

VIOLENCE IN THE MONASTERY

AN EPISODE IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC

ARMENIAN CLERGY IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

DAVID ZAKARIAN

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapprochement of the Catholic and Armenian Churches in the Middle Ages and the unification efforts made by the ecclesiastical authorities on both sides have been an area of great scholarly interest for many years, especially as far as the period of the Crusades is concerned.¹ In general, the endeavours of the papacy to bring the Armenian Church into union under its primacy found fertile soil amongst the political and ecclesiastical elites of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia, with which a regular correspondence and exchange of envoys were established.² However, these aspirations were never fully realised, primarily owing to the strong opposition of different factions within the Armenian Church, both in Cilicia and in Greater Armenia.

¹ In addition to the works cited in this article, see also Henri François Tournebize, *Histoire Politique et Religieuse de L'Arménie : Depuis les Origines des Arméniens jusqu'à la Mort de Leur Dernier Roi (l'An 1393)* (Paris, 1910), pp. 235-663; Charles A. Frazee, 'The Christian Church in Cilician Armenia: Its Relations with Rome and Constantinople to 1198', *Church History*, 45(2) (1976), pp. 166-184; Jean Richard, *La Papauté et les Missions d'Orient au Moyen-Âge (XIII-XIVème Siècle)* (Rome, 1977), especially pp. 167-223; Bernard F. Hamilton, 'The Armenian Church and the Papacy at the Time of the Crusades', *Eastern Churches Review*, 10 (1978), pp. 61-87; Nona Manukyan, 'The Role of Bartolomeo di Bologna's Sermonary in Medieval Armenian Literature', *Le Muséon*, 105 (1992), pp. 321-325; David Bundy, 'The Trajectory of Roman Catholic Influence in Cilician Armenia: An Analysis of the Councils of Sis and Adana', *Armenian Review* 45 (1992), pp. 73-89; Peter Halfter, 'Papacy, Catholicosate, and the Kingdom of Cilician Armenia', in *Armenian Cilicia*, eds. Richard G. Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (Costa Mesa, CA, 2008), pp. 111-130; Peter Cowe, 'The Armenians in the Era of the Crusades 1050–1350,' in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, Vol. 5, ed. Michael Angold, (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 404-429.

² See Peter S. Cowe, 'The Role of Correspondence in Elucidating the Intensification of Latin-Armenian Ecclesiastical Interchange in the First Quarter of the Fourteenth Century', *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*, 13 (2003-2004), pp. 47-68, on pp. 48-60.

The emergence and the activities of the Catholic Armenian congregation of the Fratres Unitores (in Armenian *miabanolk*‘ or *miaban elbayrk*³) was one of the offshoots of these developments. Engendered by proselytising activities of the Dominicans amongst the Armenians and other Eastern Christians, the appearance of the communities of Catholic Armenians on the historical stage had a profound effect both on the development of the Armenian theological thinking and on various aspects of life of the Armenians involved. Unlike in Cilicia, where the king and the Catholicos represented the interests of the state and the Church, the proselytization in Greater Armenia was happening predominantly in the communities that lived under foreign rule, which inevitably had its impact on the dynamics of these relationships.

Our current understanding of the history of interaction between the Dominican missionaries and the Armenian population of Greater Armenia and its environs is based on the data provided by various historical texts, chronicles, archival documents, correspondence, colophons of manuscripts, and lapidary inscriptions extant in both Latin and Armenian. In general, these primary sources represent the perspective of one of the parties and invariably draw a picture of confrontation and blatant prejudice, which the sides held towards each other.

Such a biased narrative representation is found in connection with one of the most intriguing episodes of the relations between the communities of Apostolic and Catholic Armenians, which, as the evidence suggests, occurred in the late 1370s in the monastery of Aprakunik‘ (Abrakunis) in the Naxijewan region of Greater Armenia. In spite of several decades of relatively peaceful coexistence of the two communities characterised by an exchange of ideas, intellectual debates, and dialogue, excessive violence perpetrated by the Apostolic Armenian clergy against the Armenian monks who converted to Catholicism allegedly erupted in one of the educational establishments of the area.

³ For more details regarding the name of this congregation, see Marcus A. van den Oudenrijn, ‘The Monastery of Aparan and the Armenian Writer Fra Mxit‘arič’, *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, Vol. 1 (1931), pp. 265-308, on p. 267.

The first narrative representation of these events, which was based on the collation of various primary sources, was attempted by the distinguished Mekhitarist scholar Mik'ayēl Č'amč'ean in 1786.⁴ Č'amč'ean evaluated the material at his disposal and concluded that the Fratres Unitores made a number of mistakes during their proselytization campaign, to which the Apostolic Armenian reacted by resorting to violence. In the nineteenth century a similar conclusion was reached by another prominent Mekhitarist Lewond Ališan, who also spoke of the extreme decisions made by the Unitores and the disproportionately violent response that they received.⁵

Subsequently, in 1931 the Dominican scholar Marcus Antonius van den Oudenrijn⁶, concurring with Č'amč'ean and Ališan's representation and evaluation of the events of Aprakunik', characterised them as 'a bloody persecution against the Miabanołq and their adherents,' staged by the supporters of the Armenian Apostolic Church, as a result of which 'many members of the congregation had to suffer cruelties, imprisonment and even death.'⁷ This became the accepted interpretation of the events and it has recently been suggested that the incident of Aprakunik' is representative of the period when an important change of strategy of the adherents of the Armenian Apostolic Church towards the Fratres Unitores and the Catholic missionaries took place, namely when a more intellectually driven 'polemical'⁸

⁴ Mik'ayēl Č'amč'ean, *Patmut'iwñ Hayoc': I Skzbanē Ašxarhi minč'ew C'am Tēarn 1784* (History of Armenia: From the Beginning of the World to the Year 1784 of the Lord), Vol. III, (Venice, 1786), pp. 326-332 and 444-449.

