia doctrinae, 55. In 1189 Clement III had written that Leo II, lord of Cilicia, was confirmed in the “Catholic” faith by the grace of God, and that the Catholicos was a “true” Christian; see Löwenfeld, “Drei Briefe Clemens III,” 180.

251 Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 156–157, claims that the pallium conferred on the Catholicos was honorary, viz. he was not required to take the oath of obedience, which would have been tantamount to recognition of the Pope’s primacy. In Halfter’s opinion the bestowal was not an act of law but a friendly gesture, a courtesy indicating the Pope’s favour and willingness to conclude an act of union. I do not think there are grounds to relativise the value of this act, since the Armenians were not challenging papal primacy, while Rome was endorsing their orthodoxy.

252 Löwenfeld, “Drei Briefe Clemens III,” 182. In the Armenian Church in the 14th century anyone who refused to accept or share chrism was considered a schismatic. Clement III did not understand the Catholicos’ request for chrism and considered him fully empowered to bless chrism, advising him to consult the Roman Ritual. Lucius III had sent him in the event of any doubts.

253 Around 1182 the Patriarch of the Maronites in Lebanon acknowledged the primacy of the Church of Rome. Hamilton, “The Armenian Church,” 68.

254 Ottonis episcopi Frisingensis Chronica, VII. 32, 360–363, esp. 361.

255 Hamilton, “The Armenian Church,” 66, writes that the Armenians regarded the successor of St. Peter as the senior member of the apostolic college.
been accorded this manner of precedence already at the Council of Nicaea, which the Armenians had attended. By having its orthodoxy endorsed by Rome, the Church of Armenia was consenting to Rome's arbitration in its age-old dispute with the Greek Church. In 1184 the Pope had called the Catholicos a patriarch, which according to the Armenian chronicler Vardan was tantamount to acknowledging his right to “bind and unbind," in other words to a sovereign and equal rank within orthodox Christianity.256

Such an interpretation, in line with the original ecclesiological ideas prevalent in the East, had its inherent weaknesses. At this time processes of radical transformation were underway in the doctrine of papal primacy and plenitude of power (plenitudo potestatis). According to Western canonists the Universal Church was ceasing to be a communion of local Churches united in a mutually shared faith, and had become identified with the One Church of Rome. The bishop of Rome was to be the sole exponent of the faith; the magisterium was to be his. The very fact of the Pope titling the Armenian Catholicos a Patriarch, counter to the tradition of the pentarchy, was significant. The See of St. Peter was moving away from the pentarchical idea, allowing for the existence of many patriarchs, over all of whom it wanted to have real and not just honorary authority. In the new interpretation the term “the Roman Church” was acquiring the meaning of “the Universal, Catholic Church.” Other Churches and their traditions were to fit within it.

At this time the Armenians raised no objections to papal primacy. In his 1199 letter to Innocent III Catholicos Gregory VI was no doubt sincere when he addressed him in lofty language: “To you, who after Christ are head and consecrated by Him; to the head of the Catholic Church of Rome, the mother of all Churches; to you who are prudent and holy through God, because you are to stand in for the Apostles as pope most high ... to you, who are the head, we the body ...” (Vobis, qui estis caput post Christum consecrati ab eo et caput catholice ecclesie Romane, matris omnium ecclesiarum, a Deo prudentes et sancti, quod debetis esse in loco apostolorum sublimis papa ... qui estis caput ... nos qui sumus corpus). He assured the Pope of his loyalty and obedience to the successors of St. Peter.257 In his reply Innocent III praised the King and the bishops of Armenia for their acknowledgement of the pope as the Vicar

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256 Balgy, Historia doctrinae, 54.
of Christ and successor to the Prince of the Apostles. By acknowledging the pope’s primacy, Innocent wrote, the Church of Armenia had become a member of the mystical body of the Church. The grounds for his primacy were in the Gospel, and the prerogatives of the Holy See due to Divine institution through the merits of the Blessed Peter, the First among the Apostles, and not on the grounds of the decrees of any of the councils. The Church of Rome had been endowed with the magisterium among the other Churches, and primacy based on Christ as its foundation. Innocent wrote to Leo in a similar vein, informing him that the Holy See had been set up by Christ not only over nations and kingdoms, but also over the other Churches. As successors of St. Peter and vicars of Christ, the Roman pontiffs had received the primacy and magisterium from the Saviour, to wield the plenitude of power (ut apud eos plenitudo resideat potestatis), and all peoples and Churches are to receive the teaching of the Catholic faith (fidei … catholicae documenta) from the Roman Church. Therefore Innocent III commended the Catholicos for having acknowledged the apostolicae sedis magisterium.

Innocent III’s vision of the Universal Church differed from the ideas prevalent in the East. Characteristically, according to him the origins of Rome’s primacy went back to Jesus himself, and not to any of the decisions taken in the councils. Yet not even an interpretation as radical as this met with opposition, providing it did not infringe any of the important components of ecclesiastical tradition. At this time recognition of papal primacy did not have such far-reaching consequences for the internal affairs of the local Churches as some historians think, looking at it retrospectively from the vantage-point of later developments. We should not forget that in the first half of the 13th century papal interference in the management of the Latin Churches was still rather sporadic, and patriarchs and metropolitans enjoyed a fairly broad scope of prerogatives. As of the Crusades the authority of the bishops of Rome in the East had a political aspect as well. The pope was regarded as the organiser of holy wars which were not only to liberate the holy places in Palestine, but

258 The Pope referred to two passages from the Gospels: J 10, 16, 21, 17; and Mt 16, 18, 19.
259 “quae per merita beati Petri, et si non tempore, auctoritate tamen inter apostolos primi, non constitutione synodochica sed divina inter omnes ecclesias magisterium obtinuit et primatum, fundata super immobili fundamento, de quo Paulus inquit apostolus: Fundamentum positum est, praeter quod alius poni non potest, quod est Christus Iesus,” (1 Cor. III, 11); CICO I, no. 11; Die Register Innocenz’ III. 2. Pontifikatsjahr, no. 209 (218) (23rd November 1199).
261 CICO II, 199–202, nos. 11 and 12.
also to bring peace and freedom to all Christians. Hence he enjoyed a high level of authority with all Christians living in the East under Muslim rule.

The aspect which weighed heavily on Armenian-Roman relations was Rome’s attitude to the Armenian liturgical idiosyncrasies. At first the Church of Rome was much more tolerant than the Greeks, whose allegations were treated with suspicion in the West, as some of them concerned customs practised in the Latin Church as well, such as the use of unleavened bread for the Eucharist. If treated separately from dogma, differences in liturgy were considered easy to deal with. Rome’s criticism of the use of undiluted wine was due to causes other than what irked the Greeks. This idiosyncrasy was not associated in Rome with the Monophysite heresy. In the Roman Church commixtio, the mixing of the wine with water in the chalice, was an ancient tradition, but its meaning differed from the one attributed to it by the Greek Church, which saw it primarily as reflecting the union of Christ’s divine and human natures. But in the Roman Church it was interpreted in the light of the Apocalypse (17,15), as the union of Christ, symbolised by the wine, with the people of God – the Church, symbolised by the water; or alternatively as a commemoration of an event recorded in the Gospel of St. John (19, 35): the water which flowed out of Jesus’ side and his blood as a symbol of the people he had redeemed. This was the symbolism to which Pope Gregory VII

263 This tradition is confirmed as extant already around 150, Justin, *Apologia I*, 65, 67.

264 “Aquare, quas vidisti … populi sunt, et gentes et linguae.” The words of St. Cyprian of Carthage († 258) were often cited in this context: “If anyone offers up pure water, the people have no part in the Blood of Christ; if it is only water, Christ is not among His people,” De sacramentis calicis Domini (Letter LXIII ad Caecilianum). A similar interpretation occurs already in the 2nd-century writings of St. Irenaeus (*Adversus haereses*, Book V). Although originally these writings were intended against the Ebionites and Gnostics (Encratites) who rejected the wine, in the Middle Ages they acquired a new meaning. The symbolism of the union of Christ with His Church now came to the fore. The liturgical act of mixing was interpreted as the offering up not only of Christ, but also of the Church, and therefore it had to be performed by a presbyter who was united with the Church. Since the water symbolised the people, a benediction formula was used for it (as a rule the wine was not blessed). The words of an ancient Roman prayer said on Christmas Day were recited during the mixing, “Deus, qui humane substantiae,” with the addition of “per huius aquae et vini mysterium” and ending with a solemn invocation of the name of Christ. The prayer referred to the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, whereby Man had been granted a share in Divinity.

265 A variety of prayers were said in connection with the second symbolic interpretation, for example, “Ex latere Christi sanguis et aqua exisse perhibetur et ideo pariter commiscemus, ut misericors utrumque ad medelam sanctificare dignetur,” and “De latere Domini nostri Jesu Christi exivit sanguis et aqua pariter in remissionem peccatorum” etc. Another aspect which gave rise to theological debate in the East was the proportion of water to wine; see Joseph A. Jungmann, *Missarum sollemnia: Explication génétique de la Messe romaine*.
referred to in his letter. In the 12th century Rome’s requirements – apart from commixtio – only concerned the strict observance of the calendar and the celebration of Christmas on 25th December. In 1141 Pope Innocent II expressed an opinion that flaws in the liturgy and discipline should be eliminated by those who lived side by side with pagans not because of any alleged heretical connotations they might have, but due to the need for them to keep their rituals in a pristine, impeccable state. In 1197 Konrad von Wittelsbach made the conferral of the crown conditional on changes in the Armenian rite, but did not require them to enter any sort of ecclesiastical union, which – understood in the sense of unity in the faith – had been a fact for some time already, at least in theory. Henceforth consent to liturgical reform would be merely a matter of deference – the manifestation of obedientia (“obedience”) – to the Church of Rome, not an endeavour to effect union. This is why Haftter’s intricate argument and reconstruction of a putative act of union has to be rejected.

The individual who attempted to implement the liturgical reform Rome had postulated was Nerses of Lambron, Armenian archbishop of Tarsus and superior of Skevra Monastery. He was descended from the Oshinid-Hethumid princes, a house that rivalled the Rubenids. Very well educated and intellectually broad-minded, Nerses knew and appreciated the legacy of various Christian traditions – Greek, Syrian, Latin – for all of them, he said, had contributed to the Christian cultural heritage. He wanted to draw on them to enrich his native tradition, and the one which he saw as the leading Christian tradition was the Latin culture. He was the Armenian translator of the Latin ritual which Pope Lucius III had sent, and put it into a codex with his own treatise on the institution of the Church and the mystery of the Liturgy. He tried to introduce reforms modelled on Western practice in his own diocese. Sometimes Armenian priests did not wear vestments for church ceremonies, so he brought in liturgical vestments based on Latin models. He ordered his clergy to say the hours collectively; and in the monasteries he had the entire community of monks recite compline together before retiring for

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266 Pope Lucius III had taken the same approach in 1184; Balgy, Historia doctrinae, 55; Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 136, 152.

267 CICO I, no. 395.

268 Published (in Armenian) in Venice, 1847; passages have been translated in RHC Doc. Arm. I, 564–578.

269 Interestingly, as late as the 14th century ordinations, bishops’ consecrations, and other ceremonies were still being conducted in Greater Armenia without the use of vestments; CICO VIII, 149–150 (no. 58); 222 (no. 59).
the night. For monks he instituted monastic vows similar to the Latin vows, something Armenian monasticism had never had before. To disseminate Western spirituality Nerses translated the *Rule of St. Benedict* and the works of Pope Gregory the Great, *The Life of St. Benedict* and *Liber Miraculorum*. He founded a hospital for the poor affiliated to the Armenian Cathedral in Tarsus. He recognised third marriages as valid in Armenian canon law. His reforms drew on other Christian models apart from Latin ones. He had Tarsus Cathedral decorated and furnished in the Greek fashion. He had Christmas separated from Epiphany, in compliance with the Greek and Latin custom, and celebrated on 25th December.

Nerses' conduct triggered an immediate reaction from the monks of Greater Armenia, particularly from the Haghpat and Sanahin Monasteries. They launched a virulent attack against him, and when he did not respond brought accusations against him to the ruler of Cilicia, saying that he had betrayed the native customs. In a treatise addressed to King Leo Nerses defended his reforms, accusing his adversaries of obscurantism and ignorance. But the conflict had become so aggravated that Leo asked the Archbishop's brother Hethum to persuade him to withdraw the changes. Leo was certainly not against reform and wanted to take a pro-Western course in his policy, but he was worried that unrest could erupt in the country and schism in the Church.

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270 KG I, 92.


272 Nerses was not uncritical of certain phenomena he observed in the Latin Church. He criticised the opulence of the prince-bishops, and the affluence and effeminacy of the lay clergy, which gave a bad example to Armenian priests. St. Nersès de Lampron, “Extrait de l’ouvrage intitulé Réflexion sur les institution de l’Eglise et explication du mystère de la messe,” in *RHC Doc. Arm.*, I, 569–578.

273 There is a report dated 1211 on Cilician Armenia, by Wilbrand of Oldenburg, who was the canon of Hildesheim and the envoy of Emperor Otto IV. It includes a detailed description of the Tarsus Cathedral of St. Sophia and St. Peter. An aspect which caught the envoy’s attention were the marble furnishings inside the cathedral, and especially the icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary, “imago domine nostre angelis manibus est depicta.” It was accorded special veneration by the faithful, since it was said to weep in times of trouble; Wilbrand von Oldenburg, “Peregrinatio,” in *Peregrinatorum medii aevi aevi quatuor*, ed. Johann C. M. Laurents (Lipsiae: J.C. Hinrich, 1864), 176; St. Nersès de Lampron, “Lettre,” 596.


275 In 1193 Basil, Archbishop of Ani, who was supported by traditionalists not in favour of rapprochement with other Churches, declared himself catholicos. The ruler of Cilicia had no power to stop him, since Basil resided in a city under the rule of a Seljuk emir. Conserva-
national tradition, such as liturgical vestments and the interior decoration of the cathedral. But Christmas was again combined with Epiphany. Nerses’ case shows the insurmountable obstacles that had to be reckoned with by those who wanted to make the slightest changes in the rites and ceremonies. No wonder that in his correspondence with Innocent III Catholicos Gregory VI tried to defend his native church traditions in a veiled manner. In a letter of 1st October 1201 he wrote that at the very outset the Armenians had received “the law” (lex) from the Roman Church, and had neither added nor taken away anything, in accordance with the tradition of the Fathers.276 The catholicos did not deny that the papal legate had put certain requirements.277 However, he realised that there would be problems with the implementation of these changes. For centuries the Armenian Church had defended its singularities, and their observance was a benchmark of its own orthodoxy and fidelity to traditions that went back to apostolic times. The king and the catholicos were ready to risk the indignation of the defenders of the national customs to shorten the gulf separating them from the great Church of the Franks. They both knew very well that the process had to be staggered over a long time. The minimum that had to be done was to gradually introduce the less controversial novelties in the Kingdom of Cilicia. Only later would it be feasible to think of the Armenians in the old country, and only those who were under the authority of the catholicos of Hromkla.278 There is no doubt that their intentions were sincere, for their country’s political future depended on this.

276 “ab ea [Romana ecclesia] a principio habuimus legem, et nunc usque neque augmentavimus neque minuimus, immo tenemus et consuetudines secundum instituta praeecedentium sanctorum partum,” CICO II, Appendix I, no. 9 (1st October 1201). Innocent III accepted this declaration: “Asseris quoque, quod ab Ecclesia Romana ab initio Armenica suscepit ecclesia, quam tu et coepiscopi tui, et grex tibi et ipsis commissus non minuistis, nec auxistis, sed sicut accepistis, sic usque hodie inviolabiliter observatis, eius tenetis consuetudines secundum santorum patrum praeecedentium instituta,” CICO II, 221–223, no. 26 (1st June 1202).
278 In a letter of 23rd May 1199 the King wrote to the Pope, “In vestri vero luminis gratia salutaribus monitis reverendissimi patris nostri archiepiscopi Maguntini instructi et informati, omne regnum nobis a Deo commissum amplissimum et spatiosum, et omnes Armenos huc illuc in remotis partibus diffusos ad unitatem sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae divina inspirante...
Church union was definitely initiated in the 1140s and developed in 1184 and 1198. This was the time when the postulates which were to be the tokens of the Armenian Church's obedience to the Church of Rome were formulated. Although the main conditions Rome had put for the bestowal of the crown were not fulfilled, in the 13th century the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia was regarded as a Catholic country, and its bishops regarded themselves united with Rome and recognised the pope as the head of the Church. The beginnings of the co-operation looked promising. The catholicos declared his intention to confirm the king, his barons and the faithful in loyalty to the pope's authority; while in a letter of 1st June 1202 to the catholicos, Innocent III wrote how happy he was that the king's faith was in such a pristine state, and promised to treat the Armenian Church as a special daughter of the Apostolic See (universam Armenorum Ecclesiam utpote filiam sedis apostolicae specialem).279
Part Three:  
Under the long shadow of Rome  
(13th–15th century)

A dominion of the Church of Rome  
(early 13th century)

In the incipient 13th century the Armenian state of Cilicia emerged as one of the most powerful political entities in the Near East. In the reign of King Leo I there were even plans to unite it with the Principality of Antioch. Although they never materialised, Cilician Armenia was on the rise. The decline of the Latin states in the East enhanced its strategic rank. Not only did the pope and the princes of Western Christendom look to its military resources with expectation, but also treated it as a prospective base for new crusading expeditions. The Kingdom of Armenia saw the crusades as a means to reinforce its political status with respect to the vicinal, hostile Muslim states. Straight after the coronation in 1198 the king and the catholicos asked the pope to launch a new crusade and to send military reinforcement.  

\[1\] Innocent III responded to Leo’s request, which had been delivered by his envoy Robert de Margat, by sending

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1 “Et nos rogamus vos, ut oretis Deum pro nobis, quia nos sumus in ore draconis et in medio inimicorum crucis, et inter eos qui naturaliter sunt inimici nostri. Et nos vos rogamus per Deum, quatenus nobis mittatis tale adiutorium et tale consilium, quod nos possimus conservare honorem Dei et christianitatis et vestrum” (the Catholicos’ letter), CICO II, Appendix I, 554–555, no. 4; “subsidiium christianissimum nobis accurrendo mittatis ante quam incremeabile, quod absit, incurramus diluvium, immo cum Dei et vestro auxilio, evaginato ense de Hur Chaldeorum, et persecutione Pharaonis liberari possimus” (the King’s letter), CICO II, Appendix I, 555–556, no. 5; “De cetero commendamus sollicitudini vestrae reliquias Syriae, quae cotidie vestrum expectant et interpellant subsidiun” (the King’s letter), CICO II, Appendix I, 556–558, no. 6. In his letter of 1st October 1201 the King informed
Leo the standard of St. Peter, under which he was to fight against the enemies of the Cross and win thanks to the merits of the Prince of the Apostles. In his address to the princes, barons, and people of Cilicia Innocent treated them just as he would have done if they were Western European Christians, exhorting them to take part in the fighting to recover the Holy Sepulchre and granting them the right to the crusaders' indulgence. In his reply the king thanked the pope for the gift, promising to fight against the enemies of the Cross under the standard he had received, and to stand firm in defence of Christianity; while the catholicos pledged to issue the crusaders' indulgences granted by the pope. At this time Innocent was indeed making preparations for a new crusade, for which Soffred, cardinal priest of Santa Prassede, and Peter Capuanus, cardinal priest of San Marcelo, were created legates. The catholicos was notified that in Venice a force was rallying and would soon set off for the Holy Land. At the request of the Armenian chancellor, John, archbishop of Sis, the pope's

the Pope of the disputes going on among the Muslim rulers, which would make it easier to organise a crusade; CICO II, 559–562, Appendix I, no. 7.


3 "ut eius sitis remissionis participes quam, de Dei omnipotentis et beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum eius auctoritate confisi, omnibus transfretantibus indulgemus," CICO II, 205, no. 15 (17th December 1199).

4 "vexillum sancti Petri in memoriam dilectionis Sedis Apostolicae ... semper ante nos portari contra inimicos crucis ad honorem sanctae Romanae ecclesiae faciemus," CICO II, Appendix I, 559, no. 7 (1st October 201).

5 "Receipimus ex parte Dei et vestra remissionem, et idem mandatum augmentavimus auctoritate Dei et vestra omnis sub sacerdotio nostro constitutis, et praecomium non cessamus alta voce mittere et praedicare sanitatem infirmis et remissionem peccatorum. ... Idem habemus mandatum praecepto Dei et vestro remittendi peccata omnibus, qui pro lege Dei funderunt sanguinem CICO II, Appendix I, 567, no. 9 (1st October 1201). In his reply the Pope wrote to the Catholicos, "Monemus igitur fraternitatem tuam ... et ... mandamus, quatinus ... pr[adic]tum regem et universam Armenorum ecclesiam in lege Domini et nostra devotione confirmes, et eis, sicut per alias nostras litteras mandavimus, formam apostolicae remissionis exponas," [my italics, K.S.] CICO I, 223, No. 26 (1st June 1202). Peter Halfter (Das Papsttum und die Armenier im frühen und hohen Mittelalter: Von den ersten Kontakten bis zur Fixierung der Kirchenunion im Jahre 1198 (Köln: Böhlau, 1996), 187–188), and Werner Maleczek (Petrus Capuanus. Kardinal, Legat am vierten Kreuzzug. Theologe (Wien: Verlag der Oesterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1988), 163) are wrong to claim that the Pope did not want to acknowledge the Catholicos' right to announce an indulgence for the crusade, fearing that an Armenian crusade would become engaged in a battle for the Antiochene succession.

6 CICO II, 217–220, nos. 23 and 24 (24th April 1202).

7 The Pope took the opportunity to once more recommend the announcement of indulgences: "sicut per alias nostras litteras mandavimus, formam apostolicae remissionis exponas, et exhorteris ipsos attentius, ut se murum pro domo Domini opponent," CICO II, 223, no. 26 (1st June 2012).
legates brought the catholicos a pallium in acknowledgement of his services to establish Church unity.⁸

In the summer of 1203 Peter Capuanus, one of the papal legates, arrived in Cilician Armenia. He was received with full honours both by the king and the catholicos. By this time Gregory VI had died, and his successor, John VI, formerly archbishop of Sis, received the legate. King Leo's lavish hospitality was partly due to political calculation; he was hoping to secure an auspicious outcome for himself through the legate’s mediation in a dispute over the Antiochene succession. He promised the legate that he would send an army of twenty thousand to the crusade if the legate supported Raymond Roupen’s claim to the throne.⁹ The legate's visit provided an opportunity to discuss ecclesiastical matters, especially the reforms that had not been put into effect.

They must certainly have discussed changes in the liturgy, days of fasting, and the rules for the celebration of holy days. The legate must have been pleased with the results of the negotiations, since at the end of his visit he presented the catholicos and his fourteen bishops with mitres and crosiers.¹⁰ It cannot be ruled out that the custom of bishops of the Armenian Church using Western-style crosiers and other episcopal insignia, which later spread to Greater Armenia as well, goes back to this event.¹¹ The king and catholicos were pleased with the talks as well. In a letter of September 1204 to Innocent III Leo stressed the catholicos’ and his own achievements in the negotiations,¹²

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⁸ “sicut per tuas nobis litteras intimasti, magisterium sedis apostolicae recognoscere et prima-tum; et in ipsius devotione persistens non solum carissimum in Christo filium nostrum, L[eonem] Regem Armeniae Illustrem, sed populum ad id induceres et barones,” CICO II, 223, no. 27.


¹¹ As I have already said, the mitre, pallium, and ring were sent to the Catholicos by Pope Lucius III in 1184. Originally the use of these insignia was reserved exclusively for the catholicos. It was not until the reign of Innocent III that the wide-scale use of Latin mitres by Armenian bishops was permitted. See Daniel Findikyan, “L’Influsso latino sulla liturgia armena,” in Roma-Armenia, ed. Claude Mutafian (Roma: Edizioni di Luca, 1999), 342.

¹² CICO II, Appendix I, 583, no. 19 (dated 1205): “Sequentibus diebus de obodoentia Arme-nicae Ecclesiae ad Sanctam Romanam Ecclesiam, ad quam tam diu laboravimus, divina auxiliante gratia deliberavimus, et ad hoc cum multo labore induximus Ecclesiam Armeniae
while the catholicos assured the pope that some of the reforms had already been brought in, and others needed the approval of the national synod. He promised to pay an *ad limina* visit, personally or through a plenipotentiary, every five years,\(^\text{13}\) and to take part in synods convened in the Near East, at which – as the legate had promised – his attendance would be indispensable.\(^\text{14}\)

The success of Peter Capuensis’ visit appeared to bring the 1198 agreement to completion, so much so that one historian has said that union with Rome was not officially accomplished until the legate’s visit.\(^\text{15}\) However, we can hardly overlook the fact that for a long time already the issue was not union, but the adoption of liturgical changes as a sign of obedience to the See of Rome.\(^\text{16}\)

There are distinct signs that the Armenian Church made a genuine attempt to introduce some of the reforms the pope had called for. Although after a short while the king quarrelled with the catholicos and had a new incumbent

\(^\text{13}\) CICO II, Appendix I, 587, no. 20 (dated 1205): “suffraganeorum nostrorum longe lateque diffusam indutiantes, et quia non sine magna personarum deliberatione, hoc fieri poterit, convenientius praesepet nostri vel maiori parte praetorium in unum, tempore constituto, ipsorum consensu, ne in ecclesia scandalum oriretur, institutiones vestras, in quibus concordaremus, suscipere proposuimus … promissimus, in ordine nostro singulis quinqueannis per nuntios nostros, sanctam Romanam Ecclesiam tamquam matrem et magistrum omnium ecclesiaraum visitare” (1204).

\(^\text{14}\) CICO II, Appendix I, 586–588, no. 20. The King had specifically requested the Pope for this in his previous letter (CICO II, Appendix I, 582–586, no. 19). Jean Richard (*La papauté et les missions d’Orient au moyen âge (XIIIe–XVe) siècle. 2* ed. [Rome: École française de Rome, 1998], 49) is not right to claim that at the Catholicos’ request Innocent III agreed to put the Armenian Church directly under the authority of the Apostolic See, and that the bestowal of the pallium, mitre, and crozier for use by every subsequent catholicos was an expression of this. In point of fact the Armenian Church received an exemption in 1210. The pallium which the Catholicos was given by the Pope in 1184 was handed down to successive catholicos until the 1230s, by which time it had become too worn for further use; see CICO III, no. 258; Halfter, *Das Papsttum und die Armenier*, 154.

\(^\text{15}\) Maleczek, *Petrus Capuanus*, 178. Halfter (*Das Papsttum und die Armenier*, 244) contests this claim.

elected, both Church and State had a similar objective in mind. Appropriate measures were taken even in Greater Armenia. An opportunity arose when Zachary (Zakhare), the Armenian ishkhān (prince) of the territories under Georgian rule, who was also the acting commander of the Georgian forces, requested the Catholicos and King Leo to grant him permission to celebrate services during military campaigns in a tent using a portable altar, not only on Sundays but also on holy days which happened to fall on a weekday. This innovation, which Zachary considered a return to the old tradition, incurred the anger and defiance of the local clergy led by the monk Mkhitār Gosh. King Leo treated Zachary’s request as a pretext to make more changes in line with the pope’s requirements. It was a delicate situation, as Zachary’s brother John (Ivane) had only recently embraced Georgian orthodoxy and was imposing the Georgian rite in an Armenian language version and the Chalcedonian Trinitarian formula in the congregations under his jurisdiction. His followers’ main stronghold was the Miriam-Ann Monastery at Pkhindzavank near Lori. In 1204 a congress of the vardapets, bishops, and monks of Cilicia which was convened in Sis by the king and presided over by the catholicos drew up an eight-point list of canonical reforms and sent it to Zachary.

It covered more issues than the requirements put by Konrad von Wittelsbach; perhaps the new requirements were points discussed during the visit of Peter Capuensis. Some might have been unconnected with the position of Rome, but rather with local factors, such as Syrian, Greek, or Georgian influences. Canon 1 stipulated that Mass was to be said in the presence of a seminarian and a deacon; Canon 2 laid down that the Feast of the Annunciation was to be celebrated on 6th April, the Dormition on 15th August, and the Elevation of the Cross on 14th September, exactly on the days they happened to fall; Canon 3 recommended fasting on the vigils of Epiphany and Easter (though fish and vegetable oil were allowed); Canon 4 laid down that the veneration of images of the Saviour and the Saints was not to be rejected and must not be treated as a pagan practice; Canon 5 instituted the celebration of Mass also for the living; under Canon 6 the clergy were prohibited from eating meat; Canon 7 regulated the time intervals which were to be observed for the successive stages of ordination from seminarian through deacon to priest; and Canon 8 obliged monks to observe the stabilitas loci

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17 Catholicos John, who was on bad terms with the King, sent Zachary an ornamental tent and a portable marble altar, appointing Bishop Minas as his chaplain and some seminarians to serve him. So he appears to have been in favour of the reforms as well. KG V, 120, 123, 125, 147, 149.
18 KG V, 120.
19 Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 244.
rule (permanent residence in a monastery) and of community ownership of property and material assets. The provenance of some of these regulations is indubitably Western. However, for the Armenian clergy in Greater Armenia they conjured up associations with the hated Greeks and Georgians. In 1205 Zachary called a synod of the clergy under his authority and laymen to meet in Lori, which resulted in dissension. The point which met with the greatest amount of opposition was the attempt to introduce the celebration of holy days on weekdays; some of those assembled were of the opinion that this new practice could infringe the rules for days of fasting. The fact that the reforms were backed by the authority both of the king and the catholicos made no impression on them. To evade the pressure a group of dissenters secretly left the synod under cover of darkness, while an attempt to bring the new practices in at the Haghpat Monastery nearly ended in the lynching of the representatives of the catholicos. The Church of Armenia was riven with discord and hatred of such vehemence that the antagonistic parties threatened each other with death. Another synod, which Zachary convened in Ani in 1207, proved just as futile. The leader of the defiant group was Mkhitar Gosh, a vardapet from Nor Getik Monastery, who uttered historic words at the synod. Zachary had received orders from the king and the catholicos to bring in these changes, he said, “and whether we like it or not, that is what he will do. So let each of us go home … and continue to celebrate the rites as we have always done.” The persecution of the recalcitrant bishops which Zachary started was not of much avail: he was the only one who observed the new customs, while “the churches continued to do as they had always done.” Even attempts to justify the changes on the grounds that they were concordant with the Church’s ancient customs brought no result. The predicament of the catholicos was further aggravated by the fact that still in 1201 a rival had sprung up – Ananias,

20 KG V, 121–122.

21 Bishop Minas was given a beating with sticks. The perpetrators had been incited by Gregory, the superior of the monastery, who was a relative of Zachary. KG V, 123.

22 KG V, 125. In his address to the Synod Mkhitar said, “You are afraid for our nation, lest it should mix with the Georgians on account of these customs; I, on the other hand, fear for our leader [Zachary], lest he should follow his brother’s example and turn Georgian, which the Georgians are hoping will happen.” KG X, 148, 291, note 3. For Georgian attempts to set the Armenians on a path for Orthodoxy, see KG V, 120, 125, 147–149. See also Claude Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant (XIe–XIVe siècle), Vol. 1 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2012), 521–523.

23 Characteristically, Kirakos of Gandzak, who had ties with the Nor Getik Monastery, did not sympathise with the traditionalists. He wrote, “It seems to me that this became a habit with them, because they were under the rule of Muslims, who did allow Armenians to practise Christian rituals in public.”
Armenian archbishop of Cappadocian Caesarea, who had participated in Leo’s coronation and now, at the instigation of the Sultan of Iconium, declared himself catholicos, challenging the authority of the catholicos of Hromkla.24 The prospects of introducing the reforms he had promised the pope were virtually nil. His authority in the Armenian Church was incommensurate with that of the pope in the Church of Rome. Any attempt to make even the slightest change in the liturgy was bound to end in schism and the fall of the catholicos’ authority and standing in Armenian society.

Meanwhile the union with the Church of Rome was put to a test that had nothing to do with matters of the faith and liturgical rite. In view of the fact that the Fourth Crusade failed to reach the Holy Land and the Crusaders made do with capturing and looting Constantinople, there was no military co-operation between the Armenian and Latin forces. Instead the dispute over the Antiochene succession became even more exacerbated. On leaving Cilicia Peter Capuensis put Armenia under an interdict for attacking Antioch while he was conducting mediation proceedings for peace.25 The king appealed to the catholicos, who ruled that in the light of the recent arrangements an act of excommunication was invalid if it was imposed without consultation with the representative of the Armenian Church. The pope concurred with his opinion. In 1211 Leo I again found himself excommunicated for having confiscated property belonging to the Templars, which he had done in connection with the struggle for power in Antioch.26 This time Leo was excommunicated by Albert, the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem. On 18th May 1211 Innocent III notified Leo that he had fallen out of favour with him and confirmed the excommunication, putting all of Leo’s allies under it, and threatened to revoke the apostolic blessing. He prohibited the kings of Jerusalem and Cyprus, along with their barons and the orders of knights, from engaging in co-operation with the excommunicated monarch.27 Leo’s reaction was uncompromising. 


27 Halfter (Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 283–284) speculates that one of the reasons why the excommunication was endorsed was that the King’s relations with the Emperor Otto IV were too good. The Emperor had sent a king’s crown to Armenia for Raymond Roupen, who used it on 15th August 1211 for his coronation as rex junior.
that his excommunication by the Church of Rome was unjust, he expelled all
the Latin churchmen from their cathedrals and handed over Tarsus Cathedral
to the Greeks. He gave away some of the Church property as fiefdoms to his
knights. This was probably the time when he took back Paperon Castle, which
he had bestowed on the Roman Church. He also endeavoured to establish
amicable relations with the Byzantine Empire of Nicæa and offered sanctuary
to the exiled Greek patriarch of Antioch.

Leo soon reconciled with the pope, who revoked the excommunication.
However, the Armenian catholicos did not attend the Fourth Lateran Council,
despite being invited and in spite of having pledged in 1203 to do so. After
capturing Antioch in 1216 Leo allowed appointments to the vacant Latin met-
tropolitan sees in Cilicia. He restored the endowments of Tarsus Cathedral and
granted Mamistra Cathedral revenues from the royal domain. Good relations
were restored and Honorius III, the new pope, took Raymond Roupen, his
family and his lands “under the protection of St. Peter.” Paradoxically, soon
afterwards Leo I quarrelled with Raymond, the relative who had enjoyed his
favour for so long, and disinherited him, appointing his own daughter Isabella
(Zabel) as his heiress. Honorius intervened on several occasions on behalf
of diverse pretenders to the throne of Armenia. In March 1219, at the request of
Andrew, King of Hungary, he gave his support to a plan to marry Andrew’s
son to Leo’s daughter Isabella. Their son would then be the heir to the throne.
But the very next year he gave his support to the claim of John of Brienne,
King of Jerusalem; and soon after that, at the request of his legate, Cardinal
Pelagio Galvani – to Raymond Roupen. Raymond Roupen had already lost
the Principality of Antioch in 1219, and his attempts to put his rights to
Cilician Armenia into effect proved abortive, too. Finally the unfortunate
prince and his mother ended up in prison, where they died. At this time, after
the death of Catholicos John VI, the new head of the Armenian Church was

28 Nonetheless, his treatment of the Teutonic Order, which represented the pro-Imperial fac-
tion, was more favourable, and in 1212 he granted them extensive estates; Tabulae Ordinis
Theutonici, ed. Ernst Strehlke (Berolini: Weidmann, 1869), 37–39, no. 46.
29 CICO II, 439–441, no. 204.
30 CICO II, 441–444, nos. 205 and 206 (19th April 1213).
32 CICO III, no. 56; Tournebize, Histoire politique, 192; Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Arme-
ner, 285–287.
33 See also Tournebize, Histoire politique, 189; Sirapie Der-Nersessian, “Kingdom of Cilician
Constantine I (1221–1267), whose relations with Rome were more reserved.\textsuperscript{34} The bailey Constantine, who acted as regent, gave Isabella in marriage to Philip, the fifth son of Bohemond IV, Prince of Antioch and Count of Tripoli. Prior to his coronation Philip was made to promise that he would respect Armenian customs, especially the church rite. The regent did not strive to have the new heir’s rights endorsed by the Apostolic See. However, since Philip failed to keep his promise, in 1225 he met the same fate as his predecessor and was poisoned.\textsuperscript{35} The war which then erupted between Armenia and Antioch affected the future of the Latin Church in Cilicia. The Latin bishops were again expelled from Tarsus and Mamistra, and Honorius III’s intervention did not succeed in placating the regent and new catholicos.\textsuperscript{36}

Not until the regent managed to marry Isabella off to his own son Hethum, who was then crowned (1226), did he think of renewing relations with the Apostolic See. The Latin archbishops returned to Cilicia.\textsuperscript{37} News of another crusade prepared by Emperor Frederick II had an effect on these developments. The Armenians were concerned more about political rather than religious relations, and they saw the pope as the political leader of Europe.\textsuperscript{38} In January 1236 Pope Gregory IX received the new king of Armenia and his father Constantine into the protection of the Apostolic See.\textsuperscript{39} Soon, however, due to an intrigue by the Prince of Antioch, he ordered the validity of Hethum’s marriage to Isabella checked.\textsuperscript{40} At the same time the Latin patriarch of Antioch, who had been appointed apostolic legate in his patriarchate, tried to revive his old juridictive claim to supremacy over all the Eastern Christians, including the Armenians.\textsuperscript{41}

Following the union of the Armenian Church with the Church of Rome a problem emerged over the mutual relations between the two ecclesiastical

\textsuperscript{34} Hamilton, “The Armenian Church,” 78.
\textsuperscript{35} Der-Nersessian, “Kingdom,” 651; Hamilton, “The Armenian Church,” 77; Halfter, \textit{Das Papsttum und die Armenier}, 292; KG X, 130–131, 179. The chronicler writes that his father Bohemond tricked him, and after he had reigned for four years took away King Leo’s crown, his throne as well as a large quantity of gold and silver. Seeing that he was dishonest with respect to the kingdom, the barons imprisoned the son and demanded the return of the crown and the treasure. However, the father preferred to keep these goods and left his son to his fate at the hands of his subjects.
\textsuperscript{36} CICO III, no. 130, 151; Hamilton, “The Armenian Church,” 78; Halfter, \textit{Das Papsttum und die Armenier}, 292.
\textsuperscript{37} On 29th July 1226 the Latin Archbishop of Tarsus appeared before the Pope to speak on behalf of the regent Constantine, CICO III, no. 151.
\textsuperscript{38} Hamilton, “The Armenian Church,” 78; Halfter, \textit{Das Papsttum und die Armenier}, 293.
\textsuperscript{39} CICO III, no. 218.
\textsuperscript{40} CICO III, no. 222.
\textsuperscript{41} CICO III, no. 240 (26th June 1238).
hierarchies. From the legal point of view, once all the barriers were overcome, there should have been just one hierarchy – the Catholic hierarchy. That was the opinion held in the mid-12th century by the Latin patriarchs of Antioch. The chronicler William of Tyre regarded the catholicos of Armenia as the primate, who together with his metropolises should have put himself under the authority of the patriarch. But regardless of their friendly attitude to the Latin clergy, the Armenian hierarchs kept their distance from the patriarch’s hierarchical structures on the same territory. In the Latin states such matters took diverse courses.

Armenians in the Kingdom of Jerusalem prior to Saladin’s capture of the Holy City recognised the authority of the Latin patriarch. Pope Lucius III (1181–1185) and his successor Urban III (1185–1187) had apparently put the churches of the Greeks and Armenians who did not have their own bishops under the authority of the bishop of Baniyas (of the Valaniensis dioecesis), who was a suffragan of the metropolitan of Apamea in Syria. The two Latin archdioceses in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia were under the authority of the Latin patriarch of Antioch. In 1201, however, fearing that the conflict over the Antiochene succession, in which those patriarchs were involved, might prejudice his interests, the king asked Innocent III to exempt his kingdom from the jurisdiction of “the Latin Churches.” What was at issue here was a safeguard that none of his subjects, including members of the Latin Church, would be liable to excommunication by any of the Latin Churches

42 “Viginti enim provincias in sua iurisdictione eiusdem deo amabilis civitas [Antiochia] dicitur habere patriarca, quorum quattuordecim singulos habent metropolitas cum suis suffraganeis, sex vero relicte sub duobus primatibus, qui vulgari appellatione dicuntur Catholici, quorum alter est Aniensis, alter vero Hiranopolitanus, qui est Baldacensis, cum eorum suffraganeis disponuntur,” Wilhelmi Tyrensis Archiepiscopi Chronicon, ed. Robert B. C. Huygens, Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis, Vol. LXIII (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986), 4.9: 245. The catholicoi of Ani and Baldak (Baghdad) were the Armenian and Assyrian patriarchs respectively; see also Tyrensis Archiepiscopi Chronicon, Vol. LXIII, 699.

43 Haluščynskyj (‘Armeniae Parvae Regnum,” 20) writes that the Armenian Bishop of Jerusalem was subject to the authority of the Latin Patriarch.

44 CICO III, no. 132.

45 “Eapropter, si placet sanctitati vestrae, cuilibet alteri Ecclesiae latinae nec volumus nec debemus alligari. Hinc est quod sanctitatem vestram suppliciter flagitamus, quatinus nobis litteras apertas mittere dignemini, ut non teneamur neque Latini de terra nostra de qualibet conditio, excepta sancta Romana Ecclesia, cuilibet ecclesiae latinae,” CICO II, Appendix I, no. 7. Curiously enough, the King of Armenia did not regard the Church of Rome as identical with the Latin Churches (Patriarchates).
(patriarchates) except Rome (the Apostolic See). On 1st June 1202 the pope granted this request. In a letter of 1210 to the catholicos, archbishops, and bishops of Armenia Innocent III stated that no-one had the right to judge their subjects, and any verdicts anyone passed would be null and void. Thereby the foundations were laid for the Kingdom of Armenia’s juridictive independence of the patriarchs of Antioch. Judicial exemption was important not only politically, but also from the ecclesiastical point of view. After the capture of Constantinople Innocent III ventured a return to the concept of the pentarchy, naturally under the leadership of Rome, and with the patriarchs nominated by the pope. Under this scheme there was no room for a “patriarch” of Armenia, so Innocent reverted to addressing him by his traditional title of catholicos. In 1215 the Fourth Lateran Council put the Eastern bishops under the authority of the Latin bishops. Henceforth the former were to be vicars of the latter for the faithful of their own rites. In 1225, at the request of the bishop of Baniyas Pope Honorius III renewed the privilege granted the heads of that diocese by popes in the 12th century. He reiterated the regulation that the Greek and Armenian churches with no bishops of their own were subject to the authority of the local Latin bishop, without whose consent no-one had the right to build a church or chapel, unless they had the approval of the Apostolic See.

The Latin patriarch of Antioch decided to take advantage of the squabbles over the Armenian succession to impose his jurisdiction on the catholicoi who were primates of their national Churches on the territory of his patriarchate. Under the influence of his arguments, in 1238 Pope Gregory IX issued the required document, and the patriarch immediately made the members of

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46 “quod non habeat potestatem nos seu Latinos de terra nostra excommunicandi, vel senten-
tiam in regno nostro proferendi super Latinos quaelibet Ecclesia, excepta, ut dictum est, Sede Apostolica,” CICO II, Appendix I, no. 7.
47 CICO II, 220–221, no. 25.
48 CICO II, no. 164 (20th August 1210).
49 In a letter to the clergy of the Patriarchate of Constantinople the Pope expressed his joy that on the passing of the Empire of Constantinople from the Greeks into the hands of the Latins the Church of Constantinople had returned “ad oboedientiam apostolicae sedis, tamquam ad matrem filia, et membrum ad caput,” thereby facilitating the liberation of its two sisters, Alexandria and Jerusalem. With reference to this the Pope observed that there were five patriarchates, Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, CICO II, 285–289, no. 68 (21st January 1205).
50 Gregory IX would do likewise – “licet tota Armenia in patriarchatu Antiocheno consi-
stat, … Armenorum tamen Praefatus, qui Catholicus vulgariter appellatur, subesse sibi contemnens debitam ei et Ecclesiae Antiochenae oboedientiam et reverentiam denegat exhibere,” CICO III, no. 241.
51 “De diversis ritibus in eadem fide” [my italics, K.S.] (c. IV); see CICO II, 480.
52 CICO III, no. 132.
the Eastern Churches liable to pay tithes. The pope asked the archbishops of Apamea and Mamistra to persuade the catholicos to submit to the juridic-
tive authority of the patriarch of Antioch, since there could not be two heads in one patriarchate, which would turn it into “something of a monstrosity.” The entire Armenian, Greek, and Georgian clergy within the confines of the patriarchate were to be subject to the patriarch’s jurisdiction.53 The Armenians responded by producing Pope Sylvester I’s apocryphal privilege for Gregory the Illuminator, Patriarch of Armenia. By this document the Church of Armenia was put under the direct authority of the pope,54 and Sylvester allegedly acknowledged the patriarchal authority of Gregory and his successors over all the Armenians, with the right to consecrate all Armenian bishops, including those in the diaspora. In addition Gregory was supposed to have been given the right to consecrate the catholici of Georgia and Caucasian Albania. Moreover, no appointments were to be made to the patriarchates of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem without his consent, and new incumbents of these sees were obliged to send their declarations of faith to the catholicos as well as to the pope. Finally Sylvester was said to have appointed Gregory his vicar for the middle region of Asia (in Asiae media regione) and have granted him “the power to bind and unbind” (potestas … ligandi et solvendi in Caelo et in Terra) – in other words the rights and privileges enjoyed by popes.55

This forgery helped the Armenians gain many advantages. Above all it made the Church of Armenia and the office of its catholicos, with its wide scope of prerogatives, independent of the local Latin hierarchs. Its independence and autocephaly were thereby legitimised with roots going back to ancient times – the Proto-Christian period. Viewed from this perspective, the primacy of the popes

53 CICO III, nos. 241, 242 and 248. In the opinion of Mutafian (“Gli inizi della Chiesa di Roma nel mondo armeno (1200–1350),” in Roma-Armenia, 156) the Archbishop of Mamistra was the Pope’s representative at the royal court. There are no grounds in the sources to confirm such a view. At this time the papacy did not have permanent representatives at foreign courts. At any rate, the Pope also sought the advice of the Bishop of Apamea (Syria) on the Antiochene issue.

54 A dispute has been going on for years over the dating of this apocryphon. Hafelter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 164–170, thinks this forgery was made in Cilicia during the reign of Catholicos Gregory IV (1173–1193) by an Armenian Latinophile, and interpolated in the manuscript of Agathangelos. See also Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. I, 554.

55 Clemens Galanus, Conciliatio Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana, Vol. 1 (Roma: S. Congregatio de Propaganda Fide, 1651), 31–45; Johannes D. Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio, Vol. 2 (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1961), 461–464. In the forgery the consecration of Gregory the Enlightener by Pope Sylvester I was presented as following the Armenian rite. The Pope allegedly held the “dexterae Divi Petri Apostoli et Sacrum linteum Jesu Christi” over Gregory’s head. In the Armenian rite for the consecration of a catholicos “St. Gregory’s arm” is held as a relic over his head. See Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 554.
was reduced to the primacy of the patriarchate of Rome. The effect of the argument based on the existence of a pact, which was given a moderate amount of credibility in Rome, was that the pope modified his earlier position and the Armenian Church had its exemption confirmed (1239). Although officially the Apostolic See's earlier decision was kept in force, in practice it lost its effectiveness once the pope had endorsed “Sylvester's pact with Gregory.” A whole series of privileges granted in this connection defined the direct dependence of the Church of Armenia on the See of St. Peter. The catholics' jurisdiction over the Armenian institutions in Syria and Jerusalem was also confirmed. The pope sent the catholicos a pallium, mitre, stole, and ring, which the latter had requested, in token of his acknowledgement of and direct submission to the pope's authority. The autonomy the catholicos of Armenia now enjoyed was greater than that of other ecclesiastical dignitaries in communion with the Apostolic See. Henceforth the pope would have no say in the election of the catholicos, nor did the Apostolic See claim a right to confirm his election. The pope also recognised the validity of Hethum's marriage with Isabella. All the inhabitants of Cilicia who fought for the Catholic faith against the Muslims were granted the crusader's indulgences. In this situation there was no point in continuing the talks which had been started with Germanos II, patriarch of Constantinople, who was now living in exile in Nicaea in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade.

Rome continued to treat the Kingdom of Armenia and its Church as orthodox, even though no reforms had been brought into its religious rituals. Characteristically, during the dispute on the Antiochene succession and with the Templars over Baghras Castle, neither the count of Tripoli nor the Templars accused the Armenians of heresy. Under the new dynasty the Armenians again acknowledged the primacy of the pope. Recognition of papal authority

56 Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 167–168.
57 The endorsement was of doubtful value. The Pope only confirmed the “rationabiles consuetudines ... quae Sanctorum Patrum regulis minime contradicunt et canoniciis non obviant institutis,” CICO III, no. 254 (letter to King Hethum I, 1st March 1239). This was the first time the Holy See was shown the “document” brought by the Armenian envoys. L. Arpee, A History of Armenian Christianity, 150; J. Richard, La papauté, 51; B. Hamilton, The Armenian Church, 79–80; P. Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 164–170.
58 CICO III, nos. 255, 256 and 258.
59 CICO III, no. 253. Although in this charter the Pope left this question open, granting the King and Queen “ut siquis super matrimonio vel aliis negotiis vestris per litteras apostolicas vos contigerit conveniri, ad locum non tutum per ipsas trahi non possitis inviti,” later the validity of their marriage was not challenged.
increased in the Armenian territories of the Kingdom of Georgia as well. Latin institutions proliferated in Cilicia. Various military orders – the Knights of St. John, the Teutonic Order, and even the Templars – received endowments from the king. As Levantine trade increased, Cilicia’s mercantile importance for Western Europe rose. The Armenians had no fleet of their own, so they availed themselves of the services of Genoese, Venetian, Pisan, and other Western merchants, who established trading posts and settled in Cilicia. New Latin churches, hospices, and hospitals were built in Sis, Tarsus, Mamistra, and Ayas. The Europeans in Cilicia made up the congregations of the two Latin archdioceses. In addition there were churches of other denominations – Greek and Syrian – in Cilicia. All these groups went their separate ways in ecclesiastical matters, although there were mutual contacts, while the state made an effort to maintain peace in religious matters and refrained from interfering in the affairs of the other Churches. Not many people knew Latin, and Armenians were not very keen on learning it. Perhaps the Armenian Church was anxious about the potential unwanted consequences of familiarity and tried to stop the spread of Latin. Trade was another aspect that brought Armenians in contact with the West. Presumably pilgrimages from the Armenian lands were constantly on the move, heading for the great religious centres of Europe. This is why new Armenian monastic communities were set up in Italy – at Genoa and Pontecurone, which were on the old Roman road connecting the coast of Liguria with the Plain of the Po. Armenian monks also settled in Ancona and Rimini, towns along the Adriatic coast, and subsequently in Perugia, Orvieto and Siena in Umbria and Tuscany. In Rome, apart from the Church of St. Mary

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63 The prototype document for the organisation of West European colonies in the Kingdom of Armenia was Leo I’s charter for Genoa, issued in March 1201. Venice was granted a similar charter in December of the same year. Italian cities were granted freedom to trade in the entire kingdom, as well as customs, juridictive and other privileges. See Laura Balletto, “Il commercio armeno-italiano (secoli XIII–XV),” in *Roma-Armenia*, 184–185.

64 We learn from Gregory IX’s letter of 13th April 1240 to the Bishop of Nicosia (Cyprus) that the Greeks who did not want to be under his authority were moving to Armenia. CICO III, no. 262.

65 In 1228 an archbishop from Greater Armenia who had letters of recommendation from the Pope came to England on a pilgrimage; Anna-Dorothee von den Brincken, *Die Nationes Christianorum*.
of the Armenians (Ecclesia Sanctae Mariae de Armenis; St. James?) “beyond the bridge” near St. Peter’s Basilica, there was also an Armenian hospice beyond the walls in the neighbourhood of St. Paul’s Basilica. Not only monks from Cilicia stayed there, but also those from monasteries in Greater Armenia regarded as mainstays of Armenian traditionalism.  

Vardan of Khachen, one of the copyists of the Armenian gospel book of 1239, noted down in its colophon that he made it “in the universal metropolis under the protection of the Apostles Peter and Paul and the Holy Image of Christ known as the sudarium [the Veronica] in the Armenian hospice.”  

The Armenian language, churches, and monks were becoming part of the Italian landscape. All this was reinforcing the sense of religious unity. A new chapter in relations between Rome and Armenia would open with the Mongol invasions, the decline of the Latin states in the Near East, and the rise of Catholic missions in the “lands of the Tartars.”

Under the Mongol Protectorate (second half of the 13th century)

In 1236 the Mongol invasion ran over the lands to which the territories of Greater Armenia belonged. Some of the Armenian lords and princes were killed, some surrendered, a large part of the population was slaughtered, the towns were devastated. The invaders and their droves stayed on the plains of southern Armenia, which pretty soon transformed into a gigantic stretch of pastureland. Within a short time a vast expanse of territory – from Rus’ and Russia in the west to Korea and China in the Far East – lay in their grip. It included the whole of Armenia as well as lands for hundreds of years inhabited  

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66 Brincken, Die Nationes Christianorum Orientalium, 267–268; monks from Khachen, Gandzak, and Getik are mentioned among the Armenian scribes working in Rome in the 13th century; Pavel Chobanian, “I manosritti armeni di Roma ed i loro colofoni (XIII secolo),” in Roma-Armenia, 213. Records for the Armenian Church in Rome go back to 1242, but this church along with the Armenian monastery and hospice must have been founded much earlier. The Vatican Library holds a codex with the works of Gregory of Narek (BAV, Vat. Arm. 4), which was probably copied in Rome in 1226. At Matenadaran, Yerevan, there is a gospel book (ms. 218) which was copied in the Armenian hospice in Rome in 1240; see Claudine Delacroix-Besnier, “I monaci basiliani in Italia (secoli XIII–XV),” in Roma-Armenia, 208 and 212.

by Armenians. The Mongols kept the political divisions extant prior to their invasion and recognised the authority of local sultans, kings, and princes, provided they obeyed the invaders’ orders. Thus the Armenian feudal lords in the Kingdom of Georgia were still Georgian vassals. The Mongols established an administrative system to cater for their needs and keep an eye on their new subjects. After some time the northern part of Greater Armenia, which was under Georgian rule, was transformed into the Wilayah of Gürçistan (viz. Georgia); and the south, which was ruled by a variety of Muslim emirs, became the Wilayah of Greater Armenia. The inhabitants who survived the invasion were scrupulously counted and subjected to taxation. The local rulers, including the Armenian lords and princes, were made responsible for tax-collecting. At first the attitude to the invaders was so bad that some of the princely families of Greater Armenia looked to the papacy as their only hope of deliverance. The same was true of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia.68

In 1243, under the impact of the Mongol attack on Cilicia and the devastation they had earlier perpetrated in Greater Armenia, and treating these invasions as a punishment from God, Catholicos Constantine I called a national synod to Sis, with discipline as the priority matter on its agenda. The synod brought in numerous regulations for matters such as the minimum age for admission to the various stages of ordination, the bishops’ educational duties, scriptoria, diocesan visitations, the administration of the sacraments, disciplinary penalties, fasting, and taxation due to the Church.69 Many of these rules were quite similar to the regulations in Western canon law. The Sacrament of Extreme Unction was introduced, undoubtedly under the influence of Innocent IV.70 The recommendation that the controversial addition to the *Trishagion* be dropped, “so that the Cross should not be mentioned after the Holy Trinity,” was clearly a Western inspiration. The catholicos ordered the addendum to be replaced

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70 In an account of the developments at the Synod, Kirakos of Gandzak reported that the Franks had written to the Armenians asking why they did not keep the order laid down by the Lord’s brother on the blessing and anointing of the dying sick, which would serve as an anointing for burial, or, if the sick person recovered, for the remission of his sins and as the cause of his recovery. Canon 25, KG XLIII, 191–192.
by “we always praise your almighty rule, O God Christ, now and forever.”

Thereby Rome was adopting the traditional Greek criticism.

Soon, however, the attitude of the clergy to the Mongol invaders changed. Unlike the ordinary people, whose situation had worsened owing to the taxes which the Mongols extricated with unrelenting exactitude, under Mongol rule the clergy of diverse religions acquired a privileged status. Church property was exempted from fiscal liability, all restrictions on religion were abolished and genuine freedom ensued. All the new lords wanted in return were prayers for the Great Khan and the Mongol people. Despite the official equality of all religions, Christianity enjoyed a privileged status, thanks to the influence of Nestorian Christians at the court of the Great Khan. Having conducted vigorous missionary activities in Central Asia since the early Middle Ages, the Nestorians had managed to convert a large number of tribes, chiefly Turkic peoples. Many Mongols took wives from the Khoreizd clan (Keraites), one of the Christian tribes. Senior magistrates were recruited from the ranks of the Nestorian clergy. The renowned Pax Mongolica gave Christians a scope of religious liberty they had never enjoyed before. Now they could perform their ceremonies in places in which before they had not even been allowed to appear in public. Much of the credit for this was due to the Nestorian catholicos, the Syrian Rabban Ata, whom many Christians had to thank for their lives or for being emancipated from slavery. Thanks to him Christian churches were built in Muslim towns, especially in Tabriz and Nakhchivan, and many Mongols were baptised. He was highly respected in the Mongol army.

For the first time Nerses, the catholicos of the Albanians, could visit his flock in the Caucasus. His predecessors had not dared to venture on a visitation “for fear of the bloodthirsty, ferocious Muslims.” He was attended on his travels by an official specially appointed by the Mongols to attend him. In 1247 thanks to the efforts of Constantine I, the Armenian catholicos, Artaz Monastery, which according to tradition had been raised on the site of the tomb of the

74 KG XXXIX, 181–182.
Apostle Thaddaeus, was restored. The catholicos appointed the *vardapet* Joseph to re-establish a monastic community at Artaz, which had been devastated during the invasion of 1236. Joseph carried out his task under the protection of a Mongol commander stationed in the vicinity. According to an Armenian chronicler the Mongols provided free access to the monastery, and even had their children baptised there. The Armenian hierarchy started treating the savage nomads amicably. Armenian churches were built in the large trading centres of the Mongol empire where there were sizeable local communities of Armenians, at first resettled forcibly, but later by voluntary migration, and taking advantage of the good business conditions. The Mongol expansion created a vast market, shifting the trade routes north to the Kipchak steppes, across Central Asia and out to China. Other routes ran south through Iran to India, from where there was a sea passage to the Middle Kingdom. For the Mongols long-distance trade was so important that they afforded special protection to wandering merchants even during their military campaigns. Armenian merchants had in fact been traversing these territories earlier, but now they had much better chances for economic expansion because there was no longer any need for Muslim middlemen. The Mongols availed themselves of the interpreting services dispensed by Armenians who knew the local languages. Italian merchants took advantage of these business opportunities, too, setting up numerous trading outposts in the Mongol empire, some of which developed into well-nigh independent colonies or republics. The merchants were followed by church institutions. The easternmost Armenian diocese was at Pishpek (now Bishkek, Kirghizia) in Central Asia. Armenian dioceses were created on territories under the Golden Horde. An Armenian ecclesiastical network developed in Persia, with nodes in virtually all the major trading centres – first at Tabriz and Maragha, later in Baghdad, and subsequently at Sultaniya (Soltaniyeh).

In this situation the role of the Greater Armenian clergy was continuously rising. It had already enjoyed a lot of influence under Christian rule in Georgia. *Vardapets* from the East were arriving in Cilicia along with the Armenians fleeing the invasion, and there they reinforced the ranks of the traditionalists, who were not in favour of rapprochement with Rome. An in-

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75 KG XLIII, 192–193.
76 An inscription discovered on a stone in the Assyrian (Nestorian) graveyard at Pishpek mentions an Armenian Bishop John, who died in 1324. Not far away, at a place north of Lake Issyk-köl, there was an Armenian Monastery of St. Matthew, which apparently held the apostle’s relics. It is mentioned in a Catalan atlas dated around 1375; see Jean Dauvillier, *Histoire et institutions des Églises orientales au Moyen Age* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1983), XIV, 71.
77 Richard, *La papauté*, 55.
dividual who exerted considerable influence on Catholicos Constantine I was Vardan Areveltsi (viz. from the East), a distinguished vardapet and an adherent of the traditional Armenian theology and ecclesiology. On his return from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1239–1240 he took up residence in the house of the catholicos at Hromkla as his counsellor. He enjoyed considerable esteem at the royal court of Cilicia and earned the sobriquet of “The Thrice Great.” He does not seem to have been decidedly anti-Roman at first, and helped the catholicos with the implementation of the reforms. In 1246 he went to Greater Armenia with a circular letter from the catholicos and the canons of the synod of 1243, and there he saw the huge extent of opposition they aroused among the local clergy, who did not like the catholicos’ letter at all, even though they all feigned submission. On completing his mission Vardan went to St Andrew’s Monastery in Kayen, where he committed himself to the education of new vardapes. To win the sympathy of the clergy of Greater Armenia the catholicos sent them various gifts, such as coloured silk, costly vestments, small presents, and graces and privileges for the Monastery of St. Thaddaeus in Artaz.

Overawed by the Mongol invasion, which had wiped out all opposition whatsoever in the countries neighbouring on Cilicia, the ruling class of the Kingdom of Armenia decided to change their policy and endeavour to enhance their status by an alliance with the Mongols. In 1243 Hethum I sent an embassy to Baydu Khan; and in 1246 the King’s brother Smbat, the Constable of the Kingdom, went on a mission to the Great Khan. An opportunity opened up for an alternative to the military alliance with the West, and it was diligently used. Armenia’s links with Rome slackened. In comparison to previous pontificates, as of Innocent IV there was a dramatic decrease in the documents recording relations, which shows that the policy of rapprochement between the two Churches was gradually being abandoned in favour of traditionalist

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78 Vardan was born in the canton of Gandzak ca. 1197–1200. He may have been educated by Mkhitar Gosh at Nor Getik Monastery; later he studied under Vardapet John Vanakan at Khoranashat Monastery, where he was engaged on translation from Greek into Armenian. He was a lecturer at St. Andrew’s Monastery in Kayen until 1239. See Vidnye deiateli armianskoi kultury (V–XVIII v.), ed. Arshak G. Madoian and Rafael E. Gukasian (Erevan: Izdatel’stvo Erevanskogo Universiteta, 1982), 252–258.

79 KG XLIII, 192. The chronicler gives the names of the bishops and superiors of monasteries who signed the deeds sent by the Catholicos.

80 KG XLIII, 193.

or separatist tendencies. Innocent IV sent his legates to notify the Armenian Church of the ecumenical council convened in Lyon in 1245, but no delegates from Armenia attended it. In the same year the Armenians were mentioned in a list of schismatic peoples in the bull of missionary privileges *Cum hora undecima* issued to the Franciscans.\(^{82}\) Even though here the Armenians referred to might have been the people of Greater Armenia, who were not under the jurisdiction of the catholicos of Cilicia, nonetheless the notion of an Armenian “schism” was becoming more and more prevalent in the West. In 1246 the pope sent his penitentiary, the Franciscan Lawrence of Portugal, to the Christian communities in the East, and as his legate to the Kingdom of Armenia.\(^{83}\) The mission was probably not accomplished. However, another Franciscan, Dominic of Aragon (recorded in the Armenian sources as Dimantche) did reach Armenia, with a letter from the pope to king Hethum I.\(^{84}\) The pope also asked Dominic to visit the catholicos at Hromkla, where in 1247 a theological debate was held with the participation of the legate and Vardan the *vardapet*, recently returned from the East with considerably changed views. Vardan exerted a strong influence on the catholicos, who later gave Hethum an account of the debate.

\(^{82}\) CICO IV/1, 36, no. 19. See also Girolamo Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell’Oriente francescano*, Vol. 2 (Quaracchi: Collegio di S. Bonaventura, 1906), 316–317.

\(^{83}\) “te ad partes transmarinas tamquam pacis angelum, commisso tibi in Armenia, Iconio, Turchia, Graecia et regno Babylonieae ac super omnes Graecos, tam in Antiocheno et Je-

rosolimitano patriarchatibus, quam regno Cypri morantes, nec non super Jacobitas, Ma-

donitas et Nestorianos, plena legationis officio … duximus dirigendum,” CICO IV/1, 73, no. 31 (7\(^{th}\) July 1246). In view of the new situation in the East, the Pope was trying to win the support of the Oriental Christians, particularly the Greeks, since in his bull he wrote, “quatenus Graecos illarum partium, quocumque nomine censeatur, auctoritate apostolica protegens, turbari eos violentiis vel quibuscumque molestiis non permittas, injurias quas-libet et off ensas a Latinis illatas eisdem plenarie faciens emendari et Latinis ipsis districte praecipiens, ut a similibus decetero penitus conquiescant;” CICO IV/1, 78, no. 35 (to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem). The area covered by Lawrence’s legation was to extend from the Latin states in the Near East (the Patriarchates of Jerusalem and Antioch, Cyprus, and Armenia), the Sultanate of Iconium, the Seljuk Emirates (*Turchia*), the Empire of Nicaea (*Graecia*), and the Caliphate of Baghdad (*Babilonia*). The Pope gave the legate letters of recommendation to the Patriarch of Antioch, the Catholicos of Armenia, and the Maronite Patriarch with their respective suffragans; CICO IV/1, 74–75, no. 32 (9\(^{th}\) August 1246). Some historians consider Lawrence of Portugal the same person as Lawrence of Orte.

On examining the pope's letter, Vardan answered the legate by openly criticising the “errors” of the Church of Rome in a schedule of fifteen points. He gave the first Armenian censure of Rome's primacy and filioque, and criticised its Christological, eschatological, liturgical, and disciplinary ideas and practices. He either misunderstood or deliberately misrepresented many of the Roman tenets. He said that Rome was not the only see with the right “to bind and unbind,” since all the Apostles were each other’s equals and none of them was given more authority, hence the pope had no jurisdiction over the Armenian Church. Moreover, said Vardan, Catholicos Gregory IV had received all the papal powers in the East from Pope Lucius III, including jurisdiction over the Armenians, Greeks, and other Eastern Christians. According to him the pope's letter said that the Church of Rome approved of the teaching that Christ had two persons and two wills and rejected the title of “Mother of God” for the Blessed Virgin Mary, in other words it followed the Nestorian error. Vardan also criticised the Roman practice of administering the Sacrament of Confirmation separately from Baptism, and of the blessing of the oils (reputedly) by rank-and-file priests instead of bishops (!), of admitting the validity of a third marriage, of the number of the Sacraments, and the custom of administering Holy Communion to laypeople only under the form of bread. He criticised the Roman teaching on the origin of souls, Purgatory, the Last Judgement etc. His charges showed that the focal point in relations between the two Churches had started to shift from liturgical and disciplinary matters towards dogmatic issues. The vardapet also advised the king that whenever anyone asked him about his religion to tell them that he followed the faith of his religious leaders and his Church, and it was to them that he was to answer, not to anyone else. What Dominic heard in Hromkla was the first unambiguous sign of the real sentiments of a large section of the Armenian clergy with regard to the Roman Church, which in reality they found alien and were inclined to treat the same as the hated Greeks.

Another individual who could have informed the Pope of the seriousness of the Armenian “schism” was André de Longjumeau, his legate to the Mongols.

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86 The Armenian chronicler made this statement on the basis of “Pope Sylvester’s deed.” Tournebize, Histoire politique, 295–298; Peter Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier im frühen und hohen Mittelalter: Von den ersten Kontakten bis zur Fixierung der Kirchenunion im Jahre 1198 (Köln: Böhlau, 1996), 165.
87 Arshak Ter-Mikelian, Die armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zur byzantinischen (IV–XIII Jhdt) (Leipzig: G. Fock, 1892), 115, 116, note 2; see also KG, XLI, 183; XLII, 185–186; XLIII, 192.
who came in contact with various Christian communities during his sojourn in the East.\textsuperscript{88} The “shock of Hromkla” would be remembered for a long time to come; it was in such blatant discord with the picture the Armenian kings and catholicoi had tried to present to the Latin West, either out of necessity or on the basis of their own religious awareness. It turned out that although their intentions may have been absolutely sincere, they had been far out of step with the majority of their priests and faithful. A mid-14\textsuperscript{th}-century critic of the Armenian Church would write that after the theological debate at Hromkla, when the king of Armenia realised that the Armenian hierarchy and theologians were in error, “henceforth the kings of Lesser Armenia [Cilicia] adhered to the faith of the Roman Church, but the Armenian bishops, masters, and princes were not pleased with this. After the legate had left, one of the masters, known as Vardan of the Black Mountain, compiled a book known as the \textit{Risma}, that is \textit{Versus pedem}, against the pope, his legate, and the Church of Rome. In it he called the Pope an arrogant pharaoh, engrossed along with all of his followers in a sea of heresy. He called the legate the pharaoh’s ambassador, who returned home in great shame; and he [Vardan] claimed that the Church of Rome was very deceitful, because it had taken the Feast of the Nativity [Christmas] and the practice of adding water to the wine from the damned Artemon; and he put many other blasphemies into that book, which is very big. And many Armenian clergymen, bishops, and presbyters revere that book as if it were full of apostolic canons.”\textsuperscript{89}

King Hethum did not opt for conflict with the Apostolic See over religious matters. After the Hromkla debate even the catholico made a declaration of

\textsuperscript{88} Golubovich, \textit{Biblioteca bio-bibliografica}, Vol. 1, 216.

\textsuperscript{89} “tunc reges Armeniae Minoris tuerunt fidem sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae, sed episcopi, magistri et principes Armenorum non fuerunt de hoc contenti. Et post recessum dicti legati, quidam magister, vocatus Vartam de Nigromonte, composuit unum librum vocatum de \textit{Risma}, id est \textit{Versus pedem}, contra papam et suum legatum et contra Ecclesiam Romanam, in quo vocavit papam Romanum superbum Pharaonem, cum suis subditis in mare haeresis submersos et legatum eius, ambaxatorem Pharaonis, fuisset reversum cum maxima verecundia; et dixit quod Ecclesia Romana erat multum decepta, quia nativitatem et aquam a maledicto Arthomonico recepit; et multis alias blasphemias scripsit in dicto libro, qui magnus est. Et multi ministri Armenorum et episcopi ac presbyteri dictum librum honorant tamquam canones Apostolorum,” CICO VIII, 154, no. 57 (Art. CXVI). In answer to this charge, in 1345 the Synod of the Armenian Church wrote, “invenimus, quod in diebus magni Ethimy [Hethum] Regis venit legatus a papa pro unione et rex recepit eum caritative; et dictum legatum misit in Hormengela ad dominum Constantinum catholicum; et ipse etiam cum caritate et honore recepit eum; et in tempore illo erat in Nigromonte supradictus Varthan, vir ignotus et amator rixae, qui scripsit aliquam verba insipida, erronea et inordinata contra verba Legati, quae non placuerunt regi nec catholicum et sunt valde reprehensibilia apud nos et ubicumque inveniuntur, igne comburuntur,” CICO VIII, 228, no. 59.
faith in writing, which the legate took with him.\textsuperscript{90} Several factors determined the position of the ruling class of Armenian Cilicia. Above all, religious union already had a tradition of many years behind it. In addition, precisely at that time, 1248, a new crusade was being organised by Louis IX of France. Louis was attended by the pope's legate Odo de Chateauroux, bishop of Tusculum, whom Innocent IV had commended to the care of king Hethum, the catholics, and the barons of Armenia.\textsuperscript{91} Hethum sent Catholicos Constantine I to welcome the King of France.\textsuperscript{92} During this crusade a new synod was called to meet at Sis (1251), which adopted a friendly attitude to the pope's requirements, in an attempt to neutralise the impression Vardan's assertions had made. On the \textit{filioque} issue\textsuperscript{93} the fathers at the synod sought the opinion of Greek and Syrian theologians, and experts “from other Christian nations.”\textsuperscript{94} Greater Armenian \textit{vardapets} – John Vanakan, Vardan, and Joseph – were also asked for an opinion, and only Vardan was against \textit{filioque}. On the other hand Vanakan,

\textsuperscript{90} However, at this time the King and the Catholicos resumed negotiations with the Emperor of Byzantium John III Vatatzes and Patriarch Manuel on union, but they soon withdrew. They were not ready for any kind of dogmatic concessions. Mutafian, “Gli inizi della Chiesa di Roma nel mondo armeno (1200–1350),” in \textit{Roma-Armenia}, ed. Claude Mutafian (Roma: Edizioni de Luca, 1999), 156; Mutafian, \textit{L’Arménie du Levant}, Vol. 1, I, 552.

\textsuperscript{91} Odo’s legation was to the Holy Land, Armenia, and Cyprus, CICO IV/1, 113–114, nos. 60 and 60a (21\textsuperscript{st}–22\textsuperscript{nd} June 1248).

\textsuperscript{92} The King of France helped to bring the conflict between Cilicia and Antioch to an end. In 1254 he acted as the intermediary in the arrangement of a marriage between Bohemond VI, the young Duke of Antioch, and Sybil, daughter of Hethum I. Hamilton, “The Armenian Church,” 80.

\textsuperscript{93} From the records of the Armenian Synod of 1345 we know that Pope Gregory IX (1227–1241) had addressed the Armenians on this matter: “quando processio Spiritus Sancti determinata fuit a Filio sicut et a Patre per Ecclesiam Romanam, quamvis Graeci contrarii fuerint, tamen magistri Armenorum cum synodo receperunt, sicut invenitur apud nos in historiis quae sunt in Maiori Armenia; sed nomen papae qui misit, manifeste non habemus; et in Minori Armenia, tempore regis magni Hecon [Hethum I] et Catholicon domini Constantini, Gregorius papa misit legatum et mandavit per epistolam dicere et confiteri Spiritum Sanctum procedere a Filio sicut et a Patre.” Kirakos of Gandzak (KG L, 202) writes that prior to the Synod of Sis in 1251 Pope Innocent IV had asked the Catholicos and King Hethum whether they believed that the Holy Spirit came and manifested Himself only from the Father, or from the Father and the Son. The chronicler added that the controversy had been caused by the “Romans,” who believed that the Holy Ghost “came from the Father and the Son.” See Sergio La Porta, “The \textit{Filioque} Controversy in Armenia,” \textit{St. Nerses Theological Review} 8 (2004): 85–116.

\textsuperscript{94} Apparently the Greeks replied that He came “only from the Son,” and some of the Syrians gave a different answer; KG L, 203.
Vardan’s preceptor, thought it was a more prudent formula and in his treatise argued that the theory of the double origin of the Holy Spirit was in compliance both with the patristic and the Armenian tradition. Although the Armenian theologians at the synod eventually acknowledged both interpretations as admissible and the “Roman” Creed as correct, they opted for a formula of their own, which said that the Holy Spirit proceeded from God the Father but had been revealed through God the Son. Acceptance of *filioque* came easily because it was denied by the Greeks. In the declaration of faith appended to the documents of the synod and attributed to their “first ordained man” (viz. Gregory the Illuminator), they wrote, somewhat inconsistently, that Christ had two perfect natures – a divine and a human nature – in one person of a perfect, unchanging, and indivisible nature. Although it did not refer to the Chalcedonian dogma, the synod adopted an identical teaching, thereby trying to reconcile the traditional Armenian theology with the Catholic faith. A resolution was passed that candidates for the priesthood would be required to make this declaration of faith during the ordination ceremony; but the divergent opinions of the *vardapets* show that the extent of theological pluralism in the Armenian Church was far greater than in the Church of Rome. Armenian theologians did not stop at the passive reception of the magisterium of Rome, but developed their theological concepts independently, in line with their own tradition. Moreover, the laity treated the teachings of distinguished *vardapets* as far more authoritative than the decrees of synods or the opinions

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95 There is an extant life of John Vanakan (1186–1251), who came from Tavush in Caucasian Albania, the canton on the Kura. He was brought up and educated at Nor Getik Monastery under the supervision of Mkhitar Gosh (1206–1213). He founded a monastery and school at Khoranashat in Albania (1215–1220). After their devastation by Jalal ad-Din, Sultan of Chorasmia, in 1225, he set up a new monastery near Tavush. After the Mongol invasion of 1236 he was imprisoned by the Mongols and served as their interpreter and translator. He was ransomed by the lord of Gag Castle, and continued to teach at Khoranashat. He educated numerous *vardapets*, including Kirakos of Gandzak; *Armianskie zhitiia i muchenichestva V–XVII vv.*, translation, introduction and commentary by Knarik S. Ter-Davitian (Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Nairi, 1994), 128–130.

96 KG L, 203; LII, 211. In the Armenian literature (the so-called *Teachings of St. Gregory the Enlightener*), we read the following: “The Father [is] of Himself, the Son from the Father, the Spirit by Them and from Them.” (Aa), Oghlukian, *Altarmenische Aussagen zur Eucharistielehre*, 117. The Armenian Synod of Shirakavan in 862 had formulated a very similar definition: “Si quis non confitetur sacrosanctae ac vivificae Trinitatis unam naturam et tres personas hoc est, Patrem a nullo principio Filium a Patre et Spiritum Sanctum ab utriusque essentia existentem, et utrique coequarem anathema sit.” Balgy, *Historia doctrinae*, 217 (Canon I).

97 KG LI, 204–205.

98 KG LI, 205. In the Russian translation two different nouns were employed to make the distinction, between two *estestva* (“existences”) which had one *priroda* (“nature”).
of the catholicoi. After the synod of 1251 the transformation of Armenian Christianity stopped on account of Greater Armenia, which threatened to elect its own anticatholicos. Notwithstanding the synodal recommendations, no changes were made in the liturgy. The *Trishagion* continued to be sung with the controversial addendum, as it had been for centuries; the wine continued to be undiluted; and Christmas was still celebrated together with Epiphany on January 6th.

In 1254, a few years after the Synod of Sis, Catholicos Constantine I tried to contact Manuel, Patriarch of Constantinople, who was in exile in Nicaea, for talks on dogmatic issues. He sent the *vardapet* James, “a man of great learning and a rhetorician” to him, but the talks came to nothing because the Armenian Church was accused of Eutychian Monophysitism. Nonetheless a few years later the catholicos tried again, establishing contact with Germanos, the next patriarch. These facts show that the Armenian Church did not give up its quest to establish a place for itself within the general Christian community, seeking an agreement in turn with the Latins, and then with the Greeks. The new context for these endeavours was the religious policy pursued by the Mongols.

The failure of the French king’s crusade made the rulers of Cilicia realise that the Mongols were the only effective allies of the Kingdom of Armenia. In 1252 King Hethum I went to the Great Khan Möngke in Karakorum. He was very well received, and the Armenian Church was granted a wide range of privileges (1254). In 1256 a fifth Mongol ulus was created, with the ilkhan Hulagu, the Great Khan’s brother, as its governor. His task was to develop the Mongol Empire in the Near East. The historical territories of Armenia became part of the Ilkhanate of Persia. In these circumstances political complications accrued to the already difficult relations with Rome. At this time Western attitudes to the Mongols were hostile. Meanwhile, on his return from Karakorum (1255), Hethum I persuaded Bohemond VI, Prince of Antioch, to side with the pro-Mongol party. In 1258 Armenian troops from Greater Armenia took part in Hulagu’s successful siege of Baghdad.

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Hethum sent an embassy to congratulate Hulagu. In 1259 Mongol troops marched for Aleppo with the catholicos’ blessing.\textsuperscript{104} In 1260 Bohemond and Hethum took part in the victorious Mongol campaign in northern Syria during which Aleppo was taken. Hulagu promised Bohemond the restoration of territories Antioch had lost following Saladin’s invasions, but on condition of the Greek patriarchate being reinstated in Antioch. This was yet another sign of the Mongol policy of religious tolerance. Unfortunately, in the same year, after Hulagu’s departure for the East, the Mongol forces were defeated in the Battle of Ayn Jalut against the Egyptian Mamelukes and had to withdraw beyond the Euphrates.\textsuperscript{105} The Franks of Accra accused Bohemond and Hethum to the pope of being in league with the Mongols. The pope excommunicated Bohemond, though not for political reasons, but for the restoration of the Greek patriarchate in Antioch. Characteristically, the king of Armenia was not excommunicated.

King Hethum’s voluntary submission to the Mongol khan made the Apostolic See and the Near Eastern crusader states apprehensive. Their anxiety grew in 1261 when the Emperor Michael Palaeologus took Constantinople from the Latins. In the following year the pope’s legate, Thomas de Lentini, bishop of Bethlehem, summoned Catholicos Constantine I to Accra. Due to his advanced age the catholicos did not travel himself, but sent his representative, Mkhitar of Tashir (Dashir), a monk from Skevra Monastery, accompanied by John, the Armenian bishop of Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{106} Mkhitar was one of the king’s counsellors. The choice of the embassy’s members was highly telling: they were all well-qualified, but not sympathetic to dialogue with the papacy. Thus the encounter was marked by a series of unpleasant incidents. The legate kept the Armenians waiting a long time before he arrived; then he reprimanded the

\textsuperscript{104} Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 145–146.

\textsuperscript{105} A contingent from the Kingdom of Armenia fought in the battle. In the aftermath of defeat Hethum granted the Mongol army refuge in Cilicia. Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. I, 149.

\textsuperscript{106} At this time Skevra Monastery became a haven for traditionalists. Mkhitar was admitted to its monastic community, and we learn that he was “renowned for his words and deeds, for his knowledge of the subtle and profound writings of foreign [viz. pagan] philosophers, and of the teachings and commentaries of the Lord’s enlightened prophets and apostles; he was distinguished for his eloquence and wisdom, and with the help of the orthodox castigated heretics.” One of his students was George, nephew of Bishop Gregory of Lambron, a great opponent of the late 13th-century union (I will return to him later). See Armians’ke zhitiia, 152–153. For more on Skevra, see Andrea B. Schmidt, “Kloster Skevra (12.–14. Jahrhundert) im Schnittpunkt kirchlichen und kulturellen Wandels in Kilikien,” in Das Lemberger Evangelier: Eine wiedergefundene armenische Bilderhandschrift des 12. Jahrhunderts, ed. Günter Prinzing and Andrea Schmidt (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1997), 121–142.
catholicos in the presence of his delegates for not attending personally. He
disdained the presents they had brought, saying that was not why they had
been called. Feeling offended, the envoys declined an invitation to a banquet.
On the next day they replied to the allegations. After asserting that the basis for all
discussion must be the Biblical tradition, Mkhitar shocked the papal legate
by asking whence the Church of Rome derived its authority to judge other
apostolic sees but did not permit itself to be subjected to their judgement. He
then continued by vigorously defending his own Church’s independence, and
even claimed that it had the power to judge the Church of Rome, in compliance
with the example given by the Apostles, and the Church of Rome could not
deny it this right.107 The Accra meeting showed that union with Rome had been
shaken very substantially, and not only were the two Churches no longer in full
communion, but that the Armenians had taken up a much more intransigent
position. Their resistance to successive attempts by papal legates to interfere
in their affairs and bully them into implementing the reforms they had once
promised to introduce and accepting new theological ideas created in the West
only became more and more resolute. Readiness for compromise was replaced
by an attitude of confrontation. However, the Roman Church did not want
to push matters to a head. Still in 1263 Pope Urban IV sent the Dominican
William de Freney, titular archbishop of Edessa, on a mission to Armenia to
establish a better climate for mutual relations.108 In 1265, following an attack
by Baibars, Sultan of Egypt, on the crusader states, Pope Clement IV asked
King Hethum to provide military assistance to the Knights of St. John. When
the Mamelukes attacked Cilicia in 1266 the pope appealed to the Frankish
rulers to help Armenia. Relations were still being maintained in political
matters, since they were in the interest of both parties. Soon it turned out that
not only were the Mongols of the Ilkhanate of Persia unable to impose their
supremacy on the Mamelukes of Egypt and capture Syria and Palestine, but
they were incapable even of keeping their possessions beyond the Euphrates.

While Mkhitar of Skevra was standing up against the papal legate in
blatant defiance, Ilkhan Hulagu (d. 1265) was seeking contact with Western

107 In 1263 Mkhitar wrote a treatise on the equal status of the Apostles, arguing against papal
supremacy and the primacy of Rome, and for the equal status of all the Apostles. See "Rela-
tion de la conférence tenue entre le docteur Mekhitar de Daschire, envoyé du catholicos
Constantin Ier, et le légat du pape à Saint-Jean d’Acre,” RHC Doc. Arm. I, 691, 693–698;

108 Richard, “Deux évêques dominicains, agents de l’Union arménienne au Moyen-Age,” AFP
19 (1949): 256–258; Richard, La papauté, 52.

1893), Appendix II, nos. 919, 1200.
Christendom, particularly with the papacy, and was interested in a resumption of the crusades. After his death in 1265 his son and heir, Ilkhan Abaqa (1265–1282), continued this policy. When Sultan Baibars took Antioch in 1268 Armenia was the only Christian state left on the north-eastern coast of the Mediterranean. All the Syrian ports had been taken over by the Mamelukes, so more and more Western merchants were settling in Ayas. Many Anti-
chene barons had come to Cilicia and entered the king’s service. The many centuries of family ties between the Franks and the Armenian barons helped the elites of both denominations on the road to cultural integration. The Latin metropolis of Tarsus, and officially the metropolis of Mamistra as well, were still in operation. The orders of knights still had property in Cilicia. Franciscans arrived; they had been visited in their monastery at Tripoli by King Hethum I, who asked to be entered on the list of their confreres. In the latter half of the 13th century the Franciscan custody of Cilicia had centres in Sis, and was a component part of the Franciscan vicariate of the Holy Land. In 1237 the king and barons of Armenia had invited the Dominican Order to set up a convent in Cilicia; however, no Dominican foundations were established in the 13th century. Meanwhile sentiments going in the opposite direction

110 Around 1262 Hulagu dispatched his first mission to the West. At this time David of Ashby, an English Dominican and chaplain to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, set out for Hulagu’s court at Tabriz. He was given a very warm welcome and became the Ilkhan’s confidant. Hulagu even told him that he was thinking of becoming a Christian. In a letter of 1263 the Pope commended Hulagu’s plans and encouraged him to convert. On 26th May 1263 he revoked the excommunication on Bohemond VI, Duke of Antioch, Lupprian, Die Beziehungen der Päpste, 67–68; Richard, La papauté, 68, 103; Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 152.


112 Giorgio Fedalto, La Chiesa latina in Oriente, Vol. 2 (Verona: Casa editrice Mazziana, 1973), 144–145, 218–219. There is a 1259 record for William, the last archbishop of Mamistra, though Tarsus Cathedral had incumbents in later times, too.

113 There was only one monastery in Cilicia, at Sis. There was another in Sebastia under Mongol rule. There were no monasteries in Tarsus, as is often claimed. As of 1292 the residence in the Franciscan province of the Holy Land was at Nicosia, Cyprus. Golubovich, Biblioteca bio-bibliografica, Vol. 1, 339, 341, 355; Vol. 2, 516–518; Richard, La papauté, 52, 202; Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 316; Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 574.

114 Yet the Dominicans were already in Cilicia earlier, around 1235. In 1237 the prior of the Dominicans in Jerusalem informed the Pope that four Dominicans had been sent out to Armenia “ad linguam addiscendam,” CICO III, no. 227a. This must have worried the local ecclesiastical authorities, since in 1239 the King and Queen procured an injunction from the Pope with a prohibition on preaching in Armenia “sine mandato Apostolicae Sedis vel Catholicos aut aliorum Praetatorum eiusdem regni licentia speciali,” CICO III, no. 255. In 1263 the Dominican General Chapter adopted a resolution for the foundation of a station in the Kingdom of Armenia “at the King’s request,” and probably under the influence of William Freney’s mission. Acta capitulorum generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum, ed. Benedict Reichert, Monumenta Ordinis Praedicatorum Historica, Vol. 3 (Romae: Typographia
were mounting in the Armenian Church, under the influence of monks and *vardapets* arriving from Greater Armenia. Hethum’s heir, Leo II (1270–1289), who was regarded in Europe as a Catholic, pursued a flexible policy and did not put pressure on the national Church. Thanks to his tolerant approach during his reign there was no religious strife, and the Church of Armenia could preserve its identity despite the growing Westernisation of the ruling class. This situation was facilitated by the relative independence of the catholicoi, who continued to reside at Hromkla, beyond the borders of the kingdom. Thus not surprisingly, the catholicos could afford to ignore the invitation to attend the Second Council of Lyon (1274), which the pope had sent to him and the king – even though the points on its agenda (apart from union with the Greek Church) included a new crusade, a matter of signal importance for the Armenians.

So while the Armenians stayed away from the Lyon Council, which met to discuss business concerning the Holy Land, Ilkhan Aqa sent his representatives. This was yet another fact prompting the delineation in Western eyes of a new, favourable image of the Mongols as allies in the Near East. Numerous...

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115 In his invitation to Leo to the Council of Lyon in 1274, Pope Gregory X wrote, “ad quod, sicut ceteri reges orbis terrae catholici per alias nostras litteras, invitatis,” CICO V/1, 105, no. 35. After Leo’s death in 1289 the Franciscan Giovanni de Monte Corvino attested to his commitment to the Catholic teaching. Pope Nicholas IV wrote to the new king, Hethum II, “Subiunxit quoque fratris memorati relatio, quod clarae memoriae pater tuus veluti obedientiae filius et catholicus christianus mortem subiit temporalem,” CICO V/2, 152, no. 85. In 1318, in a letter to Oshin, another of Leo’s sons, Pope John XXII wrote, “Quod itaque ad hanc fidei veritatem zelo devotionis afficeris, quod ipsam devotus ampleretis, quod clarae memoriae regis incliti patris tui laudabilia imitando vestigia ad eius unitatem et observantiam cunctos tibi subditos exemplo laudandae imitationis inducis,” CICO VII/2, 38, no. 20. While commending the King and barons for their orthodoxy, one of the anti-unionist hagiographers slipped a remark that some claimed the King was not fully orthodox, *Armiaksiie zhitiiia*, 161. In 1283 the Dominican Burchard of Mount Sion wrote that during periods of fasting the King abstained from wine and fish, in other words he observed the Armenian customs of fasting. See Brincken, *Die Nationes Christianorum Orientalium*, 196–197.


117 Lupprian, *Die Beziehungen der Päpste*, no. 44 and p. 73–76; see also Giovanni Soranzo, *Il Papato, l’Europa cristiana e i Tartari* (Milano: Pubblicazioni dell’ Università cattolica del Sacro Cuore, 1930); Gino Borghezio, “Un episodio delle relazioni tra Santa Sede e i Mon-
Mongol embassies were constantly arriving in the West to propose plans for military partnership for the recuperation of Palestine and the holy sites, and promising that their ilkhans would convert to Christianity. Mongol envoys would be attended by a circle of Western advisers, secretaries, translators and interpreters. The position of the Mongols on Western Christendom affected the attitude of their Christian subjects, who now credited the papacy with a high prestige rating.

Hopes of converting the Mongols were so high that Mendicant (Franciscan and Dominican) convents and residences started to appear in the lands under Mongol rule. Missionaries from both orders were granted extensive papal privileges, including some of the prerogatives held by bishops. At first the basic aim of these missions was to convert the ruling classes of Mongol society and to win the support of the Eastern bishops, clergy, and laity for the concept of union. This was a salient novelty in policy pursued by the papacy. Earlier negotiations concerning union had been conducted with Church leaders and Christian princes, usually through the mediation of legates. Now the Mendicant missions were reaching ordinary bishops, parishes, and individual Christians, in an attempt to achieve the same goal from a grass-roots level. Initially the missionaries of both orders did not insist on Oriental communities adopting the Latin rite. In their preaching they only encouraged them to acknowledge the primacy of Rome, which was understood as the achievement of Church union (unitas christianae fidei). Clergymen acceding to the union were granted absolution from the sin of schism and the right to continue performing their sacerdotal duties. A similar approach was taken to the laity, particularly as regards legalisation of marriages. Nonetheless, the pontifical privileges also gave the Mendicants the grounds to establish Latin-rite communities: they could build churches, found and consecrate graveyards, celebrate Mass, hear confession and administer other sacraments.¹¹⁸ Gradually they became competitors and an alternative to the local priests and hierarchs, even to those who had joined the union, although the initial rules had envisaged co-operation with the Uniate episcopacy. The Cum hora undecima bull had even allowed Franciscans and Dominicans to be ordained and receive other sacraments from the local patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops. The Mendicants who lived among the local people learned their

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¹¹⁸ CICO IV/1, 36–39, no. 19 (1245, for the Franciscans); 163–164, no. 100 (1253, for the Dominicans). The papal bull Athleta Christi of 20th February 1253 allowed Mendicants to hold episcopal offices "ad vacantes illarum ecclesias" in the Caliphate of Baghdad, see Fedalto, La Chiesa latina in Oriente, Vol. 1, 400–401.
languages, customs, and rites. The information they sent home let the Roman Curia build up a fuller picture of the religious situation in the East.

The Armenian people attached a lot of importance to the establishment of missions on territories under Mongol rule, controlled by the Kipchak Horde and in the Ilkhanate of Persia. The areas north of the Black Sea were inhabited by an extremely diversified population – Kipchaks (Cumans), Greeks, Goths, Alans, and Armenians. Even before the Mongol expansion Armenians had been traversing the trade routes from Crimea across the Kipchak nomadic habitats, to Hungary.\(^{119}\) Their numbers in the regions under the Golden Horde were rising systematically, both as a result of deportations and thanks to the growth of trading relations. Crimea was becoming their chief and most populous area of settlement, where Armenians lived in Solkhat (Solghad, Solghat, Old Crimea), and in Caffa.\(^{120}\) Armenian priests had commenced missionary activities among the Mongols at a very early stage. Batu Khan’s son Sartaq, who had his own encampment area still during his father’s lifetime and kept a large court near the Volga, was a Nestorian Christian. Diverse stories circulated about his religious beliefs. An Armenian chronicler wrote that Sartaq had been converted under the influence of his Christian nurse and Syrian priests. He had \textit{vardapets}, bishops, and priests in his entourage, took a portable altar with him on his itineraries, and fulfilled the duties incumbent on a Christian. At the request of envoys from Armenia, the \textit{vardapet} Marcos and Bishop Gregory, Sartaq exempted the priests of all religions from tax liabilities.\(^{121}\) In

\(^{119}\) \textit{Simonis de Keza Gesta Hungarorum}, ed. Andreas Domanovszky, Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum, Vol. 1 (Budapest: Academia litteraria hungarica, 1937), 192: “intraverunt quoque [Hungariam] temporibus tam ducis Geichae [Geizae] et quam aliorum regum Boemi, Poloni, Graeci, Bessi, Armeni et fere ex omni extera natione, quae sub celo est, qui servientes regibus vel caeteris regni dominis ex ipsis pheuda acquirendo, nobilitatem processu temporis sunt adepiti.” There was even an Armenian colony at Esztergom, which had its earlier privileges confirmed by King Bela IV in 1243. There was an Armenian monastery and estates described as “terra Armenorum,” which in 1281 King Ladislaus granted to the Augustinians. This could perhaps be evidence that the Armenian colony was no longer extant. Souren E. Kolandjian, “Les Arméniens en Transylvanie Xe–XVIIIe siècle,” \textit{REA N.S.} 4 (1967): 357.

1254 an Armenian priest named John arrived in Italy with news that Sartaq had been converted following his son’s miraculous cure thanks to the prayers of the Armenian clergy. Pope Innocent IV dispatched John, who claimed he was Sartaq’s chaplain, with a letter to the Mongol prince with greetings, and exhorting him to persevere in the faith, profess it publicly, and make an effort to convert his people. In 1256 Sartaq became the new khan after his father’s death, but died himself in the following year. The next khan was his paternal uncle Berke, a Muslim but tolerant to Christians. Pope Alexander IV did not entirely lose hope of winning over the khan for Christianity, as some Mongols were still being converted. It was not until the times of Öz Beg (Uzbeg) Khan after 1340 that the khanate was finally Islamised.

Armenians converted not only Mongols, but also Kipchaks, Turkic nomads wandering over this region since the 9th century. Although the Kipchaks had submitted to Mongol supremacy, they managed to transfer their language to them. Referred to informally as “Tartar,” it became the language used by Christian missionaries – both Armenians and Franciscans – on these territories. It was no coincidence that there were many Hungarian Franciscans there. The Mendicant orders were successfully conducting missionary operations in the areas of Kipchak migration bordering on Hungary even before the Mongol invasions. The result was the foundation of the Diocese of Cumania. The Franciscans treated the Crimean Armenians as schismatics, and got the same treatment in return. When Yaylag, the wife of Nogai Khan, converted to Christianity in 1286 or 1287 following a visit to the Franciscans at Solkhat, the Armenian archbishop and the Greek bishop attended her baptismal ceremony at Kirk Yer, envying the Franciscans this success (or so the Franciscan records say). The rivalry for the souls of the Mongols continued. The Church of Rome had the upper hand; the Mongols regarded the pope as the leader of all Christians. After some time the Armenian diaspora in the regions under the Kipchak Horde became an object of Franciscan missionary zeal. New Franciscan convents and residences were going up all the time in the region.

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122 Vita Innocentii papae IV scripta a fratre Nicolao de Carbio, ed. Étienne Baluze, Miscellanea VII (Paris, 1715), 398; KG LV, 217–219; Luprian, Die Beziehungen der Päpste, nos. 39 and 40, see also on page 61; Richard, La papauté, 77–78, 88, 92.
126 Richard, La papauté, 88–90.
The work of the missions was greatly enhanced when Bongratia was minister general of the Franciscans (1279–1283). He sent many Franciscans to the northern territories of the pagans, and extended and enhanced the Northern Vicariate very considerably (misit multos fratres ad partes infidelium Aquilonares, et cum magna dilatatione ampliavit Vicariam Aquilonis).127

In the Ilkhanate of Persia missionary activities were conducted by the Franciscan convents at Sebastia, Erzurum, Tabriz, Salmas, and Tbilisi.128 Thanks to them the Armenian inhabitants of Greater Armenia could keep in touch with Latin Christendom. The language of the missions in these parts was Persian. The power struggle in the Ilkhanate of Persia following the death of Abaqa Ilkhan and the attempt to Islamise the country during the brief reign of Ahmad-Tekuder made the new ruler, Arghun (Argun), realise the value of the Christian communities and alliance with Western Christendom against the Mamelukes and the Muslims. Arghun acceded to the throne in August 1284 and favoured the Christians, who had been persecuted by his predecessor. The man behind this policy was the Nestorian Isa Kelemechi, an important figure at the court of the Great Khan Kublai, who resided in Persia in 1285–1287. Arghun had amicable relations with the Franciscans of Tabriz, particularly with Giovanni da Montecorvino, who was a missionary in these parts from around 1280.130 There was undoubtedly a Franciscan inspiration behind the plan to unite all the Christians of Persia on the basis of recognition of papal primacy. It earned the patronage of the ilkhan, and was supported by the East Syrian Church and its patriarch, Mar Yahballaha III (1280–1317), who resided in Maragha, Azerbaijan, one of the khanate’s capitals. Soon after his appointment he sent an embassy to the pope,131 and another in 1287, under the leadership of the Nestorian monk

129 Lupprian, *Die Beziehungen der Päpste*, 77.
131 On 18th May 1285 Arghun sent an embassy to the Pope. It consisted of Isa, the Mongols Bagagoc and Mengilic, the Genoese Thomas Banchrinus Anfossi (Anfussis), and Ugueto, another Italian. In his letter to the Pope Argum wrote of the policy pursued by Ahmed (Tekuder) and called for the co-operation of Christian forces in the fight against the Mamelukes. Lupprian, *Die Beziehungen der Päpste*, nos. 49, 50, and 53.
Bar Sauma, an Uyghur born in Beijing. The embassy’s task was to establish co-operation between Western Christendom and the Mongols of Syria, and it conducted negotiations with Philip the Fair, king of France, and Edward I, king of England. The envoys returned to Rome after the election of the new pope, the Franciscan Nicholas IV (20\textsuperscript{th} February 1288). Nicholas acknowledge the leader of the Nestorians, Mar Yahballaha III, patriarch of the entire Orient and without further ado admitted him to union with the Roman Church. Bar Sauma celebrated Mass in the East Syrian rite, with the pope and cardinals attending, and received Holy Communion from the pope. In September of the same year the pope dispatched a group of Dominicans to the East, granting them the \textit{Cum hora undecima} missionary privileges. Soon afterwards Dominican convents were established in Tabriz, Maragha, and Dehikerkan, the chief residences of the ilkhans east of Lake Urmia. The campaign for Christian unity intensified on the return of the ilkhan’s envoys to Persia, and spread to encompass the Kingdom of Armenian Cilicia, which was now a Mongol protectorate.

\begin{itemize}
\item[133] Another member of this embassy was one Sabadinus. Contrary to Lupprian’s opinion, this individual should not be taken for a Nestorian. Sabadinus (Sachmadin) belonged to a new group of Armenian feudal lords which had sprung up in the period of Mongol rule; Babaian, \textit{Sotsial’no-ekonomicheskaia i politicheskaia istoriia Armenii}, 163.
\item[134] Lupprian, \textit{Die Beziehungen der Päpste}, 78–79. No arrangements were made for consensus on theological matters between the two Churches. During his stay in Rome Bar Sauma conducted discussions with the cardinals on the origin of the Holy Spirit. He told them that it did not seem possible for one thing to have two, three, or four causes. When the cardinals cited several arguments to prove the validity of \textit{filioque}, the Nestorian monk replied, “I have come here from a distant land not to engage in debate on the faith, but to obtain a blessing from ‘Mar Papa’ and the tombs of the Saints, and to bring you the word of my Prince (the Khan) and Catholicos (Mar Yahballaha III). If that suits you, let us put aside the dispute.” Istoriia Mar Jabalakhi III, 84–85. In his opinion as envoy of the Nestorian Catholicos, recognition of the Pope’s primacy could be reconciled with the preservation of the traditional Nestorian theology. We know that the Armenian position was similar.
\item[135] Lupprian, \textit{Die Beziehungen der Päpste}, 79.
\item[136] CICO V/2, 142–144, no. 79.
\item[138] On 27\textsuperscript{th} August 1288 Nicholas IV appointed the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem his legate for Armenia. CICO, V/2, 140–141, no. 78.
\end{itemize}
Political developments now put the Kingdom of Armenia, which had been the vanguard of Christianity in the East and the potential base for new crusades in alliance with the Ilkhanate of Persia, under an ever-increasing barrage of pressure from the ilkhans and the Holy See to bring ecclesiastical union to completion. The pro-Western faction at court had grown very powerful. The king himself had been educated at Lambron Castle in accordance with his father’s wishes, by Vahram Rabuni, a distinguished vardapet and an adherent of the Latin theology. According to a source hostile to union, he infected his student with “the Chalcedonian heresy,” and soon after ascending the throne the new king started to proclaim “unorthodox ideas,” which the theologians of Armenia managed to “contain” for a time. But the change in Hethum’s orientation was steadily progressing and it became more and more difficult to restrain the young monarch who loved to engage in theological matters and had found a mentor in the person of Gregory, bishop of Anazarbus, and a devoted Latinophile. It was probably under pressure from the ilkhan’s envoys and in the presence of Giovanni da Montecorvino that another theological debate (synod) was held at Sis, after which the king and a large number of barons declared they were in favour of closer links with Rome. The debate must have been heated. This was the first time when the West realised that the Armenians were Monophysites and rejected Chalcedon. The anonymous author of the Life of George of Skevra wrote that there was a renewal of the discussion on the incarnation of the Son of God, to whom “false prophets” attributed “two natures, two wills, and two energies, and tried to combine his corruptible body with his incorruptible divine nature.”

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139 In 1283 Hethum was dubbed a knight and appointed master of Lambron Castle and its environs; Schmidt, “Kloster Skevra (12.–14. Jahrhundert),” 139.

140 Armianskie zhitia, 161–162. Vahram did not come out into the open with his views, since the king, the barons, and other vardapets were supposed to be orthodox. He wrote commentaries to Aristotle, Ps-Aristotle, Gregory of Nyssa, Ps-Dionysius the Areopagite and other works. However he was against filioque. Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 565.

141 This is why Hethum’s conduct may not be assessed merely from the point of view of the political developments.

142 Golubovich, Biblioteca bio-bibliografica, Vol. 2, 73; Richard, La papauté, 205; Bundy, “Armenian Relations,” 27. The debate must have taken place in 1289, not 1288, since it was connected with the consequences of Bar Sauma’s embassy to Rome (1287–1288), and preceded the departure of Giovanni da Montecorvino.

teaching on *filioque* was acknowledged once again, and plans were made to abolish all the customs and practices which could cast even a shadow of doubt as to the orthodoxy of Armenian Christianity. King Hethum II deposed Catholicos Constantine II for his opposition to union with Rome.\(^\text{144}\) The synod convened under the pressure of political events: in April 1289 Tripoli fell to the Mamelukes. Hethum II gave Giovanni da Montecorvino letters for Nicholas IV, assuring him of his devotion to the Apostolic See and enclosing a Catholic declaration of faith. He also asked the general of the Franciscan Order to send six Franciscans to attend him on a permanent basis.

Meanwhile in the summer of 1289 a new Mongol embassy arrived in Rome. Buscarel, the ilkhans Genoese envoy, presented his master's political plans to the pope concerning a military expedition against the Mamelukes. Western forces were to play a key role. Armed with recommendations from the pope, the envoy set out to see the kings of England and France. In July 1289 Nicholas IV sent out a series of papal bulls to the Nestorian, Jacobite, Georgian, and Armenian patriarchs, and to the archbishop of Ethiopia, asking them to strengthen their links with the Church of Rome and accept *Credimus Sanctam Trinitatem*, the declaration of the faith adopted at the Second Council of Lyon. For the first time the pope was addressing his appeal not just to the catholicos of Armenia, but also to his archbishops, bishops, and church leaders, and separately to the king, queen, dignitaries of the kingdom and the Armenian people, asking all of them to work together to strengthen the union and sending them his apostolic blessing.\(^\text{145}\) Although in his letters there was no mention of military action or of a crusade, yet there could be no doubt that the reconciliation of all the Christians on territories under Mongol rule was to serve as a preparation for joint endeavour. In mid-July 1289 Giovanni da Montecorvino left Rome for the East with the pope's letters to the Great Khan Kublai.\(^\text{146}\) The pope also sent letters to Kaidu, the governor of the Ulus of Chagatai in Central Asia, whom he also encouraged to convert to Christianity. In his letter to Ilkhan Arghun the pope again expressed his thanks for Arghun's protection of the Roman, Nestorian, Greek, and Armenian Churches, and of the Franciscan missions in his dominions. He emphasised the advantages of the Christian religion and encouraged Arghun to hasten

\(^1\text{144}\) However, Stephen IV, the new appointee to the catholicosate, took a restrained attitude to union.

\(^1\text{145}\) CICO V/2, 148–149, no 83; 152–153, no 85; 153–154, no. 86; 156, no. 88, and 157–158, no. 89. One of the addressees of the Pope's appeal was Dionysius, Bishop of Tabriz; CICO V/2, 150–151, no. 84.

\(^1\text{146}\) CICO V/2, 154–155, no. 87; Lupprian, *Die Beziehungen der Päpste*, no. 54. We learn from this bull that Kublai himself asked for Latin missionaries.
his decision to convert.\textsuperscript{147} Finally he commended Giovanni and his confreres to Arghun’s protection.\textsuperscript{148} The group included several Spiritual Franciscans, who were sent out into the Orient straight from prison, where they had been detained on charges of heresy.\textsuperscript{149}

On receiving the pope’s letters, King Hethum II openly declared himself in favour of the ecclesiastical reforms. The Spiritual Franciscans who had arrived from Italy were in his immediate entourage. They were pious and full of zeal for missionary work.\textsuperscript{150} The biggest opposition to the new religious policy came from the monastic communities, especially from Skevra, the monastery containing the ancestral tombs of the Hethumids. The monastic precinct comprised three churches: the Church of the Mother of God, St. Saviour’s, and the Church of the Holy Cross, alongside buildings for community use and hermits’ cells. The atmosphere prevalent at Skevra was largely due to George, who had been educated by the \textit{vardapet} Mkhtar who had boldly defied the pope’s legate in Acre in 1261. After the death of his uncle, the bishop of Lambron and superior of Skevra, George completed his studies under the supervision of Vardan Areveltsi in the Monastery of St. Gregory the Illuminator at Vayots Dzor in Syunik. On his return to Cilicia he lived the life of a hermit, but he also taught in the spirit of the traditional Armenian theology. He was a grammarian, exegete, liturgist, and theologian. He was renowned for his treatise on the art of writing, viz. the theory and practice of copying and illuminating manuscripts, calligraphy, spelling, grammar, and syllabic division. He arranged the Old Testament into separate books and wrote an introduction to each of them. He also revised the Armenian Bible.\textsuperscript{151} George of Skevra had been very influential at the previous king’s court. He did not acquiesce to Hethum II’s ideas and was an opponent of the new trend in religious policy.

What the adherents of rapprochement with Rome tried to change were above all the Armenian customs associated with the liturgical calendar. To do this they assailed the very bastion of tradition. In 1290 the king and bishop

\textsuperscript{147} Lupprian, \textit{Die Beziehungen der Päpste}, no. 55 (13\textsuperscript{th} August). Kaidu († 1303) was the grandson of Ögedei, and had his residence at Tharay in Transoxania; see Soranzo, \textit{Il Papato}, 176–177, 260, and 277; Lupprian, \textit{Die Beziehungen der Päpste}, 79.


\textsuperscript{150} In 1292 Hethum wrote to the Pope and the General of the Franciscans thanking them for sending highly qualified missionaries. But in 1294 the Franciscans from the Province of the Holy Land, who suspected these missionaries of dogmatic errors, were applying pressure on the king to send them away. See Mutafian, “Gli inizi,” 157.

\textsuperscript{151} Schmidt, “Kloster Skevra (12.–14. Jahrhundert),” 139–141.
Gregory of Anazarbus went to Skevra, where they intended to celebrate the Feast of the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which that year happened to fall on a Wednesday, traditionally a day of fasting, even though “it was customary for the Armenians to celebrate this holy day later, or on the vigil of the Sunday.” The anonymous author of The Life of George of Skevra was shocked and rebuked the “dissidents”: “On that Wednesday they held the celebration and gluttonised like heathens, stuffing themselves with meat, fish and similar foods. One of the monks ate with them, so they made him superior of the monastery, and a few years later made him a bishop. But many died and the patrimonial homestead was ruined because of the transfer of the feast day.”152

By royal decree Christmas was separated from Epiphany and celebrated on 25th December, and its observance was supervised. Repressive measures were brought in against recusants.153 In 1292 Easter fell on two different Sundays in the Armenian and Julian calendars. On consulting Catholicos Stephen IV and a small group of clergy, the king tried to have Easter celebrated on 6th April, in line with the Latins and Greeks. The clergy and laity stood up in defiance, as for many holding Easter in advance was tantamount to a breach of the fasting due in Lent. Those who resisted were severely punished, and the king imposed an injunction on George of Skevra prohibiting him from teaching.154

At this time in Greater Armenia a caucus of opposition was emerging determined to defy union with Rome. Its founder was the vardapet Nerses of Taron. Educated in the Monastery of the Holy Apostles and St. Lazarus at Mush,155 he continued his studies under Vardan Areveltsi. He was fluent in Greek. On returning to his mother house in 1279 he engaged in teaching. In 1280, on the invitation of the Proshian princes, who ruled Vayots Dzor, an area in Syunik, he moved to Haghberts Monastery and founded a new school, the renowned “University” of Gladzor.156 In 1284, after Nerses’ death, his student

152 Armiantskite zhitii, 167.
153 This is what the life of George of Skevra suggests, “When the day of the Lord’s Epiphany came, he [George] arrived for the feast-day of his own accord and said, ‘They found me without looking for me. I appeared to those who did not ask for me.’” In the sermons he preached on that day he denounced all the apostates. For that reason some apparently wanted him killed, or at least imprisoned.
154 Arakel of Tabriz, At that time our nation was split up into two parts; half of us were under the influence of the Greeks, and half of us were true to our religion.” After the Polish edition, Arakel z Tebryzu, Księga dziejów, translated by W. Dąbrowski and A. Mandalian, introduction by W. Hensel (Warszawa: PIW, 1981), 500.
155 Hence he was known as Nerses of Mush (Mshetsi).
156 In the Armenian and European literature this school is often called a university, but this is a profound misconception. Western universities were organised in an entirely different way, with a different structure of their teaching staff, system of studies etc. Armenian schools
Yesaya (Isaiah) Nchetsi became the school’s principal, and under his supervision it developed into the chief seat of learning for the traditional Armenian theology, providing an education for over 300 alumni from virtually the whole of Armenia and Cilicia in Yesaya’s lifetime (he died in 1338).\textsuperscript{157} The school’s prestige was enhanced by the patronage of the Orbelian princes of central Syunik, who were atabegs of Georgia at the time.\textsuperscript{158} In 1286 Stephen (Stepanos), the son of Prince Tarsaich Orbelian was appointed archbishop of Syunik, and consecrated by Catholicos Constantine II in Cilicia.\textsuperscript{159} The bishopric of Syunik called itself a metropolis, and its incumbents used the title of “Prototronos of Greater Armenia and Metropolitan of the Diocese of Sisakan.” A man of learning and chronicler of his ancestral house, Stephen Orbelian was one of the most distinguished representatives of the traditional Armenian culture and dedicated to the struggle to uphold the national orthodoxy. The entire province, which had been split up into several dioceses, was put under his episcopal authority. He was the first to put forward the idea of moving the seat of the catholicosate to Armenia proper. He made an important contribution to the restoration of St. Eustace’s Monastery in Tatev (1297), which continued the legacy of Gladzor after its demise. One of the oldest provinces of Greater Armenia, by the late 13\textsuperscript{th} century Syunik had a large number of monasteries, and in almost all of them there were libraries, scriptoria, and schools (\textit{vardapetarans}). The province was thriving economically thanks to the fact that the Orbelians had acquired an \textit{inja} privilege, that is they were responsible directly to the ilkhan and not subject to the whims of local tax-collectors.\textsuperscript{160}

The plans for a joint European and Mongol crusade against the Mamelukes in Palestine did not materialise.\textsuperscript{161} On 18\textsuperscript{th} May 1291 Acre, the last patch left of


\textsuperscript{159} Stephen’s mother, Aruz-khatun, was of pure Mongol stock. Babaian, \textit{Sotsial’no-ekonomicheskaia i politicheskaia istoriia Armienii}, 182; \textit{Vidnye deiateli armianskoĭ kultury}, 280–286.

\textsuperscript{160} \textit{Armianskiie zhitia}, 187; Limper, \textit{Die Mongolen}, 59, 244.

\textsuperscript{161} Ilkhan Arghun died on 7th March 1292, before the return of the Mongol envoys, who were accompanied by the Pope’s plenipotentiaries, the Franciscan Guglielmo da Chieri, and the Pope’s penitentiary and reader Matteo da Chieti. CICO V/2, 184–185, no. 110; Golubovich, \textit{Biblioteca bio-bibliografica}, Vol. 1, 354–355; Vol. 2, 472–479; Lupprian, \textit{Die Beziehungen der Päpste}, 82.
the Kingdom of Jerusalem fell to the Mamelukes. On 29th June 1292, shortly after the dispute over the celebration of Easter, the Mamelukes took Hromkla and the residence of the catholicos, who together with twelve bishops and numerous priests and deacons was deported to Damascus, where he died in prison. King Hethum II was coerced into signing an agreement with the sultan and had to surrender two fortresses in Cilicia, in exchange for the return of relics taken as spoils, including the right hand of St. Gregory the Illuminator, which was used during the consecration of catholicoi. The traditionalists saw these events as a punishment from God for the betrayal of the true faith. Depressed by the disaster, the king abdicated and entered the Franciscan Order, taking John as his name in religion, in honour of the Franciscan Giovanni da Montecorvino.

While the Armenians were braving the Mameluke invasion, Pope Nicholas IV asked the king of France and the military orders to help Armenia, promising them the indulgences available earlier to Crusaders fighting in defence of the Holy Land. But there was no response to his appeal. Europe was busy with its own affairs and was not inclined to take part in another crusade.162 The pope died on 4th April 1292; Europe had turned a deaf ear to his initiative. The fall of Antioch, Tripoli, and Acre marked the end of the Latin states along the Syrian coast. The only Christian countries left in the region were Armenia and Cyprus. The Mameluke invasions intensified the exodus of Armenian monks from Amanos (Black Mountain) and Palestine to Italy. In 1273 the bishop of Perugia consecrated the Armenian Church and Monastery of St. Matthew de Porta Sancti Angeli. An Armenian Monastery of St. Matthew had been founded in Salerno by 1283, and in Orvieto by 1288. On 28th November 1291 Nicholas IV put the Armenian Hospital of St. John under the protection of the Apostolic See and endorsed the economic exemptions granted earlier by Alexander IV (1254–1261). In 1304 Benedict XI confirmed the privilege bestowed on the Armenian monastery in Ancona.163 In 1295 Basil, the Armenian archbishop of Jerusalem, who had evacuated to Europe together with the Latin clergy after the fall of the last vestiges of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, was given sanctuary in the papal household and spent the rest of his life there.164 On 6th January

162 Halfter, *Das Papsttum und die Armenier*, 318.
163 Oudendrijn, *Linguae*, 253–255, 268–269, 272, 563; CICO V/2, 190, no. 114; 258–259, nos. 156, 156a, 156b; CICO V/2, no. 131; CICO VII/1, 3, no. 3; Richard, *La papauté*, 197.
164 On 28th March 1298 in Rome Basil, Armenian Archbishop of Jerusalem, and five other bishops, granted five indulgences to the Armenian Church of St. Nicholas located outside the walls of Kraków. The Bishop of Kraków, Jan Muskata, endorsed these indulgences. *Codex diplomaticus Studii Generalis Cracoviensis*, ed. Źegota Pauli, Vol. 2 (Cracoviae: Sumptibus et typis Universitatis, 1873), 172, Appendix 1.
1301 Boniface VIII endowed him with the administration of the Benedictine Monastery of the Holy Saviour near Telesi in Campagna, in the Kingdom of Sicily. In the late 13th century Bishop Sukias was living in Perugia, too. In 1307 Clement V gave his permission to the Basilian monks and Martin, their prior, of the Black Mountain (de Montanea Nigra) for the erection of St. Bartholomew’s Church in Genoa. Armenian settlement, which had started earlier, now intensified. Two Armenian worlds – the Catholics of Cilicia and the diaspora, who were growing more and more like West Europeans; and the traditionalists, mostly from Greater Armenia, hostile to the slightest departure for the faith of their fathers – were brought face to face with each other in confrontation. The differences between them had never been so clear-cut and sharp.

Despite the political debacle, the Kingdom of Armenia was at the peak of its economic prosperity and took vigorous advantage of the favourable conditions Mongol expansion had created. Countless quantities of cargo and swarms of travellers passed through the port of Ayas. From there roads led out for Asia Minor, up to Trebizond on the Black Sea, whence you could sail for Crimea and go further into Central Asia. Ayas was also a point of departure for the great Persian bazaars of Tabriz, Maragha, and Baghdad, and then on to India. There were sea routes from Ayas for Famagusta in Cyprus, from where ships sailed for Genoa, Marseilles, and Montpellier. The revenue from the oriental trade was so substantial that the Armenian state easily managed to pay the tribute due to its Mongol suzerains, and subsequently to the Egyptian Mamelukes. The demise of the Near Eastern Latin states made Cilician Armenia all the more attractive economically. Italian mercantile interests in Ayas were so significant that it was given an Italian name, Laiazzo. Genoese, Pisans, Venetians, and Florentines made up the largest segment of its Italian residents, but there were also merchants from other parts of Italy – Torino, Gavi, Spigno, Bergamo, Cremona, Parma, Pavia, Vicenza, Lucca, Siena, Arezzo, Ancona, Rome, Gaeta – who came and settled. Sicilians and Catalans arrived somewhat later. The cargoes that passed through Ayas were cloth from the West, and silk, cotton, camlet, spices, and pearls from the Orient. The lords of Egypt looked on all this opulence and prosperity with envious eyes, fearing that another crusade might be launched from Ayas against them. Their attacks were intermittent and reiterative. The Armenian political authorities saw closer ties with the West, particularly with the papacy, as the only remedy.

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165 Due to the poverty of the monks the church and monastery had been built outside the city, on a site called the “multedo.” Clement V allowed them to found a graveyard; CICO VII/1, 19, no. 13; 24–25, no. 16; 59–60, no. 35.

In 1293, after the death of Stephen IV, the bishop of Anazarbus became the new catholicos, Gregory VII. The seat of the patriarchate was transferred to Sis, the capital of the Armenian state. From now on the catholicosi found themselves under an even stronger influence from the royal court and barons. In 1298 the new catholicos sent his envoy to acknowledge the primacy of the pope yet again, and to ask for military assistance for Armenia. The pope replied by informing him of his efforts to reconcile the Western kings and princes, who could provide the basic resources needed for a crusade. He encouraged the Armenians to resist and exhorted the catholicos to instruct the Armenian clergy and people in the faith as proclaimed, preached, and observed by the Church of Rome, so that, casting aside their old errors, they could persevere in the faith and be effective in their actions. Military assistance for Armenia now depended directly on them accepting the Roman magisterium and instructions regarding rituals and church discipline. The West had become the only chance of survival for Cilician Armenia. The Mongol alliance was becoming more and more problematic. In 1295 Arghun's successor, Ghazan, embraced Islam; and the next ilkhan, Arghun's son Öljeitü (Uljeitu), was a Muslim as well. However, with the common threat from Egypt hanging over them, for a time the Hulagids remained fairly tolerant with respect to Christians. In 1295 Hethum II renewed the traditional alliance with the Ilkhan. In 1299, now

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168 In 1298 Boniface VIII sent an appeal on this issue to Philip IV, King of France, and Edward I, King of England; Ter-Mikelian, Die armenische Kirche, 118; CICO V/2, 206, no. 125.

169 “Armenorum clerum et populum in fide, quam praedicta sancta Romana praedicat, docet et tenet Ecclesia, per te et alios informare, ut purgato omnis vetustatis errore in fide ipsa sint stabiles et in opere efficaces,” CICO V/2, 204–207, nos. 124 and 125.


171 Richard, La papauté, 106, 108. Violence against Christians, particularly Armenians, occurred even before the conversion of the Mongol rulers to Islam. In 1290 Vardapet Gregory and two monks were tortured to death in Kharberd. The ringleaders of such incidents were Tartar converts to Islam. The city's new Mongol commander put a stop to the persecution, making it clear that the Khan did not like outrages of this kind, especially against wealthy townsfolk. In 1307 the Muslim Ilkhan Oljeitu Muhammad Khodabandeh (an ex-Christian baptised Nicholas) imposed a tax on all Christians over 12 and made them wear badges of disgrace to distinguish them from Muslims. Local Armenians nicknamed him Kharabandeh, “servant of the ass,” an allusion to his Persian name, which meant “servant of God.” In 1321 there was a campaign of persecution and enforced Islamisation of the Christians of Erzurum (Karın), led by Timur-Tash, the Mongol governor of Asia Minor. Arakel of Tabriz (after the Polish edition), 500–501; Armianskie žitija, 352–364.
as a Franciscan, he took part in a victorious Mongol expedition in northern Syria and Palestine, according to reports wearing the Mendicant habit during battle. During the short-lived occupation of Jerusalem the king is said to have donated his amber sceptre to the Armenian Cathedral of St. James.\(^\text{172}\) The victory scored by the Christian and Mongol army made a big impression in Europe. James II, King of Aragon, sent an embassy to Ilkhan Ghazan. In July 1300 emissaries from the ikhan, the kings of Cyprus and Armenia, and the grand master of the Templars arrived at the pope’s court. But their further plans were thwarted following the defeat of the Mongol army in Syria during the 1303 campaign, and Ghazan’s death in the next year. The Mongols ceased to engage in expeditions against Egypt, while the Mamelukes attacked Armenia virtually every year. Hethum II, governing the country as regent on behalf of the minor Leo III, pinned all of his hopes on Western Europe.

As the Apostolic See had for a long time now been promising military assistance to Armenia on condition of the liturgical and disciplinary reforms being introduced, the regent and catholicos Gregory VII, who was very much under its influence, decided to implement them.\(^\text{173}\) Soon after 1305, when Leo III was put on the throne, Hethum and the catholicos started preparations for another synod to bring about full union with the Church of Rome. The synod was to convene in Sis on 19\(^{th}\) March 1307. It was preceded by a letter the catholicos addressed to the clergy, explaining why the synod had been called and why it was necessary to bring in the reforms required by the Church of Rome. The list of reforms was as follows: the mixing of communion wine with water, acceptance of the Chalcedonian teaching on Christ’s two natures, the strict observance of the principal holy days, the introduction of the Roman practice of fasting, and the removal of the phrase “you who were crucified for us” from the Trishagion. To justify the need for the changes the catholicos invoked the authority of the Bible and argued that they were in conformity with Armenian traditions.\(^\text{174}\)

To a large extent the catholicos laboured in vain. In Greater Armenia, to show him in a bad light word went round that he was too sympathetic to the Greek Church and was introducing novelties in the Church in Cilicia. His adversaries claimed that he had turned into a Byzantine catholicos and ally. The bishops, abbots, and princes of Greater Armenia warned him of the likely consequences of these rumours. The anonymous author of The Life of

\(^{172}\) Mutafian, “Le siècle mongol,” 182.

\(^{173}\) Bundy, Armenian Relations, 51–52; Oghlukian, Altarmenische Aussagen, 119–120; Halfter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier, 321.

\(^{174}\) Bundy, Armenian Relations, 29.
George of Skevra would call the catholicos’ enunciations on the Armenian traditions “an arrow with a hard and strong head drawn from the diabolical quiver of his words.” Stephen Orbelian and a group of other churchmen wrote a letter to him which – alongside words of obeisance – was full of threats and warnings. He was reminded that it was his duty to be faithful “to Gregory the Illuminator, the equal of the Apostles, and his children.” The authors of the letter referred to numerous synodal resolutions against heretics and asserted that it was inadmissible for him to diverge even in the slightest from them; instead he should defend them with his own blood even unto death, so as to avoid damnation and severing the bonds with the community of his forefathers. They told the catholicos that he should keep well away from the adherents of Chalcedon “who in their ignorance had consolidated the Nestorian heresy and having been damned, deprived themselves of [eternal] life.” He should beware especially of using leavened bread and adding water to the wine during the liturgy, they wrote – as if the Church of Rome followed the same practices as the Greek Church. The heretics were desecrating water, thanks to which Christians received the grace of new life in baptism, by turning it into a drink, whereby “they were depriving themselves of baptismal grace and destroying the mystery of purification.” Finally they demanded the patriarch state his position clearly, and threatened that they would denounce him in the event of any changes in church ritual, declaring their readiness to die for the faith of their fathers if any attempts were made by the temporal power to force them to repudiate their traditions. They enclosed a declaration of faith signed by numerous clergymen and princes, and the formula for the excommunication of dissenters.

The catholicos did not live to see the synod, he died shortly before it started. His opponents regarded this as God’s punishment for his blasphemies.
The king and regent presided over the synod. It adopted the reforms which for centuries both Rome and Constantinople had treated as the condition to be met for them to recognise the orthodoxy of the Armenian Church. Not all those present at the synod assented to its resolutions, even though most of the bishops and vardapets were from Cilicia.178 The Armenian Church acceded to union not only with the “great Roman Church,” but also with all the other Churches which had been called catholic (viz. universal) at the synod. It accepted the validity of seven ecumenical councils and the dogma of Christ having two natures, two wills, and two energies, thereby satisfying the requirements made by the Greek Church centuries earlier. The Fathers of the synod were well aware of this, since they asserted that they accepted the faith professed by “the great and universal Churches, the great and holy Church of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem”.179 “This was a reference to the idea of the pentarchy, which by this time had become decidedly obsolete, but in which union in the faith was treated as the force uniting the Universal Church.”180 The controversial addendum to the Trishagion was not removed, but instead it was prefixed with the word “Christ,” to make it clear that the phrase did not refer to the entire Holy Trinity. A decision was taken to celebrate major holy days together with the other Churches.181 Priests were ordered to use the Latin corporal for Mass and to add water to Armianskie zhitiia, 171. For information on the attempts to “rehabilitate” the catholicos, see Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 568–569.


179 The subsequent Armenian synod, held in Adana in 1316, declared that the differences which had separated the Armenian Church “a magna Romana alisque Christi Ecclesiis” [my italics, K.S.] had been removed. Balgy, Historia doctrinae, 314. Catholicos Gregory VII tried very hard to reconcile with the Church of Constantinople and with the Syrian Church. Mutafian, L’Arménie du Levant, Vol. 1, 525, 553.

180 In 1295 during a stay in Constantinople Hethum II was still discussing a possible union with the Greek Church. Mutafian, Le royaume arménien de Cilicie XIIe–XIVe siècle (Paris: CNRS Editions, 1993), 71.

181 It was established that the Annunciation would be celebrated on 25th March, the Purification on 2nd February, the Dormition on 15th August, the Elevation of the Cross on 14th September, Christmas on 25th December, and the other holy days in the menology (haysmavurk), on the days when the feast fell with no transfers.
the wine. They were to wear different vestments depending on their rank of ordination. Certain regulations were introduced regarding fasts modelled on the Roman practice. Grounds for these changes were given with quotations from the Bible and the Fathers of the Church (Basil, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, Cyprian of Carthage, Ambrose of Milan, Irenaeus, and the Venerable Bede), and conciliar and synodal documents. Reference was made to the statements of Popes Alexander I and Julius I, who were said to hand down the direct teaching of the Apostle Peter. After the synod closed Constantine III of Caesarea (1307–1322) was elected catholicos.

There was uproar when the anti-unionist Armenian clergy and laity learned of the reforms. National and anti-Latin sentiments rose. The changes were seen as sacrilege and a betrayal of church tradition. In Erzurum the bishop was murdered when he tried to pour water into the wine during Mass. And to cap it all, a few months after the synod closed there was a massacre of Armenian aristocracy, inspired by the opponents of union. King Leo III and the regent were also killed in the massacre, at the behest of the Mongol general Bilargu Khan. In 1309 during a hastily improvised synod the traditionalists tried to repeal the reforms of 1307, but the new king, Oshin (1308–1320), continued his predecessors’ policy and in 1309–1310 put down an uprising in Adana and Sis, showing no mercy. The anti-unionist clergy were persecuted.

182 “ut in Ecclesia propriis juxta unius cujusque Ordinis diversitatem sacris vestibus uteremur.”
183 Fish and oil were admitted during the fasts preceding Christmas and Easter, “sicut Romana solet Ecclesia.”
184 For instance, the Fathers of the Church were referred to on the need to mix water with the wine; “qui in sexto Synodo convenerunt tempore Justiniani Imperatoris … Et hoc ibidem ipsum decretum fuit a Sanctis Patribus in magna synodo Carthaginensi tempore piissimi Honorii celebrata; quae si quis videre desiderat legat sextum Concilium, can. XXXII; et Concilium Carthaginense, canone XXXVII.” The Synod knew that these decrees had been issued against the Encratites, who did not use wine at all for the celebration of the Eucharist; but considered that it should not be celebrated without the use of water, either.
186 The author of the life of George of Skevra wrote, “I do not even want to mention … the pouring in of water, which is allegedly done to differentiate between the corporeal and non-corporeal [nature], which neither the Evangelists nor the Apostles and Saints ever told us of. They will be judged for that before the great and supreme court, where neither bribery nor violence will be of any avail.” Cf. Mutafian, *L’Arménie du Levant*, Vol. 1, 571–572.
188 On this occasion the vardapet Moses of Yerznka wrote two treatises against the custom of mixing water with the wine in the Eucharistic chalice. This vardapet was the leader of the anti-unionist opposition in the western part of Asia Minor. Bundy, “The Council of Sis,” 56; Mutafian, *L’Arménie du Levant*, Vol. 1, 572.
Critical *vardapets* were imprisoned, and resistant monks were banished to Cyprus, where many died in exile. On suppressing the criticism in Cilicia, the king travelled to Greater Armenia to persuade the local clergy to accede to the union. His meeting with them at Bitlis (Baghesh) ended in failure. In 1309 Pope Clement V sent his legate, Peter, bishop of Rhodes, to Cyprus and Cilicia to help Oshin. The legate had the power to admit schismatics into the Catholic Church, and to take off the automatic excommunication on them. He also had the right to grant dispensations to clergymen for having celebrated Mass while adhering to the schism.

In consequence of the synod held at Sis a schism emerged in the Armenian Church. In 1311 Sergius (Sarkis), bishop of Jerusalem, declared his secession and independence, although he did not take either the title of catholicos or patriarch. He had been encouraged to do this by the sultan of Egypt, whose Armenian subjects were put under Sarkis’ authority. In 1316 another synod, prompted by Pope John XXII, was called in Adana, for the confirmation of the resolutions adopted in 1307. Presided over by Catholicos Constantine III, it met in St. Menas’ Royal Chapel, and ratified all the reforms passed at the previous synod. There were detailed discussions on why the feast of the Na-

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190 CICO VII/1, 62–63, nos. 36b and 36c.


192 However, after some time the Armenian Archbishop of Jerusalem acknowledged the authority of the Catholicos of Sis over himself, and around 1350 the authority of the Apostolic See as well. Richard, *La papauté*, 202.

193 Tournebize, *Histoire politique*, 309–310; Richard, *La papauté*, 210. Incidentally, we learn of the arguments used by the opponents of *commixtio*. The traditionalists claimed that Christ gave his disciples a cup containing wine, which is incorruptible, unlike water. They also invoked the words of St. John Chrysostom against the Encratites, in a comment on the words of Christ: “Non bibam a modo de hoc genimine vitis in diem illum, cum illud bibam vobiscum novum in regno Patris mei;” where he (John Chrysostom) claimed, “Vide, ex hoc fructu vitis, dicit, vitis autem vinum, non aquam profert, ut perniciosissimam quamdam haeresim in Ecclesia radicitus evelleret; quia sunt quidam, qui aqua in mysteriis utuntur.” So, they (the Armenian traditionalists) argued, those who used water were heretics. The water which flowed out of Jesus’ side, they said, was a symbol of purification, i.e. baptism, and not to be drunk (unlike wine). The reformers accused them of ignorance and said, “omnia fere sensibilia, quae sub visus, tactusque sensibus cadunt, esse corruptibilia et caduca.” Nonetheless, both water and wine were corruptible, “in dominicae tamen incarnationis et mortis sacramento mystice sumpta purissima et incorruptibilia sunt.” The defenders of *commixtio* invoked the authority of Catholicos Nerses Shnorhali, who had written in his commentary to the Book of Proverbs, “Misit servos suos, sanctos nimirum Apostolos, ut vocarent ad potum laetitiae misti Calicis, et ad aquam, et sanguinem, quae de latere Christi,
tivity had to be celebrated separately from Epiphany. Those against this claimed that their joint celebration was an apostolic tradition going back to James, the Lord’s brother. Without denying this, the synod argued that the other Churches had adopted the Roman tradition, which had been observed since ancient times in line with the tradition handed down from St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, whereas the Armenians had not done this only because of the political situation at the time. The fathers of the synod rejected the arguments of their opponents and asserted that the doctrine of the Church was not in conflict on this point with the Armenian tradition and that it complied with the teaching of Gregory the Illuminator and the apostolic canons.

When the Adana synod had finished Catholicos Constantine III once again sent his legate Gregory to Greater Armenia, to persuade the local bishops to join the union. The legate was to deny the patriarchal blessing to any bishops who refused to accept the synod’s resolutions, especially the dilution of communion wine and the celebration of Christmas on 25th December. He was also to withhold from them the chrism which only the catholicos could bless and distribute as a token of unity with the local Churches. In response John Orbelian, archbishop of Syunik, Stephen’s successor, and Yesaya Nchetsi dispatched two letters to the catholicos in which they rejected the unionist reforms and refused to accept the catholicos' chrism, which signified schism.

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194 The Fathers at the Synod observed that “Et quamvis nonnullae Asiaticae Regionis Ecclesiae, praesertim Hierosolymitana, utramque festivitatem uno, eodemque die VI. Januarii die antea peregissent; postea tamen, a Sanctis Patribus utraque festivitas translata est; et divisim juxta morem Ecclesiae Romanae celebrare coeperunt,” Balgy, *Historia doctrinae*, 322.

195 “Scripserunt autem, sicut ad alias Ecclesias, sic et ad magnum Isaac [Sahak the Great] Epistolam, ut vel ipse cum tota Ecclesia conveniret. Hib interim, cum nolisset in perniciem Armeni regis Ardasciri [Artashes] una cum Armenorum Primatibus conspirare, … fuerat ab iisdem magnatibus ac praeferit ab ambitioso quodam calumniatore, pseudo sacerdote, Surmac nuncupato, apud ipsum Persarum Regem false hoc crimine accusatus.” After the King and Sahak had been deposed, “nullum ex eodem Beato Isaac responsum ad Archadum Imperatorem, ac divum Joannem Chryzostomum Constantinopolis Patriarcham redire potuit.” See Grumel, *Les regestes*, no. 33. In Grumel’s opinion, the letter to Sahak was a forgery intended to glorify the Armenian tradition. However, in the 14th century no-one denied that the custom of celebrating Christmas and Epiphany together on 6th January had been the earlier practice in the East. CICO VIII, 189, no. 59.


When the synod was over King Oshin sent an embassy to Avignon, with James, Bishop of Gaban as its leader. Pope John XXII examined the synod’s resolutions and declared their orthodoxy. To make things absolutely clear, he gave the envoys a copy of the Catholic declaration of faith with all the controversial points precisely explained, and the bishop of Gaban pledged to keep it on behalf of the king and Christian people of Armenia. In his letters to the king and catholicos, John XXII made it quite plain that real union was to be achieved not merely by agreement on dogma, but also by consonantia rituum – compatibility of rites. Thus he questioned the custom of rank-and-file priests, and not bishops, administering Confirmation and blessing the holy oils used for Extreme Unction. He instructed them on the theology behind the blessing of the oils and observed that it would be better not to administer Confirmation at all than to have it done by ones who were not fit to administer it (viz. ordinary priests). In addition he pointed out that only he had the right to issue dispensations for marriages down to the fourth degree of consanguinity. He then instructed the Armenian delegation on primacy and the concept of plenitudo potestatis (full powers), implying that papal authority was superior to the rights held by patriarchs (including the catholicos). Perhaps this was a reaction to the reference that had cropped up in Armenian unionist synodal resolutions to the five patriarchates of the Catholic Church. 

Thereby in the opening years of the 14th century the Armenian Church implemented the reforms which Rome had once set as the condition for the bestowal of a royal crown on the dynasty of Armenia’s princes. Many historians write that their mutual relations in the 13th century had been more

199 The knights Stephen and Gerard were members of the embassy, which had a translator Gregory, recorded in the text as Trucimanus or Targmanus, “Translator.” James was in Avignon in 1317 and 1318, and several other Armenian embassies arrived there later, including one headed by Sarkis of Sis, the chancellor of the kingdom (1319/1320), Richard, La papauté, 203, note 135.

200 This Creed included filioque, as well as the Roman doctrine of purgatory, hell, and the Sacrament of Penance. The Pope instructed the Armenians that a relapse into sin was absolved not by a second baptism, but by confession and penance.

201 The oils in question must have been the ones used for Extreme Unction, since chrism, which was applied in the Armenian Church (as in other Oriental Churches) for Baptism and Confirmation, which were administered together, could only be consecrated by the Catholicos. The Pope stressed that in the Church of Rome only bishops could administer Confirmation, “per manus impositione in fronte chrismando renatos.” Later on the Armenians were accused of not practising the Sacrament of Confirmation, since the anointing done immediately after Baptism could not be regarded as Confirmation. CICO VIII, 131, 140, 143, 152, no. 57.

202 The Armenians assumed that the primacy of St. Peter’s See had been established by the resolution adopted at the Council of Nicaea in 325; CICO VIII, 147, 149, no. 57.


of a diplomatic rather than of a religious connection. The Church of Armenia had strengthened or relaxed its ties with the See of St. Peter depending on the political situation. The well-known Armenian scholar Claude Mutafian has even tried to prove that the Armenians have never recognised the primacy of Rome, but only the primacy of Christ, though there is no such concept and it would indeed be absurd in the context of Christian theology. However, it cannot be denied that regardless of the sincerity of particular catholicoi and bishops, the chances for union on the terms dictated by Rome were pretty slim. The Armenian Church had too ancient a tradition of independence to give up all of its self-sufficiency and be satisfied with a passive reception of the Roman magisterium. The efforts of successive catholicoi ended in failure in the face of stalwart domestic opposition.

In this situation the catholicoi had to be flexible in their policy, steering clear of the Scylla of Rome and the Charybdis of the conservatives at home. Turning a blind eye to their adversaries would have led to schism and the diminution of their prestige in Armenia, and hence to plummeting revenues. The Cilician catholicoi were not in a class of their own, they could be replaced by potential rivals in Aghtamar or Caucasian Albania. Armenian unity was feasible only on the basis of the traditional doctrine and rituals. On the other hand the Apostolic See regarded the Armenian Church in Cilicia as an ally, and its patriarch as Catholic, notwithstanding all of its reservations. The fact that the Armenian Church interacted with Rome and took up many of its overtures made this easier. The declarations of faith Armenian kings and catholicoi sent to Rome were indisputably orthodox, and there can be no doubt that the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia was considered Catholic. For the Church of Rome a country’s Catholicity depended on the attitude of its political authorities, not on the numerical ratio of the diverse Christian denominations in its population. Rome treated countries ruled by Catholic kings and princes as Catholic. The image of the Christian Kingdom of Armenia, an ally of the Latin states, was disseminated in the West by Prince Hethum of Korykos (Hayton of Corycus), a relative of the Armenian kings and a Premonstratensian monk. In 1307 at Poitiers he presented an illuminated copy of La Flor des Estoires de la Terre d’Orient (The History of the Tartars), his treatise on the history of Christianity in the East, to Pope Clement V. This was why the Kingdom

203 Mutafian, Le royaume arménien de Cilicie, 65.
of Armenia was on the list of countries to which the popes sent their bulls, appeals, and legates. It was certainly not regarded as a mission country, not itemised in the missionary ventures of the Mendicant orders. In the pontifical records the name “Armenia” hardly ever meant anything else but Cilicia, and the Armenian “schismatics” were beyond its borders. Naturally the Apostolic See knew very well that the Armenian Church of Catholic Armenia was not fully integrated with the Roman Church. Hence its recursive demands for the king and catholicos to bring the conditions for union to completion, making military assistance depend on this. The Holy See also acted on ideological grounds, the belief that it had a unique role to play in Christianity and that it was infallible in matters of faith. The belief that God would assist only those who worshipped Him in the orthodox way was the cornerstone of papal policy. One of the Armenian historians has rightly observed that of all the European states only the Apostolic See was seriously engaged in organising assistance for Armenia. Its policy ended in failure. Neither did it manage to save the Frankish states, in which the Latin Church enjoyed the status of the official religion. At any rate, on accepting Rome’s conditions the Armenian Church in Cilicia became a Uniate Church – the Armenian Catholic Church.

The Uniate Church in Cilicia: Latinisation of the rite

At the beginning of the 14th century the situation of the Kingdom of Armenia was becoming more and more dramatic. With each decade its predicament was becoming more and more disturbing. Defence against Mameluke incursions was harder and harder. Assistance from the Mongols stopped after the Islamisation of the Ilkhanate of Persia. Worse still, its Turkish Islamic lords, vassals of the Ilkhan, also started forays into Cilicia, which found itself trapped within an aggressive pincer manoeuvre. Its only ally in the region was the Catholic Kingdom of Cyprus. However, working relations with Cyprus were frustrated by the dynastic squabbles in the reigning Lusignan dynasty, in which Cilicia’s Hethumids were embroiled. Help could come only from the West. In 1306 Clement V conducted talks on the matter with the grand masters of the Knights of St. John and the Templars, and in his letters to the king and catholicos promised to stage a new crusade.205 But there was no crusade. The pope’s efforts and plans were obstructed and rendered null by the mutual hostility of the Christian princes of Europe, engrossed in their own business and not at all

205 CICO VII/1, 14–16, nos. 8 and 9.
willing to engage in a risky military expedition in the East. All that successive popes could offer the Armenians was spiritual support. Politically this was of no avail, but in the religious aspect it was a sign of something more than just Christian solidarity – evidence of denominational union. In 1322 Pope John XXII granted an absolute indulgence to the Crusaders and Armenians who fell in battle against the infidel, and sent money for the restoration of Ayas, which had been devastated by the Mamelukes in 1321.206

Following the unionist synods the Armenian Church set about introducing changes in its rites, continuing the process initiated much earlier, during the first crusades. However, then it had been conducted with no compulsion or pressure from the See of Rome: the Armenians had modified their rites in accordance with what they felt was proper for their liturgy.207 But now the changes went much further. Papal primacy was recognised, not only on the grounds of resolutions adopted at the ecumenical councils, but also of Jesus’ words to Peter.208 The Armenian Church also adopted the Roman version of the Creed, along with filioque, and acknowledged the decrees of the ecumenical councils, particularly Chalcedon,209 repudiating the decrees of Armenian synods which had anathematised it.210 Christmas started to be celebrated on December 25th, and the main holy days were held in accordance with the Roman calendar.211 The commemoration of Dioscurus was removed from the prayers, and Pope Leo, the promoter of the Chalcedonian doctrine, was

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206 CICO VII/2, 122–124, nos. 65 and 65a.
208 CICO VIII, 218, 220, no. 59: “Igitur nos sic dicimus et habemus non solum, quia in sancta synodo determinatum fuit, sed quia Christus oves suas Petro recommendavit pascere.”
209 However, the Creed said during the liturgy was the traditional Armenian version, without filioque, and no mention of the Holy Spirit coming from either the Father or the Son, the words were “Credo in Spiritum Sanctum increatum et perfectum, qui locutus est in Lege et Prophetis et Evangelii et descendit in Iordane et praedicavit in Apostolis et habitat in sanctis” (I believe in the Holy Spirit, not created and perfect, who spoke through the Law, the Prophets, and the Evangelists, descended onto the Jordan, preached through the Apostles, and lives in the Saints); CICO VIII, 121, no. 57; 228, no. 59. However, we know that the Catholicos had filioque in the Creed he recited during prayers, and asked his clergy to do likewise; CICO VIII, 162, 192, no. 59; CICO IXI, 306, no. 192; see also CICO VIII, no. 158–159, no. 58. The Armenian Franciscan Daniel of Tabriz wrote, “Apud Armenos non est ita clara et certa scientia de processione Spiritus Sancti, sicut est apud ecclesiam Latinam” (Art. 1), but “aliqui de unitis dicunt symbolum sicut ecclesia Romana, licet pauci”. Daniel de Tauris, “Responsio ad errores impositos Hermenis,” RHC Doc. Arm. II (Art. 4).
210 CICO VIII, 197, 211, no. 59.
hailed as a saint. Many of the saints of the Western Church were put into the liturgical calendar. In 1314 the Catholicos canonised the Franciscans who had been put to death in Yerznka in eastern Anatolia for preaching to Muslims. Books which ran counter to the Latin tradition were revised or rejected. This applied first and foremost to Vardan’s book against papal primacy. Latin prayers were introduced alongside the old Armenian formulas for the Sacrament of Confirmation, which continued to be administered along with Baptism, though some Cilician bishops administered Confirmation personally in the Latin rite, in line with the pope’s teaching, and separately

212 CICO VIII, 163–164, no. 59: “beatum Leonem, quem nos sanctum reputamus, simul cum concilio.” When the Armenians of Cilicia and Greater Armenia loyal to the Catholicos learned the truth they removed the hymn in honour of Dioscorus: “dictum canticum extraxerunt de libris et novum canticum composuerunt pro sancta synodo Calcedonensi.”
213 St. Sixtus, Pope, and his deacon St. Lawrence, St. Hippolytus, St. Ambrose of Milan, St. Benedict of Nursia, St. Hermenegild, St. Felicitas, St. Thomas à Becket etc. The veneration of St. Dominic was spreading among the Armenian monks in Italy, and already by 1322 there was an altar dedicated to him in the chapel of St. Bartholomew’s Monastery in Genoa. Bernard Outtier, “Santi e martyri d’Italia nel sinassario armeno,” in Roma-Armenia, 248;
214 The Franciscans who were martyred had an Armenian priest for a companion. Jean Richard, La papauté et les missions d’Orient au moyen âge (XIIIe–XVe) siècle, 2 ed. (Rome: École française de Rome, 1998), 107, 205.
215 “in istis [libris], quando inveniuntur aliqua contra veritatem sunt et unionem nostram cum Ecclesia Romana, sed vel de una natura vel de aliqua in Sacrificio vel de festo Nativitatis vel de synodo Calcedonensi et si quae similia, … , illa spernimus, reprobamus nec recipimus,” CICO VIII, 227–228, no. 59.
216 Other Oriental Churches cultivate the tradition of the simultaneous administration of Baptism and Confirmation by a priest, CICO VIII, 202–203, 205–206, no. 59; CICO VIII, 140, no. 57. Small children received Holy Communion under both kinds straight after being baptised and confirmed; this was another Oriental tradition, CICO IX, No. 192. There were two baptismal formulae, the Armenian formula, “Talis veniens a catechuminio ad baptismum, baptisetur in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti,” which was said three times while the person being baptised was immersed and had water poured over him, but the Roman formula, “Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti,” was also in use, and was said only once. CICO VIII, 205, no. 59; CICO IX, 23, no. 11. See also Charles Renoux, “It rito armeno,” in Roma-Armenia, 339.
from Baptism. Contrary to Armenian canon law, which prohibited third marriages, successive marriages were recognised as valid, while divorce was banned. Attention was now being paid to degrees of consanguinity and affinity between prospective marriage partners. The Sacrament of Extreme Unction was administered in compliance with the Roman practice as well.

Other Roman dogmatic formulas which were adopted included the teaching on original sin, sanctifying grace, penance, heaven, hell, purgatory, and limbo of the infants, the Last Judgement, angelology, and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Auricular confession replaced general confession, and the conditions for absolution were to be a penitent’s contrition (sorrow for sins committed), their confession, and reparation such as almsgiving, fasting, and prayers, according to the confessor’s, that is the priest’s discretion (secundum voluntatem confessoris, qui est sacerdos). The Latin formula of absolution was applied during Confession, and the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist were administered more often. The custom of Mass said

217 “Secundum Sacramentum est Confirmatio; cuius materia est chrisma; sed forma est, quod episcopus solus, et non sacerdos, cum chrismate signat in forma crucis frontem pueri, dicendo: Signo te …, etc. sicut nunc, secundum censuetudinem Romanae Ecclesiae, facimus exemplo praedecessorum nostrorum et secundum posse facimus fieri per subditos nostros. Sed antea, secundum consuetudinem Graecorum, Sacramentum Confirmationis sacerdotes dabant post Baptismum,” CICO VIII, 157, no. 58; “Licet postquam praedecessores nostri uniti cum Ecclesia Romana, aliquos in Minori Armenia episcopi confirmant secundum modum Ecclesiae Romanae et alii secundum modum antiquum, quem habuerunt ab Ecclesia Graecorum,” CICO VIII, 206, 209, no. 59.

218 “Nos vero de Cilicia et qui oboediunt nobis, postquam uniti fuimus cum Ecclesia Romana, qui recipiunt tres vel quatuor et sic deinceps, unam post aliam, recipimus eos ut alios christians legitime nubentes,” CICO VIII, 198.

219 The Synod of 1345 declared that a bishop who granted a divorce would be deposed from his episcopal office, and his estate would be confiscated and alienated to the Crown, CICO VIII, 225; see also CICO VIII, 158, no. 58.

220 “De Sacramento vero Extremae Unctionis, sciendum est, quod aliqui, licet pauci, faciunt secundum consuetudinem Romanae Ecclesiae, quemadmodum et nos; et aliqui secundum modum Graecorum. Secundum autem maiorem partem non faciunt; nunc conamur hoc Sacramentum per gratiam Dei, quantum possimus, conformari consuetudini Ecclesiae Romanae,” CICO VIII, 210, no. 59.

221 Armenian bishops were granting indulgences already by the close of the 13th century, like the Latin bishops. In 1317, at the request of the King’s envoy, Pope John XXII licensed James, Bishop of Gaban, to grant an indulgence of a year and forty days whenever he celebrated in Armenia wearing pontifical vestments and preached to the people; CICO VII/2, 10, no. 6a; CICO VIII, 164–193, no. 59.

222 CICO VIII, 158, no. 58.

223 “Ego te absolvo…” instead of “Misereatur tui amator hominum Deus” or “Deus dimittat tibi peccata tua,”or “Ego dimitto tibi peccata tua in terra et Deus dimittat tibi in coelis,” see CICO VIII, 133, no. 57; 194, 199, no. 59. In the opinion of D. Findikyan (“L’Influsso lati-
on a daily basis was brought in; this was a novelty in the Armenian practice. Wine mixed with water started to be used in the celebration of Mass, and the Roman interpretation of transubstantiation was introduced. The Roman Confiteor and Misereatur were brought into the Mass, as was the Introit Psalm 42(43) Iudica me Deus, and the prologue to St. John's Gospel, In principio erat Verbum, at the end of Mass. As in the Latin Mass, the Creed was recited after no; “341) the Armenian absolution formula was not a full calque of the Latin formula. The Armenians were accused of administering recurrent baptism to penitents instead of hearing their confessions. John XXII prohibited such practices outright: “baptismum non esse aliquatenus iterandum, sed eos qui post baptismum in peccata labuntur non rebaptisandos, sed per veram poenitentiam suorum posse consequi veniam peccatorum,” CICO VII/2, 35, no. 20. On the other hand, they had not heard of the casus reservati, the sins which only a bishop or the pope could absolve. In 1345 the Armenian Synod declared, “si vobis videatur inconveniens, parati sumus facere secundum voluntatem vestram, modo quo scribetur nobis,” CICO VIII, 218, no. 59; see also Alphonse Raes, “Les Rites de la Pénitence chez les Arméniens,” OChP 13 (1947): 648–655; Findikyan “L’Infl usso latino,” 341.

This did not apply to Lent. In 1345 the Synod of the Armenian Church confirmed that in the period starting from Quinquagesima Sunday Mass was said only on Saturdays and Sundays “secundum consuetudinem totius Orientalis Ecclesiae.” However, “in palatio vero regis Armenorum celebratur omni die in Quadragesima; et in alis ecclesiis quando faciunt, non prohibemus,” CICO VIII, 216, no. 59.

Around 1340 Catholicos James II wrote the following in a letter to Pope Benedict XII, “Tertium Sacramentum est Missa; cuius materia est panis azymus de frumento et vinum de vite, in quo guttam aquae miscimus propter bonam significationem, secundum consuetudinem Romanae Ecclesiae;” CICO VIII, 157, no. 58.

Like the Greeks, the Armenians considered the moment of consecration to follow immediately upon the epiklesis, viz. the supplication of God the Father to send down the Holy Spirit upon the Eucharistic offering and transsubstantiate it. According to the Roman Church Transubstantiation occurred upon the recitation of the words spoken by Christ during the Last Supper over the Eucharistic offering. CICO VIII, 141, no. 57. However, the reformers were ready to adapt to the Roman doctrine: “si alium melius videbitur vobis, quod necessarium sit facere, parati sumus perficere,” CICO VIII, 208, no. 59. Around 1340 Catholicos James II had written to Pope Benedict XII, “Perficiendo supradictam formam a Christo datam [viz. the words of Christ uttered during the Last Supper] super panem et vinum ex tunc non panem et vinum, sed verum et certum corpus et sanquinem Christi, simul cum divinitate eius credimus;” CICO VIII, 157, no. 58.

the Gospel, during the liturgy of the Word. Roman practices of fasting were introduced gradually. Catholics James fined those who did not observe the five-day fast preceding Christmas Day (25th December), but observed the fast prior to Epiphany, in accordance with the ancient Armenian custom (sed custodiebant ieiunium Epiphaniae, secundum antiquam consuetudinem Armenorum).

Earlier Western-style mitres, croziers, and pectoral crosses had been brought in. The priest was to recite prayers from the Latin missal while putting on vestments for Mass. Numerous borrowings from the Latin Ritual, albeit adapted to the Armenian tradition, were introduced into the ordination ceremony, and the bishops celebrating it observed the provisions of Roman

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228 Findikyan (“L’Influsso latino,” 340) writes that the Nicene Creed is recited at this point in the liturgy only in the Roman and Armenian Churches, which, according to him, may be purely fortuitous. There are records for this order in the Church of Rome only from the 11th century on, but from the late 7th century for the Armenian Church; Findikyan, “Bishop Step’anos Siunecci: A Source for the Study of Medieval Armenian Liturgy,” Ostkirchlichen Studien 44, Vol. 2–3 (1994): 193–194.

229 Fasting was very strict in the Armenian Church, and it involved full abstinence from meat, fish, milk, eggs, cheese, and fats (including olive oil and other vegetable oils), “quia dicunt, quod omnia ista sunt quaedam carnes; comedunt autem solum herbas, panem et vinum.” On days of fasting the Church prohibited these foodstuffs “quia habemus exemplum a Christo et Apostolis et a Sanctis Patribus in Thebaide, qui in diebus ieiuniorum ab omni pinguedine et sapido cibo abstinebant ad affligendum et subiiciendum corpus.” But by 1345 the Armenian bishops were writing that oil was not on the list of prohibited foods, and that “de piscibus multi comedunt.” On the other hand, there was no limit on the number of meals that could be eaten during a fast. King Oshin fasted “secundum Ecclesiae Romanae ritum.” CICO VII/2, 65, no. 33; VIII, 134, no. 57; 185, 197, no. 59.

230 The Armenian translation of the Latin Mass attributed to Nerses of Lambron already had the praeparatio ad missam, viz. the prayers said over each of the altar vessels and vestments. Findikyan, “L’Influsso latino,” 342.

231 The previous ordination formula was very similar to the words used in other Oriental Churches: “The grace of God and Heaven, which always provides for the needs of the holy ministry of the Apostolic Church, hereby calls NN from the deaconate to the priesthood of the Holy Church, by the witness given by himself and all the people,” (after the 9th–10th-century rite). After reciting this formula, the bishop laid his right hand on the head of the ordained man and repeated the same words. In 1345 the Armenian Synod claimed that the procedure for the ordination of priests and deacons had been borrowed by Catholicos Nerses Shnorhali from the Roman Rite: “Et haec receperunt patres nostri ab Ecclesia Romana et ad nos sicut pervenit sic facimus et docemus omnes
canon law.\textsuperscript{233} The degrees of ordination were adapted to the Latin tradition, with candidates having a liturgical examination during the ceremony, being dressed in vestments appropriate for the degree of ordination, having their head and forehead anointed, and being given tokens of their ministry (\textit{porrectio instrumentorum}).\textsuperscript{234} Latin preachers delivered sermons in Armenian churches.\textsuperscript{235} The catholicos sent letters to his bishops and priests confirming them in unity with the Roman Church, and made candidates for the priesthood take an oath on the Gospel during the ordination ceremony that they would be faithful both to the pope and to him, in compliance with the arrangements “which the Armenians had promised the Church of Rome.”\textsuperscript{236}

The papacy treated the Armenians on a par with Latin congregations. Clement V and John XXII granted indulgences to Armenian churches – St. Sergius’ in Sis; the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary de Vert in Famagusta, Cyprus; St. Bartholomew’s in Genoa; St. Matthew’s da Porta Sancti Angeli in Perugia; the Church of the Holy Spirit in Bologna; the Church of Our
Lady of Nazareth, Padua; and St. John the Baptist’s in Salerno. The popes put Armenian monasteries on Italian soil under their protection, exempting them from the jurisdiction of the local bishop; they gave their permission for the foundation of Armenian graveyards, and in special circumstances burials of Latin-rite Catholics could be conducted in them. In 1324 John XXII ordered the bishop of Fiesole and the prior of the Dominicans of Florence to stop the Canons of St. Laurence from obstructing John the Armenian from building an oratory and founding a graveyard in Florence. In 1326 he intervened on behalf of the Armenian monks of Padua, who had suffered a lot of offence from the local Knights of St. John. In the same year, in response to a petition lodged by one John, son of Leo, and their companions, Armenians who had purchased a house in the Parish of St. Basil, Parma, the Pope annulled an injunction brought by local Benedictines and allowed the Armenians to erect a chapel and found a graveyard on the property. The Armenian monks of Naples received permission from King Robert (1309–1343), his consort, and the local bishop to build a chapel. In 1328 John XXII gave his consent to the erection of a bell-tower next to it, and the foundation of a graveyard for the burial of the monks. Some Armenian churches were built from funds granted by local municipalities, or received endowments from Latin-rite individuals. The people of Italy were fascinated by Armenian rituals. 

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237 CICO VII/1, 19, no. 13; 24–25, no. 16; 59, no. 35, 63–64, no. 37; VII/2, 8, no. 5; 51, no. 26; 88–89, no. 45; 177–179, no. 90; 198, no. 105; 240–341, no. 129.
238 CICO VII/1, 19, no. 13; 24–25, no. 16, and 63–64, no. 35; V/2, 258, no. 156; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 253 and 256.
239 St. Basil was the patron of this church. Marcus Antonius von den Oudenrijn, Linguae hiacanae scriptores (Bernae apud A. Francke: 1960), 258–259.
240 CICO VII/2, 177–179, no. 90.
241 CICO VII/2, 86–87, no. 44. The Pope made his consent conditional on the opinion of the Bishop of Parma, who apparently said, “quod vicinitas ipsius domus molesta non sit ecclesiae [parrochiali].” The Armenian monks were apparently admitted into the city by Bishop Simon in 1319. The Paduan Knights of St. John held that the Armenian monks did not have the right to preach or celebrate the liturgy for the local people. However, John XXII permitted the Armenian monks to deliver sermons on days when there were no sermons in the local parish churches, and on Saturdays to celebrate the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary for the people, “quam ordinaverunt facere in dicta ipsorum Armenorum ecclesia celebrari.” He also allowed the Confraternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary which was to be set up in the church to meet once a month for Mass, in accordance with the custom of other churches in Padua. CICO VII/2, 177–179, no. 90.
242 CICO VII/2, 197, no. 104; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 262–263.
243 What struck the Florentines attending Armenian ceremonies was the frequency with which the word surb (holy) occurred in Armenian prayers. Francesco Stabili aka Cecco d’Astoli (†1327), one of Dantés adversaries, wrote in his encyclopaedic poem Acerba, “Non come
the ten thousand Christian Roman soldiers said to have been crucified along with their commander Acacius on Mount Ararat.\footnote{Donatella Taverna, “Paolo di Erzerum e la presenza armena ad Asti,” in Roma-Armenia, 228.}

In this period all the Armenian monastic communities observed the reformed Armenian rite and Eastern monastic customs. Hence Armenian monks were referred to as Basilians.\footnote{The so-called Rules of St. Basil were not legislative texts for the systematic regulation of monastic community life, but a collection of ascetic principles giving a general outline of the programme for monastic life. A “rule” of this type was discovered in a manuscript from the turn of the 11th and 12th century in the works of St. Basil in an Armenian codex (ms. 314) in the library of the Mekhitarist monastery on the island of San Lazzaro, Venice; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 260, 262. In the terminology of the pontifical sources dating to this time the phrase \textit{ordo sancti Basilii} does not mean a monastic order in the Western sense, but an Oriental monastic community, such as Greek, Armenian, or other Oriental monks. The Greek Basilian communities resident in Italy were not transformed into an order until 1578, as the Ordo Basilianus Italiae seu Cryptoferratensis; Michaël Wawryk, “Basiliani di S. Giosafat,” in Dizionario degli Istituti di Perfezione, Vol. 1 (Roma: Edizioni Paoline, 1974), 1081–1082.}

In 1312 Clement V reprimanded an overzealous inquisitor, the Dominican Robert de Sancto Valentino, who had assumed that diversity of rite led to diversity of faith and had arrested Leonard, son of Stephen, an Armenian priest and the founder of the Armenian Church at Casale Fasioli in the diocese of Siponto, and had confiscated the church property.\footnote{The Pope observed that the “dicti Armeni … alios ritus habere noscuntur, ritus servabant eorum,” CICO VII/1, 102–103, no. 69.} As a rule disputes between Armenians and the local Latin clergy concerned infringements of parish jurisdiction and the rights of other ecclesiastical institutions. The popes also took Armenian bishops forced to leave their episcopal sees under their protection.\footnote{A Bishop Thomas was staying at the Bologna monastery in 1324; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 256. In 1334, at the request of Arakel (Apostolus), Archbishop of Nikoplis, who had been banished by the Muslims and whose province had been devastated by “enemies of the Cross,” John XXII endowed the petitioner with the livings of the Greek Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary de Furbella in the Diocese of Brindisi; CICO VII/2, 264–265, no. 142. Peter, Archbishop of Jerusalem and Nazareth, and Athanasius, Archbishop of Berrhoë (Aleppo), Syria, arrived in Italy at about this time, CICO VIII, 64–65, nos. 33 and 34. These prelates soon learned the Latin rites and ministered to the local people as well. Archbishop Arakel, who resided in Naples, “latinos clericos ordinat et consecrat ecclesias et altaria latinorum ac etiam pueros baptisatis confert Chrismatis Sacramentum,” CICO VIII, 98–99, no. 45. The same document was re-issued with a false date, 11th March 1322, CICO VII/2, 114–115, no. 57. Armenian prelates who came to Italy were later accused by their adver-}
“the college of poor Armenian clerks” affiliated to the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary de Vert in Famagusta, Cyprus, one-third of the revenues accruing to the city’s Latin Cathedral.248

Undoubtedly the royal authority and the barons did the most to bring the Churches together.249 In 1321 John XXII permitted Catholicos Constantine III to grant the new king, Leo IV, a dispensation from an impediment to marriage on his behalf, and to a strictly limited number of individuals from the royal court and baronage of the kingdom, who had personally applied to the pope for a dispensation, since, they claimed, due to living in the neighbourhood of pagans and schismatics, they had no option but to choose marriage partners from among relatives within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity.250 From this time on the ruling classes applied directly to the Apostolic See for a variety of graces and privileges – dispensations from impediments to marriage, fasts, and privileges of casus reservati absolution for their confessors.251 In 1322 the Prince of Korikos, regent of the kingdom, asked the pope to erect a new Latin diocese in his fiefdom. It was created in 1328.252 In 1320, at the request of the Latin archbishop of Mamistra, the pope

248 CICO VII/2, 11–12, no. 7. This church was founded by Gerard of Ayas, a relative of the Armenian king’s envoy, who was staying in the pontifical curia in 1311; CICO VII/1, 13–14, no. 7. Nicholas, Armenian Archbishop of Cyprus, attended the Synod of Sis in 1307, but his signature is not on the synodal documents. The records of the Synod of Adana do not mention a bishop from Cyprus, either. Balgy, Historia doctrinae, 304. Perhaps the bishops of Cyprus implemented the reforms adopted at the synods at a later time; see CICO IX, 68–70, no. 41. In 1338 Benedict XII commended the Latin Archbishop of Nicosia for his fervour in converting Oriental Christians, including Armenians, “ad ritum, obbedientiam et devotionem sacrosanctae Romanae Ecclesiae,” CICO VIII, 43–44, no. 24.

249 In the opinion of those against union, the King and the barons were not members of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, because they were listening to the advice of other “masters” (viz. the Mendicants) and professed the faith of the Greeks and the Latins; CICO VIII, 131–132, no. 57.

250 CICO VII/2, 85–86, no. 43. Under Roman canon law marriages were prohibited to the fourth degree of consanguinity, and it was the prerogative of the Apostolic See to grant a dispensation “ex plenitudine potestatis.”

251 CICO VII/1, 75–77, nos. 43, 44; VII/2, 50, no. 25; 64–65, no. 33; 82–87, nos. 41–44; 239–240, nos. 128, 128a; VIII, 7, no. 5; 14–16 nos. 9, 9a, 9b; 41–43, nos. 21, 22, 22a, 23.

252 CICO VII/2, 117, no. 59.
transferred the seat of the archdiocese to Ayas and appointed the church used by the Genoese to serve as the cathedral.\footnote{Jean XXII (1316–1334), Vol. 4, no. 16143 (2nd July 1320). However, in 1328 the Pope restored the Archdiocese of Mamistra.} Thus, in the Kingdom of Armenia, alongside the network of Armenian Catholic dioceses, there were also four Latin ecclesiastical entities – two archdioceses and two dioceses – which served the purposes of conciliation.\footnote{In 1345 the Synod of the Armenian Church asserted that “Ecclesia Armenorum, maxime in Cilicia, semper … omnia Sacramenta ab Ecclesia Romana recept et dedit eis, maxime ex tunc, quando iterum in caritate ligata fuit cum dicta Ecclesia; similiter et ab Ecclesia Graecorum Sacramenta accipiebat et ei dabat, quamdui diligebat se mutuo …; tamen Armeni non propter hoc principaliter, quia iudicabant eos [Graecos] Sacramenta Ecclesiae non habere, sed propter invidiam et inimicitiam utriusque;” CICO VIII, No. 59, page 193; “Qui non sunt baptisati, ut sunt cathecumeni Armenorum, si volunt parentes, tunc indifferenter faciunt baptisari in Ecclesia Latinorum sicut Armenorum, quia plures de principibus Armenorum et filiis eorum baptisati sunt secundum consuetudinem Ecclesiae Romanae …, quoniam multi de nobis, qui volunt, indifferenter et cum magna spe communicantur a Latinis sicut a nobis,” CICO VIII, 216, no. 59.} Granting the provision for the new diocese in Ayas in 1328, John XXII ruled that the new bishop was to minister to the Armenians and Latin-rite Catholics living in the city and diocese of Ayas (singulis Armenis et Latinis degentibus in civitate et dioecesi Ayaciensi), but as suffragan to the catholicos of Armenia.\footnote{CICO VII/2, 202–204, no. 108. The Pope asked the Catholicos to put the new bishop under his special care.} However, the Armenian hierarchy began to grow wary and reserved, fearing that their flock might abandon the national rite. The bishops made an effort to ensure that Armenians received the sacraments in their own Church.\footnote{In their response to the allegation that “presbyteri Armenorum prohibent subiectis suis, ne Sacramenta recipient ab aliiis, quam ab Armenis,” the bishops of Armenia gave an evasive answer: “Haec opinio generalis est omnium,” CICO VIII, 133, no. 57; 194, no. 59.} They were rather unwilling to issue their consent for Armenian priests who knew the Latin rite to celebrate Mass in it.\footnote{CICO VIII, 214, no. 59: “quoniam usque in hodiernum diem, qui vult et scit, facit.”} 

Partly under the duress of political expediency and partly out of a genuine conviction it was the right thing to do, the Armenian Church in Cilicia embarked on a fast-rate path of reform which was to integrate it with the Church of Rome. What was certainly needed to accomplish this was time and systematic work to firmly establish Catholic doctrine. However, the process was interrupted in outcome of developments in Greater Armenia, Georgia, and Persia, where a new radical trend arose, undermining the sense of what had been done hitherto.
Catholic missions in Greater Armenia. The reception of Latin theological ideas

By the turn of the centuries the Franciscan and Dominican missions in lands under the Mongol protectorate had made considerable progress. For more efficient management, special missionary organisations were set up in both orders, and were responsible directly to the superiors. At first the Franciscan organisation consisted of the vicariate of the Orient and the vicariate of Aquilonia. The headquarters of the latter were in Caffa, catering for missionary outposts in Golden Horde (Kipchak) territories, referred to as *Tartaria Aquilonaris* in official documents. It was subdivided into two custodies, Saray and Khazaria (*Gazaria*, viz. Crimea). The seat of the vicariate of the Orient was at Pera near Constantinople and all the Franciscan missions in the Byzantine Empire and Persia under Mongol rule (*Tartaria Orientalis*) were subordinated to it. Its custodies were at Pera, Trebizond, and Tabriz. There was also a vicariate of Cathay, established around 1320–1330, for territories from the Caspian Sea through Turkestan to China.258

Around 1304 the Dominicans established an organisation which later acquired the official name *Societas Fratum Peregrinantium propter Christum inter gentes* (the Congregation of Friars Pilgrims). Its base was in two convents in the Genoese colonies of Pera and Caffa, subsequently joined by the Dominican monasteries in Trebizond and Chios. After some time the *Societas* was split up into the vicariates of Romania (for the Byzantine Empire), Gazaria (Golden Horde territories), Armenia, Georgia, and Tartary (Persia). The head of the *Societas* was its vicar general, who was the plenipotentiary of the minister general of the Order in missionary lands. In the event of his death the Friars Pilgrims could elect a successor from among their number. The powers of the vicar general did not expire on the death of the general of the Order, and he held the right to admit and dismiss Dominicans working in the missions.259

The missionaries of both Orders received extensive privileges normally held

258 Contrary to the opinion of R. Loenerts, it should be assumed that in the mid-14th century these vicariates were amalgamated and put under the authority of a single vicar general. In 1379 the Pope appointed the Franciscan Guillaume du Pré Metropolitan of China and Vicar of Cathay, and titled him “dux et gubernator fratum ad terras Saracenorum, Ruthenorum, etc. aliarumque nationum non credentium Orientis et Aquilonis destinatarum, nec non vicarius generalis ministri generalis sui ordinis,” BPol, 2, no. 1658; Loenertz, *La Société des Frères Pérégrinants*, 6, 20, 89; Richard, *La papauté*, 128–130, 154.

only by the pope and bishops, as well as the right to conduct the pastoral ministry, to which the Latin Church owed its existence and development in the East, even though there was no diocesan clergy to run parishes. Outwardly the Mendicant missionaries in the East differed from their Western confreres by their beards, an Oriental monastic custom which they adopted.

The progress made by Catholic missions on territories under Mongol rule encouraged the Apostolic See to establish a Latin episcopacy there. Clement V initiated this policy in 1307 by erecting a Latin metropolitan see at Khanbalyk (Beijing). At first its jurisdiction covered all the lands conquered by the Mongols. Its first metropolitan archbishop was the Franciscan Giovanni da Montecorvino, who was not consecrated until 1318. His chief activity was conducting the pastoral ministry to Armenians in China on commercial business or deported by the Mongols. A rich Armenian lady founded a huge Catholic church and Franciscan monastery at Ts’itian chou (Zayton) on the Pacific coast, while other Armenians founded a Latin cathedral in Beijing.260

With time new bishoprics sprang up on the vast expanses of the Mongol Empire, and incumbents were appointed to them at the metropolitan’s discretion. The first suffragan diocese was at Caffa on Golden Horde territory. Latin bishops followed the Eastern practice and resided in monasteries. It soon turned out, however, that a single metropolitan was not enough to cater for the needs for the briskly growing Church. In 1318 Pope John XXII founded a second metropolitan see at Sultaniya (Sultaniyeh), for Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Persia, Turkestan, India, and Ethiopia. Four of its suffragan dioceses, Sebastia in Cappadocia, Tabriz, Dehikerkan, and Maragha (Maragheh) – were on the trade route from the port of Ayas in Cilician Armenia and from the Black Sea coasts to the capital of Mongol Persia.261 Franciscans were appointed to dioceses in the metropolitan see of Khanbalyk, and Dominicans to those under Sultaniya,262 the first bishop of which was Franco of Perugia, vicar general of the Dominican Societas.263 The papacy still hoped the lords of the Golden Horde, the ilkhans of Persia, other khans, especially the great khans, would convert to Christianity.

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261 Until 1305 the headquarters of the ilkhanate were at Tabriz. It was not until the times of Öljeytū that a new capital, Sultaniya, was set up and in 1317 (under Ilkhan Abu Said) became the main Mongol centre in Persia. Loenertz, *La Société des Frères Pèlerins*, 152; Fedalto, *La Chiesa latina*, Vol. 1, 471–500.


However, the political situation in the Ilkhanate of Persia and on the territories of the Golden Horde was becoming complicated. When the khans embraced Islam conditions for Christians suddenly deteriorated. Worst off were the members of the Eastern Churches: they were made to pay new taxes and wear symbols of disgrace to distinguish them from Muslims, who could finally take their revenge for a century of humiliation. There were incidents of the devastation of churches, the destruction and looting of their furnishings, and persecution of the clergy. The Mongol authorities tried to stop violent outbursts of hatred, but the renowned *pax Mongolica* was receding into the past. All the Christians could count on was the care of their own princes, or the grace and favour of the local Muslim lords. Unlike their Eastern brethren, Western Christians were in a better situation. In 1320 Ilkhan Abu Said put the churches of the “Latin friars” under his protection, and the archbishop of Sultaniya was treated as the pope’s representative at the Persian court. Plans for joint crusades, usually against Egypt, worked to the advantage of this policy.\(^{264}\) It was a similar story on territories under the Golden Horde. Although Uzbeq Khan was a Muslim by genuine conviction, nonetheless he put the Western missions under his care, allowed the use of church bells etc.\(^{265}\) These circumstances were auspicious for the Franciscan and Dominican missionaries and in the eyes of local Christians raised the prestige of their head, at that time resident in Avignon.

The creation of new Latin metropolitan sees and bishoprics in the East coincided with the unionist synods of the Armenian Church in Cilicia. It could hardly have been a coincidence that they were attended by Armenian bishops from the territories where the Mendicants were conducting missionary operations.\(^ {266}\) The Franciscans and Dominicans were most certainly encouraging the Armenian bishops to embrace union with Rome. Persuading Bishop Zachary Manuelian,


\(^{265}\) In 1321 the Pope wrote to Khan Uzbek asking him to restore the right of Christians to use church bells, as the Khan had promised in 1314. In 1323 the Pope commended the Khan for his policy of toleration of Christians living on territories under the Kipchak Horde, and asking him to protect the Dominican and Franciscan missions. He also tried to persuade the Khan to allow Christians to return to Soldaya, to have the churches the Muslims had confiscated restored, and to be allowed to use church bells. About the same time he appealed to Khan Abushka, the only royal sibling who was still a Christian, to protect his co-religionists and spread the Christian faith among his Tartar subjects, encouraging him to work for their conversion and granting him personal indulgences which could be accrued by attending Mass or praying in church in a state of grace. *Bullarium franciscanum*, ed. Conradus Eubel, Vol. 5 (Romae: Typis Vaticanis, 1898), 318; CICO VII/2, 103–104, no. 53; 113–114, no. 56; 145–146, no. 74; Richard, *La papauté*, 158.

\(^{266}\) Balgy, *Historia doctrinae*, 311, 333.
who resided in the Monastery of St. Thaddaeus near Maku in the Canton of Artaz, Eastern Vaspurakan, was a tremendous success for the Franciscans.\textsuperscript{267} In view of the overt hostility of the local bishops to the new Cilician policy, the catholicos appointed Zachary his exarch for Greater Armenia and awarded him the archbishop's title.\textsuperscript{268} According to tradition the Monastery of St. Thaddaeus, referred to as the Black Church (Karakilise, Garakilsë, Caraclesia),\textsuperscript{269} which had been raised over the Apostle's tomb, on the site where St. Gregory the Illuminator had been conceived, was renowned and respected. There was a variapets' college and scriptorium on the premises.\textsuperscript{270} The local bishop – the archbishop of Artaz – used the title “Archbishop of St. Thaddaeus.”\textsuperscript{271} Quite soon Franciscans arrived and settled there.\textsuperscript{272} In 1319 an earthquake devastated the monastery, and presumably this was the reason why most of the monks moved for a time to the Monastery of the Holy Mother of God at Tsoros.\textsuperscript{273} Thanks to the Franciscans a vibrant pro-Latin faction emerged in this community.\textsuperscript{274} The Franciscans won the support of local Armenian prelates of Saray, Bishop Stephen, Archbishop of


\textsuperscript{268} Zachary was titled Archbishop, albeit his diocese was an ordinary bishopric. Even the anti-Latinist polemicist John Orbelian called Zachary the Catholicos' Exarch (hovowapet; ἐκ'sarxos). Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs et dominicains d'Arménie,” OC 40 (1956): 101; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 23–24.


\textsuperscript{271} Pelliot, “Zacharie de Saint-Thaddée,” 151–154.

\textsuperscript{272} Caraclesia is mentioned on a pre-1318 list of monastic houses in the Mongol Empire of Persia. Golubovich, Biblioteca bio-bibliografica, Vol. 2, s. 72–73; Vol. 3, s. 371; Loenertz, La Société des Frères Pérégrinants, s. 189–190; Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, Vol. 1, 422; Richard, La papauté, 170, 171, 204, 205.

\textsuperscript{273} This monastery was founded in the 10th century. It is continually mentioned in 14th–17th–century sources. Thierry, Répertoire, 161, no. 904. Many historians have misidentified the convent at Tsoros as St. Thaddaeus' Convent. For its diverse potential locations, see Richard, La papauté, 205, note 141.

\textsuperscript{274} According to Galano (Conciliationis ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana, Romae 1690, Vol. 3, 471–507), Zachary and one of the local monks, John of Erzincan, attended the Synond of
Solkhat Arakel, and other Crimean churchmen for the union. This group took an oath that they would be faithful to the pope and the Catholic faith “truly professed and faithfully taught and preached by the most Holy Mother Church of Rome (quam veraciter tenet, fideliter docet et praedicat sacrosancta Romana Mater Ecclesia).” This success was largely due to the efforts of Jerome of Catalonia, the first Latin bishop of Caffa, a city which at the time was one of the main trading emporia and stopping points on the road to the Far East. Armenians had taken part in the building of Caffa’s defence walls, and in 1316 its Armenian bishop founded a water supply system which would serve the entire city for a long time to come. In the same year the authorities of Genoa designated Caffa’s eastern quarter beyond the walls as a residential area for Armenians and other Christians. By this time the Armenians already had three churches in Caffa, including one on the area within the municipal fortifications.

The unionist movement evoked strong protest from the traditionalists. In 1321 John Orbelian, bishop of Syunik, sent a letter to Zachary Manuelian criticising the changes introduced at the unionist synods and accused him of

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275 The Pope gave them an extensive exposition on the Latin symbolism of commixtio, quoting the Scriptures to back up his arguments: “aqua namque non solum sordes carnis abluit et emundat, verum etiam juncta vino reificet et confortat, ut sic aqua praedicta accepta per se baptismum significat, permixta vero sanguini Sacramentum,” CICO VII/2, 16–17, no. 10.


277 The Latin diocese of Caffa was erected in 1318 by John XXII, who acknowledged the local colony of Genoese, Venetians, Pisans, and other Latin Christians, as a city. The borders of the new diocese were to extend from Varna in the west to Sarai on the Volga in the east, and in the south from the Black Sea, up to the borders of Rus’ in the north. Jerome had already been consecrated a bishop “absque titulo alicuius ecclesiae,” and sent out “ad partes Tartarorum.” He was working efficaciously among the Tartars of the Golden Horde, and the conversion of Abushka, son of Khan Tokhta, and his family, is attributed to him. He had been acting as Bishop of Caffa already in 1317, but it was not until the following year that the Pope formally appointed him to the see. CICO VII/2, 12–13, no. 8; 103–104, no. 53; Golubovich, Biblioteca bio-bibliografica, Vol. 3, 172; Richard (La papauté, 159) has even speculated that Jerome’s appointment might have ensued on consultation with Arakel, who was regarded as a Catholic archbishop. However, I do not think this very likely.


Soon afterwards a battle started for the Armenian bishoprics. In Saray Bishop Paul (Boghos) and his adherents assisted by Muslim Tartars expelled Bishop Stephen for accepting the synodal reforms. A similar struggle ensued in Crimea. Bishop Arakel found himself under attack for the same reason from Bishop Thaddaeus of Caffa. But there was another motive behind this conflict. The Armenian diocese of Caffa was beginning to rival Solkhat and infringing its jurisdiction. As Arakel had accepted union with Rome and taken the oath of obedience to the pope, Thaddaeus persecuted any of his compatriots inclined to follow his rival’s example. In 1323 Franciscans on territories under the Kipchak Horde were complaining that “schismatics and heretics” were the biggest obstacle to their missionary work. Disputes with the opponents of union were going on in many places. In Tabriz, where both Mendicant Orders had monasteries, Franciscans as well as Dominicans were deeply involved in the debate. In 1321 the city’s Latin bishop, the Dominican Bartolomeo Abagliati of Siena, was engaged in disputation on the issue with the Armenian bishop Matthew and his *vardapets*.  

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280 Oghlukian, *Altarmenische Aussagen*, 129, 205. A note on Catholicos Constantine’s betrayal of the traditions and faith of the fathers in the times when the province was governed by Baron John Orbelian was also recorded in the colophon to one of the gospel books copied at Syunik in 1310. *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts*, 56.

281 *Bullarium Franciscanum*, Vol. 5, 445; CICO VII/2, 100, no. 50. Contrary to the way the conflict has been presented hitherto, as a clash between the Armenian and the Latin bishops (and the Franciscans), J. Richard (La papauté, 159) claims that both bishops were of Armenian origin. He is certainly right. The papal bull describing the conflict says, “Dilectis filiis populo Armenorum per Saraicensem civitatem et dioecesim constitutis”. The Pope ordered the Armenians to restore the banished Bishop Stephen “tamquam patrem et pastorem animarum vestrarum. ” Moreover, he observed that his deposition had been done non sine … Ecclesiae Romanae contemptu.” In other words, Stephen must have recognised the authority of the Apostolic See. However, we cannot rule out that Stephen was the “intruder” who had tried to depose the previous bishop. Paul had already become archbishop by 1319. A year later Stephen, the bishop who had been ousted from Sebastia and lived for a time at Sis in Cilicia, was back in the area. Perhaps he was Paul’s rival later on in Tartary. CICO VII/2, 101–102, no. 51; Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica*, Vol. 3, 44, 223–224; Vol. 5, 69; Fedalto, *La Chiesa latina*, 1, 443, 457; *Svod armianskikh*, 61–62, no. 3; 63–65, no. 4.

282 Arakel was mentioned in 1316. *Svod armianskikh*, 59, no. 2.

283 “Licet igitur ille perditionis filius Thaddaeus nomine, ab Ecclesiae unitate discendens, per quendam suum Catholicon, contra sanctiones canonicas et Legis divinae praecepta se procuravit in episcopum promoveri, adversus te et nonulos alios partium ipsarum fideles gravia scandala […] suscitavit,” CICO VII/2, 99, no. 49 (22 XI 1321).

284 Richard, La papauté, 91–92.

285 There was a Latin community at Tabriz, consisting of about a thousand, mostly converts from Eastern Orthodoxy, already by the beginning of the 14th century. Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,”
Notified of such incidents by the missionaries, Pope John XXII did all he could to help the bishops loyal to the union. In a letter to Arakel he encouraged him to persevere and sent him detailed instructions on what to do on the most sensitive issues ruled on at recent synods in Cilicia.\(^{286}\) In another letter he asked the Armenians of Saray to restore the bishop who had been driven out and compensate him for the damage done to him, adding words of encouragement.\(^{287}\) In 1321 he consoled the persecuted Armenian monks of the Monastery of St. Thaddaeus, and the Christians of Tabriz, Sultaniya, Maragha, Dehikerkan, Salmas, Tbilisi, and other places in the Ilkhanate of Persia who had suffered for their faith, granting indulgences both to them and to those who were bringing others to religious union.\(^{288}\) In letters conveyed by Peter de Turre, vicar of the Franciscans, and James de Camerino, custodian of Tabriz, John XXII addressed Archbishop Zachary Manuelian, endorsing the reforms he had carried out and giving him instructions on how to administer the Sacraments of Confirmation and Extreme Unction, and how to bless the holy oil.\(^{289}\) He also enhanced his status in Greater Armenia by granting him the power to dismiss bishops who had illegitimately acquired ecclesiastical offices and re-consecrate those whose ordinations or consecrations had been invalid. These were the same prerogatives that the Dominican vicars and the Franciscan custodian enjoyed.\(^{290}\) In letters addressed to practically all the dissenting bishops, including the catholicoi of Aghmatar and Albania, the pope wrote of the need to accept the synodal reforms. Deploiring the schism in the Armenian Church in Persia, he recommended the Franciscan missionaries and their qualifications as counsellors, asking his addressees to take them under their care and protection.\(^{291}\) The list of his Armenian addressees shows that the pope was very well informed on the religious situation in the region and its topography. He also wrote to the local Christian princes, the king of Georgia and his vassals, not forgetting about Yesaia Nchetsi, the master of Gladzor.\(^{292}\)

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286 CICO VII/2, 105–107, no. 54.
287 CICO VII/2, 100–102, nos. 50, 51.
288 CICO VII/2, 102–103, no. 52.
289 CICO VII/2, 105–107, no. 54.
291 CICO VII/2, 110, no. 55: “nequaquam sine dolore possimus intueri a tanti capitis corpore membra quaedam esse divisa, videlicet Armenorum Orientis Ecclesiam; seiuncta nempe per inobedientiam a suo capite spirituali, corporis sanctificationi nequaquam participiat, cum ab eius se subtraxerit unitate.”
292 CICO VII/2, 89–92, no. 46. Peter Cowe, “The Role of Correspondence in Elucidating the Intensification of Latin-Armenian Ecclesiastical Interchange in the First Quarter of the
Many of the Franciscan and Dominican undertakings proved successful. The Dominicans of Caffa were so effective in their efforts to persuade the Armenian Bishop Thaddeus that eventually he entered the Order and left for Avignon, where he was styled *episcopus Caffensis de Ermenis* (Armenian bishop of Caffa). However, we do not know how long he managed to stay in this office. In 1329 another Armenian bishop, Paul (Boghos) of Saray, acceded to the union thanks to the efforts of the Dominicans. Not all the Armenian bishoprics which joined the union appear to have persisted in it. The Armenians were so strongly attached to their traditions that often the successors of unionist bishops reverted to their old customs.

Realising that the catholicos was not managing to persuade the bishops of Greater Armenia, the pope decided to make use of the Latin hierarchs in the dominions of the ilkhans. In 1323, following the resignation of Franco of Perugia, the Dominican William Adam, who had been working on the missions in Persia for some time already, was appointed archbishop of Sultaniya. John XXII wrote letters to the Armenian king and catholicos to support the new prelate’s efforts to convert the Armenians of the East. He was quite explicit that although they were subject to the jurisdiction of the catholicos of Cilicia, they had fallen away from the teachings of the Roman Church. The pope asked the Catholic lords of Cilician Armenia to send envoys accompanying the new archbishop to the Armenians of the Persian Empire. Their task would be to make sure he was properly received by the Armenians in Persia, and to get them to abandon their errors and embrace the true Roman faith.

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293 On his way back to Caffa after leaving Avignon, Thaddeus stopped for a considerable time in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia. It is very likely that he taught Latin in the school at Ayas. In 1326–1328 he was back again in Avignon, as the envoy of the King of Armenia. In 1326 he received an indult from the Pope for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In 1328, on a petition lodged by Oshin, Duke of Korykos, the Pope appointed Thaddeus bishop of that city. In 1332 Thaddeus was at Sis in Cilician Armenia, and there “sedens pro tribunali” he made a Latin translation of the chrysobull issued by Leo IV, King of Armenia, for the Sicilians, and dictated the translation to the notary Deotisalvi in the presence of three witnesses, one of whom was Bernard, Bishop of Dehikerkan. Jean Richard, *La diplomatique royale dans les royaume d’Arménie et de Chypre (XIIe–XVe siècle)* (Paris, Genève: Droz, 1986), 73; Richard (“Deux évêques dominicains, agents de l’Union arménienne au Moyen-Age,” *AFP* 19 (1949): 262–264) inferred that at Avignon Thaddeus must have been promised the succession of the bishopric of Caffa. He was appointed to the see in 1334, after the death of the next but one incumbent, the Dominican Matteo of Cortona.

294 In 1329 the Pope commended Paul, Bishop of the Armenians “in imperio Tartarorum Iusbect,” for acceding to the Union. CICO VII/2, no. 210, no. 112.

295 CICO VII/2, 136–136, no. 71. Papal bulls were despatched to King Leo IV and Catholicos Constantine of Lambron (1322–1326).
However, William Adam was not installed, because in the following year he was appointed archbishop of Antivari in Dalmatia.296

With some bishops embracing the unionist reforms and others rejecting them outright, and with bishoprics passing from one incumbent to another against a background of scandal, gradually the Mendicants, particularly the Dominicans, started to be tired and distrustful of the Armenian hierarchy. The only remedy seemed to be the creation of Latin communities genuinely devoted to the Catholic religion. This could be achieved by a broader knowledge of Latin, at least for the works of Western scholastic philosophy and theology. In June 1318 John XXII asked the king of Armenia to provide premises for a Dominican school in the port of Ayas where young Armenians could learn Latin, the arts and sciences, and theology.297 Already by 1321 there were teachers of Armenian in the curia of Avignon – a sign of the Apostolic See's new policy on the Armenian missions.298 After the collapse of the plans connected with the Mongols the missionary activities pursued by the Latin Church switched their focus to the Eastern Christians. Franciscans settled in the Monastery of St. Thaddaeus and took over the management of the school of philosophy and theology. The archbishop himself attended their lectures.299 They launched similar operations in Tabriz and Salmas. They were seconded by the Dominicans, who were working in the same area, especially at Sultaniya, Tabriz, Dehikerkan, and Sebastia, in monasteries in which Latin bishops resided. Classes were conducted according to the Western manner and so great was the interest in them that Armenian monks from diverse monasteries, including Gladzor, which was hostile to the union, flocked in

296 Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, 2, 211.
297 CICO VII/2, 27, no. 15: “Quocirca Serenitatem tuam rogamus ... ut certa loca in regno tuo et praecipue civitas Aleassii, predictis Dei famulis assignetur, in quibus ... confluentem plebem instruire et latini sermonis copiam valeant ministrare.” In 1332 one of the Dominicans wrote in his report to the King of France, “Ces Armenins de la Basse Armenian, ... ont reçu la couronne et le nom royal des Pappes de Romme et des Empereurs. Et lors, en signe de subjection, par pacte et par convenance ... et [ils] ont promis que leurs enfants apprendront nos lettres latinez,” Brocardus, “Directorium ad passagium faciendum, ” in In RHC Doc. Arm. II, 488. Perhaps the writer of this account was Gillaume Adam, later Bishop of Sultaniya. Peter Hälter, Das Papsttum und die Armenier im frühen und hohen Mittelalter. Von den ersten Kontakten bis zur Fixierung der Kirchenunion im Jahre 1198 (Köln: Böhlaü, 1996), 212.
298 Richard, La papauté, 207.
299 In the Mekhitarist Library in Venice there is a manuscript (no. 248) written by an Armenian monk called Israyel with the notes he took down during a series of lectures delivered by Franciscans in 1327. Israyel was a member of the community of monks of St. Thaddaeus' Monastery named in letter from the Pope in 1321. Golubovich, Biblioteca bio-bibliografica, Vol. 3, 217; Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 40 (1956): 112; 42 (1958): 133; Oudenrijn, Linguæ, 125.
to attend. The result was that many of Yesaia Nchetsi’s students eventually became Franciscans or Dominicans. The Franciscan and Dominican missions also conducted a campaign targeted at the local Armenian laity, both lords and ordinary people.

A series of translation projects started on a scale reminiscent of the Early Christian translations into Armenian. The pioneering effort came from the Monastery of St. Thaddeaeus in Artaz. Following a suggestion from Pope John XXII, Archbishop Zachary Manuelian and John of Yerznka translated an abridged version of Thomas Aquinas’ commentary to Book IV of Peter Lombard’s Sententiae (on the Sacraments) into Armenian, for use in polemic with the traditionalists. According to the translator, from this book you could draw “the mystical and pure teaching of the Holy Church on the Sacraments – Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist … presented clearly and logically.” The translation aroused so much interest that it was copied even in St. Stephen’s Monastery at Gladzor. This translation centre continued its work after 1330, when the Franciscan Pontius who had arrived from Europe, and the translator Israyel translated Nicholas of Lira’s commentaries to the Gospel of St. John and St. Paul’s Epistles to the Hebrews. In 1339 Pontius translated St. Bonaventure’s Life of St. Francis of Assisi into Armenian. The school attached to the Monastery of St. Thaddeaeus developed a sort of blend of Latin ideas with the Armenian tradition.

The Dominicans followed a more radical path. In 1328 John, abbot (archnord) of the Armenian Monastery at Krna and a group of monks paid a visit to the Catholic missionaries in Maragha. John had been educated at Gladzor by the renowned vardapet Yesaia. On arrival at Maragha he contacted the Dominican Bartolomeo de Podio (Poggio), the Latin bishop of the city. They conversed in Persian, as Bartolomeo knew no Armenian, and John knew no Latin. However, they learned each other's language, and John also studied Latin

301 Oudenrijn, Linguae, 184.
304 This monastery was situated on a mountain near a place of the same name, in the Canton of Yernjak, with a river of the same name which drained into the Arax. The Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary had been founded around 1325 by John’s uncle, George (Gorg) and his wife Eltik. Thierry, Répertoire, 147, no. 828. By the 15th century an Armenian Uniate tradition had developed attributing the initiative behind John’s voyage from Krna to Maragha to the vardapet Yesaia Nchetsi, though this story was at variance with the historical facts. Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 40 (1956): 98, 104–105; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 25.
theology. Meanwhile Bishop Bartolomeo compiled a collection of sermons, which were then translated into Armenian by John’s companion James, who was known as the Targman (translator). Encouraged by the prospect of missionary work among the Armenians, Bishop Bartolomeo left Maragha and went with John to Krna beyond the Arax, where he spent the rest of his life in the company of a group of Dominicans, John of Swinford, Peter of Aragon, and John of Florence, and numerous Armenian vardapets.

Having settled in the monastery, Bishop Bartolomeo and Abbot John of Krna drafted a letter inviting local monks and vardapets to a conference on union with the Church of Rome. It went on for nearly a month in 1330, and its outcome was that a considerable number of the local monasteries acceded to the union. As soon as the conference was over John left for Avignon to present a project for the foundation of a new congregation to the pope. Its aim would be to bring the entire Armenian Church into the union. In 1331 the

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305 Oudenrijn (“Uniteurs,” 42 (1958): 111–112) conjectured that Maragha was the place where a set of minor works which occur among the sermons in some copies of the Karozgirk were translated. The Book on Hell and Liber iudicorum, a short treatise on the judgement of individuals after death and the Last Judgement, are also believed to have been translated here. The Karozgirk is one of the original translations done at Krna in 1330–1333. It was probably the first translation done by James the Targman (1331), whose work in translation may be followed for the period from 1333 to 1347. The Armenian translation of the book of homilies contained an exhortation reinforced with a curse on those who failed to comply, prohibiting making it accessible to impostors passing themselves off as Uniates. For there had been instances of anti-unionists exploiting the words of the missionaries against the doctrine they preached. Matenadaran (Yerevan), ms. 2185, fol. 57v.; cf. Oudenrijn, Linguae, 25–26; Oghlukian, Altarmenische Aussagen, 127. There was a “drogomanus curie qui recitavit de lingua armena ad latinum” at the royal court in Cilicia. Richard, La diplomatique, 72.

306 We cannot rule out that the reason why Bartolomeo left his bishopric was the hostile attitude of Beshken Orbelian, son of Burtel, a relative of the Bishop of Syunik. Beshken was in the service of the ilkhans, stationed in the environs of Ortubazar near Maragha, where the Mongol army was stationed. Roma-Armenia, 179; Levon O. Babayan, Sotsial’no-ekonomicheskaia i politicheskaia istoriia Armenii v XIII–XIV vekakh (Moskva: Nauka, 1969), 182–183.


308 On the basis of John’s letter (Conciliatio, 519) Galano gives the names of those who attended the conference of vardapets at Krna. All of them were alumni of Gladzor and John’s former schoolmates. According to the letter many more vardapets, whose names were “inscribed in the Book of Life” took part in the discussions than the number listed by Galano. They, their convents and provinces acceded to the Union. Mkhitarich of Aparan, a later Uniate writer, regarded the conference as a church synod. Apparently 500 priests and religious, as well as many laymen, joined the movement. Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 40 (1956): 110–111; 42 (1958): 110. The reply given by the school at Gladzor to the invitation to the conference of Armenian vardapets has survived. Oudenrijn, Linguae, 22.

monks and superior of Krna offered their monastery to the Dominicans, and many of them took the Dominican habit.\textsuperscript{310} The rule of St. Augustine and the constitutions of the Dominican Order,\textsuperscript{311} and diverse works by Bishop Bartolomeo were translated into Armenian.\textsuperscript{312} Even though the Dominicans did not take over the monastery completely, the monks of Krna found themselves under their control. They learned Latin, and reciprocated by teaching the Dominicans John of Swinford and Peter of Aragon Armenian.\textsuperscript{313} The setting up of the new congregation took a long time, as Bishop Bartolomeo was busy organising courses of study in philosophy and theology, no doubt inspired by the example of the Franciscans of Artaz. To help the Armenian monks acquire the Western intellectual outlook, the principal 13th-century scholastic works, mostly by Dominican authors, were translated, on subjects such as dogmatic and moral theology, biblical exegetics, apologetics, homiletics, liturgics, and Aristotelian philosophy. Bishop Bartolomeo wrote more treatises: \textit{Liber de Verbo incarnato}, \textit{Liber de duabus naturis et de una persona in Christo}, \textit{Expositiones dominicae}, \textit{Interpretatio salutationis angelicae}, \textit{De inferno}, \textit{De paradiso}, \textit{Liber de resurrectione Christi}, \textit{Liber de communi resurrectione}, \textit{Liber de amore}, \textit{Questions Orosii et responsa S. Augustini}, and \textit{Liber seu sermo de

\textsuperscript{310} Oudenrijn, \textit{Linguae}, 24–25.


\textsuperscript{312} In Oudenrijn’s opinion (“Uniteurs,” 40 (1956): 96), Bartolomeo’s treatises were translated at the time when he was still active as a leader in Western Europe in 1330–1333, for use in the school of philosophy and theology then being set up at Krna. The works involved were Bartolomeo’s \textit{Dialectics} and commentaries to the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis (\textit{Hexameron – Operae sex dierum}). Some historians write that a translation was made of the Vulgate as well, but in fact this version of the Bible was never translated into Armenian. The reason for this misunderstanding was probably a misinterpretation of Galan’s Armenian text, which spoke of the translation of “surb grots”, i.e. “sacrorum librorum”, which need not have referred to the Bible; Oudenrijn (“Uniteurs,” 40 (1956): 110). One of the earliest texts to be translated at Krna (apart from the above-mentioned) was the compilation of Latin canon law in five books, \textit{Iudiciorum liber compilatus iuxta canones Ecclesiae Romanae}, translated by James the Targman with the co-operation of Peter of Aragon. Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 42 (1958): 111–115; Oudenrijn, \textit{Linguae}, 26, 200.

\textsuperscript{313} John the “Englishman” belonged to the English province of the Dominican Order, but in fact he was an Irishman. He composed several treatises in the Thomist spirit on philosophy and theology, which were subsequently translated into Armenian and must have enjoyed a considerable amount of success in Armenia, if a substantial number of manuscripts with them have survived in Armenian collections. In one of the Armenian colophons Peter of Aragon is referred to as a “Dalmatian,” which in the Armenian tradition meant the same as “Latinus.” There is no doubt about his Spanish origin. Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 40 (1956): 110; 42 (1958): 110–111; Oudenrijn, \textit{Linguae}, 26; Oudenrijn, \textit{Der Traktat von der Tugenden der Seele: Ein armenisches Exzerpt aus der Prima secundae der Summa Theologica des hl. Thomas von Aquin} (Freiburg: Kommissionsverlag, Libraire de l’Université, 1942).
The work did not stop with his death in 1333. John of Krna came to love studying and made considerable progress. For the rest of his life he continued to translate from Latin into Armenian and encouraged others to do likewise.

Bartolomeo’s work was continued by John of Swinford and Peter of Aragon, who had made good progress in learning Armenian. In 1334 Peter of Aragon wrote a treatise on the seven deadly sins, which Sarkis Vashents translated. In 1337 three of John’s treatises were translated. They were based on St. Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa theologica* and were on the soul and its properties (*De anima eiusque facultatibus*), the virtues (*De virtutibus animae*), and the nature of angels (*De natura angelorum*). In the same year the Armenian James the Targman and Peter of Aragon completed their joint project to translate the Dominican missal and office. 1339 saw the translation of three of Peter’s treatises, on the virtues (*Liber de virtutibus*), a small treatise on the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*), and on the eight Beatitudes (*De octo beatitudinibus*). In 1340 a treatise on the vices (*Liber de vitiis*) appeared as a supplement to the treatise on the virtues. Both were based on *Summa de virtutibus et vitiis* by the French Dominican Guillaume Perald and had a good reception, also by anti-unionists. Translations of two short treatises, on the control of the five senses (*De quinque sensuum custodia*) and the tongue (*De custodia linguae*), appeared in the same year, along with a compilation on the Ten Commandments (*Compilatio de decem praeceptis*). In 1344 Peter of Aragon and James the Targman completed the translation of the handbook of theology *Compendium theologicae veritatis* attributed both in the West and in Armenia to Albert the Great, but in fact by Hugh Ripelin of Strasbourg.

In the same year a couple of textbooks were issued for lectures and the study of philosophy. First there was a grammar book by John of Krna, or more properly a commentary to the Old Armenian translation of Dionysius

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316 Oudenrijn, *Der Traktat*.
Thrax, compiled using examples from Armenian and Latin authors. One of the manuscripts containing this treatise, now no. 293 in the Mekhitarist Library in Vienna, was supplemented with a number of other works – the Old Armenian translation of Porphyry’s *Isagoge* and Aristotle’s *Categories*, both with commentaries by Peter of Aragon;\(^{319}\) a brief treatise attributed to Gilbert de la Porre entitled *De sex principiis*, with a commentary; and finally Aristotle’s *Peri hermeneias* with a commentary by Peter of Aragon. This manuscript also contains Bishop Bartolomeo’s *Dialectics, Definitiones* by David the Invincible, and an Old Armenian translation of the treatise *Omnia mala*.\(^{320}\) This codex gives us an idea of the subjects taught during the philosophy course at Krna. It started with Dionysius Thrax’s *Techne Grammatike* (with a commentary by John of Krna) and Bartolomeo’s *Dialectics*,\(^{321}\) followed by a study of Aristotle, for which there were already Old Armenian commentaries available. Gilbert’s treatise *De sex principiis*, on the last six Aristotelian categories, was covered in connection with them; and followed by the compilations *De anima eiusque facultatibus* and *De virtutibus animae* by John of Swinford.\(^{322}\) Moral theology was taught on the basis of *Liber de virtutibus* and *Liber de vitis*, the compilations made by Peter of Aragon, and *Compendium theologicae veritatis* by Hugo of Strasburg was used for dogmatic theology (in the modern sense of the term).

The works of St. Thomas Aquinas were to be used for an in-depth course of theology, for which Books One and Two of the third part of the *Summa Theologica* (De incarnatione Christi, and de sacramentis et de virtutibus animae) were translated in 1344 and 1347 respectively.\(^{323}\) The translation of this part of Aquinas, with his presentation of Christology and teach-

\(^{319}\) *Compilatio brevis in Porphyrii Isagogen; Brevis explicatio Categoriarum Aristotelis*; Oudenrijn, *Linguae*, 200.


\(^{321}\) This work was a compilation from the *Summulae logicales* by Peter the Spaniard. Oudenrijn, *Linguae*, 188.

\(^{322}\) Oudenrijn, *Linguae*, 27.

\(^{323}\) Oudenrijn, *Eine alte armenische Übersetzung der Tertia Pars der Theologischen Summa des hl. Thomas von Aquin* (Bern: A. Francke, 1954). According to some authors, the *Summa Philosophica* was translated as well. The work was certainly known at Krna: Peter of Aragon made use of it in his writings. Parts One and Two of the *Summa Theologiae* were known as well; evidence of this is to be found in Bishop Bartolomeo’s collection of sermons. John of Swinford used Part One in his treatise on the nature of angels. However, neither the *Summa Philosophica* nor the first two parts of the *Summa Theologiae* had been translated into Armenian before the Black Death epidemic of 1347, and therefore there were never any Armenian translations of these works. Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 42 (1958): 122.
ing on the Sacraments, was of tremendous importance for the debate with anti-unionists, for which the Order’s young students had to be well prepared. The translation of Aquinas’ Book Two was appended with a translation of the *Supplementum* attributed to him, in what was one of the earliest signs of the existence of this additional work. Bishop Bartolomeo’s *De opere sex dierum*, a scholastic discourse on the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis, his treatises on heaven and hell, and other works by him were also used in the theology course; and, presumably, so was the commentary to the Apocalypse translated by one of the *vardapets* who had acceded to the union, and *Historia biblica Veteris et Novi Testamenti cum interpretationibus allegorici*. Works which must have been important for polemics against Monophysites were the Christological treatise on Christ’s two natures and one person *Liber de duabus naturis et de una persona in Christo* (*Girk’ yerkuts’ bnut’ENTS’*), compiled and translated from the works of Aquinas by Bishop Bartolomeo and John of Krna; and *Liber de Verbo incarnato* (*Girk’ vasn Banin marmnats’eloy*). The Krna scriptorium also issued a textbook written by Peter of Aragon and translated by James the Targman, entitled *Gladium Petri* (*Sur Petrosi*), for those engaged in polemic with Muslims and Eastern Christians. Five books entitled *Iudiciorum liber compilatus iuxta canones Ecclesiae Romanae* (*Girk’ datasstanats’ hawak’al əst kanonats’ yekeghetswoyn Hr’ ovmay*), a compilation from the works of Raymond of Pennafort, Thomas Aquinas, and Geoffrey of Trani, served as an introduction to Roman canon law. The course in philosophy and theology at Krna was essentially no different from similar programmes of study in Dominican schools in the West, except for one aspect – the language of instruction, Armenian instead of Latin.

Works which come from a later period included passages from the Uniate Catechism (late 14th century) and the Catholic Book, *Liber orthodoxorum* otherwise known as *Manuale Catholicorum* (*Girk ughghaparats – 1410*) by

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325 Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 42 (1958), 122; Oudenrijn, *Linguae*, 207. Oudenrijn’s studies on the translations from the Latin have verified the claims made in the earlier Armenian historiography.
326 Oudenrijn, “Le ‘Sour Petrosi’, vade-mecum pour les missions asiatiques du XIVe siècle”, *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 1 (1945): 161–168; a couple of manuscripts of this work contain passages from other treatises probably originating from the Krna school, such as a treatise on the primacy of St. Peter and the Roman popes, a treatise on the ecumenical councils, and part of a list of catholicoi of the Armenian Church; Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 42 (1958): 120.
327 It addresses the following subjects: *De iudicibus*, *De iudiciis*, *De vita et disciplina clericorum*, *De matrimonio*, and *De poenis pro delictis* in five chapters; Oudenrijn, *Linguae*, 192.
Mkhitarich of Aparan, a student of the “schismatic” vardapet Malachi of Crimea. Only a few sections of the Catechism survive (the parts on the end of the world, the Last Judgement, and questions and answers on the life of Christ: his birth, circumcision, baptism, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension into heaven, and the descent of the Holy Spirit). The Catholic Book was a compilation on philosophical, theological, and historical issues, drawn up for polemical purposes. It contained a fairly comprehensive exposition on the faith, Christology, and liturgical and disciplinary issues, including an explanation of commixtio (kharnumn), why water was to be added to the wine during Mass; the teaching on purgatory and the limbo of infants; as well as of the reward due to Christians after death; the grounds for filioque, and for the primacy of St. Peter and his successors; a discussion of fasting; an account on heresies (including the Armenian “heresy”); a discourse on the Twelve Articles of the Faith and the Seven Sacraments; an account of the ecumenical councils and the Roman and Armenian synods, with a history of the Armenian Church in the 5th century; a discussion of the status of Christians not in union with the Catholic Church. Its last chapters contained a discussion of simony, divorce, degrees of consanguinity, daily Mass, foods prohibited by the Armenian Church but allowed by the Roman Church, and the false miracles that occurred in pagan, Jewish, and heretical communities.

The Krna Monastery became so renowned for learning that it was dubbed the New Athens. Its translations presented the riches of Western philosophical and theological thought to Armenian monks, and some of them received this enthusiastically. Initially John of Krna wanted to reform Armenian monastic life, but he soon changed his mind and decided instead that it would be a good idea to found a new congregation modelled on the Dominican Order. Its development was protracted over many years. It was founded at Krna as the Congregatio Fratrum Unitorum S. Gregorii Illuminatoris (Karg srboyn Grigori Lusavorch’in), and took as its patron St. Gregory the Illuminator, traditionally regarded as the founder of the Armenian Church.

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330 Earlier the same epithet had been applied to Gladzor Monastery; “Uniteurs,” 42 (1958): 111.
331 Members of the Congregation also used other names, such as Krnetsik, Jahketsik, derived from the place-names of their main houses, Krna and Jahuk. Armenian historians refer to them as the Miararner, i.e. promoters of union. Anti-unionists called them yerkabnak, i.e. those who adhere to the doctrine of the two natures (in Christ). From the very outset they called themselves the Yeghbark Miabanok, which was rendered in Latin in the 14th century as the “Fratres Unitores.” The Latin-derived Armenian term Unitork’ may be encountered in
15 Armenian convents joined the Congregation, which was referred to as the *Yegh bark’ Miabanok’ or Unitork’* in Armenian.332 Many monks in sympathy with the union moved to Krna. It was to be a centralised order, with headquarters at Krna, which was named the Supreme Convent of the Mother of God. Its premises were redeveloped, and became the chief unionist centre in the cantons of Yernjak, Nakhchivan, and Jahuk, in the area where centuries before Mesrop Mashtots, the creator of the Armenian alphabet, had been a hermit.333 The congregation was put under the supervision of the Dominicans, a certain number of whom were to stay in its convents permanently and take part in general chapters. John was the congregation’s first provincial general.334 By the time of Bishop Bartolomeo’s death in 1333 about 500 monks and seminary students had joined the union. But not all of them entered the Uniate congregation at once. Some were fairly loosely affiliated, and there were some still entering the Dominicans.

At the same time a new Latin community of Armenian monks was beginning to form in Crimea, on the initiative of Thaddaeus, a Dominican as of 1334 and formerly a local Armenian bishop. It was known as the Basilian Order, and the role it soon started to play in Crimea paralleled that of Krna in Greater Armenia. Bishop Thaddaeus translated the Dominican daily office335 and his own pontifical336 for the new community. Prior to adopting the Dominican missal which was used at Krna, the monks of Caffa used a translation of the Roman missal, only fragments of which still survive.337 They also had their own martyrology, known as the *Lectionarium*.338 Bishop Thaddaeus translated St. Thomas Aquinas’ treatise *De articulis fidei et ecclesiae sacramentis*, dedicating it to “the distinguished Fathers, Lords, and Brethren”

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334 The colophon to a 1344 treatise on the Incarnation from Part Three of Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae* refers to John of Krna as “the first general of our congregation of Uniates.” He called himself a “frater” for the first time in the introduction to his *Grammar*, written in the same year. Oudenrijn, *Linguae*, 25, 28.

335 It contains the *Officium parvum de crucifixione Domini*, which is attributed to Pope John XXII.


338 The *Lectionarium Caphense* (*Haysmavurk’*) has not survived to the present times. It is mentioned by Galanus (*Conciliatio*, 527). Most probably it was a translation from the Greek. Oudenrijn, *Linguae*, 100.
of his own nation, and the Liber expositionis sanctissimi sacramenti Altaris. A collection of sententiae from the Scriptures and Fathers of the Church, entitled Liber scintillarum (Girk kaytsakants) and attributed to the Venerable Bede, was compiled in this community. By the mid-14th century the influence of the Uniate monastic communities had diffused over a wide area. The Uniate movement bore its most abundant fruit in the environs of Sis in Cilicia, in the parts of Anatolia inhabited by Armenians (Sebastia and the Sultanate of Rum), Caffa in Crimea, and in Greater Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Persia (at Maragha, Tabriz, Sultaninya, and Salmas). A new phenomenon was emerging in the history of Armenian Christianity – Armenian Catholicism.

From Uniate Church to Catholic Church

There are no papal documents relating to Asia for almost the entire decade from 1310 to 1320. It was not until the late 1320s that Pope John XXII renewed his interest in what was going on in the Latin Church in Asia. In 1329 he transferred the seat of the Latin bishopric from Smyrna to Tbilisi and put it under the authority of the metropolitan see of Persia. In the same year he

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339 This was a treatise by St. Thomas Aquinas, known in Armenian as the Hanganakats Girk (Liber articulorum), Oudenrijn, Linguae, 178–181.
340 This treatise, entitled De sacro Altaris mysterio, was written by Pope Innocent III. It was translated by Bishop Thaddaeus in 1354, in the Armenian Monastery of St. Anthony at Pisa. Oudenrijn, Linguae, 214.
341 This work was translated by Thomas of Jahuk, who was appointed to the Diocese of Nakhichevan in 1356. Oudenrijn, Linguae, 207.
342 M. A. van den Oudenrijn has expressed reservations on the scope of influence enjoyed by the Congregation of Uniates as reported by Mkhitarich of Aparan, (“Uniteurs” 42 (1958), 130; while Richard (La papauté, 223) had no misgivings over the reliability of Mkhitarich’s account. There is no evidence at hand to confirm that Uniate monasteries ever operated in Cilicia. According to van den Oudenrijn, Mkhitarich’s relations may be interpreted only as a reference to the Uniate movement, but not to the expansion of the Congregation. The Congregation’s original monasteries included Krna, Aparan (Aparaner), Saltak (Salitak), Aprakunik, and Khoshkashen in the Yernjak Valley; subsequently Jahuk and Shahapunik in the Canton of Jahuk; at Tbilisi in Georgia; Tabriz, Maku, and Tscortsor (Ketsuk) in Azerbaijan, and as of the mid-14th century at Caffa. Thierry, Répertoire, no. 825; Oudenrijn, “Bishops and archbishops,” 188.
343 In 1329 John XXII put Samarkand in Central Asia and Quilon in India under the authority of the Metropolitan of Sultaninya. Fedalto, La Chiesa latina in Oriente, Vol. 1 (Verona: Casa editrice Mazziana, 1973), 473.
recommended the Dominican and Franciscan missionaries sent out to Persia, Georgia, and Armenia to Zachary Manuelian, archbishop of “St. Thaddaeus.” One of those recommended was the Dominican William of Cigiis, the new bishop of Tabriz. This move shows that Avignon appreciated Zachary’s role in the region, nevertheless the Pope decided to promote his Latin counterparts to a higher rank. In 1330 the new archbishop of Sultaniya, the Dominican Johannes de Cori, and his suffragans received the privileges which John XXII had previously granted Archbishop Zachary, the Dominican vicar, and the Franciscan custodian. A new Latin diocese based on the mission at Krna was founded at Nakhchivan, and was shortly afterwards made a suffragan see of the metropolitan see of Sultaniya.

At about this time the Franciscans on the territory of the Kipchak Horde converted a large number of the local population from Eastern Orthodox Christianity to Catholicism. Hence in 1333 the local network of Latin dioceses was extended and put under the authority of a new metropolitan see at Vosporo (Kerch), which included Caffa, whose importance as a missionary centre was continually rising. In the same year at Dijon the Dominican General Chapter issued an order for the foundation of a school of Oriental languages in St. Dominic’s Convent at Caffa, to train prospective missionaries. In 1334 Thaddaeus, an Armenian Dominican, was appointed bishop of Caffa. Thereby Greater Armenia and the Armenian diaspora were enveloped within a network of Latin dioceses.

At first relations between the Armenian Uniate Church in this area and the Latin monastic orders were good, if James the Targman of Krna wrote in the colophon to his translation of the collection of sermons of Bartolomeo of Poggio that he translated it during the pontificate of John XXII, “when the Lord James was the Armenian Catholicos, fully devoted to the Church of Rome; and the Lord Zachary, Head of the Apostolic See of St. Thaddaeus,

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345 He was also given a letter of recommendation to the Jacobite Maphrian. Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, Vol. 1, 482.
346 CICO VII/2, 93–94, no. 47, 119.
347 The dioceses of Soldaya, Caffa, Sebastopol, Chersonesus, and Trebizond were to be under the authority of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Vosporo (ancient Pantikapaion, modern Kerch). However, it proved a short-lived arrangement. See Loenertz, La Société des Frères Pérégriants, 109; Richard, La papauté, 232–233.
349 Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, Vol. 1, 444, 450; Vol. 2, 60.
stood in the vanguard of the invincible bastion of union.”  

On 6th March 1331 Catholicos James gave his support to the idea to create a congregation of Armenian monasteries in Greater Armenia promoting union, under Dominican leadership. On leaving for China, the Franciscan Nicholas, the new archbishop of Khanbalyk (Beijing) was issued with letters of recommendation asking Leo IV of Armenia and the catholicos for their protection. However, relations between the groups cultivating union in its hitherto form and the Dominicans soon deteriorated. The Franciscans, who exerted an influence on the archbishop of St. Thaddaeus in the 1330s, were largely responsible for this. The Franciscans in the Persian Empire, the majority of whom were Spiritual Franciscans (Fraticelli), did their utmost to undermine Dominican influences. Their teachers (lectors) declared war on Thomist doctrine. In the School of St. Thaddaeus attached to their monastery they used their own theological treatises, as well as works condemned by the Church, such as the writings of Pierre Jean Olivi (Olivetti). In 1333 Lorenzo da Bobbio and Guillaume Saurati, new Franciscan lectors, censured an Armenian vardapet who had arrived in their monastery from Erzurum and preached the doctrine of papal infallibility. Under pressure from them the unfortunate Armenian had to recant his teaching before the archbishop. In outcome of these troubles the Dominican William of Cigiis, bishop of Tabriz, lodged proceedings against the Franciscans in the curia at Avignon, which confirmed the charges brought against them. Although a decision was taken at a synod improvised by the Dominicans in 1334 to remove the Spiritual Franciscans from Persia, their

350 “dum katolicos Armenorum erat Dominus Jacobus, Romanae ecclesiae plane subtus … dum unionis arcem invictam se praebebat Dominus Zacharias, apostolicae sedi S. Thaddaei praepositus.”


352 CICO VII/2, no. 100; Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, Vol. 1, 430.

353 At this time the Franciscans of Trebizond played a considerable role politically. Phillip VI, the King of France, used their services to organise a crusade against the Mamelukes and persuade the Ilkhan and the King of Georgia to join it. Girolamo Golubovich, Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell’Oriente francesco, Vol. 3 (Quaracchi presso Firenze: Collegio di S. Bonaventura, 1919), 414–417; Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, Vol. 1, 482.

ideas still continued to be disseminated for a long time among the local Franciscan missionaries. We do not know whether the Franciscans were expelled from the Monastery of St. Thaddaeus at this time. Most probably they stayed until the death of Archbishop Zachary, and the union was cultivated there in the traditional form, on the basis of the reformed Armenian rite. In 1339 the Franciscan lector Pontius translated St. Bonaventure’s life of St. Francis into Armenian, and shortly afterwards a postilla on the Gospel of St. John, which claimed that Jesus and his apostles had no property or goods, owned either collectively or individually (nec in communi nec in speciali). Pontius dedicated this translation, which was done with the assistance of a monk called Israyel, to Archbishop Zachary. But undoubtedly the Dominican school at Krna was exerting more and more influence on the monks in the “diocese of St. Thaddaeus.” After the expulsion of the Spiritual Franciscans from Persia the role of the Dominicans increased considerably.

Already during a consistory in 1333 Dominicans working in the East were making allegations to the pope that many of the clergy there, who considered themselves priests and said Mass, had misgivings whether they had been baptised and ordained in the manner prescribed by the Church. To sweep away such doubts the pope issued a bull entitled Fidelium novella plantatio in which he instructed Dominican priests and deacons to re-administer baptism conditionally, using the formula Si baptisatus es, non te rebaptiso; sed si nondum baptisatus es, ego te baptiso in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti (“If you have been baptised, I am not re-baptising you; but if you have not yet been baptised, I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit”). The bull also regulated for invalid ordination. The pope recommended an analogous formula: Si ordinatus es rite, non te reordino, sed si nondum ordinatus es, te ordino ad sacros Ordines antedictos (“If you have been ordained according to the prescribed rite, I am not re-ordaining you; but if you have not yet been ordained, I hereby ordain you to the said Holy Orders.”) The right of re-ordination was given to the Dominican and Uniate bishops. Ordinations were to be administered at the prescribed terms, with a time-lapse between successive stages of ordination as prescribed in canon law, and with the use of the prescribed matter and form of the sacrament.

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355 The Bishop of Tabriz travelled to Avignon to deal with this matter. In 1353 Pope Innocent VI asked the Latin Bishop of Caffa, an Armenian named Thaddaeus, to take action against the Spiritual Franciscans. Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, Vol. 1, 482.

356 In 1323 John XXII condemned this doctrine in his bull Cum inter nonullas.

357 The Pope put an injunction on the administration of the minor and major holy orders on the same day, CICO VII/2, 259–260, no. 139.
Due to the influence of the Dominicans misgivings of this kind also emerged among priests who had acceded to union with Rome.

The Dominicans were also the source of several other negative assessments of the orthodoxy of Armenian Uniates reaching Western Europe. One Dominican, who had spent 24 years in the East, compiled a treatise at Avignon entitled *Directorium ad passagium faciendum* and dedicated to Philip VI, King of France, in which he presented a deprecatory picture of all Eastern Christians including the Armenians. He wrote that their “conversion” had been opportunistic and insincere, that they had never been faithful to the Catholic religion, nor to the Church of Rome, and were the worst heretics among all Christians, steeped in their errors. The Armenians of Cilicia, who had entered a union with Rome, were just as obstinate, he maintained, and had never carried out the promises they had made to the Roman Church prior to the coronation of Leo I. But opinions to the contrary were also reaching Avignon. In 1335, for instance, an Italian pilgrim named Jacopo da Verona who lived in Cyprus, wrote of the Armenians that they were orthodox Christians and above all obedient to the Church of Rome. No incidents which could have undermined the missionary work carried out hitherto or done damage to the Armenian Church occurred during the pontificate of John XXII, who had intervened on many occasions on behalf of the Armenian clergy, granting their churches and chapels indulgences, and treating the Armenian catholics and hierarchy on a par with the Latin hierarchy of the Orient. He was ready to admit Armenian bishops from Greater Armenia and the diaspora to communion with the Church of Rome, considered the reformed Armenian liturgy a Catholic rite, and if need be rebuked over-zealous inquisitors. Neither did he have any qualms over the Armenian profession of faith, and his own teaching on the postponed vision of happiness after death was similar to some of the ideas attributed to Armenians.

Radical changes did not come until the pontificate of his successor, Benedict XII (1334–1342). At this time Nerses Balients (Paliunts), bishop of

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358 John XXII’s successor Benedict XII claimed that he had heard of numerous Armenian errors when he (Benedict) was still a cardinal (as of 1329), CICO VIII, 119, no. 57.
Urmia, arrived in Avignon with a group of monks who had been educated by the Dominicans. Nerses came from the environs of Tondrak in the Canton of Hark, near Manzikert. Perhaps he had left his impecunious diocese and got his compatriots with Catholic sympathies to elect him archbishop of Manzikert, where he straightaway set about organising a Latin Church, re-baptising and re-ordaining those who converted to Catholicism. He

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362 Daniel de Tauris [Tabriz], “Responsio ad errores impositos Hermenis,” in RHC Doc. Arm. II, 643. According to the Franciscan Daniel of Tabriz, earlier Nerses Balients had entered the Congregation of Uniate Friars; see Gregorio Petrowicz, “I Fratres Unitores nella Chiesa Armena,” in Euntes Docete: Commentaria Urbaniana: Miscellanea in honorem Card. G. P. Agagianian 22 (1969): 328. This is not fully trustworthy information, as the congregation was only in its initial stages at the time. However, it is possible that Balients had been a Dominican; Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 43 (1959): 110–111. At this time the structure of the congregation was fairly informal, with a combined membership of Armenian monks and confreres who had entered the Dominican Order. Jean Dardel wrote of Nerses in his chronicle, “Der Norsses, Jacobin de l’ ordre des Freres prescheurs,” RHC Doc. Arm. II, 29. Ormi or Urm is the name of the place from which the name of Lake Urmia has been derived.

In 1345 Mkhitar claimed that Nerses, “episcopus de Orni … false se nominat archiepiscopum Manasgardensem,” CICO VIII, 213–214, no. 59. The Franciscan Daniel of Tabriz wrote in the same vein: “Ille [Nerses] qui dicit ista, verum est quod non fuit archiepiscopus, sed simplex episcopus super aliquas villas Turcorum, in quibus sepe fui, que terra vocatur Ormi [Urmia], et nominatur de quadam civitate destructa, quia nullus habitat intus. Ipse venit ad istam curiam et dixit se falso esse archiepiscopum, et de peccato quod inculpat alios ipse est intus. Item falso rapuit sibi titulum, nominans se archiepiscopum Manasguerdensem, in qua terra nec episcopus nec archiepiscopus fuit. Etiam dicta terrae Manasguerda non est archiepiscopatus, sed episcopatus,” Daniel de Tauris, “Responsio ad errores,” 638. According to the papal bull, Nerses had received all the stages of Holy Orders at the hands of Catholic bishops, “ac dein vacante ecclesia Manazguerden., metropolitana in illis partibus, presbyteri catholici et populus orthodoxus civitatis Manazguerdense. te [Nerses] unanimiter in Manazguerdn. archiepiscopum elegerunt teque ad quemdam vocatum Catholicon residentem in Minor Arnemia cum litteris eorum testimonialibus transmiserunt, ut confirmationem electionis huiusmodi et deinde consecrationis munus recipiens ab eodem … confirmationem et consecrationem huiusmodi recepistis,” CICO VIII, 232, no. 60. We don't know which version is true. It is a fact that the Catholicos did not deny that Nerses had been consecrated bishop, and this must have been done by the Catholicos himself. However, the title conferred on him was Bishop of Urmia, not of Manzikert, although in his new diocese he was regarded as the latter. Perhaps the Catholicos later revoked Nerses’ right to the title, under pressure from the faithful, and allowed him to keep only the former title. The archbishopric undoubtedly acknowledged and submitted to the authority of the Catholicos of Cilicia, in other words it was in communion with Rome. Later Nerses accused the Catholicos of deposing newly consecrated bishops who failed to pay the required sum of money, and replacing them with ones that paid up and informing the faithful of the change. Hence there could be three or four bishops operating at the same time in a diocese. CICO 150, no. 57.

364 In 1345 the synod of the Armenian Church denied that it was rebaptising persons converting from other Churches, and defended itself with the following argument: “sed aliqui ex eis, qui articulum istum falsum ponunt super Armenos, baptizaverunt plures, contra
maintained that Armenian Masses were not the true Mass. Not only did he himself say Mass in the Latin rite, but he also took measures to take the Latinisation of the national rite further. During a solemn Mass in Hanga Castle he demanded the priest show the consecrated host to the congregation, in accordance with the custom in the Roman Church. The incident caused a dispute, and Nerses wrote a letter on the matter to Catholicos James II, who sent his legates to the castle, where a committee of five bishops, twelve priests, and numerous laymen was set up under the chairmanship of the archbishop of Iconium. Both the priest who had celebrated the Mass and the vardapet who had stood up in opposition to Nerses were questioned. The verdict was not favourable for Nerses, and so great was the anger of the mob that he barely escaped being stoned to death. The champion of Catholic doctrine left for Cilicia in the company of Simeon Beg, archbishop of Erzurum. Once there, they told the catholicos that they had doubts as to the validity of their baptism, ordination, and episcopal consecration in the Armenian Church. Catholicos James II, who was a Uniate, but very attached to the Armenian traditions, was appalled at their scruples. He forbade them to say Mass in the Latin rite and imprisoned them. The king forbade them to leave Cilicia until

verbum Apostoli, qui dicit, ‘Non est possibile semel baptisatis iterum renovari ad poenitentiam et sibi ipsi reiterato crucifigere filium Dei,’ [Hebr 6, 6] quia ipsi reordinati fuerant et rebaptisati et multos alios trahentes ad se rebaptizaverunt et reordinaverunt; aliquos rebaptisabant in balneis, alios in domibus, alios in transitu aquarum et in occultis locis et silvis reordinabant … Isti ad dubitationes suas erroneas alios inducendae rebaptizandos et in Missis eorum dubium introducendo, dicentes quod Missae Armenorum non veraciter sunt Missae,” CICO VIII, 191, 214, no. 59.

365 This is the account Nerses gave in his libellus of the controversy: “Item, quod quidam magister Armenorum, cum venisset ad quendam locum ubi fiebat solemnitas et sacerdos elevasset Eucharistiae Sacramentum, ut videretur a populo, dictus magister maledixit eidem sacerdoti dicens, quod mysterium Dei in secreto debebat teneri et non populo ostendi et quod, ostendendo dictum Sacramentum, sacerdos videatur dicere populo: ‘Non timeatis, quia unum frustrum panis est hic sacramentum,’” CICO VIII, 144, no. 57. These places (Hanga, castrum Solene – Sofene?) were located in the Sultanate of Iconium, beyond the borders of Cilicia: “Hanga, quod est castrum magnum … et villa Sahap, quae sunt loca notabilia,” CICO VIII, 213, no. 59.

366 “Tunc rumor Magnus fuit, quod non fuissemus ibi, plures lapidassent eum et nepotem suum, qui litteram falsam scripsaret de voluntate sui avunculi. Et illud fuit principium et causa persecutionis suae a diocesi et fugiens venit ad nos.” This was the version of the events recounted by Mkhitar, the new Catholicos, who had served as one of the envoys sent by Catholicos James II to Hanga. CICO 213, no. 59.

367 Simeon’s office was not disputed: “De Simeone Beck verum est quod Theotopolis [Erzurum] archiepiscopus erat,” CICO 214, no. 59.

368 CICO 145, no. 57; Daniel de Tauris, “Responsio ad errores,” 619–620. The members of the synod of 1345 claimed that the Catholicos had not prohibited them from celebrating
they had reconciled with the catholicos and declare their respect for him.\textsuperscript{369} The catholicos demanded a written declaration from them that they would honour the Holy Armenian Church and preach its doctrine, and that they would acknowledge his authority over them and obey him.

After eighteen months of confinement Nerses managed to escape to Cyprus, from where he sailed west. Eventually he reached Avignon, where he publicly accused the entire Armenian Church of heresy.\textsuperscript{370} His companions dispersed throughout the Armenian monasteries in Italy, claiming that all Armenian monks should be re-baptised, and any who should not want to do so should be imprisoned for heresy. Pope Benedict XII had the Armenian rite of baptism examined and declared it fully Catholic, and the conditional formula for baptism prescribed by John XXII superfluous.\textsuperscript{371} But later he changed his mind, probably under the influence of Nerses and his adherents, who spread the word that in Greater Armenia, especially in areas subject to the authority of the catholicos of Aghtamar, baptism was administered without the use of water, but instead with wine or milk, and without the words of the Trinitarian formula,\textsuperscript{372} while those priests who did use water for baptism did not say the baptismal formula while pouring the water, but instead recited it three times, allegedly performing the baptism three times over.\textsuperscript{373} And

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{369}{Both were held in the king's prison: "Ideo correxerunt eos in modico tempore Ecclesia et rex per suum forum iudiciale et irarum misericordiam fecerunt, dando eis suas et constituendo eos ad executionem Ordinum." When they demanded a stop to their persecution at the hands of Leo, he allegedly informed them that he had been put on the throne for Armenians, not Latins, "et quamdiu viveter debeat pro fide Ecclesiae Armenorum laborare et catholicon Armenorum honorare, quia caput eius erat," CICO VIII, 154, no. 57; 214, no. 59.}
\footnote{370}{We learn this from the supplication on this issue submitted on 2\textsuperscript{nd} October 1342 by John, a monk from Greater Armenia, who was in Tuscany during the pontificate of Benedict XII: "in suo loco et conventu existens, a sociis fratris Nerses archiepiscopi Manasguerden. audivit, quod praedictus dominus papa mandaverat, quod omnes Fratres Armeni deberent rebaptisari, alioquin tamquam haeretici caperentur." John was rebaptised by a Benedictine abbot. However, later he was told by the Pope himself that the Armenian baptismal rite was valid. CICO IX, 23, no. 11.}
\footnote{371}{CICO VIII, 145, no. 57.}
\footnote{372}{CICO VIII, 138–139, no. 57. Those who used wine for the baptismal rite apparently said the following words, "Ego te lavo in vino, ut sis fortis et ne patiaris frigus," while those who used milk did not say any words at all. CICO VIII, 139.}
\footnote{373}{In 1341 Catholicos James II refuted the charges, writing, "Ideo sive fusio aquae super puerum et prolatio verborum erunt simul sive non, quia puer tunc semper in aqua stat, unio verbi ad elementum semper sine defectu fit et sic veraciter baptizatur ... Ideo si criminatores Armenorum dicerent, quod Armeni baptizant ter ..., mentiuntur contra veritatem Spiritus,}\end{footnotesize}
so over-zealous Catholics sowed the seeds of doubt among the clergy and laymen: did Armenian priests really say the baptismal formula, *Baptizo te in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti* (“I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit”) during the ceremony? Some might have been drunk, after all, they claimed, the Armenian clergy over-indulged in alcohol. So it would be better to re-administer baptism to adult Armenians, just in case. Moreover, baptism washed away all sins, so its renewal would guarantee salvation without the need for punishment in Purgatory.³⁷⁴

This was a very astute tactic. Part Three of St. Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica*, which the Dominicans had spread abroad among the Armenians, rejected second baptism, even in cases where the sacrament had been administered by a schismatic or heretical priest. The Apostolic See prohibited second baptism. But alumni of Dominican schools knew that what determined the validity of a sacrament was its matter and form. Baptism was to be administered with the use of water (as the matter) and on behalf of the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity (the form). If it was administered on the grounds of a misconception of the doctrine of the Trinity, by a priest who rejected the doctrine of the two natures in Christ and of the Holy Spirit deriving from the Son as well as from the Father (*filioque*), and who used wine or milk instead of water – it could not possibly be valid. At any rate the Dominican missionaries and their Armenian adherents doubted its validity. Nerses claimed that priests in Greater Armenia did not believe in original sin, so they administered baptism contrary to the ordinary rite, which clearly stated that baptism released the baptised individual from bondage to Satan; Greater Armenian priests administered baptism not for the remission of the baptised person’s sins, but merely to admit him to the Christian Church and thereby to the Kingdom of Heaven.³⁷⁵ He also said that the doctrine professed by the catholicoi of Albania and Aghtamar was corrupted by Theopassionism.³⁷⁶ He accused the catholicos of Cilicia of using the Greek rite, and other Armenian priests of administering a second baptism to members of other Churches who asked them for baptism.³⁷⁷ He alleged that they believed that only the Armenian Church was the true Catholic Church and offered true baptism (*verum baptismum*), and that is why in the

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³⁷⁴ CICO VIII, 214, no. 59.
³⁷⁵ CICO VIII, 124, 132, no. 57.
³⁷⁷ CICO VIII, 139, no. 57.
Symbol they said the words *Credo … in istam sanctam ecclesiam* ("I believe in this Holy Church").\(^{378}\) The validity of Armenian ordination was doubtful as well, he said, because it was administered without regard to the canonical rules observed by the Church of Rome, and in particular without *porrectio instrumentorum*, the presentation of the objects symbolising the consecrated person's ministry, which many Latin theologians considered an essential part of the matter of the sacrament.\(^{379}\)

The situation became even more exacerbated when a group of monks from Greater Armenia educated at Krna or its dependent monasteries began to call for a complete withdrawal of the Armenian rite, which they said was the source of all heresy and error. When the king banished them from Cilicia in 1336 they started to organise themselves beyond the country, in areas ruled by Muslims or by local Armenian princes, associating with Latin churches and monasteries, or with Armenian communities in contact with the nascent congregation of Uniate Friars.\(^{380}\) In 1337, when the Dominican Missal was translated into Armenian, they started using the Armenian language version of the Latin rite for their liturgy and sacraments. The organising framework for these Zealots was created by the metropolitan see of Sultaniya, and especially the diocese of Nakhchivan, which became the basis for missionary activities conducted by the monastery of Krna and its daughter houses. The Armenian bishops, monks, and laypeople who adopted the Latin rite severed all their juridictive links with the catholicos of Cilicia, called themselves true Catholics in compliance with the rite of the Roman Church (*iuxta ritum Romanae Ecclesiae*), and regarded the rest of their countrymen as schismatics.

These conversions to Catholicism were a source of anguish for the Armenian Church. Those who converted to “the Roman faith” were wealthy Armenians, often aristocrats or princes. There are records of foundations made by wealthy Armenians for the Latin Church. For instance, around 1339 Arabred founded the Dominican Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary Crowned, a mile away from Caffa, and soon entered the Dominican Order himself.\(^{381}\) Faced with this predicament, the catholici of Cilicia contested the challenge. Catholicos

\(^{378}\) CICO VIII, 131–132, no. 57. This phrase in the Creed would still give rise to controversy in 17th-century Poland-Lithuania.


\(^{381}\) On 12th April 1339 Benedict XII conferred the right on this church to grant indulgences. The charter of indulgences issued for this church by Gregory XI on 13th April 1377 gives us some more information on its founder. We are told that Arabred (Arabiet) was converted to the Catholic faith “relictis haeresi et erroribus Graecorum schismaticorum, ex quibus originem duxit,” and later “habitum ordinis suscepit.” Arabiet is the Armenian name Karapet.
James II was staunchly against second baptism, on the grounds that any Armenian who had misgivings as to the validity of his baptism could have it repeated in the Armenian rite. In Avignon Nerses spread tales about him, that the catholicos had given orders for any cleric or layman who had been baptised in the Latin rite to be apprehended, degraded, have his property confiscated and sold, be insulted and humiliated, have his head and half of his beard shaved, his robes cut, and finally be cast into the king's prison and kept there until he recanted his Roman baptism. Most probably he himself and the archbishop of Erzurum had been oppressed in this way. James had apparently said that it would be better for his flock to go to Hell as Armenians rather than to Heaven as members of the Latin Church. King Leo IV also came out against the zealots. This stance brought him into conflict particularly with the Franciscan Nicholas, the Latin Bishop of Ayas, who had attempted to re-baptise one of the queen's Georgian ladies-in-waiting. The situation was growing more and more aggravated, as the “true Catholics” were pulling bishoprics out of the jurisdiction of the catholicoi, taking away their revenues, undermining their authority in Armenian society, and denigrating them in the curia of Avignon. There was a mass exodus of them to Western Europe, which strengthened Nerses Balients’ faction.

The campaign of rumours spread by Nerses and his followers cast Benedict XII into a state of serious alarm. In many of the Armenian monasteries in Italy there were monks from Greater Armenia who ministered to Latin congregations as well. Many Armenian bishops who had been banished by the Muslims were administering the sacraments and ordaining Latin clergy. And now it turned out that they might not have been properly baptised and ordained. How many Latin souls might suffer for all eternity on this account?

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382 James II ordered Nerses and Simeon, when they were still in Cilicia, not to rebaptise anyone and to treat the chrism consecrated by the catholicos as valid for the administration of baptism. CICO VIII, 145, 154, no. 57.

383 CICO VIII, 145–146, no. 57.

384 CICO VIII, 145, no. 57. The members of the synod of 1345 did not deny that repressive measures had been taken against those who practised second baptism. However, they claimed that this was not meant as a punishment for those who had been baptised in the Latin rite, but to make amends for the error brought into the Church. CICO VIII, 214, no. 59.

385 CICO VIII, 214, no. 59; Richard, La papauté, 208. The Franciscan Nicholas became Bishop of Ayas in 1328. CICO VII/2, 202–204, no. 108. In 1347 he granted the confraternity of the Church of Corpus Christi in Kazimierz near Kraków the right to grant indulgences. KDM, Vol. 1, 264–265, no. 223.
Having settled in Avignon and received the livings from one of the Armenian priories in Italy, Nerses became the leader of a campaign against the Armenian Uniate clergy. A group of Armenian bishops resident in Italy stood up in opposition to him and in defence of the Armenian tradition and rite. They were Athanasius, bishop of Berrhoé (episcopus Veriensis, viz. Aleppo), who lived in Romagna, or perhaps in Rome itself, in the hospice near St. Paul’s Outside the Walls; Peter, archbishop of Jerusalem and Nazareth, who lived in the monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Nazareth in Padua; and his vicar Ezekiel, who had settled in St. Basil’s monastery in Florence. They regarded all who had been re-baptised in the Roman rite as dissenters, incarcerated some monks, and even had them flogged. News went round of a particularly drastic case. When three Armenians who had undergone the rite for conditional baptism in Bologna arrived in the Armenian monastery in Florence the Florentine monks started pressing them to renounce “the bath,” as they called the Latin baptism. When the newcomers refused they were cast into prison, where one of them died after a few days. The other two were released when they recanted, saying that the Latin baptism had meant as much as if a dog had urinated on them (si unus canis minxisset super eos), whereupon they were re-baptised in the Armenian rite. In cases when “renegades” refused to be re-baptised Armenians allegedly denied them the Eucharist, even when they asked for the Sacrament on the deathbed. Tension was mounting. The opponents of the Zealots sent scores of complaints to the catholicos, claiming that those who did not sign a declaration that they had not been baptised were being thrown into jail, though there had been no orders from the pope for this; and that they were then being re-baptised, and those who refused had to flee. The conflicts that emerged from this issue gave rise to a profound rift between the Armenian Uniates and the Zealots, and the atmosphere was certainly not conducive to peaceful dialogue.

At this time Armenia was in a grave situation politically. In 1334 preparations were underway in the whole of Europe for a new crusade, which never materialised due to the outbreak of the Hundred Years’ War (1336). Nonetheless, Al-Malik an-Nasir, sultan of Egypt, alarmed by the preparations,
first sent the emir of Aleppo on an expedition against Cilicia, and subsequently laid waste the Kingdom of Armenia in a second expedition he led himself in 1337. When he finally decided on a peace treaty he demanded the king of Armenia take an oath on the Gospel that he would sever relations with Western rulers and the pope.  

At first Benedict XII tried to support Leo IV, showing that he was not prejudiced against him and his Church. In 1335 he granted Leo’s confessor the power to absolve him of all sins whatsoever if he took up arms at the head of his army against the enemies of the faith. In 1336 the Christians of Sicily, Cyprus, Rhodes, Negroponte, and the lands ultra Farum (beyond Pharos) who had been fighting in defence of Armenia for a year were granted two-year indulgences. In early May 1338 the pope released the Armenian king from the promise he had made under duress to the sultan, invested the confessor of his consort, Constance, with the power to absolve penitents of all sins whatsoever in articulo mortis, and granted the constable, Jean de Lusignan, a dispensation from the obligation to observe fasts, on the grounds of ill health. In the same year the pope ordered a consignment of grain to be purchased in Sicily and despatched to Christians in Armenia in the grips of a famine. However, already by the end of May he sent a letter to the Franciscan Elias, archbishop of Nicosia, praising him for his zealous efforts to convert Greeks, Armenians, Jacobite Syrians, and other Christians in Cyprus “to the rite, obedience, and devotion of the Holy Roman Church” (ad ritum, obedientiam et devotionem sacrosanctae Romanae Ecclesiae). In June 1338, at the pope’s bidding the archbishop of Genoa administered conditional baptism to one Peter of Greater Armenia, whereupon he confirmed and ordained him. The reason behind the change in the pope’s attitude was most definitely the unrelenting campaign conducted by Balients and his people.

391 CICO VIII, 7, no. 5.
392 CICO VIII, 16–18, no. 10.
393 CICO VIII, 40–41, nos. 21, 22. The Pope said that the Queen was “in sinceritate fidei et unitate S. R. Ecclesiae ac obedientia et devotione nostra.” Constance was the widow of Henry II, King of Cyprus, and the daughter of Frederick II, King of Sicily. The Pope granted a similar privilege to Basil, one of the barons of Cilicia. CICO VIII, 42, no. 22a.
394 CICO VIII, 42–43, no. 23.
396 CICO VIII, 43–44, no. 24.
In the autumn of 1338 Nerses Balients asked the pope to re-consecrate him and endorse his appointment to the archdiocese of Manzikert according to the rite and form of the Roman Church, since, he claimed, the catholicos of Cilicia did not have the right to exercise these powers, because he did not abide by the “due canonical manner and form” (modum et formam debitos et canonicos) during ordination ceremonies. On 9th October 1338 the pope granted his request. Nerses was to be conditionally ordained by Peter, bishop of Palestrina, according to the rite and customs of the Roman Church. The pope granted him a pallium “taken from the body of the Blessed Peter” (de corpore beati Petri sumptum), and recommended him in letters addressed to the orthodox clergy, laypeople, and suffragans of the archdiocese. It was the first time in the history of the Armenian Church a pope had made an appointment to an archdiocese in Greater Armenia, which was under the jurisdiction of the catholicos of Cilicia, bypassing his authority.

We do not know whether Nerses intended to return to Armenia. The fact is that he never got there. Shortly after his appointment the pope took a series of measures against the Armenian bishops resident in Italy. He sent letters to his vicar in Rome, John, bishop of Anagni, and to the bishops of Padua and Ferentino, instructing them to arrest and imprison the Armenian bishops Athanasius, Peter, and his vicar Ezekiel, allegedly for making statements against the Catholic faith on the grounds of forged letters which they claimed had been issued to them by previous popes. In a letter of 1340 Benedict drew the attention of the archbishop of Naples to the activities of Arakel (Apostolus), who called himself the archbishop of Nicopolis and was ordaining Latin seminarians, consecrating churches and altars, and administering Confirmation, even though he had not been baptised and ordained in the Latin rite. The pope ordered him detained, imprisoned, and sent to Avignon, because apparently his teaching was full of errors. Bishop Arakel admitted the charges and had himself baptised in the Latin rite, taking the name of Raymond.

398 CICO VIII, 232–234, no. 60.
399 CICO VIII, 64–65, nos. 33, 34, 34a.
400 In its published version the document has been misattributed to Pope John XXII, and misdated to 11th March 1322. CICO VII/2, 114–115, no. 57. In reality it was issued by Benedict XII, CICO VIII, 98–99, no. 45. In the bull ordering the arrest of Arakel, the Pope wrote, “quidam Armenus, vocatus frater Apostolus, se archiepiscopum Nicolopolitanum nominans et faciens nominari,” even though in 1334 John XXII had recognised Arakel's status as an archbishop and had granted him the rights to a Greek abbey near Brindisi, showing that the papal privileges Armenian bishops said had been granted them could have been authentic, and not forged as Benedict XII claimed, CICO VII/2, 264–265, no. 142.
401 See Richard, La papauté, 198, note 112. In the colophon to St. Thomas Aquinas' De articulis fidelis et ecclesiae sacramentis we read, “Sed et possessoris huius sacri libri, domini Arakel, qui
maintained that the Armenian bishops coming to Italy pretended that they had been banished from their dioceses by the Muslims, and many of them said they were archbishops, though there was no such ecclesiastical office in Armenia. They did this to administer episcopal consecrations to Mendicants, charging enormous fees. Apparently they had ordained priests and deacons even in the papal curia, in return for cash and without the knowledge of the appropriate diocesan bishops. Nerses had forgotten that on arriving in Avignon he himself and Simeon Beg had passed themselves off as archbishops. Balients’ position in the papal curia was rising systematically. In 1339 the pope gave him the right to choose a confessor with the power to grant him absolution in articulo mortis, and permitted him to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. However, he did not venture on such a dangerous journey; instead he assumed the duties of an examiner of the faith and tutor in Armenian at Avignon, on a pension granted by the pope. In outcome of his activities in Avignon over a dozen Armenian monks were imprisoned in 1340–1342. The Anglo-Irish theologian Richard FitzRalph (later archbishop of Armagh), who was staying at the pope's court at this time, compiled a large schedule of the Armenian errors entitled Summa de erroribus Armenorum, no doubt drawing on information provided by Balients and his associates.

Early in 1341 there was a change in the situation when an Armenian embassy arrived in Avignon to ask for assistance against the Mamelukes. Owing to the pope's ill health the two envoys, Toros Mikaeiants and the Franciscan Daniel of Tabriz, spent a long time at the papal court and were not received until midyear. During their audience they gave the pope a letter from King Leo IV and Catholicos James II’s profession of faith, a Latin translation (by Prince Bohemond de Lusignan) of the Armenian Rite, and a volume entitled Girk’ t’ght’ots’ (“The Book of Letters”) containing the records of all the

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402 CICO VIII, 151, no. 57.
403 In 1341 he was reproached for this claim by the Franciscan Daniel of Sis, and in 1345 by the Synod of the Armenian Church. Daniel de Tauris, Responsio ad errores, 638; CICO VIII, 224. no. 59.
404 Benoit XII (1334–1342). Lettres communes, nos. 7059, 7291.
405 Richard, La papauté, 211.
406 Roma-Armenia, 172. There is a copy dated 1375 in the Jagiellonian Library (ms. 1599).
Armenian synods since the times of Gregory the Illuminator, along with other liturgical books.⁴⁰⁸

In his profession of faith (Fides Armenorum) the catholicos gave a precise description of the Armenian baptismal ceremony, arguing that there was not even a shadow of doubt as to its validity. None of the priests administering Baptism mispronounced the baptismal formula, since all of them knew the grammar of Armenian, their native language. The priest recited the baptismal formula, *Talis, baptizetur in nomine Patris* etc. when the child was already in the font, so there was no risk of the words being said with no association with the matter of the sacrament, which was always water, while their recitation three times did not mean a triple baptism, which is not the Church’s intention.⁴⁰⁹ For these reasons the catholicos was absolutely against re-baptism, even if the priest who had administered the original baptism had been an ignorant simpleton. If the validity of a sacrament depended on the education of the priest administering it, he argued, then all the Christian Churches, including the Church of Rome, would need to be re-baptised, since “at the beginning there were ignorant people in every Church, there still are, and there will always be some who are ignorant” (*quia in principio in omnibus Ecclesiis ignorantes fuerunt, sunt et erunt*). Next the catholicos argued that all the rest of the Sacraments, Confirmation, Holy Communion, Penance, Holy Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction – of which the last-mentioned had previously been treated neglectfully or administered according to the Greek rite – were now practised in compliance with the Roman rite. His letter concluded with his profession of faith with a discussion and clarification of controversial issues.⁴¹⁰

Now a group of Nerses’ antagonists gathered around the king’s envoy, Daniel the Franciscan, stood up and voiced their opposition to Nerses. Two Armenians, representatives respectively of the Dominicans and the

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⁴⁰⁸ These included the *Breviarium, Simbolum, Pontificale, Missale*, a total of seven books. Bohemond was the son of Amalric, Prince of Tyre, and Isabella of Armenia, and the brother of the King of Armenia Constantine II (Guy de Lusignan; 1342–1344).

⁴⁰⁹ CICO VIII, 156, no. 58.

⁴¹⁰ The version of the Creed in his letter included *filioque* and was backed up with a theological and historical argument as grounds: “Et processionem Spiritus Sancti a Patre et Filio, quod post tempora Ecclesia Romana addidit in symbolo, praedecessores nostri etiam receperunt et in hymnis Spiritus Sancti processionem Spiritus Sancti a Filio dicunt sicut a Patre, quam et nos indubitanter credimus.” The Catholicos also gave an interesting explanation for the misunderstandings over whether there was a single or a double nature in Christ: “Ideo Armeni unam naturam dicebant propter unionem [hypostatic union], duas autem propter differentiam; quia nec divina nec humana naturae in Christo conmutate sunt de proprietibus suis,” CICO VIII, 159, no. 58.
Franciscans – two different schools and missionary traditions – confronted each other. Daniel was born into a non-Catholic family in the late 13th century at Archesh on the northern shore of Lake Van in Greater Armenia. He came in touch with Franciscan missionaries in St. Thaddaeus’ Monastery in Artaz, where he acceded to the union, and entered the Franciscans probably at Tabriz, and hence was called Daniel of Tabriz (de Tauris). In 1330 he attended a vardapet conference at Krna, becoming well acquainted with the Dominicans and John of Krna, the leader of the unionists. After 1333 he spent 3 years in Jerusalem, and later became a reader in theology in the Franciscan convent at Sis, which belonged to the Province of the Holy Land.

To make up his mind on whether there was any truth in the charges, Benedict XII set up a theological committee under the leadership of Bernard d’Albi, titular cardinal presbyter of St. Cyriac in Thermis. The committee used the services of interpreters to interview persons who did not speak Latin. Armenians fluent in Latin translated the liturgical books used in both Armenias for the inquisitors. The apostolic notary aided by bilingual assistants drew up the reports and minutes of the interviews and examination of the books. The result of this work was a libellus entitled Fides Armenorum (The Armenian Faith), containing a list of 117 errors of the Armenian Church, authored by Nerses Balients. Although the libellus brought a mass of accusations against the Church of Greater Armenia, which was not a party to this conflict, it did not spare the Uniate Church, either.

Not only the native Armenian traditions were criticised in the Fides Armenorum, but also those which were the common heritage of the whole of Eastern Christianity. Its author accused the catholics of Cilicia of Monophysitism – contrary

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412 In the Armenian sources he is referred to as a “mnur,” viz. a “frater minor,” Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 40 (1956): 102; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 23.
413 In that year the Sultan of Egypt permitted the Franciscans to resettle in Jerusalem. Golubovich, Biblioteca bio-bibliografica, Vol. 3, 335.
414 In a bull of 1346 the Pope referred to Daniel as the “Lector et Vicarius Ordinis fratrum Minorum in Armenia existentium.”
415 CICO VIII, 114–116, no. 55.
416 Daniel of Tabriz is explicit about the identity of the author of the libellus; Golubovich, Biblioteca bio-bibliografica, Vol. 3, 338–339, 353–358. Notwithstanding this clear indication, Oudenrijn (“Uniteurs,” 43 (1959): 110 seq.) claims that it was written by Nerses of Sis. There must have been an Armenian version, since in 1341 the Pope wrote that it had been compiled by the apostolic notary assisted by persons with a knowledge of Latin and Armenian. Moreover, all the Uniate bishops had to take notice of its contents, yet not all of them knew Latin. CICO VIII, 120, no. 57.
to the facts. He also reproached him for allowing ordinary priests to ordain deacons and administer confirmation, thereby rendering these sacraments null and void. He alleged that extreme unction was neglected and often administered too late. The validity of Armenian baptism, administered without the proper matter and form, was at least doubtful. Apparently the Armenians preferred general confession, and only rarely or never at all made individual confessions, but if they did, penitents would avoid giving the details of particular sins, for fear of too big a penance or of the disclosure of their sins. In addition, the author of Fides Armenorum claimed, the Armenian formula for absolution, Deus dimittat peccata tua (“May God forgive you your sins”), or Ego dimitto tibi peccata tua in terra et Deus dimittat tibi in coelis (“I forgive you your sins on Earth, and may God forgive you in Heaven”), was inadequate, as it suggested that only God, and not the priest, could forgive sins. Another charge was that the Armenians only had three stages in ordination, acolytes, deacons, and presbyters, and that they were conferred defectively, sometimes on individuals born out of wedlock. Nerses also criticised the Armenian custom of episcopal consecrations being conducted only by the catholicos, with the bishops present at the ceremony not taking an active part but merely assisting, just as cardinals assist at a mass celebrated by the pope. The ceremony itself did not meet with his approval, especially as regards the holding of the relic of St. Gregory the Illuminator over the head of the man being consecrated, without which, as the catholicos was reputed to have said, his consecration would be null and void. And the rite for the preparation and blessing of the chrism used during baptism seemed just as suspect to Nerses.

417 Reservations of this kind could arise on the basis of the Armenian theological terminology, since in Armenian the word bnut’iwn meant both “person” and “nature.” CICO VIII, 132 (no. 57), see CICO VIII, 159 (no. 58): “Ideo Armeni unam naturam dicebant propter unionem, duas autem propter differentiam … Si verus Deus est et verus homo, ergo Deus et homo duas naturae sunt; quod indubitanter credimus.” In 1345 the Synod of the Armenian Church clarified the matter as follows: “Licet aliqui Armeni aliquando unam naturam dixerint in Christo, propter indivisibilem et ineffabilem unionem Verbi et corporis et animae rationalis, contra divisionem Nestorii et suorum similium, quia in lingua nostra natura aestivoca est, quandoque etiam personam significat,” CICO VIII, 182, no. 59.

418 “Item catholicon Minoris Armeniae dicit, quod Sacramentum Confirmationis nihil valet et si valet aliquid, ipse dedit licentiam presbyteris suis, ut idem Sacramentum conferant,” CICO VIII, 140, no. 57.

419 CICO VIII, 132, 138–139, no. 57.

420 CICO VIII, 133, no. 57.

421 CICO VIII, 149–150.

422 CICO VIII, 150, no 57.

423 CICO VIII, 151, no. 57.

424 CICO VIII, 138, no. 57.
All the Armenians were alleged to deny Transubstantiation, confuse the Epiclesis with the Consecration, use diverse rites for the Mass, and to pray during Mass for temporal and eternal goods, deliverance from evil, and for the future salvation of the dead, not for the remission of the sins they had committed during their lives.\textsuperscript{425} They did not believe in the power of sacraments administered \textit{ex opera operato}, viz. regardless of the state of grace of the priest administering them; in other words, they held that sacraments administered by sinful bishops or priests were invalid.\textsuperscript{426} The form they used for the contracting of marriage was wrong; they did not observe the prohibitive rules on canonical impediments but allowed divorce and tolerated concubinage; yet they denied absolution to those who had contracted a third or fourth marriage.\textsuperscript{427} They took money for the administration of all sacraments, in other words Nerses accused them of simony; while in Cilicia the king made all the ecclesiastical preferments.\textsuperscript{428} There were many charges against the Armenian practice of fasting, distinguishing between animals said to be clean from those regarded as unclean, and \textit{matagh} – the custom of making sacrifices of “clean” animals for the souls of the dead.\textsuperscript{429} The critic maintained that the Armenians of Cilicia were even worse than those from Greater Armenia, because they did not acknowledge any \textit{vardapet} unless he came from the old country, and only the king and barons listened to the true “masters” (i.e. the Mendicants).

Apparently the catholicos had a hostile attitude to the Roman Church and the pope and had forbidden the institution of Latin practices. Both he and his bishops were alleged to have usurped the authority Christ had given to St. Peter.\textsuperscript{430} Nerses accused James II of trying to persuade the king that any act of excommunication the pope made against him would be invalid;\textsuperscript{431} and of spreading rumours that every day the pope and cardinals ordered more people put to death than there were hairs on his (James’) head. James II was to blame for the fact that in Armenia errors in religion went unpunished,\textsuperscript{432} and was alleged to have spoken disrespectfully of the Roman baptism. He and six of the bishops he had consecrated were rebuked for banning the teaching of Latin to Armenian children, for fear that they should forsake their native language (\textit{quia quando addiscerent litteram latinam, amitterent linguam Armenorum}).

\textsuperscript{425} CICO VIII, 134, 140–141, no. 57.
\textsuperscript{426} CICO VIII, 142, no. 57.
\textsuperscript{427} CICO VIII, 135, 151, no. 57.
\textsuperscript{428} CICO VIII, 148–149, no. 57.
\textsuperscript{429} CICO VIII, 134–135, 146, no. 57; Daniel de Tauris, \textit{Responsio ad errores}, 600.
\textsuperscript{430} CICO VIII, 149, no. 57.
\textsuperscript{431} CICO VIII, 148, no. 57.
\textsuperscript{432} CICO VIII, 152, 155, no. 57.
Apparently he had required these bishops to make written declarations on this matter, with an additional pledge that they would not allow any Latin preachers (and certainly no Dominicans) into their dioceses and provinces _qui praedicaret veritatem Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae_ (to preach the truth of the Holy Roman Church). Nerses claimed that James II had ordered one of the bishops he had consecrated to excommunicate any Armenians who wanted to be “true Catholics” (_veri catholici_), obedient to Rome; furthermore, that James had forbidden his priests and bishops in the East from affirming that the pope was the head of the Church, as he regarded himself as pope of all the Oriental lands from the sea to the borders of the vast Tartar empire (_sed ipse se dicit et facit papam in partibus Orientalibus a fine maris usque ad magnum imperium Tartarorum_). Finally, James was accused of having bought his incumbency from the king, for a sum of 50 thousand groats plus an annual fee of another 20 thousand.

Nerses also accused Zachary Manuelian, archbishop of St. Thaddaeus, of an insincere attitude to union, violations of canon law, and nepotism. Lastly he maintained that the union which had been concluded in 1289 had never been implemented throughout Armenia, and that in Cilicia itself very few adhered to the Roman faith. The rest of his accusations applied only to the Churches of Greater Armenia, which he said were full of all manner of heresies. _Fides Armenorum_ purported that in Greater Armenia diverse notions and opinions uttered by simple people who had no education in theology, folk tales and prejudices were held as official church teaching. Alongside the Monophysite doctrine and the repudiation of Chalcedon and _filioque_, he reprimanded them for a variety of views on the remission of sins, angels, and eternal life; for instance, that after the Last Judgement there would be an “earthly paradise” to which all the none-too perfect folk, including married people, would be sent, and that there the souls of little children would fly from tree to tree, while the souls of adults would repose under the trees; or that the moon had collected up the blood which had flowed out of Jesus’ side, and that it would be used on the day of Judgement to baptise children who had died without baptism; or that Armenians expecting imminent death eat soil over which the sign of the cross has been made because they regard it as Holy Communion. _Fides_
Armenorum also gave a precise list of books suspected of errors and heresy, which included the Armenian martyrology (menology).440

A copy of *Fides Armenorum* was given to Daniel, who examined it carefully while still in Avignon and wrote a 58-page reply under oath in a treatise entitled *Responsio ad errores impositos Hermenis*,441 in which he refuted each of the charges in turn. He was quite openly indignant when he reminded Nerses that he had been overwhelmed with misgivings as to the validity of his Armenian episcopal consecration only when the catholicos had removed him from his see, excommunicated him, and did not allow his restoration to the episcopal dignity. Earlier he had been happy to perform his juridictive duties as a bishop without questioning the prerogatives of the catholicos.442 Daniel, an Armenian and a Franciscan, defended the Armenian Church of Cilicia which, he wrote, was fully orthodox and had all the sacraments approved by the Church.443 If there had been any conflicts with the Latins, the blame could not always be attributed to the Armenians. He gave an example: the Latin archbishop of Tarsus had got rich in Armenia on usury and then fled to Cyprus, so as not to lend money to the king of Armenia for the defence of the kingdom.444 Daniel stressed and repeated his assertions several times that both the king and the princes, the lords and the barons of Cilicia, as well as the catholicos and all the archbishops and bishops, and a large number of archbishops, abbeys, and priests from Greater Armenia, especially Zachary, the archbishop of St. Thaddaeus, had in all sincerity acceded to the union.445 The catholicos himself had been counteracting the errors of the faction led by the anticatholicoi of Aghtamar and Albania, who were hostile to him, and whom he called heretics and villains.446

440 CICO VIII, 153, no. 57.
443 “Fidem veram et sacramenta, que acceperunt a sanctis Patribus, et que sunt per Ecclesiam approbata, Armeni habent, sicut ego portavi domino summo Pontifici, ex parte Regis et catholici [the catholicos], et de consensu omnium episcoporum de Armenia minori,” Daniel de Tauris, *Responsio ad errores*, 648.
444 Daniel de Tauris, *Responsio ad errores*, 640. The indicted archbishop was Homodeus (1328–1344), and papal sources confirm the story; CICO IX, 65–66, no. 38.
446 Daniel de Tauris, *Responsio ad errores*, 598, 606, 637. 30 bishops are reported to have recognised the authority of the Catholicos, and 14 recognised the authority of his opponent; Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica*, Vol. 3, 354.
Daniel did not try to hide his dislike of Nerses and pelted him with unrefined epithets such as *trufator* (trickster), *ioculator* (joker/jester), and *ribaldus infamis* (disreputable scoundrel). He called him a man who derided two Churches – the Armenian and the Latin, a liar, a perfidious knave, full of the worst vices, a rabid dog, a false Christian, a pseudo-archbishop, cursed and imprisoned by his own patriarch, qualified to join the sect of sun-worshippers (*Arewordik’*) of Tondrak near Manzikert.\footnote{Daniel went as far as to make the following remark, “et est valde mirum, si non est de dictis filiis solis, qui sunt de partibus suis, et de titulo, unde nominatur se falso [archiepiscopus Manasguerdensis].” Daniel de Tauris, *Responsio ad errores*, 586, 595, 619. The sect had been in Armenia since Antiquity. In 1345 the Armenian Synod wrote the following of its members: “sunt in Maiori Armenia in contrata Manasguer et vocabunt Filii solis [Armenian *Arewordik’*]; et quamvis ipsi habitent in Maiori Armenia et loquantur armenice, tamen Armeni non sunt; sed colunt solem et sunt infideles manifesti et operantur multis alias turpitudines,” CICO VIII, 226, no. 59.} In his refutation of the charge that Armenia was rife with lechery and bigamy, which the Church tolerated, Daniel could not refrain from making a personal digression: “Would to God that the priests of other nations steered clear of concubinage as much as the Armenian laity does, for Armenians consider carnal sin hideous.”\footnote{“Et utinam placeret Deo, quod sacerdotes aliarum nationum ita [se] custodirent de concubinis, sicut saeculares Armeni faciunt, quia vitium carnis est valde abominabile apud Armenos,” Daniel de Tauris, *Responsio ad errores*, 640.} To answer the accusation that the people of Cilicia cursed the Church of Rome and its cardinals, regarding them as heretics, Daniel wrote, “It is characteristic of a mad dog to bite anything it sees, and that is what this man does. He mauls everything and will not let anyone be, denigrating both the good and the evil ones, both Uniates and Non-Uniates. One conclusion is to be drawn from these two things: either the entire Armenian Church is false and heretical, as he says in his lies; or else he himself is an enemy of the true faith, the sacraments, and good conduct; and a liar, a fraud, and a traitor, all of which is true.”\footnote{“Canis rabidus habet conditionem istam, quod, quidquid videt, mordet […] Ita facit iste homo. Omnes mordet, nullum permittit sanum, ita diffamat bonos sicut malos, et unitos sicut non unitos. De duobus sequitur unum necessarium: oportet, quod vel tota Ecclesia [Armenorum] sit falsa et heretica, sicut ipse mentitur in dictis suis, vel quod ipse, pessimus contrarius veritatis fidei et sacramentorum, et honorum morum, sit falsus et mendax, [et] traditor, sicut est. Et ecce finis,” Daniel de Tauris *Responsio ad errores*, 649.} Daniel invoked the testimonials of the Italian Franciscans, especially those from Florence, against Nerses and his supporters.\footnote{“alii fratres, qui sunt hic, de Florentia, et de Italia, ad istum articulum possunt melius respondere,” Daniel de Tauris, *Responsio ad errores*, 617.} Shocked at Nerses’ slander of the Armenian Church, Daniel wrote bitterly, “The Church of Armenia is being treated in such a manner in this holy curia that I do not think that since the...
times of Jesus any heretic or Church, even the most heretical of Churches, has ever been as maltreated as this Church of Armenia.” Daniel submitted his memorandum to the pope, asking that nothing be done to the Armenian Church that the Church of Rome would not have done to itself. He assured the pope that by doing this he would win over those Armenians who had already opted for union as well as those who were not yet in its favour, and that other Christian Churches would follow their example.

But Nerses’ faction was so strong that Daniel’s dramatic appeal did not make much of an impact on the pope, especially as it was made by a Franciscan – a member of an order still suspected of heresy. Not surprisingly, on 1st August 1341 the pope sent letters to the king, the catholics, the archbishop of St. Thaddaeus in Greater Armenia, the archbishop of Sultaniya in Persia, and the Cilician archbishops of Sis, Tarsus, and Anazarba, demanding a national synod to be convened for the condemnation and eradication of the monstrous errors rampant in both Armenias, and for a renewed recognition of the primacy and magisterium of the Roman Church. He also demanded the institution in Armenia of Roman canon law – the *Decretum Gratiani*, the Decretals of Gregory IX, and other books “containing the sayings of the Holy Fathers.” When the synod was over educated clergymen were to come to Avignon to discuss any doubtful points. Benedict XII made no bones about sending military assistance to Armenia only on condition of the removal of all the errors in the Armenian Church, for, as he wrote, the Church of Rome could not help those who were in error in matters of the faith. He also observed that only the eradication of error could bring victory over the foe. He was sending out well-educated theologians to Armenia, and asked for letters of safe conduct to be issued for them. Incredibly, this was the same pontiff

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452 “Ideo, placeat Sanctitati Vestre defendere, quod non fiat aliis ecclesiis, quicquid non placet vobis fieri. Et tunc habebitis Armenos, quos habetis et quos non habetis, ad unionem istius sanctissime ecclesie; et post exempla Armenorum habebitis alias ecclesias,” Daniel de Tauris, *Responsio ad errores*, 649.

453 The Pope called on the Catholicos to order his bishops and seminarians to have these books available, “pro vera informatione fidei ac morum et observantiarum salutarium ipsius Romanae Ecclesiae,” and report to him on the outcome of the project, CICO VIII, 118, no. 56. CICO VIII, 114–119, nos. 55, 56. The Pope’s letters to the Catholicos and bishops of Armenia were drafted in compliance with the “spiritum gratiae salutaris” formula which, their editor tells us, was used when addressing recipients suspected of adhering to unorthodox doctrine.
who only in 1336 had maintained that the people of Armenia were connected

to Rome by a bond of unity in the faith through Christ’s love (\textit{unitas fidei in

Christi charitate}).\footnote{CICO VIII, 17, no. 10.}

The King of Armenia wanted help from the West so desperately that he
decided to dismiss Catholicos James and appoint Mkhitar of Krna.\footnote{In the papal
documents Mkhitar is referred to by the Latin version of his name, “\textit{Consola-
While James was against causing discontent in his Church because of changes in
the rite and ecclesiastical custom, and fearing another Egyptian invasion,
supported the curtailment of contact with the West and the Apostolic See; his
successor was ready to make concessions to Rome. However, he was not in
favour of full Latinisation, even though he was probably himself an alumnus
of Krna, as his byname suggests. Meanwhile new events occurred speeding
up developments. Leo IV, the young King of Armenia, died in January 1342,
and Pope Benedict XII died in May of the same year.\footnote{Petrowicz, “\textit{I Fratres},” 330.}

Leo IV was the last in his line and on his death the Hethumid dynasty became
extinct. Guy de Lusignan of Cyprus ascended the throne of Armenia. He was
particularly interested in good relations with the West and the removal of all the
ecclesiastical misunderstandings. Soon an embassy consisting of many persons
was dispatched to Avignon. Its members included the knight Gregory of Sargiis,
Daniel of Tabriz, two Armenian bishops: John, bishop of Medzkar (Meschar-
ensis), and Anthony, bishop of Trebizond, as well as a few other prelates.\footnote{Tournebize,
\textit{Histoire politique}, 366; Petrowicz, “\textit{I Fratres},” 331; Richard, \textit{La papauté}, 213.}
The envoys reached Avignon in September 1344 and were to solicit military assistance
for the Kingdom of Armenia, which was growing weaker and weaker.\footnote{Richard,
\textit{La papauté}, 213. The Armenian envoys had not arrived yet in Avignon by April
1344, when Bohemond de Lusignan, Prince of Korykos, received the dispensation for his
matrimonial plans. It was not until 11th September 1344 that Clement VI wrote to the
King, informing him that he had received the envoys, “\textit{Joannem Mascarensem et Antonium
Trebisonensem episcopos, ac dilectos filios Danielem Armenum ordinis Fratrum Minorum
et nobilem virum Gregorium de Sargiis militem, ambaxiatores et nuntios regios,” Fedalto,
\textit{La Chiesa latina}, Vol. 1, 466.}

\section*{Caught between union and policy}

At first Pope Clement VI vacillated over making a stand on the disputes going
on among the Uniate Armenians. In 1342 he granted a dispensation to John,
a monk of Greater Armenia who had unnecessarily succumbed to lobbying from the companions of Nerses Balients, had himself re-baptised in the Latin rite, and later regretted it, feeling it had been an abuse.\footnote{CICO IX, no. 11.} Thereby the pope endorsed the validity of baptism in the Armenian rite. However, there can be no doubt that right from the beginning of his pontificate he had been for the establishment of a Latin Church in Armenia and territories with an Armenian diaspora. In the same year he exercised his apostolic authority to appoint a monk named Alexander to the Armenian see of Pera near Constantinople, entrusting to his care those Armenians who kept the Catholic faith, as it is taught and preached by the Holy Roman Church. He ordered Pietro Gometti, bishop of Sabina and cardinal priest of Santa Prassede, to consecrate Alexander in the Latin rite.\footnote{Clement VI emphasised the skills enabling the candidate to conduct a spiritual ministry: his knowledge of the Armenian language and customs, and his educational qualifications in theology. For these reasons he asked the Armenian community to accept John as their bishop and be obedient to him, CICO IX no. 4. There were Dominican and Franciscan missions at Pera, a Genoese colony. Hesychius, Armenian Archbishop of Constantinople, and Isaiah, Bishop of Saloniki, had signed the acts of the 1306 Synod of Sis. Balgy, \textit{Historia doctrinae}, 311; see Franz Miklosisch and Joseph Müller, \textit{Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana}, Vol. 1 (Windobonae: Gerold, 1860), 162, no. 71.} It was the second pontifical nomination to an Armenian see (Nerses Balients had been the first), and the first without the participation of the catholicos of Cilicia.\footnote{By this time Nerses Balients had been consecrated a bishop by Catholicos James II. In Avignon he was again consecrated \textit{sub conditione}.} At the new bishop's request Clement VI granted an indulgence to the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Armenians in Pera.\footnote{From the papal bull of indulgence of 7th January 1377 we learn that this bishop was regarded as the Suffragan of the Latin Patriarch of Constantinople. Since the latter did not reside at Pera, the local Armenian bishop was the only Latin bishop in that Genoese colony located near the Byzantine capital, so he could minister to the faithful of the Latin rite as well; CICO XII, no. 192. See, Fedalto, \textit{La Chiesa latina in Oriente}, Vol. 1 (Verona: Casa editrice Mazziana, 1973, 448–449; Jean Richard, \textit{La papauté et les missions d’Orient au moyen âge (XIII–XVe) siècle}. 2 ed. (Rome: École française de Rome, 1998), 233.} At about the same time, at the request of Brother Abraham of Greater Armenia, the pope also granted an indulgence to the faithful of Salmas who had been converted by Latin preachers, embraced the Catholic faith in accordance with the rite of the Roman Church, and raised the Church of Our Lady of Consolation in that city.\footnote{CICO IX, nos. 5, 5a. The Franciscans must have been responsible for organising the Catholic community of Salmas. In 1341 the Franciscan William Warden (Walden) had been martyred there, for preaching to Muslims. In a list of Franciscan centres in Persia drawn up before 1318 we read, “In Salamastro, ubi b. Bartholomeus fuit martirizatus,” Fedalto, \textit{La Chiesa latina}, Vol. 1, 422; Richard, \textit{La papauté}, 206.}
In 1344 George Noreghes, the Armenian bishop of Cyprus, who had been consecrated by Elias, the Latin archbishop of Nicosia and cardinal priest of San Vitale, arrived in Avignon. Wanting to adapt fully to the Latin rite, he gave up his incumbency and received conditional baptism and holy orders in the Latin rite, whereupon he asked the pope for a provision, which Clement granted. George was ordained in the papal curia by Anibaldo, bishop of Tusculum. The pope recommended him to the Armenian clergy and faithful in Cyprus, and also to the Latin archbishop of Nicosia and the king of Cyprus.465 These facts imply that George severed his jurisdicitive links with the catholicoς of Cilicia and became the Latin metropolitan’s suffragan for the Armenians who were to become Catholics of the Latin rite. His case shows that the pope reverted to the tradition of second baptism and re-ordination. He did not trust Catholicos Mkhitar and the Armenian Uniate hierarchy.466 When asked by King Constantine II (Guy de Lusignan) to grant the catholicoς and the archbishop of Sis his apostolic authority to create some notaries public, the pope instructed one of the Latin bishops in Cyprus to perform this task,467 although he did not expressly refuse the request. On the king’s request, too, he summoned the Latin archbishop of Tarsus, who had been living in Cyprus for several years, to return to his archdiocese.468 In 1344 the pope appealed to Constantine, a “Most Christian Prince,” to wipe out the heresy spreading in his kingdom.469

In 1344 there were developments which substantially enhanced the authority of the papacy among Eastern Christians. Clement VI managed to muster a coalition army consisting of Venetian, Genoese, Cypriot, and Knights of St. John forces alongside his own units. The papal fleet and the Rhodians took Smyrna.470 Henry of Ostia, the Latin patriarch

465 CICO IX, no. 41. J. Richard (La papauté, 199, note 121) has misdated this provision to 1334 instead of 1344. Armenians made up an important community in Cyprus, and one of the districts of Nicosia was called Armenia. There was also a neighbourhood at Limassol called Armenochori. The Armenian population increased after 1335 and the Mameluke invasions. Claudine Delacroix-Besnier, Les dominicains et la chrétienté grecque aux XIVe et XVe siècles (Rome: Ecole française de Rome, Palais Farnèse, 1997), 64.

466 The addresses in the papal bulls show a certain degree of reserve: “venerabili fratri Consolator, dicto Catholicon Armenorum,” CICO IX, no. 105.

467 CICO IX, no. 36.

468 CICO IX, no. 38. The King obtained an expectative grace from the Pope for some Latin prebends in Cyprus or Rhodes for the chaplain of his brother, the Prince of Korykos. CICO IX, no. 40.

469 CICO IX, no. 45.

470 In the early 14th century (from 1318) there was a Genoese colony and a Latin bishopric at Smyrna. The city was seized by the Turks, and in 1329 John XXII moved the seat of the diocese to Tbilisi in Georgia. Smyrna was in the hands of the Latins until 1402. When the city was taken over a Latin archdiocese was established there. Tithes were collected, as far

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of Constantinople and papal legate accompanying this crusade, was ordered to help the Armenians, but there were insufficient Latin forces available. In revenge for Armenian operations in the West, the Mamelukes invaded and devastated Cilicia. Towards the end of the year the Armenian conservatives, who wanted to maintain peaceful relations with Egypt, murdered King Constantine and his Latinist entourage. The death of the king, who came from the Cypriot line of the Lusignan dynasty, was a great shock for the papal court. As the new king of Armenia was not a Lusignan the pope began to have more misgivings about the orthodoxy of the Armenian Uniates.

The new king, Constantine III, insisted Catholicos Mkhitar call a synod and procure results which would satisfy the Apostolic See. The synod met in 1345 and was attended by the catholicos and the archbishops of Sis, Tarsus, Anazarba, Cappadocian Caesarea, Iconium, and Sebastia, as well as by many bishops, abbots, arch-presbyters, presbyters, and vardapets from Greater and Lesser Armenia, and Cilicia. The synod examined all the charges brought against the Armenian Church, point by point, and declared some of them false, and some long since condemned by the Church of Armenia. The Fathers at the synod disavowed Monophysitism, which, they said, had once been admitted because the Syrians had misrepresented the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon to the Church of Armenia. They denied the accusation that the Armenian Church was re-baptising heretics, especially individuals who had abjured the doctrine of the two natures, calling it slanderous. They were particularly offended by the defamatory remark that some Armenians were using wine or milk for baptism: they had never heard of such things!

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473 CICO VIII, 190, no. 59.

474 CICO VIII, 178, 191, 193, no. 59.

475 “Falsum est et criminosum, quia omnes cum aqua baptisant in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, quia eundem librum et easdem rubricas et eamdem consuetudinem baptismi quam nos habemus et ipsi habent et numquam audivimus, quod aliquis in Ecclesia Armenorum cum vino baptizaret nec Ecclesia Armenorum talem errorem sustinere posset,” CICO VIII, 192, 203, no. 59. The following answer was given to the charge that the Catholicos of Cilicia was using the Greek rite: “Catholicon vero tertius tenet omnia Ecclesiae Graecorum per quae convenit cum Ecclesia Romana; tamen illud, in quo cum Ecclesia Romana non convenit, non tenet nec vult tenere, sed tenet sicut Sancta Ecclesia Romana,” CICO VIII, 192, no. 59.
They stood up in defence of ex-Catholico James, who was alleged to have said that Armenian baptism was better than Latin baptism. They members of the synod denied that he had ever said such a thing, and stated that they held the Armenian and Latin baptism equally good. They were absolutely against second baptism. Once again the synod confirmed church union and acknowledged papal primacy, declaring that it would carry out all the reforms Rome considered necessary. The synodal constitutions concluded with a profession of faith and anathemas against heretics.

The King’s envoys arrived in Avignon with the records of the synod and letters from the Armenian bishops acknowledging papal primacy, declaring readiness to submit the Armenian liturgical books to papal scrutiny, and to adopt the Latin canon law. A theological commission headed by Giovanni de Vergonis, bishop of Sutri, was set up by the Pope to examine the documents the Armenian envoys had delivered, and promptly started its work.

In 1344–1348 there was a considerable number of Armenian clergy at Avignon, as well as Dominican and Franciscan missionaries who had been working in the East. There were so many of them that in 1346 a monk named Karapet, “who was faithful to the Holy Roman Church,” asked the Pope for permission to build a chapel and monastery and to grant indulgences for its benefactors, which he received.

Under the impact of the political developments, which were ascribed a religious significance as well, Nerses Balients’ faction gained the upper hand in the
papal entourage, while the Franciscan influence diminished. In 1344 the pope made an appeal addressed to the Latin clergy and Catholics of Greater Armenia, the Persian Empire, and other Oriental countries to reject the teachings of the Spiritual Franciscans. At the time there was a Franciscan named Pontius at Avignon, who had been a reader in theology in the Monastery of St. Thaddaeus and had made an Armenian translation of the Roman missal in everyday use for Mass in the pope’s chapel. His translation, which was completed in March 1345, shows that even the Franciscans were no longer against the imposition of the Latin rite on the Armenians. The fact that the translation was made at the request of the envoys of King Constantine II suggests that the purpose behind this move was to have the pope’s missal ready to replace the old Armenian missals. Thereby the Franciscans were trying to displace the Dominican missal of 1337. Perhaps the inspiration for the translation came from the Franciscan Daniel of Tabriz, who had a particularly hostile attitude to the Dominicans and their converts. Soon the new missal was adopted in the Armenian monasteries in Italy, and the monks switched to the Latin rite. On 7th August 1345 Pontius was appointed to the archdiocese of Seleucia and left Avignon later that year. However, already in the following year the Pope ordered the Latin archbishop of Sultaniya to initiate inquisition proceedings against him, for his postil on the Gospel of St. John, in which he preached “false” doctrine on the poverty of Christ and his apostles. Its Armenian translation, Meknut’iwn surb awetaranin or ëst Yovhannu, carried a dedication to Zachary of Artaz, archbishop of St. Thaddaeus, and was widely distributed in the East. The Pope ordered the postil condemned, and its author sent to Avignon.

The atmosphere of suspicion developing around the Franciscans worked to the advantage of their adversaries. Not surprisingly the envoys of the late

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482 CICO IX, no. 42.
484 The copyist of the 1381 missal wrote that it had been translated by Brother Pontius of the Order of St. Francis, “qui fuit sapiens magister et valde peritus in literis Armenis … ad instructionem et utilitatem omnium catholicorum et illorum, qui cum sancta Romana Ecclesia sunt uniti.” Another copyist called these Uniates “sons of the new Sion.” Marcus A. van den Oudenrijn, *Linguae haicanae scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Congregationis Fratrum Unitorum et FF. Armenorum Ord. S. Basili citra mare consistentium* (Berne: A. Francke, 1960), 257, 266.
485 Daniel was on friendly terms with the Armenian monks of Florence who were staying in Avignon in 1341 in connection with the canon law proceedings against the Armenian Church. Daniel de Tauris, "Responsio ad errores impositos Hermenis," in *RHC Doc. Arm.* II, s. 617.
488 CICO IX, no. 83.
king succumbed and switched to the Dominicans, all the more as after the political coup in Cilicia their return home was problematic. They tried to find a place for themselves in the West. One of them, Anthony, bishop of Trebizond, embraced the Latin rite and in 1345 was transferred to the Latin bishopric of Galtelli in Sardinia; another, John, bishop of Medzkar, received conditional baptism and in 1346 was granted a series of indults by the pope. In one of his supplications he asked for Latin benefices for Armenian seminarians sent to the cathedral school at Tarsus to learn Latin. In another he asked for a similar grace for Rainer Balani, an Armenian canon and formerly a courtier of the late king, dean of St. Zion in Jerusalem. He and his military confreres had been among the first in the kingdom to be “reincorporated into the obedience of the Holy Roman Church,” bringing down numerous reprisals upon themselves, including the confiscation of their property. Bishop Anthony also managed to obtain a favour for his servant, the monk Nerses of Gragan – the privilege to select a confessor with the power to grant him absolution in articulo mortis. Rainer and Nerses, both of whom were re-baptised and re-ordained in the Latin rite, intended to leave for missionary activities among their countrymen, so Bishop Anthony asked for permission for them to come into contact with schismatics and non-Uniates. He wanted them to be able to celebrate Mass and administer the Sacraments “not to confirm them [Armenians] in their schism, but to bring them back to obedience and convert them to the true doctrine.” He seems to have lumped Armenians adhering to the Armenian rite in with the “schismatics,” viz. non-Uniates. Beyond all doubt the two

489 Fedalto, *La Chiesa latina*, Vol. 1, 466, note 210; Richard, *La papauté*, 214, notes 186, 233. Anthony was the bishop of Trebizond, and simply adopted the Latin rite in Avignon. During the synod of 1345 a certain Stephen was bishop of Trebizond (CICO VIII, 160, no. 59). When Pope Martin V appointed Marco Viadro, a Franciscan from Venice, to the See of Trebizond, he observed that this diocese was “tam in Armeniae, … quam in Graeciae et Turchiae partibus” (CICO XIV/2, no. 393d). The area had been known as “the first Armenia” ever since Justinian’s reforms, and the city had a large Armenian community.

490 CICO IX, nos. 85, 85a, 85b, 85c.

491 He wrote in the supplication, “Harabetus armenus, dilectus suus, incorporatus et unitus Ecclesiae Romanae, zelo devotionis, quam habet ad dictam ecclesiam, Johannem et Raymundum filios suos scholasticis Latinorum tradidit disciplinis, qui iam in Tharsen[s]i Ecclesia latina in divinis deservire ceperunt.” The bishop asked for canonries and prebends at Tarsus Cathedral for them, regardless of the fact that formally they were both under age – one was 18 and the other 13. CICO IX, nos. 86, 86a.

492 John of Medzkar asked for benefices in the Patriarchates of Grado or Aquileia for him. CICO IX, no. 87.

493 CICO IX, no. 85b.

494 Nerses was an Armenian priest from the Cilician Diocese of Bardzberd (Armenian *Barjberd*, “high stronghold”). See CICO IX, no. 110.
Armenian missionaries he dispatched intended to conduct a pastoral ministry in the Latin rite.\textsuperscript{495}

Geopolitical developments soon forced the new masters of Cilician Armenia to resort to well-tried diplomatic measures. In 1346, after yet another Mameluke attack, Constantine again sent an embassy to the West, under the leadership of his secretary Constantius, asking for assistance.\textsuperscript{496} And again the pope made it conditional on an agreement in doctrinal matters. To achieve it he sent Giovanni Scarlatto, bishop-elect of Corona, and Antonio de Aribandis, bishop of Gaeta, to Armenia. They were to reform the Armenian liturgical books, stamp out the errors still being disseminated in Armenia, and instruct the clergy and laity in dogmatic matters.\textsuperscript{497} The legates were given the power to dispense church livings; grant absolution for sins and revoke penalties, interdicts and acts of excommunication, also in cases reserved for the pope, for crimes against the clergy; grant matrimonial dispensations; absolve and reinstate clergymen who had been suspended for administering second marriages; regulate the status of bishops who had left their diocese to enter a monastery; grant dispensations to seminarians for “corporal defects” resulting from diverse “irregularities and censures” which may have occurred during their ordinations, including for cases where the ordination had been performed by a heretic or schismatic.\textsuperscript{498}

They were also permitted to allow Catholic priests who were “in the grace and communion of the Apostolic See” to administer Confirmation to their parishioners “in accordance with the rite and form of the Holy Roman Church,” which, as we know, they had formerly been allowed to do by the catholicoi, to the abhorrence of their adversaries in Avignon.\textsuperscript{499} The pope also wanted them to bring the Dominicans, Franciscans, Austin Friars, and Carmelites into Armenia, and to find premises for their monasteries, chapels, churches, bell-towers,

\textsuperscript{495} “non ut eos in suo schizmate approbare, sed ut illos ad oboedientiam, veram doctrinam Ecclesiae iuxta posse, reducere, commodius possint,” CICO IX, no. 88.


\textsuperscript{497} The Pope wrote the following about the Armenian hierarchs: “per eos Synodo congregata, huismodi errores abiecerant et prout decuit condemnarunt, ulterius offerentem, quod si in libris eorum, quibus comuniter utuntur, aliqua forsitatem reperirentur errore et fidei repugnantia supradictae, parati erant illa de libris eisdem, iuxta mandatum eiusdem Ecclesiae, delere penitus seque institutis apostolicis in omnibus conformare,” CICO IX, no. 92.

\textsuperscript{498} CICO IX, nos. 93–99, 102, 104. The murder of a bishop or superior were the only cases reserved for the pope’s jurisdiction.

\textsuperscript{499} However, the Pope made the reservation that this could be done only “si tamen tanta fuerit inibi episcoporum penuria”, CICO IX, no. 100; see CICO VIII, 140, no. 57; 157, no. 58; 205, no. 59.
buildings, and graveyards. In addition the legates could endorse the appointments of archbishops, bishops, abbots, and other senior churchmen “in compliance with the form prescribed therefor by the Holy Roman Church.”

The papal letter of 1st August 1346 addressed to Catholicos Mkhitar tells us that the theological commission presided over by Giovanni de Vergonis had not found all the resolutions adopted by the Armenian synod of 1345 fully satisfactory. The pope regretted that errors were still spoiling the glory of the faith in the Armenian Church. He recommended co-operation with his legates to eradicate all the errors from Armenian hearts, and he made the future treatment of the Armenian Church conditional on the success of the legation. In a letter to the bishop of Paphos in Cyprus he asked for the books of Decrees and Decretals, and Liber sextum et Clementinorum to be sent to the bishops of Armenia, if need be purchased at the expense of the Apostolic Camera. This probably meant the dispatch of a considerable number of copies, as earlier the pope had notified the catholicos that the legates were carrying these books for him. The embassy was joined by Daniel of Tabriz, Franciscan vicar for the Kingdom of Armenia, who had defended the Armenian Uniate Church so resolutely in 1341. On 26th July 1346 the pope appointed him Latin bishop of Bosra in the patriarchate of Antioch. Daniel had attended the synod at Sis in 1345 and had been King Constantine II’s envoy. Most probably he himself took the steps required to join the legation, stopping the despatch of Giovanni de Vergonis, bishop of Sutri, who was making preparations already in April 1346 to leave for Armenia with the legates. As head of the theological commission, Giovanni had found both Daniel’s treatise and the records of the Armenian synod riddled with dogmatic errors and had brought about the compilation of a new, 53-point libellus.

Daniel still supported the Armenian Uniates. A month after his episcopal consecration he asked the pope for a provision for the Armenian Apostolus (Arakel) for the Armenian priory in Perugia. Arakel was a first-generation

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500 CICO IX, no. 101
501 CICO IX, no. 104.
503 “Pro certo scituri, quod si praemissa seceritis, ut speramus, vos in sinu sanctae matris Ecclesiae confovebimus et vobis gloriosis favoribus, quantum cum Deo fieri poterit, super vestris opportunitatibus assistemus nec vestris detractoribus, si qui forsitan existerent, credulas praebebimus faciliter aures nostras. Alioquin poenas et sententias, quas ipsi Legati et quilibet eorum rite tulerit seu statuerit in rebelles, ratas habebimus et faciemus auctore Domino usque ad satisfactionem condignam inviolabiliter observari;” CICO IX, no. 105.
504 CICO IX, no. 107 (10 Sept. 1346).
monk there, and in Daniel's opinion was faithful to the Roman Church.\footnote{507} Daniel's admission to the papal legation was such a hard blow for Nerses Balients that he decided to leave Avignon and return to his diocese in Greater Armenia. In September 1346 he brought a couple of supplications to the papal curia. In one he asked to be relieved of the duty of \textit{ad limina} visits due to the remoteness of his see, writing that he hoped the true faith of the Roman Church would be strengthened in the recent Uniates of Manzikert thanks to his presence in the diocese.\footnote{508} In another supplication he asked for one of the cardinals to write letters of recommendation for him saying that he was leaving Avignon with the pope's consent, to stop rumours from spreading in the East that he had fled in secret from the Roman curia.\footnote{509} His third supplication was a request for a dispensation for the Greek Nicholas of Armenia, a man “most faithful to the Roman Church,” who wanted to set out on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem with two companions.\footnote{510} But due to the course of events Nerses remained in Avignon.\footnote{511} The legates set off in September 1346.\footnote{512} They were accompanied by John, bishop of Medzkar. They reached Cilicia in March 1347.\footnote{513}

\footnote{507} “dictus Apostolus [a calque translation of the Armenian name Arakel – K.S.] fuit socius personae laboris primi aedificatoris dicti loci et in tempore domini Johannis papae XXII tamquam prior regit dictum locum et multa aedificavit in eo.” Arakel was re-elected prior on the recommendation of the Latin bishop of Perugia, CICO IX, no. 90. He asked for permission to fulfil this duty through the services of a procurator, viz. a proxy, “per litteras speciales,” CICO IX, no. 109.\footnote{508} \footnote{509} \footnote{510} \footnote{511} Armenian historians have attributed the translation of Martinus Polonus’ \textit{Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum} (Armenian title \textit{Gawazanagirk} – Liber sceptri) to Nerses Balients. The Armenian version was supplemented with an account of the history of Armenian Cilicia, and was completed at Avignon in 1348. The passages on the history of Armenia have been published by Vazgen A. Hakobyan in \textit{Mamr zhamanakagrut'yunner (XIII–XVIII dd.)} (Erevan: Haykakan SSR Gitut'yunneri Akademiayi Hratarakch'ut'yun, 2, 1956), 173–189, 195–205; Gevorg Ter-Vardanian, “La littérature des milieux uniteurs (XIIe–XVe siècle),” in \textit{Arménie entre Orient et Occident}, ed. Raymond Kévorkian (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1996), 64. However, this claim was challenged by Marcus A. van den Oudenrijn (“Uniteurs et dominicains d’Arménie,” 43 (1959): 110–111; \textit{Linguae}, 210–212), who attributed the translation to Canon Nerses of Sis (in Cilicia), a convert to the Latin rite; see Jean Richard, “Les Arméniens à Avignon au XIV siècle,” \textit{REA N.S.} 23 (1992): 260.\footnote{512} On 3rd September 1346 Clement VI recommended the Bishops of Gaeta and Corona to the master of the Knights of St. John at Rhodes, ordering him to safeguard their passage from Rhodes to Cyprus. \textit{The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia}, ed. T.S.R. Boase (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1978), 129.\footnote{513} Golubovich, \textit{Biblioteca bio-bibliografica}, Vol. 4, 374; \textit{The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia}, 129.
Clement VI sent Constantius the royal envoy back home and started organizing assistance for the Kingdom of Armenia, full of hope that the crusade launched in 1342 would be a success. He ordered the archbishop of Crete, his envoy in the East, and the captain of his fleet on the Aegean Sea to come to the aid of the king of Armenia, so long as the operation would not put Smyrna in jeopardy. He also asked the master of the Knights of St. John at Rhodes and the king of Cyprus to engage in the operation and continue defending the endangered Cilician coast. The pope also wrote to the doge of Venice to use his influence with the sultan of Cairo and persuade him to return the port and city of Ayas to Armenia, which he had taken in 1337. The king of Armenia also asked for Venetian intervention. The Teutonic Order of knights, which still had possessions in Cilicia, was also considered as a potential participant. The Armenian Stephen, archbishop of Nik, and a monk named Cyriac were sent to the Teutonic state, probably on the pope’s inspiration. Their mission was to obtain the Order’s assistance for Armenia. Both had converted to the Latin rite and were members of Nerses Balients’ group. On reaching Pomerania they spread stories of Turkish attacks on Armenia, saying that in the course of two years the Turks had murdered 600 thousand Christians, and were exacting tribute from the rest. Stephen and Cyriac must have been the source

514 The Pope instructed his treasurer to pay 1,000 gold florins each to the papal legates and 300 florins each to Bishop Daniel of Bosra and Bishop John of Medzkar; CICO IX, no. 111. He also promised to pay the King of Armenia an annual subsidy of 12 thousand florins and supply him with a unit of a thousand cavalrymen, provided they reached an agreement on church matters; Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, 129; G.G. Mikaelian, Istoriia Kiliikiiskogo armianskogo gosudarstva (Erevan: Izdatel’stvo Akademii Nauk Armianskoï SSR, 1952), 445.

515 Housley, Avignon Papacy, 36, 253, 303, note 4; Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, 129–130.

516 In 1346 the Pope granted “frater Stephanus, Armenus, archiepiscopus Nichenus,” the right to choose a confessor empowered to absolve him of his sins in articulo mortis; CICO IX, no. 84. Richard (La papauté, 224) has quite rightly identified Stephen’s archbishop’s title (Nicenus) as pertaining to the archdiocese of Bjni or Nik, west of Lake Sevan. The Chronicle of Oliwa mentions him as the “archiepiscopus Nycenensis.” The archbishop of Nik was one of the four archbishops who confirmed the election a new catholicos. Bjni belonged to the Zakharid family, Armenian princes (ishkhans) who were vassals of Georgia. Tournebi-ze, “Arménie,” in Dictionnaire d’histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique, Vol. 4 (Paris: Lefouzey et Ané, 1930), 322; Levon O. Babaian, Sotsial’no-ekonomicheskaia i politicheskaia istoriia Armenii v XIII–XIV vekakh (Moskva: Nauka, 1969), 179. On 15th October 1346 Stephen was granting indulgences, together with Nerses Balients, Archbishop of Manzikert, Nicholas, Latin Bishop of Ayas, Thaddaeus, Latin Bishop of Caffa, and Bishop Benedict of Simisso (Samsun), a city on the south coast of the Black Sea and a well-known port and Genoese emporium. The Franciscans were working there already by the early 14th century. Benedict may have been Armenian. Linguae, 269; Richard, La papauté, 171, 189, note 79, 235–236.
of the entry in the Chronicle of Oliwa on a Turkish invasion of Rhodes and the massacre of Christians on that island.\textsuperscript{517} At the Cistercian Abbey of Oliwa Archbishop Stephen blessed chalices and vestments, in Gdańsk he ordained a group of Cistercians, and consecrated a number of churches in Pomerania. The chronicler of Oliwa was surprised that “during the celebration of the Mass and in the signs and articles of the faith this lord acted in full concordance with us, in the manner and according to the faith of the Roman Church” (\emph{quod idem dominus in celebracione misse et in signis et in articulis fidei secundum modum et fidem Romane ecclesie nobiscum totaliter concordavit}).\textsuperscript{518} All the services in which they participated were most certainly performed in the Latin rite.\textsuperscript{519}

In 1348 the Black Death completely disorganised life in Europe and the Orient. Only 15 missionary stations were left by 1349. Virtually all of the Dominican missionaries and a large number of the Latin hierarchs of Armenia, Georgia, and Persia died of the plague.\textsuperscript{520} In the following year the Catholics of Armenia asked the new archbishop of Sultaniya, Giovanni Lumbello of Piacenza, who was also the Dominican vicar of the Congregation of Friars Pilgrims (\emph{Societas Fratrum Peregrinantium}), for new missionaries and bishops, as only three had survived the epidemic. Translations at Krna stopped; Peter of Aragon was one of the victims of the plague; and John of Krna, the monastery’s abbot, died on 6\textsuperscript{th} January 1349. The crisis hit the Franciscans as well, and they were left with only two outposts, at Erzurum and Tbilisi.\textsuperscript{521}


\textsuperscript{518} Hence, contrary to the opinion of J. Richard (\textit{La papauté}, 224), we may not assume that at this time (1346) Stephen embraced union. His familiarity with the Latin rite and the fact that he granted indulgences together with the Latin bishops is a contra-indication for such an assumption. Richard does not know the account in \textit{The Chronicle of Oliwa}.

\textsuperscript{519} On 1\textsuperscript{st} June 1353 at Avignon Stephen’s companion Cyriac, Abbot of the monastery “S. Marie Brichiensis ordinis S. Basillii,” was consecrated Bishop of Khlat on the shore of Lake Van in Greater Armenia; Richard, \textit{La papauté}, 221, note 215. Richard thinks that Cyriac was a monk at the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary "Messinensis" (not Brichiensis), viz. of Mamistra (Missis) in Cilicia. This is not a well-grounded supposition, as both churchmen were from Greater Armenia, not from Cilicia. The adjective "Brichiensis" is a corrupt form of Bjnikhiensis, which refers to the city of Bjni in the Canton of Nik, where there was a Monastery of the S. Astuacacin, viz. of the Holy Mother of God. Michel Thierry, \textit{Répertoire des monastères arméniens} (Turnhout: Brepols, 1993), no. 669.


\textsuperscript{521} Richard, \textit{La papauté}, 222.
At this time the pope’s legates were conducting negotiations on dogmatic issues in Sis. The results were not quite what they wanted. Constantine III, who was related to the old Hethumid dynasty, was not as eager to make concessions as his predecessor. Catholicos Mkhitar was much more restrained now than he had been in 1345. The policy of the Avignon popes was a threat to the very existence of the Armenian Uniate Church. In outcome of the activities of the Mendicants and Uniate Armenians many bishops in Greater Armenia were converting to the Latin rite, and things were going in the same way in Cilicia. In 1345 Clement VI had elevated a Premonstratensian, an Augustinian, and a Franciscan to the archdioceses of Anazarba, Mamistra, and Seleucia without the consent of the catholicos.\footnote{They were not appointments to Latin sees, since the only Latin dioceses in Cilicia were at Mamistra, Ayas, and Korykos. Some of them had become only titular by this time, due to the fact that these cities were now under Mameluke rule. Richard (La papauté, 209–210) considered these nominations an attempt to reinforce the authority of the Latin missionaries. However, the Pope seems to have expected to recover lost territories following the success of the crusade, and to install Latin bishops to their residences in the cathedral cities of those parts. Raising the prestige of the missionaries would have made sense if the local bishops had been able to perform their duties in these missionary lands, yet nearly all of them are on record as serving as auxiliary bishops in Western European dioceses.} Appointments to Armenian sees were conducted on the same principle as to Latin dioceses in Europe: they were reserved for the pope’s decision. Latinist Armenians obtained episcopal incumbencies from the curia at Avignon, bypassing the procedures used in the Armenian Church for centuries. Whereas in the Kingdom of Armenia decisions on the investiture of catholicoi and bishops rested with the king and the barons, beyond Cilicia a strong tradition still persisted of bishoprics passing down in the aristocratic families descended from their founders. But the Roman curia took absolutely no notice of these rules, especially in the Latinist environment, where elections carried out by chapters were rendered completely irrelevant, and provisions were granted not only for bishoprics, but also for lesser ecclesiastical offices. This led to tension in relations between the papacy and temporal power. However, in the West papal primacy was well-grounded, and sanctions applied by the pope were effective. Things were different in the East, where the laity was strongly attached to its traditions, rite, hierarchs, and catholicoi, and the opportunities available to the Avignon curia to apply pressure were limited. Nonetheless the policy pursued by the popes attempted to degrade catholicoi to the rank of Latin patriarchs, or even of metropolitans. Monasteries of all the Mendicant orders were to be set up in the Kingdom of Armenia, and together with the appointment of their members to Armenian dioceses, this was nothing short of a prelude to the
transformation of the Armenian Church into a Latin Church, at most with the preservation of Armenian as the language of its liturgy.

In the political realities of the Kingdom of Armenia, year by year losing more of its territory, a policy of this kind led to the limiting of the authority of its catholicos to a small area, further diminished by the Latin archdioceses coexisting on the same territory. The atmosphere for talks with the king, catholicos, and bishops of Cilicia was bound to be unpromising for the pope's emissaries. The legates presented the new *libellous* that had been elaborated at Avignon, with its schedule of errors, to which they expected the catholicos and his theologians to give a reply. During the talks the catholicos complained that the pope was curtailing and not respecting his prerogatives, infringing Armenian rights and freedoms, and the juridictive powers bestowed on his predecessors by Sylvester I. He maintained that the Armenian Church was an Apostolic Church, too, since it had been founded by the Apostles, Saints Thaddaeus, Jude, and Bartholomew, and proclaimed the doctrine they had taught. He complained that the Roman Church was undermining the validity of the sacraments administered in the Armenian Church and rite. The legates were displeased with the catholicos for not doing enough to instruct his flock on papal primacy and the faith of the Roman Church, for not being sympathetic to those Armenians who had embraced the Latin rite, for questioning the need for second baptism in the Latin rite, and for tolerating those who had received the Roman baptism only to repudiate it and return to the Armenian rite, for being too tolerant of Armenians distant from, or even defiant of the Roman Church, and for treating ordination administered by schismatic catholicoi and bishops as valid. They accused him of not regarding as heretics those who claimed there was only one nature in Christ, of acquiescing to the recitation of the Creed without *filioque*, of not doing enough to explain the Catholic teaching on this point, and of being too indulgent with those who denied it. They were critical of his failure to prohibit the writings of the *vardapet* Vardan Areveltsi, particularly his treatise against papal authority. They disapproved of his failure to condemn the Armenian synods which had passed resolutions contrary to the teachings of the Roman Church, and to denounce their participants as heretics. They criticised him for tolerating divorce but not admitting remarriage for the widowed.

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523 My reconstruction of the negotiations are based on the *libellus* which the Pope sent the Catholicos in 1351.

524 The Catholicos claimed that he in particular ("particulariter") and the faithful subject to his authority said the Creed with *filioque*.
They were not too certain of the orthodoxy of the Armenian doctrine on original sin or on what happened to souls after death, especially as regards Purgatory. They censured the catholicos for tolerating animal sacrifice, banning fish and oil on days of fasting and abstinence, and not observing fasts (ieiunium) without abstinence. They suspected that the Armenian Church still regarded the epiclesis, not Christ's words over the bread and wine, as the moment of transubstantiation. They held it against him that the sacrament of Confirmation was being neglected, that ordinary priests were being allowed to consecrate the chrism used for Confirmation and to administer Confirmation without having a dispensation issued by the Holy See, that individuals born out of wedlock were being ordained, and that no attention was being paid to the casus reservati (sins which only the pope could absolve). The legates had reservations concerning the Armenian calendar and saints, and the days on which their feasts were observed. Baptism was another bone of contention. The catholicos was firmly against the repetition of its administration and regarded this procedure as a mortal sin that not only failed to wash away sins but actually added to them.\footnote{525 “si aliqui baptizantur bis in eodem Baptismo, non delentur peccata illorum, imo potius adduntur et comittuntur per secundum Baptismum,” CICO IX, 309, no. 192.}

The legates had misgivings over the validity of Armenian baptism in view of the low qualifications of Armenian priests. They did not consider it appropriate to administer Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion all at the same time to small children, as was practised in the Armenian rite. They were critical of the repressive measures, including the death sentence, imposed on the re-baptised. The catholicos and Armenian bishops refused to submit their liturgical books for scrutiny by the legates, claiming that there were no errors in them, only “the glory and honouring of God,” and if there was anything in them that needed correction, they would correct it themselves. They also refused to submit the allegedly heretical works of Armenian “doctors.” Finally the catholicos notified the legates in writing that he refused to continue the discussion. The efforts made by Daniel of Tabriz had evidently not been of much avail. The legates left Armenia discontented, convinced that the catholicos was deceitful and insincere, and that on many points the king, the catholicos, and the faithful had strayed from Catholic truth (\emph{a veritate catholica oberrabant}).\footnote{526 CICO IX, no. 176.} Bishop Antonio of Gaeta died on the way back; Giovanni, bishop-elect of Corona, was the only legate to reach Avignon and was soon elevated to the archdiocese of Siena. But so dramatic was the predicament hanging over Armenia that King Constantine sent an envoy out with the legates on their return journey. He arrived in Avignon in

\footnote{525 “si aliqui baptizantur bis in eodem Baptismo, non delentur peccata illorum, imo potius adduntur et comittuntur per secundum Baptismum,” CICO IX, 309, no. 192.}

\footnote{526 CICO IX, no. 176.}
September 1349, with letters from the king and the catholicos. The former asked for assistance, while the latter responded to the 53 allegations.\(^{527}\) The Armenian envoy stayed in Avignon until September 1351.\(^{528}\)

The catholicos was still under suspicion of unorthodoxy, and his jurisdiction was being infringed by successive appointments made at Avignon. A year later the pope appointed the monk Cyriac to the archdiocese of Khlat on the shores of Lake Van, annulling a nomination made by other ecclesiastical authorities, which presumably meant the catholicos.\(^{529}\) A commission consisting of cardinals and other church dignitaries, theologians, and canonists, including Giovanni, the former legate, was examining the catholicos’ answers to the 53 allegations sent by the pope.\(^{530}\) In 1351 before his departure on his return journey, the king’s envoy was given a letter from the pope to the king. In it the pope asked the king to persuade, or if need be compel the catholicos to give straightforward, candid answers to a new questionnaire compiled by the papal commission, which had found several ambiguities in his replies, some of which, in the pope’s opinion, could have been the fault of his scribes or translators. At any rate the pope was not sure whether the Church of Lesser Armenia (viz. Cilicia) sincerely professed the pure Catholic faith.\(^{531}\) He sent letters to the Latin hierarchs of Cyprus – the patriarch of Jerusalem, the archbishop of Nicosia, and the bishops of Paphos and Limassol – requiring them to send appropriately educated legates and translators, or to go themselves to Armenia to cross-examine the catholicos, who was to provide unambiguous answers in writing. This was the pope’s condition for a subsidy of 6 thousand florins’ aid for Constantine.\(^{532}\)

From the pope’s letter we learn that he wanted the catholicos and his bishops and faithful to acknowledge the Roman Church, with the pope at its head, as

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\(^{527}\) CICO IX, nos. 176, 192: “quae scrisistis in capitulis LIII” (312).

\(^{528}\) The knight Constantine Cremanensis “de Portella,” also known as Carsilly, served as envoy. On 24th June 1351 Clement VI issued recommendations for him to the Kings of Armenia and Cyprus, and the Master of the Knights of St. John. *Cilician Kingdom of Armenia*, 130; Richard, *La papauté*, 214.

\(^{529}\) The Pope wrote that following the death of Bishop John, who had died “extra Curiam,” he reserved the right to make a provision for “decernentes extunc irritum et inane, si secus super his a quocunque, quavis auctoritate, scinter vel ignoranter contingeret attemptari,” CICO IX, no. 184. Cyriac’s predecessor, John, had been a Latin as well and belonged to Nerses Balients’ faction. Richard FitzRalph dedicated his treatise to Nerses and to John, whom he described as “electus Clatensis in Armenia Maiori.” Richard, *La papauté*, 221, note 216.

\(^{530}\) CICO IX, no. 190.

\(^{531}\) CICO IX, nos. 190, 192.

\(^{532}\) It was to be paid out by the Bishop of Paphos. The Pope also wrote on the matter to Hugh, King of Cyprus, the Master of the Knights of St. John, and to the Captain of Smyrna. CICO IX, nos. 176, 176a, 191.
the only Catholic Church with true salvation, true baptism and remission of sins, and that all who had fallen away from it were schismatics and heretics who would never be saved. The catholicos was to accept that St. Peter had been given the fullness of power (plenitudo potestatis) by Jesus Christ himself, whereas the rest of the Apostles, Jude, Thaddaeus, and Bartholomew included, were by the will of Christ subject to Peter’s authority, and none of them had full power and authority over Christians. He was to acknowledge that every Roman pontiff was a canonical successor to the rights Peter had received from Christ. In particular he was expected to make a declaration that only the popes had full jurisdiction over the Church, that they could judge and appoint ecclesiastical judges over all the faithful. In this connection the pope asked the catholicos if he believed that popes would never be subject to anyone else's jurisdiction, and that their verdicts could neither be appealed against nor were forensically subject to the jurisdiction of emperors, kings, princes, or any other temporal power. The catholicos was also to acknowledge that fullness of power was expressed in the pope’s right to transfer patriarchs, catholicoi, archbishops, bishops, abbots, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries to other offices of higher or lower rank, and if the need arose, the pope had the last word in cases concerning degradation, dismissal, excommunication, and condemnation. Only the pope had the right to institute canons, issue indulgences for ad limina visits, pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and for the remission of punishment for sins. The pope asked the catholicos if he believed that all who rebelled against the faith of the Roman Church and who died without having repented would be damned forever and cast into hell; and whether he was ready to accept that the pope had the last word in matters concerning the administration of the sacraments, and that only the pope could “tolerate diverse rites in Christ’s Churches and grant permission for their preservation” (diversos ritus Ecclesiarum Christi tolerare et etiam concedere, ut serventur). He wanted the catholicos to say whether he agreed that the Armenians loyal to the pope and had embraced the Latin rite had done well and would be saved. Furthermore the catholicos was to accept

533 Nerses Balients accused the Armenian Church that it considered only itself Apostolic and Catholic, and that this was why its head used the title of catholicos. The 1345 Synod answered this charge as follows: “quod Armeni de Maiori Armenia, propter hoc quod habent catholicon, dicunt se solam ecclesiam catholicam et apostolicam, hoc non audivimus; sed quod Ecclesia Armenorum est apostolica, propter hoc quod habet fidem quam Apostoli praedicaverunt, hoc verum est, quia symbolum Ecclesiae Armenorum, quod nunc habet, est sanctum et rectum et conveniens evangelicae et apostolicae praedicationi, sicut receptimus a Sancta Ecclesia et a Sanctis Patribus nostris,” CICO VIII, 189, no. 59. “Ecclesia Armenorum secundum fidem christianam, in qua est, de Catholica Ecclesia est, tamen ipsa per se non est tota et universalis Ecclesia,” CICO VIII, 191.

that no temporal ruler had the power to make appointments to a higher rank in the church hierarchy, nor to do so on his own authority. In matters of faith the pope was the supreme authority, and his decisions were incontrovertible, since he held the authority of the keys Jesus Christ had entrusted to Peter. As the catholicos had written that his authority came from the Old and New Testament, the teachings of the Apostles Thaddaeus and Bartholomew, and the teachings of the councils that had been passed down to the Armenian Church, he was asked whether he thought that the doctrine in the Scriptures had been instituted (edita) by Thaddaeus and Bartholomew, or merely expostulated (manifestata) by them. He was also asked whether the power and authority of any of the Apostles (Thaddaeus, Jude, Bartholomew, Andrew, James the Greater and James the Less, John the Evangelist or any of the others) was greater than Peter’s power and authority.

After this veritable dictatus papae on papal primacy the compilers of the questionnaire moved on to doctrinal matters, above all filioque. They wanted the Catholicos to admit that the ex Patre filioque doctrine – the belief that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son – was necessary for salvation, and to recognise all who denied it as schismatics and heretics. He was also expected to have the Symbol with the phrase filioque chanted on days when this was done in the Roman Church, and to have the Roman doctrine on this point explained to his congregations. As the catholicos had written that in Lesser Armenia particularly (particulariter) he himself recited the Creed with filioque and that some Armenians (aliqui ex Armenis) followed his example, although generally (generaliter) he required all of them to do so, he was asked what he meant by particulariter – did it mean “aside” (ad partem), not “in public” (in publico)? – and whether aliqui ex Armenis meant only a few, as the word generaliter suggested. The pope also wanted a clear exposition of the doctrine of the two natures in the single person of Christ, and a declaration that all who believed in only one “nature” were heretics; he also wanted Eutyches, Dioscorus, and other heretics regarded as the creators of Monophysitism condemned, and the acknowledgement that Pope Leo, the

535 “si credidisti, quod doctrina Novi et Veteris Testamenti a beatis Apostolis Thadeo et Bartholomaeo fuit edita vel solis illis praedicantibus Ecclesiae Catholicae per eos manifestata.”
co-creator of the Dyophysite doctrine, was in Heaven with the other saints, looking at the Divine Essence. He wanted the catholicos to make a similar declaration on Monothelitism and its makers, Macarios, bishop of Antioch, and his companions, who had been condemned by Pope Agatho at the Sixth Ecumenical Council in Constantinople. In addition the pope called for the condemnation of all the errors in Vardan Areveltsi’s treatise on papal primacy, the recognition of all the Armenian synods which defied the Roman faith as heretical assemblies (congregationes haereticorum), and the acceptance of the Roman teaching on original sin and life after death. Since the catholicos had firmly expressed his opposition to second baptism, a series of questions was put to him concerning the Armenian baptism. Did persons who had sincere doubts as to the validity of their baptism and had been re-baptised in the Latin rite according to the formula Ego te baptiso in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti have their sins – both original sin and their actual sins – remitted? Did he believe that the formula used by the Roman Church had been instituted by Jesus Christ and passed down by the Apostles for use by the Catholic Church, that is the Church of Rome; in other words, was it a doubtful, uncertain formula, and was it used by the Apostles? He was also asked for his position on conditional baptism.

As the catholicos had said that one who had doubts could receive baptism again in the Armenian rite, did he not think that the Roman Church and her learned doctors, who could ground their opinions on the authority of the Scriptures, would be better equipped to dispel such doubts? Putting this question to the catholicos, the pope pointed out that not only were senior Armenian churchmen unsympathetic and lacking in understanding as regards doubters, but instead had them scourged, imprisoned, or put to death, as they had done with those Armenians who had received conditional baptism from the pope’s legates. The catholicos was expected to say whether he acknowledged that in the face of imminent death baptism in the Roman rite could be administered by anyone, even a woman. And did he not deem it improper to have the Gospel read or prayers said between the recitation of the baptismal formula and the pouring of the water over the person being baptised? Would it not be better to have the aspersion with the baptismal water follow on immediately after the recitation of the baptismal formula? Somewhat irritated, the pope wrote that he wanted to know the catholicos’ exact position on these matters because the arguments in the written answers he had sent were too vague and inconclusive (Quod pro tanto a te scire volumus, quia misisti quasdam rationes debiliter concludentes, pro eo quam maxime, quod supponis in omnibus
illis rationibus, quae deberes probare). If the catholicos considered baptism received in a Catholic and Apostolic Church, such as his own, valid, did he not consider the Roman Church Catholic and Apostolic as well? Armenians were still suspected of meaning only the Armenian Church when they said in the Creed that they believed “in this Holy Catholic Church” (*Et in hanc sanctam Catholicam*). Hence the catholicos was asked whether he was ready to modify this passage in the Creed to the words as said in the Roman Creed (*Et in unam, sanctam Catholicam*). Next the catholicos was questioned on matters relating to the sacrament of Matrimony, its indissolubility, and the possibility of a second marriage for widows and widowers.

Since the catholicos had promised that seminarians from his flock would receive Holy Orders only from bishops subject to his jurisdiction, who like him acknowledged the authority of the Apostolic See, he was asked whether he admitted the possibility of their ordination by the pope or other bishops designated by him. Then a question was put to him which sounded rather devious, whether he thought it right that Armenians subject to his authority should be more (*immediatius et principalius*) obedient to the pope than to himself. As the catholicos had stood up for *matagh*, the native Armenian custom of offering up an animal sacrifice and eating the meat during funerals, which was treated as a charitable deed for the poor and clergy, he was asked whether it would not be better to give them bread, wine, cloth, or other commodities they were more in need of. He was likewise quizzed on the specifically Armenian customs of fasting and abstinence. The catholicos claimed that the Armenian Church prescribed abstinence from oil and fish.

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538 “The reason why we want to obtain so much information from you is because some of the theses you have sent are poorly grounded, especially as in all of them you draw conclusions which you should substantiate.” CICO IX, 310, no. 192.

539 The position the Synod of 1345 took on *istam* was absolutely clear: “Falsum est hoc, quia talem intellectum numquam in symbolo audivimus, licet et hoc vocabulum dupliciter invenimus in symbolo Armenorum; universaliter dicunt: ‘credunt in hanc sola universalis et apostolica ecclesia;’ et hoc sic intelligimus, quod quidquid dicit symbolum, a principio usque hic et quod post sequitur usque ad finem, credit sola et universalis et apostolica ecclesia. Sed quia dicunt, ‘credimus in hanc solam universalis, etc.;’ intelligimus ‘in hanc’ pro una catholica et apostolica Ecclesia, quae orthodoxe confitetur omnia, que sunt in symbolo et non solum pro generatione nostra, ut false detrahirum,” CICO VIII, 191, no. 59.

540 “si credis, quod omnes, qui tibi oboediunt, teneantur immediatius et principalius quam tibi, Romano Pontifici oboediunt?” CICO IX, 311.

541 An issue which came up in connection with *matagh* was the division of foods into a permitted and a prohibited category, which had been abolished “per adventum Christi.” Nonetheless, the catholicos was asked whether *matagh* consisting of the meat of animals which were prohibited under the law of Moses was more beneficial for the souls of the dead than *matagh* made of meat that was allowed. CICO IX, 311.
on days of fasting and abstinence, and considered those who had only one meal on days of fasting as worthy of respect. The pope asked if this type of fasting had been instituted by the Catholic Church or by the Fathers, and if it was necessary. Were those who did not keep the one-meal fast in breach of the fasts instituted by the Roman Church and the Fathers? Subsequently the pope put questions to the catholicos on transubstantiation and epiclesis. Was he prepared to remove the latter from the liturgy of the Mass, or to amend it so that it should not suggest that transubstantiation occurred due to epiclesis? Concluding his analysis of the catholicos’ answers to the 53 points, Clement VI asked him if he was ready to introduce all the reforms which the pope – in his capacity as vicar of Christ, successor to St. Peter, the Prince of Apostles, wielding full power over all Christians – required of him, and to submit to the corrections laid down in future by his successors and by the Church of Rome.\footnote{CICO 312, no. 192.}

Moving on to the instruction compiled by the pope’s legates, to which the catholicos had also supplied answers, the pope demanded the consecration of the oils used for Confirmation, and the administration of this sacrament, be solely the prerogative of episcopal authority, and only in exceptional cases devolved to a priest, on the grounds of a special dispensation granted by the Apostolic See. Hence he asked if it was appropriate for those who had been confirmed by a priest without a papal dispensation to be re-confirmed in accordance with the canonical provisions. Since the catholicos had promised that Holy Communion would not be administered to children at their Baptism, the Pope wanted him to promise that it would not be administered to persons under the age of seven. The catholicos was also to concede that a moribund person who did not receive the sacrament of Extreme Unction for lack of faith as well as a priest who failed to administer it for the same reason both sinned grievously and were in error. Since the catholicos had written that the Armenian Church celebrated the major feasts and holy days at the same time as the Roman Church, but the rest in accordance with the Armenian calendar, the pope asked him whether he was prepared to introduce the saints’ days generally observed in the Roman Church, according to the Roman calendar. As the catholicos had replied that in accordance with the will of the Church of Rome the veneration of the saints approved and honoured in the Catholic and Apostolic Church had already been brought in, this made the pope wonder what the catholicos meant by “Catholic and Apostolic Church” – did he mean the Church of Rome? He (the catholicos) seemed to be making a distinction and separating the two concepts. The pope demanded the catholicos present the books used during Mass, for the liturgy of the canonical hours, ordination and episcopal consecration for scrutiny by
his legates. And he pointed out that the catholicos had given no answer to the question of the books by the Armenian doctors suspected of heresy, which, as he had been informed, were full of errors and heresy.

The pope held it against the catholicos that he had not answered 16 of the libellus' points and wanted to know why. He considered the catholicos' answers dubious, unclear, and suspect. He did not hide his indignation that the catholicos dared to perform canonisations and grant dispensations to candidates for the priesthood who were born out of wedlock: these were the prerogatives of the Apostolic See. He wanted the catholicos to give him a written assurance that henceforth he would accept, teach, and observe the traditions of the orthodox Fathers, and the decrees and constitutions of the See of Rome, for, he wrote, he was constantly hearing that the catholicos had not kept and were not keeping the promises they had made to the popes. He deplored the fact that his legates had been given a cold reception, and that the faith of the Church of Rome, outside of which there is neither grace nor salvation, had been made to look ridiculous. So he called the catholicos to swear on the Gospel that he would keep his promises concerning the faith. He and his bishops were to pledge that in all matters they would carry out the pope's commands sicut vere oboedientes. If they did that the pope promised to honour the catholicos and Church of Armenia with greater and more notable privileges, graces, and freedoms. This detailed and extremely abundant list of allegations concerning religious matters stood in stark contrast to the generalised orders to assist Armenia which he gave to the master of the Knights of St. John, the king of Cyprus, and the captain of Smyrna.543

The bishops of Cyprus, whom the pope had made responsible for the duty to conduct negotiations with the catholicos, could not find a translator qualified and experienced enough to provide translation and interpreting services for the difficult theological discussions, so they stopped at dispatching the pope's letters to Armenia. The king and the catholicos replied immediately and sent their letters to Cyprus, expressing their readiness to carry out the pope's postulates. However, they, too, claimed that they could not find an adequately qualified translator who would not mistranslate their answers. The bishops appointed by the pope for the task wrote to Clement VI informing him of this.544

543 The prospect of effective assistance was poor, because Western forces were engaged on keeping Smyrna, and soon thereafter on plans to help the Byzantine Empire against the Ottoman Turks, who had established a foothold on the Dardanelles in 1354. Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, 130.

544 Unfortunately their answers have not survived. We learn of the developments from Innocent VI's letter, CICO X, no. 20. Richard (La papauté, 215) is wrong that Clement VI's
Clement VI did not live to see a resolution to the Armenian dogmatic issues. He died on 6th December 1352. His successor, Innocent VI, elected on 18th December of the same year, continued Clement's policy. On 29th April 1354 he appointed the monk Zachary Marchart to the archdiocese of St. Thaddaeus in Greater Armenia. Zachary was consecrated by Pietro, bishop of Ostia, and received the pallium from two cardinal deacons, Galhard, titular of Santa Lucia in Selci, and Bertrand, titular of Sant'Eustachio; he must definitely have converted to the Latin rite. Since he was acknowledged as the primate of Greater Armenia, as its Latin metropolitan he could be the leader of the Armenian dioceses and archdioceses which had adopted the Latin rite. Undoubtedly he severed his links with the Catholicos of Cilicia and ceased to perform the duties of his exarch. On 1st August 1353 Zachary was granted indulgences for St. Thaddaeus' Cathedral, whereupon he left Avignon, accompanying the envoys of Casimir the Great, king of Poland, who were returning home. On his journey to Greater Armenia he stopped at Bochnia in Poland, and on 17th August 1354 granted indulgences to a local literary fraternity attached to Bochnia parish church.

letters were not translated. The King and the Catholicos wrote that they were not able to “responsiones ad praefatos articulos requisitos perfecte facere, prout intendebant efficere, quam primum huiusmodi interpres adesset.” So we may surmise that Daniel of Tabriz was no longer in Armenia by that time.

545 CICO X, no. 14.
546 We learn from the papal bull that the archdiocese had become vacant following the death of Zachary Manuelian, who died after 1340. In the Mekhitarist Library in Venice there is a Bible (no. 935) copied in St. Thaddaeus' Monastery before 1341, when there was a new archbishop named John. As this Bible was in the possession of anti-unionists in 1341, we may assume that the monastery passed into the hands of traditionalists. John may have been the last Uniate archbishop, consecrated by the Catholicos of Cilicia and following the Armenian rite. See Lilit Zakarian, “Un artista anti-unitore del XIV secolo,” in Roma-Armenia, 177.
547 On 2nd May 1353 a monk named John was granted a provision for the Armenian Archdiocese of Apahunik after the death of one Gregory. Making this appointment, the Pope cancelled earlier nominations made by other ecclesiastical authorities. The Archdiocese of Apahunik was situated north of Manzikert. The new archbishop had been a monk in the Monastery of St. Gregory the Enlightener at Kokhp (Goghp) in Greater Armenia. M. Thierry, Répertoire, 215, no. 325 on the location of the monastery. The papal bull says the monastery belonged to the Diocese of St. Thaddaeus, at a fair distance from Artaz. Thus we may conclude that the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of St. Thaddaeus extended over all the Uniate monasteries in Greater Armenia. In the bull nominating John the Pope recommended him to Karokh, whom he addressed as “dominus Asiae.” So Karokh must have been the Armenian prince of Apahunik and a convert to Catholicism. CICO X, nos. 15, 24. See Richard, La papauté, 221, note 215 on the identification of the archbishopric.
Meanwhile a plan emerged to return to negotiations with the Armenian Church in Cilicia. Innocent VI decided to send none other than Nerses Balients to Armenia as his translator. Nerses, now archbishop of Manzikert, had offered to do the job.\textsuperscript{549} At this time Innocent was conducting negotiations for church union with the emperor of Byzantium John Kantakouzenos.\textsuperscript{550} Nerses Balients did not leave for Armenia until early 1355.\textsuperscript{551} He was accompanied by William Bonet (Bonatti), the Dominican provincial for the Holy Land. The pope gave them orders to travel to Armenia with a copy of the questionnaire Clement VI had sent out, which they were to get from the archbishop of Nicosia and the bishop of Paphos.\textsuperscript{552} Nothing is known about this phase of the negotiations.\textsuperscript{553} Meanwhile James of Sis, newly re-elected catholicos after Mkhitar of Krna, arrived in Avignon.\textsuperscript{554} Although his visit helped to clarify several points, there is no doubt that the times when there was close co-operation between the Churches was receding into the past.

In 1359 Mesrop of Artaz (d. 1372) was appointed the new catholicos. Artaz was a province with a flourishing Catholic movement. Mesrop’s pontificate marks the beginning of the reintegration of the Church of Cilicia with the Armenian cultural environment and the restoration of the once forfeited bishoprics to the jurisdiction of the catholicos of Sis. The political situation in the region, more and more dramatic for the Armenian state of Cilicia, had an effect on this process. In 1360 the emir of Aleppo invaded and occupied the plain of Cilicia with the cities of Tarsus and Adana, prompting the inhabitants of Korykos to put themselves under the care of Peter, the Catholic king of Cyprus, whose fleet broke the siege of that coastal city. Peter built a ring of garrisons around Korykos and manned them with his troops.\textsuperscript{555} Cut off from the sea, the Kingdom of Armenia held on only in the mountain

\textsuperscript{549} The Pope gave him a first-rate recommendation, writing "te dumtaxat, qui armenicam originarium tibi linguam perfecte noveras et latinam," CICO X, no. 20.
\textsuperscript{550} CICO X, no. 21. See Oskar Halecki, Un empereur de Byzance à Rome (Warszawa: Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie, 1930), 9–30.
\textsuperscript{551} CICO X, no. 59.
\textsuperscript{552} CICO X, no. 20.
\textsuperscript{553} However, we do know that by this time both the King and the Catholicos were allowing vardapets from the East to preach; Roma-Armenia, 180.
\textsuperscript{554} According to the early 15th-century Uniate author Mkhitarich of Aparan, James sent his envoys to Avignon with a profession of faith and a declaration of obedience to Pope Innocent VI. The papal sources do not confirm this. Tournebize, Histoire politique, 686; Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 43 (1959): 114; Richard, La papauté, 215.
\textsuperscript{555} Mikaelian, Istoriia Kilikiiskogo, 467.
region. The Cilician Church, which had been bullied by Latin theologians and was now anxious about its future, looked to the rest of Armenia and the Armenian cultural sphere, which had been under Islamic rule already for a long time. As the prospects of Western assistance diminished, the pro-Latin faction dwindled, while a group pursuing the opposite policy and envisaging what had befallen the Church as a punishment from God for abandoning their native religion, was growing in strength. In 1361 Nerses Balients, the archenemy of the national Church, died in Cyprus. His ring and small silver seal passed down to the collector of the Apostolic Camera. It was probably no coincidence that the synod of the Armenian Church that met in the very same year at Sis decided to return to its original rite, revoking many of the Latin practices including *commixtio*. The Armenian Church returned to the status quo in the late 13th century. Not long afterwards Catholicos Mesrop, who had just consecrated Gregory Armenian archbishop of Lwów, wrote to the Armenians of that city, telling them that the clergy they had had hitherto without the catholicos’ approval had been hirelings, not true shepherds. Writing to the clergy, he warned them against attempting to defy the order he had laid down, or becoming followers of any other bishop. This leads us to suspect that in Armenia Nerses had been left out on a limb, while the king and the catholicos had been playing for time. Undoubtedly the decisions taken at the synod were made with the consent of King Constantine III, whose right to the throne of Armenia was queried in the West. The kingdom’s pro-Western barons were still pinning their hopes on Cyprus, whose king, Peter, was rallying forces in the West for one of the last major crusades against the Mamelukes. When Constantine died in 1363 the king of Cyprus and the barons attempted to put Bohemond, a Lusignan, on the throne of Armenia. And when Bohemond died, Pope Urban V issued an address to the Catholic bishops, clergy, and barons of the Kingdom of Armenia, urging them to have Leo de Lusignan, “a Catholic devoted to the Holy Church of Rome” and a relative of Peter, king of Cyprus, for their

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559 CICO XI, no. 73.
monarch. The pope’s address, dated 3rd April 1365, had been written under Peter’s inspiration. Characteristically, the catholicos was not on the list of the letter’s addressees.\(^{560}\)

However, the candidate who was elected king of Armenia was Constantine IV (1365–1373), a relative of the deceased monarch.\(^{561}\) In the autumn of 1365 Peter took Alexandria, but his expedition ended in total failure and the barbaric sacking and looting of the city. Its outcome was the persecution of the indigenous Christians, the destruction of their churches, the closing down of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and an end to pilgrimages, and finally a stop to flourishing economic relations. Quite rightly suspecting that new expeditions against them might be launched from Cilicia, the Mamelukes decided to put an end to that state. Peter tried his luck in Europe once more.\(^{562}\) In Venice in the autumn of 1368 he received an Armenian embassy which came to offer him the crown of Armenia. But in 1369 he was murdered in Nicosia by his own vassals. In the same year an Armenian embassy arrived in the West, desperately begging for help. The pope was powerless. Even though he knew that nothing but a new crusade would be of any use, he saw no prospects for its organisation. Nonetheless he recommended the envoys to Philip, Latin emperor of Constantinople and duke of Tarentum and Achaea, and to Louis, king of Hungary.\(^{563}\) The pro-Western barons of Armenia and Mary, the dowager queen, who was descended through her mother from the House of Anjou, continued to seek assistance. In 1371 Mary’s envoy, John, archbishop of Sis and chancellor of the kingdom, visited her relatives in Western Europe, and thereafter Pope

\(^{560}\) “Venerabilibus fratribus … archiepiscopis et episcopis ac dilectis filiis aliis ecclesiarum et monasteriorum Praealitis et rectoribus et personis ecclesiasticis nec non magnatibus alisque nobilibus et populis catholicis universis regni Armeniae, salutem” etc. In 1370, when Urban V appointed a new bishop of Korykos, a diocese within the dominions of the King of Cyprus, he called him a suffragan of the Archdiocese of Tarsus; CICO XI, no. 201.

\(^{561}\) According to the chronicler Jean Dardel, Constantine III wanted to abdicate in favour of Peter, and did not inform Leo of the papal bull recognising his (Leo’s) claim to the throne. In defiance of the pro-Western faction, Constantine pursued a friendly policy on Egypt. RHC Doc. Arm. II, s. 35. Mikaeljan, Istoriia Kilikiiskogo, 471.

\(^{562}\) In 1366 Pope Urban V wrote to Casimir the Great, King of Poland, asking him “ut ad defensionem regni Cypri et insulae Rhodi fratrum Hospitalis s. Iohannis Ierosolimitani contra Saracenos et Turchos de aliqua gente armigera velit subvenire,” BPol, 2, no. 1527.

\(^{563}\) CICO XI, nos. 166, 166a. The Pope also made a general appeal to the King of Hungary, the Doges of Venice and Genoa, and to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John on the Island of Rhodes to come to the assistance of the Kingdom of Armenia. However, in August 1370 Venice and Genoa concluded a peace treaty with Egypt in Cairo, and in the autumn of that year the Pope permitted them to trade with that country. Halecki, Un empereur, 185–186, 222.
Gregory XI. In January 1371 the pope wrote to Philip and Joanna, queen of Sicily, with a plan to marry Mary to a prince capable of helping the declining kingdom. He was thinking of Otto of Brunswick, a distant descendant of Henry the Lion. But he was under no illusion of what was in store for Armenia. He deplored the fact that the kings and princes of Europe engaged in wars against each other, making it impossible to organise a crusade. He advised Mary to seek the counsel of her relatives and of Louis, king of Hungary, about a prospective marriage; and he asked her to trust in God and be faithful to the Catholic faith professed by the Church of Rome, working for its dissemination among her subjects by "well-experienced men who were good Catholics." In other words he regarded the members of the Armenian Church in Cilicia as schismatics. He sent out letters to the doges of Venice and Genoa, the master of the Knights of St. John, and the governor of the Kingdom of Cyprus asking them to consider how Armenia might be helped, and wrote that until quite recently the entire Kingdom of Armenia had been Catholic, which was a rather paradoxical thing to write in view of the recent inquisition proceedings.

In the same period Constantine IV was conducting talks with the Lusignan dynasty of Cyprus on the prospect of abdicating; and also with the sultan on ceding the rest of his kingdom to him. As a result in April 1373 he was murdered by his own subjects. His successor, Leo de Lusignan, on reaching Sis did not want to be crowned in the Armenian rite. He only withdrew his objections under pressure from the barons and had two coronation ceremonies. In 1375 Sis was taken by the Mamelukes, and the king, who had been abandoned by the catholicos, the bishops, and his subjects, was taken into captivity in Cairo, where he stayed for many years. This marked the end of the Kingdom of Armenia.

The editor of CICO claims that John was a Franciscan (CICO XII, no. 18), which seems doubtful as John did not know any Latin and had to use the services of a translator named Manuel. Nevertheless, in 1371 the Pope tried to organise a crusade which was to start in March 1372. Halecki, Un empereur, 251.

"temporibus non longe praeteritis totum erat catholicum," CICO XII, no. 18c; see Mikaelian, Istoriia Kilikiiskogo, 474. Urban V had said as much already in 1365: "Dum in apostolicae considerationis memoriam revocamus, quod regnum Armeniae fuit olim latissimum, afflubat divitis et erat potentia gloriosum in eoque splendebat orthodoxae fidei claritas [my italics, K.S.] et fervebat devotio populorum," CICO XI, no. 73.

Mikaelian, Istoriia Kilikiiskogo, 474–475. See Halecki, Un empereur, 253–257 for the general political situation in Europe at the time.

Leo de Lusignan did not want to be consecrated by the Catholicos, but by the Bishop of Nebron, who was a Dominican and had accompanied him to Sis. This episode shows that the pro-Western barons also observed the Armenian traditions. In 1374 the Pope recommended the new king to various dignitaries in the Kingdom of Armenia, CICO XI, no. 73.

Steven Runciman (A History of the Crusades, Vol. 3 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987], 408–416) is wrong that the last Armenian king fled to Paris. See Mikaelian, Istoriia...
in Cilicia, and of a certain stage in Armenian relations with the papacy.\textsuperscript{570} The catholicos found himself under Muslim rule. The fall of the Kingdom of Cilicia freed him from the political pressure that had facilitated Roman interference, and gave him the opportunity for reconciliation with long-lost coreligionists. The pontifical records went silent for many years on Armenian catholicoi and their Church. Henceforth the Apostolic See was concerned for the needs only of those Armenians who adhered to the Latin Church.

\textit{Veri Catholici: Armenians in the Latin Church in the Near East}

Disputes over the validity of baptism in the Armenian rite and their consequences, conversions to the Latin rite, brought some Armenians out of their native community of worship, giving rise to a group of Latinist Armenians, with their Latinist bishops of Armenian stock. They were to bring life to the Latin dioceses in the East, both the extinct ones as well as newly created ones. A forecast of this phenomenon may be observed already in the late 1320s, in the ecclesiastical career of Thaddaeus, first appointed Latin bishop of Korykos in Cilicia (1328), and subsequently Latin bishop of Caffa in Crimea (1334–1357). But it was not until the pontificate of Clement VI that Armenians started to be appointed to senior church offices in the region on a wider scale. On 30th May 1342 John David, prior of the Armenian monastery in Bologna and formerly a monk of the Tsartsor monastery, was appointed Latin archbishop of Edessa.\textsuperscript{571} He was consecrated by a group of cardinals in Avignon, and in 1345 received the pallium at his own request. Perhaps the pope expected the appointee to revive the Latin metropolitan see, long since defunct, as he recommended the new archbishop to his chapter, clergy, laity, and suffragans, bestowing a pontifical blessing on him and ordering him to make his way to his see. In the environs of Edessa there had always been a large Armenian population.\textsuperscript{572}

\textsuperscript{570} When Pope Gregory XI was organising an international anti-Turkish crusade in 1375, he drew attention to the deplorable situation of Armenia. Halecki, \textit{Un empereur}, 316.

\textsuperscript{571} CICO IX, 32–34, no. 18.

\textsuperscript{572} Martin, the nominee's predecessor, died “apud dictam Sedem.” John David, an Armenian monk from the “Diocese of St. Thaddaeus,” was a member of Nerses Balients' faction, since
On 31st July 1346 the Pope elevated the Armenian Antonine of Alexandria, a Franciscan, to the see of Hierapolis (Manbij), in the Latin patriarchate of Antioch. On 9th January 1349 the vacant archdiocese of Berrhoé (Aleppo) was filled. The new incumbent was the Armenian Gregory, who had been a resident of the Armenian monastery in Pisa still in 1338. On 13th November 1349 Thomas, prior of the Armenian Monastery of the Holy Spirit at Orvieto, became the Latin bishop of Simisso (Samsun) in Asia Minor. On 15th January 1350 the Armenian Emanuel, prior of the Armenian Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Naples, was elevated to the diocese of Kephalenia and Zakynthos on the islands of the Ionian Sea, in the metropolitan archdiocese of Patras. In 1359 the Armenian Dominican Thomas de Illeye (viz. Lwów; the city’s Kipchak name is Ilov) received a pontifical provision for the Latin diocese of Lwów. In 1360 Innocent VI appointed Isaias, son of Aslan, archbishop of Seleucia; the name suggests he was an Armenian. The next stage in this process was the numerical preponderance of Armenian converts in Latin-rite communities. Paradoxically, in some areas of the Near East the Latinisation of Armenians brought about the Armenisation of the Latin Church. Armenian converts brought their native language into the Latin-rite liturgy. The instrument effecting this transformation were two new Catholic congregations, the Uniate Friars citra mare.

In 1344 they jointly petitioned the Pope to appoint Stephen of Noradunc (Noravank?) prior of the Armenian priory in Bologna, which the Pope granted. CICO IX, 62–63, no. 34. See CICO IX, 32–34, no. 18; 104–105, no. 63, 202–204, no. 126.

573 In 1348 Clement VI stressed that Antonine had spent 25 years among unbelievers, had converted many of them, and had a good knowledge of the situation in the Sultanate of Egypt. However, Antonine did not get to his see and performed episcopal duties in England and Spain, and later became Bishop of Durazzo. Jean Richard, La papauté et les missions d’Orient au moyen âge (XIIIe–XVe siècle), 2 ed. (Rome: École française de Rome, 1998), s. 209–210.


575 Oudenrijn, Linguae, 269; see Richard, La papauté, 189 (note 79), 235. Perhaps Thomas never got to his bishopric and died in Perugia in 1385, hence his title, “episcopus Italiae.” Oudenrijn, Linguae, 263.

576 His rival for the title was Theodore, an Armenian who was also granted a provision for these two amalgamated dioceses. After his consecration Theodore was moved to a bishopric in the Metropolitan See of Taranto. CICO X, 32–35, nos. 17, 17a.

577 Władysław Abraham, Powstanie organizacji Kościoła łacińskiego na Rusi (Lwów: Towarzystwo dla Popierania Nauki Polskiej, 1904), 248–249.

The same period saw the completion of the setting up of a congregation founded at Krna in John XXII’s pontificate. Its first monks made their profession before John of Florence, bishop of Tbilisi, in the 1340s. The Uniate Friars of Armenia modelled their habit, rule, and constitutions on the Dominican paradigm. Their formula for profession was Dominican as well, but with the additional vow of obedience to the Apostolic See. The congregation was put under the authority of the Dominicans, a certain number of whom were to reside permanently in its convents and take part in its general chapters. By 1337 they had adopted the Armenian-language Latin rite, abandoning their native liturgy. After the Black Death the Armenian convent in Caffa, attached to the Monastery of St. Nicholas, which had originally been an independent unit in the Catholic movement, was amalgamated with the Uniate Friars. The Uniate Friars managed to build a number of monasteries, with churches, bell-towers, and graveyards. Other monasteries amalgamated with them as well. By 1356 in the pontificate of Innocent VI they had a total of about 700 monks in 50 monasteries. In each of them the friars elected their own prior, and the election was confirmed or annulled by the congregation’s governor (verakhnamok’). The friars also met for general chapters, which were celebrated at Whitsuntide, to settle disciplinary matters, and to elect the best educated “to preach the faith of Christ to schismatics.” During chapter meetings, whenever the need arose, the priors of the diverse houses elected a governor. Presumably these practices had not been endorsed by the Apostolic See, if in 1355 a delegation consisting of germane brothers Thomas of Jahuk and Eleutherius (Avagter) representing the Uniate Friars arrived in Avignon to ask the Apostolic See for the official recognition of their order and the regulation of their legal status with respect to the Dominicans.

579 Before his episcopal nomination in 1330, John of Florence had probably been one of the Dominicans who settled at Krna with Bishop Bartolomeo, hence his relations with the Uniates. M.A. van den Oudenrijn, ("Uniteurs et dominicans d’Arménie," OC 42 (1958): 111; Linguae, 24–28) speculated that John received his episcopal consecration from Bishop Bartolomeo da Poggio in the new church at Krna. John’s biography has been published by van den Oudenrijn, on the basis of the data in his obituary at the Monastery of Santa Maria Novella, Analecta Ordinis Praedicatorum 28 (1920): 286.

580 CICO X, 128–130, no. 73.

581 Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 42 (1958): 122. The formulae for profession and baptism were in the contemporary vernacular, not in Classical Old Armenian.

582 Some parts of the liturgy were occasionally celebrated in Latin with the use of Armenian Latin missals with some prayers, e.g. the Gloria, transcribed in the Armenian alphabet; as in a 14th-century Matenadaran missal (ms. 4821.) Abel Oghlukian, Altarmenische Aussagen zur Eucharistielehre, Ph.D. Diss. (Wien, 1992), 139.

583 Oudenrijn, Linguae, 32–33.

584 Avagter was a seminarian at the Monastery of St. Nicholas, Caffa; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 29.
On 31st January 1356, in response to their application, Innocent VI issued a special bull regulating many of the points in detail. He confirmed the Friars’ rule of St. Augustine, their Dominican constitution, and their right of ownership of their monasteries. He also exempted them from abstinence from meat. However, the order was not fully independent, as it was put under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Dominicans, who was given the right of visitation and carrying out reforms in it, and could have these duties performed by his vicar.\textsuperscript{585} Henceforth the order was known as the \textit{Ordo Unitorum de Maioris Armenia}.\textsuperscript{586} Avagter was appointed its governor general, and Thomas of Jahuk was raised to the Latin see of Nakhchivan, becoming a suffragan of the metropolitan archdiocese of Sultaniya.\textsuperscript{587}

In the same period the status of the Armenian monks resident for a long time in Italy was settled. Originally their monasteries went by the names \textit{domus Armenorum de Montanea Nigra ordinis Sancti Basilii}, or \textit{domus et loca Armenorum citra mare or in partibus Italiae}, and the monks went by the name \textit{fratres pauperes Armeni ordinis Sancti Basilii}. Initially Armenian monks in Italy had used the rule traditionally ascribed to St. Basil, whom they had as their patron, naming him in the version of the Confiteor in their missal and in the formula for their profession.\textsuperscript{588} After some time their superiors started to be known as priors, and their monasteries as priories; perhaps the Western nomenclature became prevalent due to their closer and closer links with the Dominicans.\textsuperscript{589} Some Armenian houses were exempted from the authority of the local Latin bishops.\textsuperscript{590} The monks’ maintenance came from alms, and occasionally from endowments made by laypeople, who were

\textsuperscript{585} CICO X, 128–130, no. 73. The duty of deputising for the Master of the Order would be performed by his Vicar for the “Societas Fratrum Peregrinantium propter Christum inter gentes.”

\textsuperscript{586} The friars in the Order were known as the “fratres Ordinis Unitorum de Maiori Armenia”; or the “fratres Ordinis Sancti Augustini de Armenia Unitorum nuncupatorum,” CICO XI, 8, no. 4; 31–32, no. 20.

\textsuperscript{587} We learn from the bull for the provision that the Diocese of Nakhichevan was vacant following the death of Bishop John. The Pope recommended the new bishop to the Noble Junius, Prince, of Greater Armenia (“nobili viro luniae, principi Armeniae Maioris,”) CICO X, 136, no. 75. Neither of the brothers reached home, on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 1358 they were shipwrecked and died on their way back. Oudenrijn, \textit{Linguae}, 29.

\textsuperscript{588} Oudenrijn, \textit{Linguae}, 259–260, 262 (Genoa). The Armenian convent in Florence had St. Basil for its patron saint, and was said to have been founded as early as the 13\textsuperscript{th} century. Oudenrijn, \textit{Linguae}, 258–259.

\textsuperscript{589} In the Armenian church attached to Monastery of St. Bartholomew in Genoa there was a chapel dedicated to St. Dominic already by 1332. CICO VII/2, 214, no. 129.

\textsuperscript{590} CICO VII/1, no. 156; IX, 123–124, no. 71; Oudenrijn, \textit{Linguae}, 156.
treated as patrons and given the right to appoint the superiors. In other houses the monks elected their superiors themselves. As of the pontificate of Benedict XII a custom developed of granting the livings of these priories to Armenian monks who were “well-tried in the Catholic faith” (*in fide catholica probatis*), some of whom lived in Avignon. In connection with the orthodoxy and rites controversy, Clement VI reserved the right to nominate most of the superiors.

At first they were far from thinking of any sort of integration, and all the monasteries followed their own path of development. With time, however, particularly with the rise of the Congregation of the Uniate Friars in Greater Armenia, the first attempts at centralisation were launched. By 1348 the monks had already established a congregation consisting of all the Armenian monasteries headed by a prior general who was elected annually at the general chapter. They put forward the candidacy of Dominic of Nordrach (Noradants) for their prior general, but Clement VI was diffident about the initiative and gave an order for Armenian monasteries in Italy to remain under the jurisdiction of the local Latin bishops. However, in 1355 the priors of the Armenian monasteries in Genoa, Rome, Milan, Salerno, Ancona, Bologna, Padua, Siena, Perugia, Rimini, and Venice again petitioned the pope for the appointment of a prior general. On 30th June 1356 Innocent VI issued a bull...
in response to their appeal. The bull said that some Armenian monks had adopted new forms of monastic life, but they had done so without the consent of the pope and their bishops. Since they had no prior general, numerous irregularities had occurred in their houses. To remove these defects the pope instituted the rule of the canons of St. Augustine and the Dominican constitutions (except for the provisions on property and abstinence from meat) for them. He also permitted them to raise churches and other buildings, and to admit candidates. Their first prior general (hanrakats’ aṙachnord) was to be elected from the Dominicans, and only after his resignation or death did the pope permit them to elect a new prior general from their own community. The master of the Dominicans and his vicar were given the authority to visit Basilian houses and introduce reforms, analogous to the powers they had for the Dominican Order. However, the new order would keep St. Basil as its founder and patron, and be named after him. The monks were allowed to mention him in the Confiteor and in their formula for profession.

The Monastery of St. Bartholomew in Genoa became the congregation’s main centre, and Pietro Strozzi, the compiler of its constitutions, was appointed prior general. The Congregatio Fratrum Armenorum Sancti Basili was not split up into provinces, though probably such a division into at least two provinces was envisaged for the future. The articles on provincial priors and chapters were retained in the congregation’s constitutions adopted from the Dominican prototype. A ban was brought in on admitting seminarians under the age of 18. The Congregation of Armenian Basilians adopted the Armenian-language Latin rite. Unlike the Uniate Friars, for Mass the

597 CICO X, 140–141, no. 77. The bull was addressed to “all the beloved sons, priors and monks of the Armenian houses on this side of the sea” (“dilectis filiis universis prioribus et fratribus domorum Armenorum citra mare consistentium”). Oudenrijn (Linguae, 261) writes that even before the Pope issued this bull Armenian monks had adopted the apparel of the Tertiary Dominicans, a white tunic and black scapular, as well as the statutes of the Dominican Order. All that Innocent VI’s bull did was to legalise the customs they had already adopted. Oudenrijn, Linguae, 294.

598 Like the Uniate Friars, the Citra Mare Basilians (on this side of the sea) were allowed to eat meat and to receive endowments.

599 Oudenrijn, Linguae, 293–294. St. Basil received a considerable amount of veneration in Armenia. One of the legends of this saint popular in Armenia in the 14th century was about a falling angel who was able to return to heaven thanks to the prayers of St. Basil, CICO VIII, 125, no. 57. In the Roman Armenian missal there was a Mass of St. Basil, modelled on the Masses of St. Dominic in the Dominican missal.

600 CICO X, 142–144, no. 78. The constitutions have been published by Oudenrijn (Les constitutions des Frères Arméniens de Saint Basile en Italie, OCA, 126, Romae: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1940).

601 Oudenrijn, Linguae, 294.
Basilians used the Armenian Roman missal, which had been translated by the Franciscan Pontius. One of the numerous prayers appended to this missal was the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary. But by the mid-14th century they were celebrating all their ceremonies, except for Mass, in Latin. The Armenian Basilians of Genoa also used the Dominican *Diurnum*, translated into Armenian by Thaddaeus, bishop of Caffa, and the book of sermons (*Karozigirk*) by Bartolomeo da Poggio, bishop of Maragha, while in the 15th century the Basilians of Milan adopted the Ambrosian liturgy.

So by the midyear of 1356 two parallel Armenian Catholic orders had been set up – the Uniate Friars *extra mare* and the Basilians *citra mare*, and served as a haven for monks arriving from the Orient. Caffa became an important centre for the Uniate Friars, a transit node for those travelling to the East. The Friars of Caffa started building the Convent of St. Nicholas before 1350. Later it would become one of their principal houses. In 1358 Innocent VI granted it a series of indulgences. The Apostolic See pinned great hopes on the Uniate Friars of Greater Armenia. At the request of the Order’s governor, in 1362 Pope Urban V granted it the rights and privileges which John XXII had bestowed on the Dominican missionaries of the *Societas Fratrum Peregrinantium*. All of the Order’s benefactors who contributed to its growth and advancement received a hundred-day indulgence from the pope. It was probably due to the progress made by the new Order that the Dominican general chapter which met in Magdeburg in 1363 abolished its missionary society. Henceforth the authorities of the Dominican Order were not too keen to send out its

602 Oudenrijn, “Die Fratri Armeni und die Lauretanische Litanei,” *Muséon* 64 (1951): 278–292; Oudenrijn, *Linguae*, 293. Several missals of this kind have survived. Archbishop Gregory had two copies made in Pisa in 1353 and 1358; they are now in Florence and Milan. Another copy was made in 1381 at Bologna, in the Monastery of the Holy Spirit beyond the city walls, by Paul, son of Arakel (now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). A missal copied by the Armenian Sarkis in the early 15th century at Rimini survives in that city. In 1370 it was copied by Mkhitar of Shahapunik at Siena; Oudenrijn, *Linguae*, 255, 261, 264, 269, 269–271. Only the Armenian monasteries in Venice, which did not belong to the congregation founded by Innocent VI, did not use Pontius’ missal.

603 Oudenrijn, *Linguae*, 75, 261. A manuscript of the *Diurnum*, copied by James Prevs in 1352, is extant in Pavia. The copyist was probably a monk of the Armenian Monastery of St. Nicholas in Caffa, and the manuscript was subsequently used in St. Bartholomew’s Monastery in Genoa, as evidenced by the antiphon, St. Basil’s prayer, and commemoration of St. Sirius, Archbishop of Genoa (d. 1136), which were later appended.

605 *Svod armianskikh pamiatnykh*, 107, no. 32; CICO X, 205–206, no. 111.
606 CICO VII/2, 94–98, no. 48; XI, 8–11, nos. 4, 5.
missionaries to the East. Nonetheless, in the same year a new archbishop was appointed for Manzikert, Dominic, a Uniate Friar who received permission to take twenty Dominicans with him on his journey to Armenia. In 1365 the Uniate Friars once again received confirmation of the privileges successive popes, including John XXII in 1321, had bestowed on Dominican and Franciscan missionaries. In the grounds for this endorsement the pope wrote that thanks to it the missionaries would be able to conduct their apostolic ministry among all the unfaithful, since they were fluent in Armenian and many other Oriental languages.

The Latinists now held not only the Latin dioceses of the metropolis of Persia, but also the old Armenian archdioceses – St. Thaddaeus’ at Artaz, Khlat on the shores of Lake Van, Manzikert in the Canton of Hark, and Pera near Constantinople. The bishops of these former Armenian dioceses now worked as members of the Latin episcopacy with the same rights and powers as their Latin colleagues. Armenians continued to be appointed to eastern bishoprics. On 28th February 1368 Urban V elevated Thomas of Tabriz, a Uniate Friar, to the Latin metropolitan see of Sultaniya, to which the diocese of Nakhichevan was subject under metropolitan law. In 1370 Urban V appointed another Uniate Friar, Martin, son of Stephen, archbishop of Seleucia.

Armenians were still predominant in the Latin diocese of Caffa. In Pera Armenians were the only Latin bishops at the time. In 1376 Gregory XI appointed Gregory Sisco Armenian bishop of that city, putting him under the jurisdiction of the Latin patriarch of Constantinople. Bishop Gregory asked the pope for indulgences because of the need to carry out a restoration project on the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Armenians. He also granted a dispensation to the local merchants, who were trading with partners in the Persian and Egyptian empires, regardless of the papal prohibition. The names of these traders suggest they were Italians, which would mean that this

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608 Dominic was the immediate successor to Nerses Balients, CICO XI, 31–33, no. 20; 46–47, no. 28; 79–80, nos. 48, 48a.
609 The privileges in question were those bestowed in the bull Cum hora undecima and later augmented by John XXII, CICO XI, 130–131, no. 78.
610 “Quare Nobis humiliter supplicastis, quatenus, cum vos armenicae et multarum aliarum linguarum dictarum nationum sitis periti, et nonnulli ex vobis in praedicatione sancti evangelii competenter instructi, et eisdem infidelibus dictum evangelium iugiter praedicetis et intendatis praedicare, iuvante Domino, instantius in futurum.”
611 In January 1363 Thomas of Tabriz, Archbishop of Khlat, was ordered to delimit and separate two Latin archdiocese on territories belonging to the Kipchak Horde. CICO XI, 15, no. 10.
612 CICO XI, 336, no. 203; XII, 430, no. 223.
Armenian bishop also ministered to Western Latinists. There was a similar situation in Lwów in 1369–1378, where James, formerly Armenian bishop of Kiev, ministered to the pastoral needs of the Catholic population. The diocese of Nakhchivan, which had grown out of the Krna mission, was held by a continuous line of Uniate Friars.

Yet already by the 1370s it turned out that there were not enough Uniate Friars to cope with needs. In 1373 a delegation of Uniate Friars arrived in Avignon, most probably to petition for an appointment to the Latin bishoprics that had been instituted in Persia, and for the restoration of the Dominican missionary society. Pope Gregory XI ordered Elias Raymond of Toulouse, the master general of the Dominicans, to send new missionaries to Armenia. The following year the pope ordered the priors and provincials of the Dominicans to select missionaries and send them to Avignon. When they arrived the pope appointed new bishops for Tabriz, Maragha, and Nakhchivan from the group, and instructed them to elect and consecrate a new archbishop for Sultaniya when they reached the Orient. Bishop John of Tabriz was entrusted with the bull of nomination and pallium for the future metropolitan. On 28th January 1375 the pope officially reinstated the Dominican Societas Fratrum Peregrinantium, incorporating the convents of Pera, Caffa, Chios, and Trebizond. Brother Elias the Small was appointed the Society’s vicar general. In 1377 the Dominican convents in Rus’ and Moldavia were incorporated in the reinstated missionary society.

Unfortunately for the Armenian Catholics, in the middle of the century the power of the Mongol ilkhanate of Persia collapsed, depriving the Western missions of the support and protection of a hitherto powerful political agency. The local princes recuperated their old prerogatives within the formally persisting empire, and each pursued an independent religious policy depending on his own religion. The fate of the Christian communities now depended on the goodwill of the local Muslim emirs. Christians on territories associated

613 Cum itaque in loco de Pera, iuxta Constantinopolim et pertinentiis ipsius, multi Armeni habitare noscantur, qui fidem catholicam, prout sacrosancta Romana Ecclesia docet et praedicit, servant et servare desiderant et affectant,” CICO XII, 364–366, no. 186; 380, no. 192; 387–388, no. 198.
with the Kingdom of Georgia, including its vassal Armenian principalities, were in a better position. The Armenians in these parts were strongly attached to their traditions, and their dislike of the Roman and Greek Churches, which they tended to treat as synonymous, matched their love of their own Church. Eastern vardapets denied papal primacy in any form whatsoever, claiming that the popes had forfeited it long ago, when they embraced the Chalcedonian error of the two natures in Christ. Following their breach with Cilicia the traditionalists turned to the catholicoi of Albania and Aghtamar. But their leaders were still the metropolitans of Syunik and the school attached to the monastery of Gladzor under their protection. In 1333 Archbishop Sarkis rejected the demand made by the catholicoi of Cilicia for the reform of the ritual practices. He went further, instructing the renowned vardapet Yesaia Nchetsi to write a treatise on the structure, liturgy, and priesthood of the Armenian Apostolic Church, summoning all his faithful to stand up in defence of their Church and its independence.\footnote{Roma-Armenia, ed. Claude Mutafian (Roma: Edizioni de Luca, 1999), 178. Yesaia Nchetsi was in favour of the Chalcedonian formula of the two natures in Christ. However, he did not consider it right to disclose such a great mystery to the common folk; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 223.}

The appearance of the Latinising movement only exacerbated the struggle. The initial fascination, palpable even in conservative quarters, soon gave way to profound hostility and envy.\footnote{Oudenrijn, Linguae, 223.} The first acts of mutual intolerance may be observed already for the late 1330s. Armenian traditionalists were said to persecute, imprison, and even kill Catholics who embraced the Roman filioque doctrine on the origin of the Holy Spirit, and on the two natures, wills, and energies in Christ. They treated those who professed the teaching on the two natures as pagans, and if any renounced Dyophysitism, they would re-baptise them and impose twenty years of penance on them.\footnote{CICO VIII, 120–121, 127, no. 57. For the traditionalists the Chalcedonian terminology and the Council itself were synonymous with heresy.} They considered sacraments administered in other Churches invalid.\footnote{CICO VIII, 132–133, no. 57.} Hymns were composed summoning the faithful to battle against the “Dyophysite sect.” One of these hymns, composed at Tabriz in 1335, called the people to “bemoan with sorrowful voice Armenia, our country … for Arius’ and Nestorius’ sect has arisen anew … . They call themselves Christians, but they are the seed of discord.” The traditionalists believed that the demons Jesus Christ locked up when he descended into Hell after his resurrection had been released thirty years earlier in Lesser Armenia (Cilicia), to tempt and draw true Christians away from the faith. This reputedly happened

\footnote{Roma-Armenia, ed. Claude Mutafian (Roma: Edizioni de Luca, 1999), 178. Yesaia Nchetsi was in favour of the Chalcedonian formula of the two natures in Christ. However, he did not consider it right to disclose such a great mystery to the common folk; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 223.}
\footnote{Oudenrijn, Linguae, 223.}
\footnote{CICO VIII, 120–121, 127, no. 57. For the traditionalists the Chalcedonian terminology and the Council itself were synonymous with heresy.}
\footnote{CICO VIII, 132–133, no. 57.}
when Armenians started mixing the wine with water during the Mass and celebrating Christmas on 25th December.\textsuperscript{621} Already in 1346 Pope Clement VI wrote to the Latin archbishop of Sultaniya that schismatics in the diocese of Tbilisi were acrimoniously fighting against the Catholic faith, that they hated John of Florence, the local bishop, and were trying to snatch away his flock. Hence the pope exhorted the local Catholics to persevere in the faith, remain obedient to their bishop, and withstand the wiles of the enemies of the faith.\textsuperscript{622}

After the death of Yesaia Nchetsi the monastery at Tatev in Syunik became the main centre for traditional Armenian studies.\textsuperscript{623} The founder of this school was Yesaia's student, the \textit{vardapet} John Vorotnetsi (1315–1386), a member of the Orbelian family of princes who dedicated his vast fortune to the fight against the Union.\textsuperscript{624} In his lectures John applied the legacy of Western theology and philosophy, available thanks to the Krna translations, to battle against Latin influence.\textsuperscript{625} He blamed Catholicos Gregory VII for all the misfortunes that had befallen Armenian Christianity.

In 1373 he appealed to the catholicos of Cilicia, Constantine V, to be faithful to the Armenian traditions.\textsuperscript{626} John Vorotnetsi's students included \textit{vardapets} renowned for their anti-Catholic forays, Sarkis, Malachias of Crimea (Krimetsi), and especially Gregory Tatevatsi,\textsuperscript{627} who spent twenty-eight years with John Vorotnetsi and on his death succeeded as head of the Tatev school. Gregory wrote commentaries on the Scriptures and Fathers of the Church, lectured in philosophy and theology, training the next generation of \textit{vardapets} for the contention against the Catholics. He conducted disputes with Latin and Greek churchmen, and his sermons were marked by a high standard of

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\textsuperscript{621} CICO VIII, 131, no. 57.
\textsuperscript{622} CICO IX, 126–128, nos. 74, 74a. The Pope's recommendation given to the Bishop to punish schismatics was not very realistic.
\textsuperscript{623} The name Tatev looks like a corruption of the name of the monastery's patron, St. Eustace (Eustateos, Evstateos).
\textsuperscript{624} After the death of Yesaia in 1338, John Vorotnetsi, Yesaia's successor Tiratur of Cilicia, and a group of students moved to a monastery at Germon, and hence to Vorotan (hence the byname), and only later settled at Tatev. \textit{Armianskie zhitiia i muchenichestva V–XVII vv.,} translationing introduction and commentary by Knarik S. Ter-Davtian (Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Nairi, 1994), 186.
\textsuperscript{625} Oghlukian, \textit{Altarmenische Aussagen}, 144, 209, provides a list of manuscripts authored by him and their editions.
\textsuperscript{626} Oghlukian, \textit{Altarmenische Aussagen}, 142–146.
\textsuperscript{627} Gregory was born in Georgia. Before he became a monk he was known as Kutlushakh. He died in 1409. \textit{Armianskie zhitiia}, 192, 197.
rhetoric.628 In his works Gregory defended the Armenian liturgical traditions, arguing that the use of unleavened bread and undiluted wine for the Mass went back to apostolic times. To defend the Armenian use of undiluted wine he employed the Latin doctrine of transubstantiation, which he fully accepted.629 He argued against the Latin practice of consecrating a large number of hosts and keeping them in the tabernacle for administration to the congregation at a later Mass, arguing that if the hosts were already consecrated there was no need to celebrate another Mass, the purpose of which was to receive the Body of Christ consecrated during that Mass.630 In his treatises Gregory quoted large passages from the Western Fathers of the Church and Scholastic theologians, which was an absolute novelty at the time in Armenian scholarship. He is regarded as the pioneer of Nominalism in Armenian philosophy.631 He educated numerous vardapets who continued his idea to transfer the catholicate to its indigenous territory in Greater Armenia. His disputes with the Catholics helped to raise the standard of theological education, but often they also led to the ossification of intransigent attitudes and a wave of mutual intolerance. The battle for bishoprics and believers was waged throughout Greater Armenia. The fall of the Kingdom of Cilicia, which did not receive military support from the West despite ecclesiastical concessions, undermined the authority of the papacy in Armenian eyes.

John Vorotnetsi’s students engaged in more than just intellectual combat against the Catholics. They moved from Tatev to monasteries closer to Krna to resist its Catholic teaching. Malachia Krimets’i (Chgnavor) was a particularly zealous attacker, who did not hesitate to resort to violence. He managed to stir up an atmosphere of nationalistic and fanatical fervour among the laity and princes of Armenia. In 1376 he ousted the Uniate Friars from the monastery of Aprakunik (Aprakunis), which was situated on the opposite bank of the River Yernjak (Alinja) to Krna. He also took over other Catholic monasteries and their opulent libraries.632 By 1379 many of the monasteries which had joined the Congregation with headquarters at Krna had fallen into the hands of the

629 The theory of transubstantiation had been borrowed from the translations made at Krna of the Western scholastic philosophers, Oghlukian, Altarmenische Aussagen, 150–155.
630 Oghlukian, Altarmenische Aussagen, 163–167.
632 Oghlukian, Altarmenische Aussagen, 164, 213.
enemies of the Union. Malachia got rid of those who favoured Union from the monasteries with the use of violence and the support of local Muslim rulers whom he bribed. Adherents of Catholicism were imprisoned and tortured, and even killed. At Koghb (Sukiasvank) the Catholic vardapet James and ten of his students were sentenced to death, and boiled alive in matagh (animal sacrifice) cauldrons. Many Uniates fled to Maku in Artaz, which was ruled by a Catholic; to the environs of Nakhchivan, where Catholic influence was strong; or to Caffa. The aim of the persecution was to remove all the Uniate Catholics from Armenia. Eventually in 1384 Malachia was poisoned at Poradasht in the eastern part of the Canton of Yernjak. His supporters claimed that he was the victim of his godmother’s treachery. She was a Uniate and gave him the poison at the behest of Catholic princes. Malachia was canonised and ascribed a feast day on 21st October in the Armenian calendar. His life shows that a wall of mutual enmity had grown up between the conservatives and the Catholics.

In outcome of these developments, on 3rd April 1381 Pope Urban VI ordered the Dominicans to admit Uniate Friars to their houses, for cast out by “unbelievers” from their monasteries and deprived of possessions, they were wandering about and not observing monastic discipline. This shows that the hostility of the conservatives was targeted chiefly against their own Uniate countrymen, the “Dyophysite sect,” not against the Latin missionaries from the West. In 1386 Armenia was afflicted by another Mongol invasion, this time by Timur (Tamerlane, Tamburlaine), which put a stop to the mutual hostilities. The Mongol khan was a fanatic Muslim, and his hordes devastated all Christian churches and slew Christian clergy and laymen alike, regardless of the differences between them. The monasteries of both Tatev

634 At least that was what Mkhitarich of Aparan, Malachia’s student and later a Uniate Friar, said. Oudenrijn, Linguae, 225.
635 An account of the persecution of the Uniates is to be found in a manuscript now kept in London. The vardapet Sarkis, who lectured at Aprakunik, moved to the monastery at Astapat, because he was against the radical methods employed by the Crimean vardapet. See Oudenrijn, Linguae, 224–227; Oudenrijn, “The Monastery of Aparan and Armenian Writer Fra Mxitarič,” AFP 1 (1931): 285; Armianskie zhitiia, 183–184, 450.
636 Mkhitarich of Aparan categorically rejected this version, see “Zhītie Magakī Krimetsi” in Armianskie zhitiia, 183–184, 450; Oudenrijn, “Monastery,” 285; Oudenrijn, Linguae, 226.
637 The Pope allowed the governor of the Uniate Friars to exercise authority over them subject to the approval of the general of the Dominicans or his vicar, BOP, 2, 248, 300; Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs,” 42 (1958): 127; Richard, La papauté, 223.
and Nakhchivan were gutted by fire, as were other regions, including the Catholic area of Artaz.638

At this time the catholicos of Cilicia managed to recover jurisdiction over traditionalist Armenians. The Armenian dioceses of Caffa and Pera were restored. In the latter city the foundation stone for the new Church of St. Gregory the Illuminator was laid in mid-May 1389 by “the patriarch’s delegate,” John, son of Nasredin, whom the catholicos of Cilicia had appointed Armenian archbishop of Rus’ in 1379.639 Due to this nomination the character of that Latin diocese must have changed, and a large part of its flock must have left. Sermons in Armenian were preached in the chapel attached to St. Anthony’s hospital for the small group that remained.640 The Armenian community split up into two factions: the national group, and the Latin Catholics.

However, by the close of the 14th century Tamburlaine’s attitude to the Latin missionaries had changed. This was due to the efforts of Bishop John of Nakhchivan,641 an Armenian Dominican from Castamonu who was so persuasive about the advantages to the khan of reviving economic relations with the West that Tamerlane made him his envoy to Venice and Genoa.642 Before John left on his embassy the missionaries elected him archbishop of Sultaniya, taking the first step to the restoration of the eroded Latin metropolis of the East. In 1398 John reached Rome in the company of a group of Uniate Friars vitally interested in the restoration of the Oriental missions. On 20th July Boniface IX endorsed John’s election and at his request excommunicated all who had looted his movable property (his pectoral and other episcopal emblems, documents, and the furnishings of his cathedral). He also granted twenty individuals in Greater Armenia specified by John the right to the choice of a confessor empowered to administer full absolution to penitents in articulo mortis. This privilege was to be reserved for Catholics who were providing the missionaries with material support.643

638 However, the citadel and monastery of the Uniate Friars at Maku survived the fire, see Tournebize, “Ravage de Timour-Leng en Arménie,” Revue de l’Orient Chrétien 23 (1922–1923): 31–46.
639 This event is dated in a colophon to 1391. The Archbishop procured a letter of recommendation from Anthony IV, Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople, to the Hospodar of Moldavia. In 1398 the Archbishop was in Kamieniec Podolski, at the time when the Armenian Church of St. Nicholas was founded. Petrowicz, La Chiesa, 31.
640 In the early 15th century the Dominican Louis of Tabriz preached sermons in Armenian. He dispensed a multinational ministry, also in Latin, Greek, Persian, and Tartar. CICO XIII/1, 263–265, no. 131.
642 Richard, La papauté, 257.
643 CICO XIII/1, 126–127, no. 65.
After John’s transfer to Sultaniya the pope appointed Francis of Tabriz to the see of Nakhchivan, perhaps ratifying an election already conducted in the East. Along with the new bishops the pope sent out a new Dominican mission with the task of restoring the Latin Church in Georgia and Greater Armenia. An indulgence was granted to all the faithful helping with the re-building of the churches. The Uniate Friars who had come to Rome asked for and received papal indulgences for their Order. By this time their main centre was Caffa, where they had three monasteries, St. Nicholas’, St. James and St. Peter’s, and St. Peter and St. Paul’s. Their numbers had risen due to the arrival of fugitives fleeing persecution and invasions in Greater Armenia. On 29th April 1399 Boniface IX granted indulgences to Catholics visiting and donating to St. Nicholas’, the main church, on the feast day of its patron saint, as well as to the other two churches. The Uniate Friars of Caffa tried to emancipate themselves from the oppressive supervision exercised by the Dominicans, and particularly from the abuses that occurred whenever their monasteries were visited by the vicars of the Dominican master general. In response to their complaints Boniface IX laid down that there was to be only one visitor, and he was to visit once a year. The Uniate Friars were exempted from the jurisdiction of the local Latin bishop, and the archbishop of Sultaniya and the bishops of Caffa and Tana were appointed conservators to protect the Order’s property and assets against abuse by secular and ecclesiastical authorities. As there had been cases of individual friars transferring to other orders, the conservators were given the power to compel transferees to return to their original order and to grant absolution for such “apostatical” abscondment. The papal decisions of 1398 show that the Uniate Friars wanted to emancipate themselves from the Dominicans. However, there was a great need for the Dominicans in the East, both as the backbone of the Oriental mission and as an agency for the supervision of Armenian Catholics. In a situation of conflict with other Oriental Christians and a threat from Islam it would have been inexpedient to split up the modest resources of manpower available, so the Dominican general’s powers of jurisdiction over both of the Armenian orders received papal confirmation in 1402 and in 1409.

645 CICO XIII/1, 118–119, no. 58; 120–121, no. 59.
646 St. James’ Church was located “extra muros,” CICO XIII/1, 149, no. 72.
647 The friars complained that their monasteries bore the whole burden of the visitations, and none of the visitors ever bothered to travel up to Greater Armenia, which was their main centre, CICO XIII/2, 142–145, no. 70.
648 CICO XIII/1, 146–148, no. 71.
649 BOP, 2, 376, 381–384.
Tamerlane sent out the archbishop of Sultaniya on another embassy to the West, this time with news of his victory over Bayezid, the sultan of Turkey, and an offer to the kings of France and England of a renewal of trading relations with the Orient. Archbishop John returned home with their replies in 1404, having taken the opportunity to discuss religious matters as well. King Henry IV of England wrote to Tamerlane, thanking him for protecting the Catholic monks and merchants and recommending John, “Archbishop of the East” to him. Henry sent analogous letters to the king of Abyssinia, the doge of Venice, the emperor of Trebizond, the emperor of Byzantium, the king of Georgia, and the king of Cyprus. He asked John II of Cyprus to arrange a meeting for John with the catholics of Armenia and other Armenians living in Cyprus, to discuss matters relating to the Union.  

Archbishop John developed a reputation for mediating between East and West in various ecclesiastical matters. In 1408 he was in Pisa, from where the cardinals dispatched him to Sigismund of Luxembourg, king of Hungary; Manuel II emperor of Byzantium; Mircea, prince of Wallachia; and Alexander (Alexandru) the Good, hospodar of Moldavia, with news that an ecumenical council had been called. He was instructed to appeal to all of these rulers to engage in efforts to establish union. He was also employed to carry similar appeals to the bishops of the vicariates of the East, North, Gazaria, Cumania, and Romania (Byzantine Empire). In 1410 at Bologna John XXIII appointed him administrator of the metropolitan see of Khanbalyk (Beijing) and metropolitan of the Kipchak dioceses. In 1412 Archbishop John was in Lwów, where he granted indulgences to the Dominican Church of Corpus Christi, and where presumably his life as a missionary came to an end.

However, these were not auspicious times for the missions in the East. The homeland of the Armenians turned into a battleground for fierce fighting between Turcoman tribes and the descendants of Tamerlane. The seat of the archdiocese of Artaz had to be transferred from St. Thaddaeus’ Monastery to the prince’s residence in the fortress of Maku. The Principality of Artaz was the

651 On 25th December the Emperor Manuel II congratulated Alexander V, the Conciliar Pope, in his election, which must mean that John had reached Constantinople by that time, Loenertz, “Evêques dominicains,” 262–263.
652 CICO XIII/2, 267–268, no. 3.
653 CICO XIII/2, 268, no. 4; Richard, La papauté, 155. John was the author of Libellus de notitia orbis, in which he mentioned the pioneer of the Krna mission, Bartolomeo de Poggio, Bishop of Maraga. We read that Bartolomeo’s grave “usque ad hodiernum diem [1404] venerator propter signa et prodigia per ipsum facta,cottidieque funt ad laudem dei et dei catholicae,” “Der ’Libellus de notitia orbis’ Johannis III. (de Galonifontibus?) O. P., Erzbischofs von Sulthanyeh,” ed. Anton Kern, AFP 8 (1938): 115.
last Christian enclave surrounded by a Muslim sea, and its religious influence diffused beyond its territory. In its fortress the Uniate Friars had a monastery. Most of the population of the principality were Catholics and worshipped in the Latin rite in their native language. At the close of the 14th century the German captive Hans Schiltberger of Bavaria wrote that at Maku he had encountered ein pistumb [Bistum] do und halten do römischen glauben und die priester sein prediger ordens und singen und lesen nur in armenischer sprach (a bishopric adhering to the Roman faith, with priests of the Preaching [Dominican] Order who sing and read exclusively in the Armenian tongue). In 1404 when an embassy sent by the king of Castile to Tamerlane passed through Maku, the citadel’s ruler was a Christian named Nuradin (Moradin). The envoys were very surprised that a Catholic principality could have survived for so long in the midst of Islam. Nuradin asked the envoys on their return journey to take his son, who had completed an education in Armenian grammar. He hoped that thanks to a recommendation from the king of Castile the pope would make him a bishop. Like the rulers of Spain, the princes of Artaz were loyal to the Avignon papacy. In September 1411 one Brother Jerome, no doubt a Uniate Friar, was appointed archbishop of Maku.

This was the period that saw the end of the Western Schism, which had made things difficult for the Catholic Church in missionary lands as well. In 1419 Pope Martin V appointed Martin of Chiari (Krna?), a Uniate Friar, bishop of Nakhchivan, hoping his appointment would improve the pastoral situation of Armenian Catholics, who were surrounded on all sides by non-believers doing all they could “to reduce them to idolatry.” In the 1420s hope emerged for an improvement in the situation, as evidenced by the arrival of a group of Uniate Friars in Rome in 1423. They had elected John of Chiari to serve as

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654 The Armenian hagiography contains the life of a woman named Khimar of Van who married a local Kurdish man and was being forced to convert to Islam. To avoid conversion, she went to live in Maku, where she expected to be able to “freely profess her faith in Christ.” On her return home she ardently gave witness to her faith, and for this reason was stoned to death in 1418, Armianskie zhitiia, 376–381.


658 There was a vacancy in the diocese after the death of Mictaricius (Mkhitarich?). CICO XIV/1, 280–281, no. 118.
archbishop of Sultaniya and wanted the pope to confirm the election and allow
the archbishop-elect to be consecrated by a Catholic bishop. Martin V issued
his consent on 12th December 1423. The Friars also asked the pope to permit
the metropolitan to reside next to St. Michael’s Church in Caffa, since there was
no longer a cathedral in the old capital of the ilkhans, and there was a threat
from the “heretics” and the Jews. The pope consented to this request, too. He also elevated Peter, a Uniate Friar, to the see of Nakhchivan, endorsing
yet another episcopal election carried out beforehand in Armenia. On 13th
March 1424 the pope appointed the Uniate Friar Job to the archdiocese of
Maku (St. Thaddaeus). Peter, the new bishop of Nakhchivan, was granted
the power to excommunicate all heretics and “the unfaithful” who did not believe “in the Holy Church” and did not recognise the pope. The Friars
asked the pope for a bull to confirm all the Christians in the region, regardless
of denomination, in the faith and loyalty to the Apostolic See. They also asked
for the bulls appointing the bishop of Nakhchivan and the other prelates to
be issued free of charge. At the request of Joseph, the superior of the Uniate
Friars, Martin V granted him and his successors the right to hear confessions
and grant absolution in casus reservati situations, and to administer the sacraments to all Christians in Armenia and the whole of the metropolitan see
of Sultaniya for a period of twenty years. He also confirmed the privileges
Boniface IX had bestowed on the Uniate Friars, and granted indulgences
to the churches in the dioceses of Tbilisi and Nakhchivan, to help with their
restoration.

On 9th April 1424 in Rome Job, archbishop of Maku, and Peter, bishop of
Nakhchivan, asked the pope for a financial subsidy for themselves and two
companions for their return journey home, since in istis partibus nullum de

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659 CICO XIV/2, 679–680, no. 259c. John of Chiari claimed that on the grounds of their apostolic privileges, following the death of an archbishop the Uniate Friars had the right to elect his successor.

660 The Pope exempted the Church of St. Michael from the jurisdiction of the local Latin bishop, CICO XIV/2, 701–702, no. 269.

661 Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, Vol. 2, 162.

662 The pope had accused Job’s predecessor, Jerome, of apostasy, which means that he had been loyal to the Avignon popes. Richard (La papauté, 261) is wrong to think that the monks of St. Thaddaeus rescinded union. The monastery was in Catholic hands all the time. Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 171, 175; see Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, Vol. 2, 197; Richard, La papauté, 206, note 145.

663 CICO XIV/2, 677–678, no. 259a.

664 CICO XIV/2, 678, no. 259b.

665 CICO XIV/2, 677, no. 259a.

666 CICO XIV/2, 702–703, no. 269a, 269b–16 II 1424.
lingua ipsorum reperiunt et linguam vulgarem patriae istius loqui non sciant nec intelligent (in Rome they did not find any people who spoke their language, neither did they know or understand the local language). 667 John of Chiari, who had been appointed metropolitan of Sultaniya, could not have assumed the office, since on 19th December 1425 another Uniate Friar, Thomas of Aparan, was appointed to the same office. Later John petitioned to be allowed to remain at Nakhchivan; perhaps Peter never reached this bishopric. In 1425 the pope appointed another Uniate Friar, John of St. Michael’s Monastery (at Caffa?), bishop of Tbilisi. On 12th May 1426 Martin V put the Caffa convent of the Uniate Friars under his protection. 668

The Uniate Friars were trying to bolster or renew the structures of the Latin Church in the dioceses of Nakhchivan, Maku, and Tbilisi, where the congregations were composed mainly of Armenian Catholics. 669 However, the situation in Greater Armenia was becoming more and more aggravated. Iskandar, son of Qara Yusuf, chief of the Kara Koyunlu tribe, was persecuting Armenian Catholics. In 1426, having taken the stronghold of Maku, he deported the Catholics from Artaz and gave the Monastery of St. Thaddaeus to the Non-Catholic Armenians. 670 The Uniate Friars’ permanent headquarters were now in Caffa, where they had their novitiate and monastic school. 671 In 1431 they set about building a bell-tower for the Church of St. Nicholas and asked the pope for indulgences for their material sponsors. 672 The indulgences granted by previous popes for the three churches in Caffa were confirmed. 673 Caffa’s status was underpinned by the fact that its Latin bishops had the right, bestowed on the grounds of apostolic privilege, to consecrate Latin bishops for Greater Armenia, following a valid election. Uniate Friars also held bishoprics

667 CICO XIV/2, 718, no. 278.
669 According to the bull issued for Archbishop John on 16th February 1424, the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Sultaniya was situated “in partibus ultramarinis Armeniae Maioris,” CICO XIV/2, 701, no. 269.
670 Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 171, 175.
671 CICO XIV/2, 1273, no. 527e; XV, 2, no. 2. One of the petitions submitted to the pope in 1427 was signed by Thomas, reader of St. Nicholas’ Convent, CICO XIV/2, 990–991, no. 390. In 1431 a governor called Joseph lodged an application for the confirmation of his graduation as a master of theology, as in the graduation ceremony only a staff had been conferred on him, which was the usual practice for the graduation of vardapets, but he had not received the biretta or any of the other insignia of the master’s degree.
672 CICO XIV/2, 1271, no. 527b; XV, 3, no. 4.
673 CICO XIV/2, 1273, no. 527c; XV, 2, no. 3.
in Crimea and endeavoured to keep the local Catholic community integrated, in the face of numbers dwindling in conditions of religious plurality and a tolerant policy pursued by the secular authorities. In 1426 the bishop of Soldaya, an Armenian called Louis de Sancto Petro, brought a complaint to Rome against the podesta of Genoa, accusing him of harming the Latin Church by consenting to children of mixed marriages being baptised in “schismatic” churches, of taking bribes to send runaway slaves who had been baptised by the bishop back to their masters, who forced them to renounce Catholicism, and finally of permitting the “schismatic” Greek bishop to visit and build churches in the city, and treating him and his clergy with respect. The complainant had been performing his episcopal duties in Caffa and its environs for twenty-six years, administering the sacraments and ordaining seminarians from Greater Armenia as well, and battling not only against “schismatics” and Genoese officials, but also against the Franciscan vicar for “Northern Tartary.”

Thomas of Aparan appears not to have taken up his duties as metropolitan of Sultaniya, as in 1431 John of Chiari, the previous appointee, petitioned Martin V for permission to return to his see of Nakhchivan, which was granted, albeit the bull was issued by Martin’s successor, Eugene IV, on 11th March 1431. The archdiocese of Sultaniya was left vacant. The Genoese authorities of Caffa took advantage of the opportunity and asked the pope to transform Caffa into an archdiocese, on the grounds that no business could be settled with the archbishop of Sultaniya, since there was no archbishop there. Thus in practice there was only one surviving diocese in Greater Armenia, Nakhchivan, that was fully Armenian, using Armenian in its liturgy and Dominican liturgical books in Armenian translation. Uniate Friars were regularly appointed to this incumbency. The rite practised by the Uniate Friars had not severed its links with the Armenian tradition. Its liturgical calendar contained the commemorations of St. Hripsime and her companions, and of

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674 On 26th May Joseph of Armenia was appointed bishop of Cembalo in Crimea, Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, Vol. 1, 462; CICO XIII/1, no. 126.
675 He was undoubtedly a Uniate Friar from the Monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul in Caffa, CICO XIV/2, 958–961, nos. 374, 374a.
676 CICO XIV/2, 958–960, no. 374. The bishop complained that his cathedral had been looted by the vicar Francesco Spinola of Genoa, and the friars of St. Francis’ Monastery in Caffa. Hence he asked to be granted the management of the livings of the diocese of Cembalo in Crimea, CICO XIV/2, 960–961, no. 374a.
677 CICO XIV/2, 1269–1270, no. 527.
678 CICO XV, 1–2, no. 1.
679 The metropolitan archdiocese of Sultaniya was conjoined with the metropolitan archdiocese of Beijing, and officially Caffa was subject to the authority of the latter, Fedalto, La Chiesa latina, Vol. 1, 477–479.
St. Gregory the Illuminator, and their offices were in the Uniate Friars’ breviary. In line with the Armenian tradition they used the term “Dormition,” not “Assumption” of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For their liturgical, homiletic, and theological works they used the 5th-century Armenian translation of the Scriptures. Wealthy laymen who took an active part in Church affairs continued to participate in episcopal elections, and later even had a say in monastic transfers. Like their Eastern colleagues, the bishops of Nakhchivan resided in monasteries, and the monastic community performed the duties of a cathedral chapter, which was an unfamiliar institution in the Oriental Churches. The Armenian Catholic Church had no diocesan clergy – the pastoral ministry and homiletics were entirely in the hands of the Dominicans and Uniate Friars.

By the beginning of the 15th century all that was left of the grand ambitions and venturesome plans and operations of the Avignon popes in the East were the Crimean dioceses and the diocese of Nakhchivan. Armenians were so numerous in Crimea that sometimes the peninsula was called “Maritime Armenia.” Nonetheless, they lived among many other peoples of the Catholic religion. Only Nakhchivan preserved its purely Armenian character and was the last bastion of the Armenian Catholic Church.

The Union of Florence (1439)

While the Catholic missions in the East were gradually shrinking and disappearing, in the West a new idea was born for the reconciliation and union of all Christians in an ecumenical council. Only once it had resolved the schism within the Western Church at the Council of Constance was the papacy capable of undertaking this new task. The work to achieve it was stimulated by impending threats – the Hussite movement and Ottoman expansion. A united

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680 Oudenrijn, Linguæ, 81: “S. Hripsime Virginis et Martyris cum sodalibus; S. Gregorii Illuminatoris.” The missals also contained a proper of the Mass for the feast day of St. Gregory the Illuminator (celebrated on 13 October).

681 In the Dominican breviary from Caffa it is called the Feast “Dormitionis Mariae, Genitricis Dei,” (Armenian nakchumn), while in the Krna breviary it is the “Transitus” (Armenian pokhumn), Oudenrijn, Linguæ, 108.

682 However, Oudenrijn (Linguæ, 174) notes that they also used the Latin Vulgate.

683 The books of homilies they used were called karozgirk in Armenian. Hence the Dominicans, the Order of Preachers, were known in Armenian as the Karozichk or Karozoghk, Linguæ, 125.

Christendom under the pope’s leadership was the *conditio sine qua non* for a new crusade. The atmosphere prompted a revival of Western interest in the Armenian question, though of course the main focus was on union with the Greeks.

The Dominicans of the convent at Pera near Constantinople had been working for years for the reconciliation of the Churches. Pera was the headquarters of the vicar of the Congregation of Friars Pilgrims, and as of 1426 the office was held by a Greek, Andrew Chrysoberges, who was also chancellor of the pontifical university. Chrysoberges had travelled all over Europe, encouraging princes and ecclesiasts to engage in this matter. He had also discussed it with representatives of the Eastern Churches. Universal Church union was to be accomplished at the Council of Basel, and even before that council was opened had been discussed at a congress of the monarchs of Poland and Lithuania, Vladislaus Jagiello and Witold (Vytautas), with Sigismund of Luxembourg, king of the Romans. The congress met at Sigismund’s instigation in 1429 at Łuck/Lutsk in Volhynia, a land with a population of Eastern Orthodox Christians, and the venue and roll-call of its participants – kings and princes of the entire eastern fringe of Catholic Europe from Lithuania to Hungary – predestined it to play an important part in the pre-conciliar preparations. Andrew Chrysoberges, who had spent a whole year visiting the convents of the Congregation of Friars Pilgrims in Rus, attended the congress as the pope’s legate. One of the individuals welcoming the monarchs at Łuck was Gregory, Armenian archbishop of Lwów, who may have been invited to the congress by Andrew Chrysoberges. Although the congress did not bring the expected effects owing to a quarrel over Vytautas’ coronation, contact with the papal legate left Archbishop Gregory favourably disposed to the idea of union. Armenians were constantly growing in numbers in Lwów and Kamieniec (Kamianets), and these cities were becoming more and more important among the Armenian communities in Christendom, alongside Caffa, Pera, and Trebizond.

The Council of Basel (1431–1448) did not meet the expectations put in it and fizzled out in an embroiled rivalry with the pope. Nonetheless, union was still a key issue on the agenda after the split-up of the original convention, and

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both sides tried to get representatives of the Eastern Churches, primarily the Greeks, to attend sessions continuing at their separate venues. In 1433 both the council and Pope Eugene IV tried to establish working relations with Constantine VI, the Armenian catholicos. Delegates sent by the council and by the pope discussed the matter in Constantinople with Armenian bishops John and Yesaia (Isaiah), who wrote a letter to the Council of Basel with a commitment to dispatch its resolutions to the catholicos, in the hope of an attitude in favour of union on his part. They also asked for the first three ecumenical councils to be taken as the basis for dialogue in dogmatic matters, and the “pact” drawn up between Gregory the Illuminator and Pope Sylvester to serve as the point of departure in liturgical matters. Their letter was read out at the Council session on 30th July 1433. Cristoforo Garatoni, the pope’s special plenipotentiary (commensalis et secretarius), conducted the talks with Bishop Yesaia. In a letter of 1st November 1434 to Eugene IV, Bishop Yesaia wrote that he had had the pope’s address on the council of union translated into Armenian and sent to the catholicos. Garatoni informed the pope that the Armenian prospects for union were good. Thus, in his bull Existimantes of the same year Eugene announced that the catholicos was ready to come to Constantinople for negotiations.

Soon, however, these plans were cancelled due to the quarrel which broke out between the council and the pope. In 1437 Eugene decided to move the council to Ferrara and instructed his legates, the Franciscans Francesco and Lodovico da Bologna, and his vicar Giacomo dei Primadizi da Bologna, to notify the catholicos. In the same year Giacomo dei Primadizi travelled to Caffa for negotiations with the Armenians. According to the doge of Genoa, Caffa was the city with the largest Armenian population, where the Armenian patriarch obtained the largest part of his revenues.

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689 Yesaia was archbishop of Jerusalem, and John (Hovhannes) was (perhaps) archbishop of Pera.


691 The “Armenian patriarch” is reported to have been among those who agreed to move the Council to Ferrara. CICO XV, 288, no. 560; CF DS. EP, nos. 36, 38, 39, 88.

Two Armenian archbishops representing the catholicos of Sis were present at the talks conducted at Ferrara on 9th April 1438 between the Latins and the Greeks. They arrived in Italy from Constantinople in the retinue of the Emperor of Byzantium. However, we do not know why later they left without attending the negotiations on union. At this time Caffa’s Genoese authorities were putting pressure on the city’s Armenians to send delegates to the council. An agreement was reached on 12th May 1438. With the consent of representatives of the Armenian clergy and laity, Malachus (Maghakia), the Armenian bishop of Caffa, decided to send a delegation to the West, to any destination Genoa wanted. All he asked for were three months to contact the catholicos. The Genoese consul, Paulo Imperiali, agreed to this, on condition that they choose a vardapet, grant him a broad scope of powers, and send him out at their own expense even if the catholicos’ consent did not arrive. The Genoese authorities were resolved to enforce union regardless of the opinion of the head of the Armenian Church. The Armenians of Caffa sent Bishop John (Guanesius) on an embassy to Cilicia. Catholicos Constantine VI was in favour of union, and said so in letters to the Genoese consul in Caffa and to the city’s Armenians. His envoy must have arrived in Caffa before 13th November, since the letters he had brought from Cilicia were translated on that day. The Armenians of Caffa chose three Caffa vardapets, Sargis, Mark, and Thomas, and Joachim, bishop of Pera, as their delegates for the Council of Florence. Sargis and Thomas

693 CF DS. Fragmenta, XXV, 30. Sdislaus Obertyński (*Die florentiner Union der polnischen Armenier und ihr Bischofskatalog*, OCh 96 (1934), 11) thinks that these two bishops, representatives of the “archbishop of all Armenia,” were in fact legates of the catholicos of Aghtamar. This is not very likely. The catholicoi of Aghtamar were not in touch with the Apostolic See at all. One of the legates was a bishop of Jerusalem, which recognised the authority of the catholicoi of Cilicia.


696 In 1427 Vardapet Sargis was the superior of the Monastery of St. Anthony the Hermit and the Holy Mother of God, situated in the environs of Caffa. He is sometimes referred to as the Catholicos’ Vicar in Crimea, or as “the right-hand man” of the Archbishop of “All the Northern Parts.” In 1431 he was the Catholicos’ Vicar for Caffa. He was called “Great Rhetor,” “Teacher” (1428), and “Rabunapet” (1429). He restored the monastery and built a school in it. He wrote commentaries on Porphyry and Aristotle, using the writings of David the Invincible (of Anhaght’), Gregory of Tatev, and John of Vorotan as the basis for his work. He died after 1442. He was succeeded by his student Thomas (Tuma). *Svod armianskikh*, 213, 215–217, 223–225, 227–228, 231–233, 235, 240. Sargis signed the acts of the synod with the following words, ‘ego S[arg][l]s Vardapet qui sum legatus Catholici
left for Italy immediately. There is no information about Joachim or Mark being at the council. The *vardapet* Sargis was appointed head of the delegation, which left Caffa on 1st December 1438 with the pope’s vicar, the Franciscan Giacomo dei Primadizi, who had been sent out to escort the Armenians; his confrière, the Armenian Basil; and Nerses, a Uniate monk, who were to act as translators and interpreters during the theological discussions.

The delegates were favourable to the idea of union and to the Latins. They reached Genoa via Constantinople in late July 1439, and were welcomed by Doge Tommaso di Campofregoso, who sent them off for the Council in Florence on 3rd April. Their travel expenses were paid by Genoa. They had recommendations from the pope and the doge, so everywhere on the way they were given an official welcome and treated with great respect. They arrived in Florence on 13th August, after the ratification of the union with the Greek Church. The Armenian delegates were put up in the Monastery of St. Basil, which belonged to the Armenian congregation of Basilians *citra mare*. At the doge’s request they were put under the charge of Giovanni de Montenegro, Dominican Provincial for Lombardy, who had made a distinguished contribution to the achievement of union with the Greeks; and the Genoese envoy Baldassarre Ususmaris. Soon they were received by Eugene IV. They were certainly not in two minds about union. They informed the pope that they had come at the bidding not only of the catholicos, but also of the bishops and entire nation of Armenia, addressing him as follows: “You hold the See

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698 Their translator at Florence was Thomas Simeon, a Dominican. Obertyński, “Die florentiner Union,” 11; Richard, *La papauté*, 266.
700 On 7th July 1439, even before the Armenian delegation arrived, Eugene IV wrote, “Expectantur enim in dies cum nostris nuntiis ad id misiss, et iam fere pre foribus adesse nuntiantur Armeni, gens magna et celebris, parati se per omnia Romanae ecclesie et sancte sedi apostolice subdere, eiusque mandatis et doctrinis incunctanter obedire,” CICO XV, 378, no. 795; CF DS. ER II, nos. 178–182, 195.
of Christ. You are vicar of Christ in the See of the Apostles. We have come to you, our head. We have come to our shepherd. You are the foundation of the Church. … If there are any defects in our faith and our Symbol, teach us.”

Beyond all doubt the Armenian delegates were ready to accept any conditions Rome insisted upon, and had no misgivings on the question of papal primacy. From the very outset Eugene IV treated the Armenians benevolently and was very considerate, on many occasions discussing matters in private with them. The Armenian delegates also met the Byzantine Emperor John Palaiologos, who promised his protection.

The Latin party in the theological discussion which started on 4th September consisted of cardinals appointed by the Pope: Antonio Correr, bishop of Ostia, Niccolò Albergati, and Giuliano Cesarini; and theologians: the Dominican Giovanni da Montenegro, Tommaso Parentucelli of Sarzano (later Pope Nicholas V), and perhaps others. The Franciscan Basil and the Uniate Friar Nerses served as interpreters. Negotiations lasted until 8th November. Monophysitism was not discussed at all, since right at the beginning it was condemned by both parties.

The most heated discussion concerned the sacraments and the liturgical calendar. The dilution of communion wine was a troublesome point. The Armenians claimed that Pope Sylvester had approved of undiluted wine, while the Latin theologians argued that Christ had used diluted wine during the Last Supper, moreover that the mixing of water with wine was a good way to represent the Lord’s Passion (commixtio convent dominicae passionis repraesentationi). References were made to the copious pontifical correspondence with the Armenians on this issue. Other points were not so problematic. Regarding ordination the Armenian delegation even agreed to porrectio instrumentorum, viz. the presentation of various rituals.
objects representing the sacerdotal ministry to those being ordained; while this practice had not been imposed on the Greeks, who were permitted to continue administering Holy Orders merely with the laying on of hands.\textsuperscript{705} Abundant use was made during the negotiations of the 14\textsuperscript{th}-century synodal and polemical texts, such as \textit{Responsio ad errores impositos Heremens} by Daniel of Tabriz. The outcome of these talks was the \textit{Decretum pro Armenis}, which was incorporated in Eugene IV’s bull \textit{Exultate Deo}.\textsuperscript{706} The Armenians accepted the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed with the \textit{filioque} phrase, which was to be sung in all of their churches during Mass at least on Sundays and holy days. A lot of attention was given to the explanation of the teachings of the Council of Chalcedon and the Third Council of Constantinople (the Sixth Ecumenical Council) on the Incarnation, and on the two natures, two wills, and two energies in Christ. The Armenians revoked all their previous objections to Chalcedon and the ecumenical councils following it; and they accepted the tenets of all the subsequent councils convened with the consent of the Roman popes. Since the Armenians claimed they had been misinformed about Pope Leo’s letter to Flavian, they were now presented with a full exposition of its content. Henceforth they were to stop commemorating Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, and instead commemorate Leo the Great, “a pillar of the true faith,” who was henceforth to be incorporated in their saints’ list. They were also recommended to use the Symbol \textit{Quicunque vult} attributed to St. Athanasius.

The \textit{Decretum pro Armenis} gave a full explanation of the Catholic teaching on the Seven Sacraments. Their validity was determined by three factors: their matter, their form, and the person administering them. Apart from Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, the other Sacraments could be repeated. In the light of the earlier controversies, the most interesting exposition was for Baptism. It said that the matter of this Sacrament was water, and its form was the expression \textit{Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti}. But it went on to recognise the validity of the Armenian formulae, \textit{Baptizetur talis servus Christi in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti} or alternatively \textit{Baptizatur manibus meis talis, in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti}, since the essence of the form was the act administered on behalf of the Holy Trinity.\textsuperscript{707} In principle Baptism was to be administered by a priest or

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{705} Hofmann, “Die Einigung,” 164.
\item \textsuperscript{706} St. Thomas Aquinas’ treatise \textit{In articulos fidei et sacramentorum ecclesiae expositio} also played a part in the talks, CF DS. EP, II, 123–138, no. 224.
\item \textsuperscript{707} “Non tamen negamus, quin et per illa verba [of the Armenian baptisal formula] verum perficiatur baptism; quoniam cum principalis causa, ex qua baptismus virtutem habet, sit Sancta Trinitas.”
\end{itemize}
deacon, but if the need arose it could be done by a layman or laywoman, or even by a pagan or heretic, providing they observed the form approved by the Church and intended “to do what the Church did.” Baptism received in this manner washed away all the sins of the person being baptised, including original sin, and in the event of their death without further sin led to immediate salvation. The validity of Confirmation was determined as consisting of the anointing of the person being confirmed with the oil and balsam blessed by a bishop (as the matter of the Sacrament), and the words Signo te signo crucis, et confirmo te crismate salutis in nomine etc., said by the bishop who administered it (its form). The matter of the Holy Eucharist was wheat-bread and wine made of the fruit of the vine. Prior to the Consecration Armenians would in future add a little water to the wine, viz. perform commixtio. Reference was made in the decree to earlier discussions which used arguments drawn from the Fathers and doctors of the Church. The Latin theologians convinced the Armenian doctors that during the Last Supper Jesus Christ had used wine mixed with water, supporting their argument with statements made by Popes Alexander and Julius, who were said to have transmitted the teachings of the Apostles Peter and Paul. They also pointed out that water symbolised the water that flowed out of Jesus’ side, as well as his union with the People of God, as expounded in the Apocalypse. The decisive factors were the ancient practices of the Latin and Greek Churches, “in which shone the lights of all holiness and doctrine” (in quibus omnis sanctitatis et doctrinae lumina claruerunt). It was deemed right that the Armenians adapt to the practices accepted throughout the whole of Christendom.

The form of the Sacrament were the words the Saviour had uttered and the priest repeated to effect transubstantiation. Next the Decree discussed the Catholic teaching on the Sacrament of Penance, with stress on auricular confession. On Extreme Unction, the Armenians were instructed that its matter is olive-oil blessed by a bishop and its form are the words Per istam unctionem, et suam piissimam misericordiam indulgeat tibi Dominus, quid-quid deliquisti per... etc. said by the priest. The validity of Holy Orders was determined by porrectio instrumentorum and the bishop reciting the formula prout in pontificali romano late continentur. As regards the Sacrament of Matrimony the important point was its indissolubility. As the Armenian Church had previously not admitted the validity of a third marriage, to avoid

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708 “secundum illud apocalypsis: Auctae multae populi multi.”
709 The next part had different wording for the anointing of the different parts of the body (the eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands, feet, and loins).
potential problems in future it was decided to recognise not only a third, but also any further marriage, providing there was no canonical impediment to its contracting.

Although the Decree for the Armenians recommended Latin practices, it did not rule out the Armenian traditions, for example in the baptismal formula. Its text incorporated the conditions which had been negotiated with the Greek Church, in other words it admitted the customs which the Armenians shared with the Greeks, Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist administered at the same time as Baptism, and rank-and-file priests (alongside bishops) being allowed to administer Confirmation.\textsuperscript{710} As no final solution had been found to the problem of epiclesis, the potential for a variety of interpretations was open, although the Latin theologians tried to impose their point of view on the Eastern Churches.\textsuperscript{711} Transubstantiation had never been a controversial point with the Armenians, since even those against union had always accepted this doctrine.\textsuperscript{712} Neither were there any obstacles standing in the way of administering Holy Communion to the laity in both forms; nor of continuing the tradition of married non-monastic clergymen, in accordance with the customs observed in the East.\textsuperscript{713} Along with the Greeks, the Armenians adopted the Latin eschatological ideas, including the concept of Purgatory. As far as the Armenians were concerned, papal primacy was not a controversial issue. The order of patriarchates

\textsuperscript{710} In the address to the Armenians we read, “Legitur tamen aliquando per Apostolicae Sedis dispensationem ex rationabili, et urgenti admodum causa, simplicem sacerdotem crismate per episcopum confecto, hoc administrasse confirmationis sacramentum.”

\textsuperscript{711} In the Decretum pro Armenis we read, “Forma huius sacramenti sunt verba salvatoris, quibus hoc confecit sacramentum. Sacerdos enim in persona Christi loquens hoc conficit sacramentum; nam ipsorum verborum virtute substantia panis in corpus Christi, et substantia vini in sanguinem convertuntur: ita tamen quod totus Christus continetur sub specie panis, et totus sub specie vini, sub qualibet quoque parte hostiae consecratae et vini consecrati, separatione facta, totus est Christus.” However, in the bull of 4\textsuperscript{th} February 1442 for the Copts we read that the Decretum pro Armenis had not fully settled the “form” of the consecration. Therefore it was stressed once more, that consecration was effected by the uttering of the words of the Saviour. CF DS. EP, III, no. 258: “verum quia in suprascripto decreto Armeniorum non est explicato forma verborum, quibus in consecratione corporis et sanguinis domini sacrosancta Romana ecclesia … semper uti consuevit, illam presentibus duximus inserendum.”

\textsuperscript{712} The Decretum pro Armenis did not assume a position on this issue. Laetentur coeli, the bull issued for the Greeks, recognised that leavened bread was also suitable for the Sacrament.

\textsuperscript{713} We read the following in the obligations to which the Armenians agreed: “Item de plenitudine potestatis Sedis Apostolicae tradita a Christo beato Petro, et suis Successoribus, atque de ordine patriarchalium sedium.” The Greeks had taken note of the fact that the tradition of the primacy went back to its institution by Christ.
established at the Council of Florence was as follows: Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. The Armenians did not even see to their patriarchate being entered on the list following the five patriarchates of Antiquity, which had their rights and privileges confirmed (salvis videlicet privilegiis omnibus, et juribus eorum). The Decree also regulated the issue of the liturgical calendar. The Armenians were told to celebrate the following feasts and holy days at the same time as the rest of Christendom: the Annunciation (25th March), the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (24th June), Christmas Day (25th December), the Circumcision (1st January), Epiphany (6th January), and Jesus’ Presentation in the Temple (the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 2nd February).

Also the doctors and fathers approved by the Roman Church were to be entered in the Armenian calendar, and those not approved by the Church of Rome were to be removed. As the Decree did not rule on the dates for other feasts and holy days, the Armenians were free to do as they pleased in this respect and keep their traditional calendar. The same applied to days of fasting and abstinence and other customs practised by the Armenians, especially their indigenous liturgy, which set them apart from the rest of Christendom.\(^{714}\) The Roman Church passed over in silence and withdrew from the attempt to impose the Latin rite on the Armenians, although in view of the Latin hierarchy and the Latin congregations of Uniate Friars and Basilians citra mare worshipping in the Armenian translation of the Latin rite this issue remained an open question. Although the Decree was a concession to the Armenians on the part of the Roman Church, it opened up the possibility of Rome’s further interference in Armenian customs in the future. Like obedient sons, the catholicos’ delegates committed themselves faithfully to abide by the regulations and provisions laid down by the Apostolic See (ipsius Sedi Apostolicae ordinationibus et jussionibus fideliter obtemperare).\(^{715}\) The Decretum pro Armenis provided the foundation and

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\(^{714}\) However, some of the arrangements, such as the consecration of the oils used for baptism and confirmation, infringed the privileges enjoyed by catholicoi. The right to consecrate bishops, in the Armenian Church held exclusively by the catholicoi and only in exceptional circumstances by three bishops, remained open. See Mahé, “L’Église arménienne de 611 à 1066,” 415, note 364.

\(^{715}\) Exultate Deo, the Armenian bull, has been published by Balgy, Historia doctrinae, 102–124; and G. Hofmann, De unione Arménorum. Its dogmatic value has been discussed by J. de Guibert, “Le décret du Concile de Florence pour les Arméniens; sa valeur dogmatique,” Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique 10 (1919): 81–95, 150–162, 195–215.
point of departure for all the negotiations Rome would conduct in the future with Armenian Christians.\footnote{It served this purpose in the 17th century for the union of the Polish Armenians. See Gregorio Petrowicz, L’Unione degli Armeni di Polonia con la Santa Sede (Roma: Pontificio Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1950), 66–78.}

On 22\textsuperscript{nd} November the bishop of Padua, Pietro Donato, read out the bull of union in Latin at a special session in the Cathedral of Santa Maria Novella, after Mass had been celebrated by Cardinal Cesarini with the participation of the pope and cardinals. The Uniate Friar Nerses read out in Armenian the main commitments the catholicos’ delegates had made, and the Franciscan Basil interpreted, translating them into Latin. During the reading the pope sat on a throne in front of the main altar.\footnote{Balgy, Historia doctrinae, 125–126; CF DS. Fragmenta, XXX, 37, 47.} The catholicos’ delegates made a public declaration that not only did they accept all the resolutions in the Decree, but also all that the Apostolic See and Roman Church held and taught. Immediately following this ceremony an instruction was given for the text of the Armenian Decree to be made compatible with the Decree of Union issued for the Jacobite Church, insofar as it was applicable to the Armenian situation.\footnote{“Ne vero praedictum Decretum mutilum referatur, opportunum putamus eam quoque partem eidem attexere, quae pro Jacobitis quidem lata est, sed Armenorum quoque res aliquatenus attingit,” Balgy, Historia doctrinae, 131. This extra sentence is missing in Hofmann’s edition (CF DS. EP, II, 123–137, No. 224).} Thereby the final version of the Armenian version of the bull was to be made when all the ceremonies were over.\footnote{Cantate Domino, the Jacobite bull, was not promulgated until 4\textsuperscript{th} February 1442, although the talks were held earlier, CF DS. EP, III, no. 258. The Armenian envoys returning from Florence had the Latin text of the Decretum, along with its Armenian translation, see CF DS. ACA, 98–99, nos. 122, 123.} On 23\textsuperscript{rd} November 1439 Eugene IV announced the glad news to diverse European princes that union had been concluded with the Armenians. He asked them to organise special processions to mark the occasion and granted seven-year indulgences to their participants.\footnote{CF DS. EP, II, nos. 226–229, 231; CICO XV, 406, no. 867.}

Gregory, Armenian archbishop of Lwów, granted the Caffa delegation powers of attorney for matters concerning Church union.\footnote{Vladislaus III, King of Poland and Hungary, had a neutral attitude on the Council. In Petrowicz’s opinion, an Armenian delegation from Lwów took part in the discussions together with the Catholicos’ envoys, but his claim is unfounded (La Chiesa armena in Polonia, Vol. 1 (Roma: Istituto degli studi ecclesiastici, 1971), 56).} In his breve of 15\textsuperscript{th} December 1439 the pope encouraged the archbishop to send letters to the clergy and faithful under his authority recommending the acceptance of the Armenian Decree and the union. Should the need arise for an explanation of
the details of the Decree he recommended the Uniate Friar Nerses of Caffa for the task.\textsuperscript{722} On the same day he sent a breve to the Armenian bishop of Caffa, granting him the right to use a Latin-style mitre on feast days and holy days, judicial immunity, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction over Armenians. He also prohibited the local Latin missionaries from administering second baptisms, on pain of excommunication.\textsuperscript{723}

Honours were conferred on the catholics' delegates. Sargis was granted the title of papal chaplain, and the translator Basil was elevated to the Latin see of Tana.\textsuperscript{724} The Armenian delegation left Florence in mid-December. On 10\textsuperscript{th} March 1440 Vladislaus III, king of Poland, wrote to Eugene IV expressing his satisfaction that the Armenians had acceded to union with the Church of Rome.\textsuperscript{725}

Catholicos Constantine VI died soon after the Council closed. His successor, Joseph III, reigned for only half a year. A new catholicos was elected – Gregory IX (1440–1452), and straight after his election went to Cairo, presumably to have his appointment endorsed by the sultan. In Cairo he was met by the pope's envoy, Albert Berdini of Sarteano, who presented letters addressed to him and for Martiros, the Armenian bishop of Jerusalem. In his reply of 4\textsuperscript{th} September 1440 to Eugene's letter, the catholicos apologised for the humble rank of the Armenian delegation to the Council, explaining that the Armenians had wanted to send a much larger group, consisting of bishops and numerous vardapets, but in the end gave up the idea for fear of the Muslims. He confirmed the powers of attorney his predecessor had granted the vardapets Sargis and Thomas, and consented to all the conditions they had accepted (\textit{quod a Te altissimo sit statutum}).\textsuperscript{726}


\textsuperscript{724} Apparently the Pope also gave Sargis a gold cross encrusted with gemstones as a gift. Shortly afterwards the vardapet offered this cross to Mkrtich Nagash, the Armenian bishop of Diyarbakir (Amida). Balgy, \textit{Historia doctrinae}, 159; CF DS. ACA, 96–97, no. 118; 104–106, nos. 132, 133; \textit{Svod armianskikh}, 243–245; Fedalto, \textit{La Chiesa latina}, Vol. 2, 217. The Pope also conferred distinguished offices of honour on Consul Paolo Imperiali, and Battista de Gentilibus, a citizen of Caffa, CF DS. ACA, 103, no. 130; CF DS. EP, II, no. 242; III, no. 273.

\textsuperscript{725} CF DS. EP, II, no. 232; CE, II, no. 267.

The Union of Florence brought signal consequences for the Armenians living on Genoese territories. The doge decided it would be officially celebrated in all the lands subject to the Republic of Genoa, as the pope had wished. He ordered a special announcement of the Union from the consul’s office in Caffa, and copies of the bull to be deposited in the archives of Caffa and Pera. In a letter of 5th April 1441 Doge Campofregoso rebuked the catholicos for not yet having accepted the Florentine resolutions. He also wanted assistance for Sargis, who was to implement the Union despite his age. In his letter of 24th July 1441 to the authorities of Caffa he censured the policy pursued by Consul Oliver Maruffa, who sympathised with the Union’s opponents.727 The civil magistrates were to protect the bishops of Caffa and Pera against any hostile moves which might be made by the catholicos, whose position was unknown as yet. The city was to admit only those of the catholicos’ envoys who were approved by Sargis. The Genoese authorities suggested the catholicos move his residence to a Christian city – Caffa, Pera, or Famagusta in Cyprus. They threatened to stop collecting taxes from the Armenians of Caffa if they rejected the Union of Florence. They issued permission to the Armenians to raise their churches within the city walls of Caffa, exempted other Armenian churches from all ground taxes and dues (ab omni cabella soli seu terratici), and ordered them treated on a par with Catholic churches. The Armenians were to celebrate only those feast days and holy days listed in the Decree together with the Catholics, but could keep other feast days according to their calendar. An order was issued for the return of slaves who had fled from Armenian masters to the Latin bishop and had received baptism in the Roman Church, for “there were no longer to be any differences between Armenians and Catholics.” The doge promised the catholicos that the status of Armenians would be improved.728 But as he had not heard from him, he sent him letters threatening that his (the catholicos’) attitude could bring about repressive measures against the Armenian population subject to the authority of the Republic of Genoa.729 Meanwhile news of the Union of Florence created a storm in the traditionalist party of the Armenian East. A group of Eastern vardapets led by

Holy Land, wrote of the Armenians of Jerusalem, “El loro patriarcha chiamano Catholicon,” Il trattato di terra santa e dell’Oriente 75 (cap. XXVIII).


Thomas of Metsop, a student of Gregory of Tatev, committed themselves to a project to move the patriarchate from Sis to Etchmiadzin (Vagharshapat) in Greater Armenia. The idea had been maturing for some time in ecclesiastical circles which saw it as the only way to free the Armenian Church from the influence of the Apostolic See. In 1441 a local synod headed by the catholicos of Albania met at Etchmiadzin and decided to transfer the patriarchate from Sis to Etchmiadzin. Jahan-Shah, the chieftain of the Turkmen Kara Koyunlu tribe which ruled the eastern territories of Greater Armenia, gave his consent to this decision. The catholicos of Cilicia was invited to the synod but did not attend, so the synod deposed him and elected a new catholicos, Kirakos of Khor-Virap, thereby inaugurating a new line of patriarchs, which has been continued down to the present times.\(^{730}\) The catholicoi of Cilicia ruled the synod of Etchmiadzin canonically invalid, excommunicated its participants, and did not recognise its resolutions. Another breach had occurred in the Armenian Church and society, aggravating the already existing jurisdictive split. Alongside the catholicoi of Cilicia, Aghtamar, and Albania, there was now a fourth catholicos, at Etchmiadzin. After the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, around 1461 Sultan Mehmed II resettled a large number of Armenians from Asia Minor in the new Ottoman capital, and made Joachim, bishop of Brusa, their spiritual leader. After some time the Armenian archbishop resident in Istanbul adopted the title of patriarch.\(^{731}\) Henceforth the Armenian ecclesiastical jurisdictions coincided with the political divisions. Most of the bishoprics in Greater Armenia, as well as the Armenians of Poland and Lithuania recognised the authority of the catholicos of Etchmiadzin. The Polish and Lithuanian Armenians did this already in 1444, under the influence of the Armenians of Kamieniec Podolski (Kamyanets Podilski) in the aftermath of the defeat of Varna and death of King Vladislaus III on the battlefield, and the poor effort the Latin

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\(^{730}\) After two years the most enthusiastic supporters of the new catholicos deposed him and annulled his election. They declared him a “sorcerer,” who had not even been baptised. Thomas of Metsop was so embittered that he returned to his monastery, and died there in 1446. Thomas of Metsop is the author of *The History of Tamerlane* and *The Memorable Record*, an account of the transfer of the patriarch’s seat from Sis to Etchmiadzin, *Armianskie zhitiia*, 207–210.

\(^{731}\) The old Greek Përibleptos Monastery in the Psamathia district became the headquarters of the patriarch, and served this purpose until 1641. It was probably Suleiman the Magnificent who allowed the Armenian archbishops to use the title of patriarch (batrik), which made the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople Armenian patriarch for the whole of the Ottoman empire. Haig Berbèrian, “Le monastère byzantin de Përibleptos dit soulou manastir siège du patriarchat Arménien de Constantinople”, *REA N.S.* 5 (1968): 145–149.
clergy of Poland made to implement the Union of Florence.\textsuperscript{732} Poland’s Latin ecclesiasts were supporters of the Council of Basel, then in its decline. On 1\textsuperscript{st} January 1443 Eugene IV had announced the collection of a tithe throughout the Catholic lands for a new crusade to liberate the Armenians as well. However, the military disaster of Varna put paid to this plan and was a severe blow to the project of union in the East.\textsuperscript{733}

The Union survived formally for some time among Armenians who were Genoese subjects and loyal to the catholicos of Cilicia. In Pera it lasted until the surrender of Constantinople in 1453, and in Caffa to the fall of that city in 1475. Gregory IX and Karapet (Garabed) of Eudoxia (1452–1477), catholicoi of Cilicia, and maybe their successors, were sincere Catholics.\textsuperscript{734} The Franciscans persuaded the Armenian hierarchy and monks of Jerusalem to embrace the Union, but the reforms were short-lived. In the 1460s a Franciscan in the Holy Land wrote that although the “best friends” (\textit{praecipui amici}) of the Latins reverted to their old errors after a decade, they still treated the Franciscans with great respect and attended Catholic Masses and worshipped the Blessed Sacrament, “which other nations did not do.”\textsuperscript{735} Evidently, despite their return to their original liturgy, “Western” Armenians continued to nurture pro-Roman sympathies. This attitude would be quite widespread in the next centuries. At turn of the 14\textsuperscript{th} and 15\textsuperscript{th} century the Catholic writer Mkhitarich of Aparan had classified his countrymen into three groups. The first group rejected all links


\textsuperscript{733} CF DS. EP, III, No. 261.

\textsuperscript{734} Jacopo Camporra, the Latin bishop of Caffa (from 1441), who was zealously implementing the Armenian union, visited Catholicos Karapet. In 1456 he informed the Emperor Frederick III at Graz that the Catholicos was a true Catholic. Karapet appointed the city’s Latin bishop, the Dominican Girolamo Panissari, to act as his representative in a dispute between two Armenian bishops of Caffa in 1474. According to Jacopo’s account, the archbishops of Nakhichevan, Beijing, Tabriz, and Tbilisi were also faithful to Rome. However, we know that they were Latin bishops. Loenertz, “\textit{La Société des Frères Pèrègrinants de 1374 à 1475},” 115–116; CF DS. EP, III, no. 261.

\textsuperscript{735} “E per ben che promisero obedientia a la chiesa Romana, quando da Enrigo imperator de Roma fo preso loro paese: et lo suo re fo incoronato da lo Archiepiscopo Magontino. Tamen non lassaron mai lor pristine usanze, et rito e ceremonie. Da poi recidivarono per sino al mil quatro cento cinquanta; nel qual tempo forono per li frati nostri de Monte Syon redacti a la pristina iterum obedientia de la chiesia; et persevero dieci anni in quella, da poi per Videcoro et ritornorono al vomito: niente di meno cordialmente ce amano: stan alli offici e misse nostre: adorano lo sacramento che nui consecrano; la qual cossa non fano veruno tute l'altre natione. Questi habitano in Hierusalem: in Sancto Sepolcro, in sancto Jacobo et in li palazi et case de Anna et Caypha, le quale sono monasterii loro. Questi Armeni sono li piu belli homeni e done che siano in Hierusalem;” \textit{Il trattato di terra santa e dell'Oriente di frate Francesco Suriano}, ed. Girolamo Golubovich (Milano: Tipografia editrice Artigianelli, 1900), 75–76 (cap. XXVIII).
with Rome; the second chose to follow the traditional Armenian rite while keeping to Catholic doctrine; and the third group was in full communion with Rome but continued to use its native language in the Latin liturgy.

The third trend was still extant, but grew feebler and feebler with each passing decade. It was weak even in Caffa. The Congregation of Friars Pilgrims, which had been abolished by the Dominican General Chapter in 1456, was restored in 1464 thanks to the efforts of Girolamo Panissari, the Latin bishop of Caffa, and the local Dominicans. In 1473 Pope Sixtus IV issued a decree putting the two Armenian Catholic orders, the Uniate Friars and the Basilians *citra mare*, under the authority of the Congregation’s vicar. The Uniate Friars, who wanted to be independent, did not like this move and resisted. However, in the following year Caffa fell to the Turks and all the Catholics were deported. Due to the Ottoman threat the influx of Armenians to Italy subsided. In the 15th century the Armenian monasteries in Italy went into decline, and their monks assimilated the Italian culture and customs. The Armenian Basilians survived until 1650 as a purely Italian order and were known as the Bartholomites after their mother house, St. Bartholomew’s, in Genoa. The Uniate Friars survived for longer. In the 15th century the situation of Catholics in Armenia improved when political power in Persia was taken over by the Ak Koyunlu tribe. Its ambitious chieftain, Uzun Hassan (1468–1478), nurtured considerable political aspirations and endeavoured to vie with the rising power of the Ottomans. For this purpose he sought allies in the West, and one of his instruments for mediation with Venice were the Uniate Friars, who thus enjoyed his support. This helped them re-establish their order in the Province of Nakhchivan in Greater Armenia, whither their headquarters moved after the fall of Caffa. For many centuries the Uniate Friars’ convent in Aparan (Abaran) served as their mother house, accommodating their novitiate, monastic school, and a residence for the bishop.

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736 In the collection of philosophical treatises he transcribed in 1448 at Caffa John (Hovhannes) the copyist noted down that he finished his work “in the reign of Catholicos Gregory [X of Etchmiadzin, 1443–1465], the new sun rising in the East, who took up his seat in Vagharshapat, when Ter Maghakia [Malachy] was bishop, Ter Tuma [Thomas, the envoy to Florence] was *rabunapet*, and Ter Martiros and Stepanos the monk were *nyvirags* [presumably envoys of the new catholicos of Etchmiadzin].” *Svod armianskikh*, 241–243. All the indications are that by this time the Armenians of Caffa – at least some of them – had recognised the jurisdiction of the new catholicos of Etchmiadzin, and had abandoned the catholicos of Cilicia. See also *Svod armianskikh*, 246–247, 251, 257, 260, 262–263. See also *Svod armianskikh*, 246–247, 251, 257, 260, 262–263.

737 In the summer of 1474 the governor of the Uniate Brothers, Mathias of Krna, travelled to Rome to lodge a complaint against the “oppression” the Convent of St. Nicholas had suffered.
of Nahkchivan. For the next centuries much of Greater Armenia remained under Persian rule. The Persians regarded the bishops, and later archbishops, of Nahkchivan, as representatives of Western interests and potential allies for a Persian challenge to the Ottomans. On consecration in Rome they were given letters of recommendation from the pope to the shah of Persia, which gave them a modicum of security and offered a chance for survival. In 1583 the Uniate Friars were incorporated in the Dominican Order, and the region of Nahkchivan became a province under the authority and management of the Dominican archbishop resident in the Aparan Monastery. That was all that was left of the old metropolitan see of Sultaniya. The archdiocese of Nahkchivan and Armenian Catholics persisted in Greater Armenia until the early 18th century, but their apostolic mission was limited to a few villages in the neighbourhood.738 Its heyday had receded into the distant past.

738 Oudenrijn, Linguae, 50–72; Ani P. Atamian, The Archdiocese of Naxjewan in the Seventeenth Century, ms (Columbia University, 1984).
Concluding remarks

Christianity was brought to Armenia at the turn of the 1st and 2nd century and took root in the country’s multi-ethnic municipal communities. In the early 4th century, under the impact of ideological developments taking place in the Roman Empire, Armenia’s protector, the royal court and aristocracy of Armenia embraced the new religion, thereby inaugurating the process which was to turn Armenian Christianity into a national religion. When it first reached Armenia Christianity had the traits of a universal faith, far removed from any ethno-cultural idiosyncrasies. The theory that Armenian Christianity had the character of a state religion right from the start may still be met in the literature of the subject, but it is an erroneous notion. The Christian religion built up its privileged status gradually, as it was assimilated by the nakharars, the ruling class of Armenia. While it is true that in the mid-5th century Sozomen wrote that by issuing just one declaration King Trdat instructed all his subjects to embrace the same faith, we should be very cautious about this remark. Sozomen took a Greek cultural perspective on the spread of Christianity in Armenia, which he viewed through its history in the Roman Empire, where the edicts of Theodosius made it the state religion. But even in the Empire Christianity had first built up a strong position socially. In Armenia, which was much more decentralised in comparison to Rome, it would have been even harder to impose a single religion on all the people by means of just “a single declaration,” and Trdat’s decision around 314/315 must have been preceded by an initial reception phase of the new religion in Armenian society. The royal decree should be understood to mean the culmination of this process, not its start. At the time Sozomen was writing his history the Armenian state was no longer extant, albeit the Armenian people still cherished the memory of its first Christian monarch, who, like Constantine the Great, had taken the historic step in the country’s religious policy. Armenia’s initial Christianisation had not been accomplished thanks to operations prompted by the state; the decisive factor determining its success was its assimilation in the Armenian system of aristocratic families and clans. This was facilitated by the adoption
of the national language of Armenia in worship, and the Armenian alphabet devised in the early 5th century by Mashtots (later known as Mesrop). These developments brought about a change in the ethnic breakdown of the Christian clergy, initially composed chiefly of Syrians and some Greeks. Armenian clergymen translated Syrian and Greek philosophical and theological works into Armenian, absorbing this intellectual legacy into their national culture, while at the same time assuming a separate and distinctive position linguistically with respect to the surrounding Christian peoples.

Political developments ultimately determined the “nationalisation” of Armenia’s Christianity and the isolating off of its Church from the rest of the Christian communion. Persian rule cut Armenia off from the Roman Empire; yet on the other hand the alien culture and religion of Armenia’s new overlords encouraged Armenians to challenge and resist their religious policy. In particular an attitude of defiance against Nestorianism, which enjoyed the overt support of the rulers of Persia, marked a significant stage on the building up of the Armenian religious and national identity. In the course of the great contention on the nature of Christ that split up Christendom the Armenians were beyond the reach of pressure from Christian emperors and able to opt for a denomination which ultimately failed to win the approval of the Imperial Church. Yet this development also marked the beginning of a rift in the Armenian Christian community. At the Synod of Dvin in 555, convinced that it was standing up in defence of the Trinitarian doctrine elaborated at Ephesus, the Church of Persarmenia decided to follow the Monophysite teachings, which had been condemned and rejected by the Council of Chalcedon. The Armenians were helped into making this decision by the ambiguous religious situation in the Empire, where for a long time the fate of Chalcedon and its proponents hung in the balance. At one point it was nearly renounced and dubbed a pseudo-council. Opposition under Persian rule to Persian-supported Nestorianism, which looked back to Chalcedonian decrees, built up and bolstered an Armenian sympathy for the interpretation advanced by Cyril of Alexandria in his writings on the single nature of the Word Incarnate.

But the Church of the part of Armenia under Roman rule did not turn into the substratum supporting the Armenian “schism”. Chalcedonian Armenians continued to exist on Byzantine territory for many centuries, integrating fully with the “orthodox” Church. The Persarmenian Church adopted a rather extreme form of Monophysitism, Aphthartodocetism (Julianism), which made reconciliation with moderate Monophysites (Severians) impossible. This only isolated the Armenian Church even more from the other Christian Churches, and by the end of the 6th century Armenian isolationism went still
further as a result of a breach with the Churches of Eastern Georgia (Iberia), and even Albania. Henceforth a dislike of Chalcedonianism would be an integral component of Armenian Christianity. Although with time Armenian interpretations of Christian doctrine approached the Chalcedonian definition, nonetheless the Church of Armenia steadfastly refused to enter Chalcedon on the list of councils deemed ecumenical.

The Byzantine Empire made numerous attempts to bring the Armenians into the “orthodox” fold. It did so particularly whenever its troops were occupying Armenia. Such ecclesiastical “unions” lasted for however long the Armenian aristocracy were military allies of Byzantium. A change in political tendency meant a reversion to the old doctrine and rites, now treated as part and parcel of the national tradition. Monophysitism persisted without intermission in areas beyond the reach of imperial power. In a shifting political kaleidoscope and borders which cut across Armenian territories, national unity was achievable only in the sphere of religious doctrine and liturgy. The Armenian national identity came to be expressed more and more in the ritual peculiarities and doctrinal traditions. The ultimate breach with the Church of the Byzantine Empire came in the early 8th century, when Armenia was overrun by the Arabs.

Chalcedonian Armenians gradually lost their national identity. Those in the Byzantine Empire Hellenised; those in Georgia (Iberia) assimilated to the Georgian culture and lifestyle. The Chalcedonian Armenians had no separate ecclesiastical structures, which facilitated these processes, and this group, which was an effect of the pressure applied by the Byzantine imperial Church on the Armenian national Church, drifted away from their compatriots. Religion was the force behind this evolution. Armenian Chalcedonian monks engaged wholeheartedly in missionary activities among their “heretic” countrymen. With an inside knowledge of the language and literature, they figured in theological debates and discussions as experts on the Armenian “heresy,” and so, like all other Armenians who accepted their argumentation, they became the object of intense hatred. For the home-grown national community the sole mouthpiece representing Armenian national interests was the Monophysite Church, which spared no efforts to deprive “dissenters” of the right to be regarded as Armenians. Anyone who left the national Church was considered to have apostatised not only by renouncing the “true” faith, but also by betraying his nation. A situation emerged in which for Byzantine Christians the very name “Armenian” was synonymous with “heretic.” Therefore Chalcedonian Armenians eschewed this epithet, and in the historical sources they are referred to either as Iberians (Georgians), or Greeks (Tsats). The Chalcedonian problem came to an end with the decline of Byzantine power. Although small
communities of Chalcedonian Armenians have survived down to the present time, they have not played a significant role.

The Eastern Empire and its Church made many attempts to conduct a dialogue with Armenian Christianity. Constantinople always made such dialogue conditional on the Armenians accepting the decrees passed at Chalcedon and subsequent ecumenical councils. As time went on relations became more and more difficult, since the catalogue of Armenian “errors” burgeoned at an escalating rate. Not until the close of the 12th century did the Imperial authorities realise that they would have to give up some of their requirements. But it was too late. The Armenians, who had managed to set up a state of their own in Cilicia, now had a new partner – the Apostolic See.

In contrast to the Byzantine Church, the Church of Rome remained exceptionally tolerant with respect to the Armenian Church for a long time. The papacy regarded the Armenians as orthodox Christians, and their Church, especially in the kingdom of Cilician Armenia, as in communion with Rome. Admittedly, following the example of the Byzantine theologians, Rome criticised the Armenian liturgical singularities, but did not associate them with dogmatic issues. Peter Halfter is not right to claim that Rome and the Armenians entered a formal and legal union in 1198. All that was negotiated at that time were the conditions for the granting of a king’s crown. For well-nigh a century relations were good, with no major upsets. Contrary to what Halfter claims, the Armenian political and ecclesiastical elite did not have reservations about papal primacy, and the Latin rite exerted a great influence on the Armenian rite. Particularly those customs were adopted which did not clash with the national singularities. It is hard to find a suitable term to describe this period in Armenian-Roman relations. The term “union” suggests the subordination of the weaker partner, whereas the Armenian Church enjoyed more of a partnership status at the time, and the respect it had for the papacy was not a simple relation of juridicive dependence, but far more of a mutual acknowledgement of one another’s orthodoxy, “communion in the faith,” ecumenical fraternity. This was the spirit that guided the “instructions in the faith” sent out from pontifical Rome to the Armenians, who were also the pope’s allies in Rome’s ancient contention with the Greeks.

Cilicia played a special part in relations between Armenia and the papacy. During the period of the Crusades a “second,” very Westernised Armenian nation grew up in that kingdom. Cilician Armenia was the only state in the coalition of Crusader kingdoms whose Church was not Latin, yet its people could still be counted among the nations that belonged to the West European cultural milieu. In terms of religious awareness its ruling class was so close to the Latins that it became partly alienated from its ethnic community. The
Westernisation of the Cilician Armenians offered a fertile substrate for rapprochement with Rome. Yet the Oriental components of its traditional culture never disappeared completely. The overwhelming majority of the Armenian people, especially those who lived in the mountain regions beyond the Cilician towns, continued in their traditional mindset, mentality, and church customs, and even if they were inclined to admit union with Rome, it was in the old sense of the communion of faith, not in the unionist spirit. As a result the gestures and declarations the parties made were interpreted in different ways in Rome and in the Armenian Church.

The situation changed under the Avignon popes, especially as of Benedict XII (1334–1342). The triumphalist centralism under these pontiffs brought considerable damage to the Catholic world, eventually triggering the Great Schism which rent Western Christendom, hitherto a well-knit entity, and kept it riven for many years. Its repercussions could be felt in the Western Church’s relations with Eastern Christendom as well. Henceforth Rome entered on the path previously trodden by Constantinople, and started to notice more and more Armenian “errors.” In the early 14th century its list of charges amounted to barely a couple of liturgical and disciplinary matters, but by the mid-century it had expanded to well over a hundred and was growing all the time. The Greek theologians had never gone that far. It was no coincidence that one of the Armenian anti-Catholic polemicists called the Latins “Greeks.” The old anti-Greek prejudices from the times when the Armenian Church had resisted imperial Chalcedonism revived and served as weapons in the fight against the Roman project of unionist reform.

A lot of harm was done in the Armenian milieu by Catholic missionaries, particularly the Dominicans. The new Armenian Catholic congregations, the Basilians *citra mare* and especially the Uniate Friars were certainly zealous in their endeavours and did much in the cultural sphere. It was thanks to their work that the Armenian Catholic Church using Armenian as the language of its liturgy emerged, and Armenian Catholics made an active contribution to the establishment of the structures for the Latin Church in the East. Yet in the historical perspective the fruits of this labour turned out to be rather feeble. Not only did the Armenian *vardapets* manage to save their native traditions and rites, but also to engender a spirit of resistance and perseverance in the national faith in their compatriots, even in those who were initially sympathetic to Rome. Although the debates conducted between the Latinophiles and the traditionalists contributed to a revival of scholarship and an enhancement of philosophical and theological deliberation, nonetheless they also killed ecumenical dialogue and released the demons of ethnic hatred and religious fanaticism. In Armenian eyes the fall of the Armenian state of Cilicia on the
one hand undermined the authority of the Apostolic See, which could not prevent its demise; but on the other hand it brought an end to the political pressure on the Armenian Church. Gradually the Cilician Church turned away from Rome, reverting to communion with its compatriots in the East. But it returned in a changed state. For several centuries it had undergone a process of Latinisation, and it was with this legacy that it now re-entered its home ground, modifying the Oriental features.

In the 15th century Cilicia’s role in representing Armenians in the West was taken over by the diaspora living along the coast of the Black Sea in Crimea and in Lwów and Kamieniec Podolski in the Kingdom of Poland. These communities, especially in the Genoese colonies, were just as susceptible to pressure from the papacy as Cilicia had been; moreover, they were weaker socially (with no aristocracy), and politically (with no state structures). Hence their representative value for Armenia with respect to Rome was rather questionable. But the policy pursued by the popes was evolving, too. In a sweeping move with two documents issued in 1439 Pope Eugene IV overturned the rationale of years of battle for second baptism. After three centuries of the papacy’s efforts to win over Armenia – from the Crusades to the Union of Florence in 1439 – all that it had managed to achieve was the establishment of several different forms of communion: in the period of the Roman Church’s supremacy in Cilician Armenia this meant the communion of faith (communio fidei) in the old spirit. The early 14th century saw the emergence of the Uniate Church, chiefly in Cilicia, and church union (communio ecclesiastica). At this time Armenian Christians, including those not in the union, experienced a massive influx of Western theological thought – an idiosyncratic communio cogitationis theologicae. Under Avignon centralism all these forms of communion were overwhelmed by a communio disciplinae, the outcome of which were the veri Catholici – Roman Armenians. The Union of Florence was an attempt to withdraw from the radical form of ecclesiastical authoritarianism, a blend of communio fidei of the entire universal Church with communio ecclesiastica under the leadership of Rome.

Despite the humiliation and the criticism, Armenians were still strongly attached to Rome. In the next centuries pro-Roman sympathies came to be shared also by the rivals of the catholicoi of Cilicia, their counterparts in Etchmiadzin, who until the early 18th century strove in vain for Rome to recognise them as Catholic patriarchs. While political calculation – hopes of Western military aid – certainly stood behind these moves, they also entailed an undeniable ideological value. Time and again the Armenians tried to revive the legendary pact entered on by Gregory the Illuminator, the founder of their Church, with Pope Sylvester, and the purported ancient links of the Church of
Armenia with the Patriarchate of Rome. A new wave of Western missionary activity in the 17th and 18th centuries led to the radical severance of links with the papacy. The missionary methods applied made the sympathy and nostalgia for Rome turn into distrust and dislike. This period was marked by the death-throes of the archdiocese of Nakhchivan, which had emerged in outcome of the 14th-century Dominican missions. Since the Middle Ages the local Catholics had not been regarded as Armenians, even though Armenian was their native language. For their countrymen they were apostates and “Franks.” They shared the fate of the Chalcedonian Armenians. The national Church succeeded in relegating Catholic Armenians, too, out onto the margins of national affairs. Meanwhile an Armenian Catholic Church, with its own patriarch and a new Armenian Benedictine order (the Mekhitarists) emerged from the new instalment of missionary operations. A new chapter opened in the history of Armenian Christianity. The Mekhitarists made such a large contribution to the salvaging of the national culture that their achievements are appreciated even by Armenians who do not like the Roman Church. This time the new Armenian Catholics did not let themselves be deprived of the right to be called Armenians.

The Armenian Church has covered a long road since its foundation to the present day. The Armenians have managed to preserve their own tradition, the origins of which go back to the Early Christian communities. The Armenian rite is part of the legacy of the general Christian culture. The contemporary Armenian Apostolic Church has been searching – especially since the fall of the Soviet Union – for a place of its own within the Christian community. Within it there are two tendencies pointing in opposite directions – just as there were centuries ago. One is more outgoing and open to other Churches, seeking dialogue with Catholics, Protestants, and Eastern Orthodox Christians; the other is conservative, focused on the traditional, distrustful of outsiders. Time will tell which of them will have the upper hand. The relationship between religion and nationality has changed, too. Many Armenians have converted to a variety of Protestant Churches without forfeiting their ties with the nation. Nationality is no longer identified with membership of the national Church, although there are still some lingering associations. Since the fall of the Soviet Union many Armenians who were not religious before have been baptised in the Armenian Church to express their patriotism.

Many contemporary Catholic historians, theologians, and liturgists are of the opinion that the changes imposed on the Armenians were superfluous and unnecessary. Today the Apostolic See considers the Armenian Mass valid, even without the mingling of water with the wine, treating this at most as a material shortcoming. This is by no means a recent change. Already in the
17th century a theological commission appointed by the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith for the union of the Armenians of Poland declared that the mingling of water with the wine was not essential for the validity of the Sacrament, but the Armenians should be required to practise it, since that was what the popes had always demanded from them. A similar attitude has been taken for some time now on the famous addition to the Trishagion. For a long time the Armenians have understood it in the orthodox sense, as a reference to the Son, not to the whole of the Holy Trinity. At any rate, when the Apostolic See admitted the Maronites to communion, a long time ago, they were allowed to keep this addition, and the Ethiopian Missal published in Rome in 1945 – well before the Second Vatican Council – also has this version of the Trishagion. Also the Armenian Creed, albeit slightly different from the Nicene-Constantinopolitan version, is recognised as fully orthodox. The participants of the Armenian synod of 1345 appreciated this point, and wrote that the expression in istam sanctam Ecclesiam (“in this Holy Church”) referred to the universal Church, not just to the Armenian Church. Today even Roman Catholics may say the Creed without filioque, if they so wish, in the original ancient version. Furthermore, we know that contemporary Armenian “Monophysitism” is at most a terminological problem. Even if initially the Armenian Church took a radically Monophysite position – as did many Greek theologians – all that has remained of it since the Middle Ages is the Armenian attachment to St. Cyril of Alexandria’s famous formula of the “one nature incarnate of God the Word.”

Just how outdated the heated theological and liturgical disputes of the past have become before our very eyes is shown by the joint communiqué issued by Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Karekin II of Etchmiadzin on

1 “Prima quia, licet huiusmodi admixtio aquae cum vino non sit de necessitate sacramenti, sed tantum de praecepto ecclesiae,” quoted after Petrowicz, L’Unione, 206, who makes. Petrowicz makes an apt observation that it was the pope’s prerogative to grant a dispensation “a praecepto ecclesiae.”

2 “quia semper Armeni petierunt a Sede Apostolica, ut ritus huiusmodi eis permetteretur, et nihilominus id semper eis fuit negatum.” By the 17th century the commission had new reasons, unknown in the Middle Ages, to stop this Armenian peculiarity: “quia Lutherus huiusmodi ritum probavit et Calvinistae eundem observant in sua Coena; et si Armenis permetteretur huiusmodi ritus in regno Poloniae, Calvinistae, qui in eo non pauci reperiantur, R. Ecclesiam calumniarentur, quod scilicet mutaverit sententiam,” Petrowicz, L’Unione, 208–209.

3 Although the commission set up by the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith was aware of this fact, yet in the Armenian case it was not so flexible: “Nec valet, id fuit concessum Maronitis, quia alio modo in eorum libris hymnus glorificationis praedictus concipitur,” Petrowicz, L’Unione, 209. As we know, the Armenians did not accept the symbolic interpretations of the hymn which were being imposed on them.
9th November 2000. In it we read: “Together we confess our faith in the Triune God and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, who became man for our salvation. We also believe in One, Catholic, Apostolic and Holy Church. The Church, as the Body of Christ, indeed, is one and unique. This is our common faith, based on the teachings of the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church. We acknowledge furthermore that both the Catholic Church and the Armenian Church have true sacraments, above all – by apostolic succession of bishops – the priesthood and the Eucharist. … The Catholic Church and the Armenian Church share a long history of mutual respect, considering their various theological, liturgical and canonical traditions as complementary, rather than conflicting” (my italics, K.S.).

The chief problem now is over the acceptance of papal primacy – the opposite of the situation in the Middle Ages. This is undoubtedly the outcome of the negative experience due to the short-sighted policy once pursued by the Apostolic See, a lack of tolerance for other traditions, and a narrow-minded dogmatism. As early as the 12th century this problem was appreciated by Nerses of Lambron, a proponent of religious dialogue who thanked God for the grace of being able to take an impartial look at the differences separating Christians. He was of the opinion that all Christians should be full of fraternal love for one another. “As far as I am concerned,” he wrote, “the Armenian is like the Latin, the Latin is like the Greek, the Greek like the Copt, and the Copt like the Jacobite … Thanks to Christ’s grace I am breaking down all the barriers that separate us; thanks to this my good reputation reaches the Latin, Greek, and Jacobite Churches, as well as Armenia, for I am unperturbed among them, not favouring any of their particular traditions.”

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