⁵ Lewond Ališan, *Sisakan: Telagrut'iwñ Siwneac' Ašxarhi* (Sisakan: Topography of the Land of Siwnik'), (Venice, 1893), pp. 350, 364, 377, 385-386.

⁶ The establishment of the order of the Fratres Unitores and their relations with the adherents of the traditional Armenian Christianity were first extensively studied by M. A. van den Oudenrijn in several of his works published between 1931 and 1962. Subsequent research into various aspects of these relations strongly relied on the conclusions drawn by the Dominican scholar.

⁷ Van den Oudenrijn, 'The Monastery of Aparan,' pp. 284-285.

⁸ Sergio La Porta, 'Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange in the Fourteenth Century Scholarly Traditions in Conversation and Competition', *Medieval Encounters*, 21 (2015), pp. 269-294, on p. 284. I would like to express my deep sense of gratitude to Sergio La Porta for generously sharing with me some of his work on the topic, from which the present paper has largely benefited.

approach of the 1330s-1360s was substituted by ‘a more aggressive policy towards the proponents of Latinization of the Armenian Church or of union with the Latins.’⁹

In this paper I shall explore in detail the primary sources that relate these events¹⁰ and provide an alternative interpretation of this episode and of its consequences. In particular, it will be argued that the persecutions in the Aprakunik‘ monastery of Surb Xaç‘ should not be perceived as a changing point in the relations between the two communities but they rather represent an isolated incident in a monastic educational institution when the school officials took drastic measures to suppress dissent. I shall also argue that this incident served as a convenient propaganda material deployed by both sides to smear their opponents and to question the validity of the opponent’s teaching. A close reading of the extant sources will enable us to explore the nature of the conflict and its consequences, as well as to examine the ways in which individual clergymen representing both sides of the debate perceived, interpreted, and deployed this event to promote and defend their definition of the “orthodoxy”.

2. THE EMERGENCE OF THE FRATRES UNITORES: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

In 1330¹¹, with the initiative of the Armenian monk Yovhan (alternative spelling – Yohan, Yovhannēs) and the Dominican Bishop Bartholomew, as well as with the support of the local prince, Yovhan’s uncle Gorg and his wife Elt‘ik, the monastery of Surb Astuacacin (the Holy Mother of God) was built in the village of K‘rna of Naxiĵewan.¹² It was to become the most

⁹ Ibid., p. 285.

¹⁰ The original texts and their English translations cited in this paper are provided in the appendices. All translations are mine.

¹¹ For a brief overview of the earlier history of the relations between the Armenians and the Roman Catholic Church, see, *ibid.*, pp. 271-273; Cowe, ‘The Role of Correspondence’, pp. 47-60; Marcus A. van den Oudenrijn, ‘Uniteurs et Dominicains d’Armenie: I. L’union de Qřnay (1330)’, *Oriens Christianus, Hefte für die Kunde des christlichen Orients*, 40 (1956), pp. 94-112.

¹² Marcus A. van den Oudenrijn, ‘Uniteurs et Dominicains d’Armenie: II. Le «nouvel» athénée’, *Oriens Christianus, Hefte für die Kunde des christlichen Orients*, 42 (1958), pp. 110-133; p. 110; Argam Ayvazyan, *Naxiĵevani ISSH Haykakan Huřarjannerə: (Hamahavak‘ C‘uc‘ak)* (Armenian Monuments of Naxiĵewan ASSR: [The Complete List]), (Yerevan, 1986), p. 96.

prominent stronghold of the Fratres Unitores, a movement of Armenian monks and priests that championed conversion to Catholicism, acceptance of the Catholic teaching, and recognition of papal supremacy.¹³

The undertaking of the Fratres Unitores supported by the proselytising activities of the Dominican Fratres Peregrinantes in the region had a tremendous effect on the spread of Catholicism in Greater Armenia. The number of the Armenian priests and monks who accepted the Catholic doctrine and the number of monasteries associated with the Order increased considerably by 1356.¹⁴ Moreover, the monastery of K'rina became the major intellectual and educational centre of the Fratres Unitores, where numerous translations from Latin into Armenian of the works of illustrious theologians and exegetes such as Thomas Aquinas, Nicholas of Lyra, and Bonaventure were produced.¹⁵

What is noteworthy about this latter fact is that not only did the *miaban elbayrk'* benefit from these translations but they also held considerable appeal to non-Catholic Armenians. As Sergio La Porta has suggested, 'intellectual curiosity' was perhaps the main reason why the Armenians of the east were driven to the Roman Catholicism.¹⁶ This primarily refers to the great interest in the Latin theological and philosophical literature which became available in Armenian. Moreover, it was also expressed in the educational reforms prompted by the Dominican model introduced in the prominent Apostolic Armenian

¹³ For more details, see van den Oudenrijn, 'Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Armenie' (1956), pp. 107-112.

¹⁴ La Porta, 'Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange', p. 281. According to Fra Mxit'arič' Aparanec'i, many priests and monks joined the K'rina congregation and the number of clergymen multiplied quickly reaching more than 500 (Marcus A. van den Oudenrijn, *Linguae Haicanae scriptores: Ordinis Praedicatorum Congregationis Fratrum Unitorum et FF. Armenorum Ord. S. Basilii citra Mare consistentium quotquot huc usque innotuerunt*, (Bern, 1960), pp. 215-225, on p. 216).

¹⁵ For more information on the translated texts and places of production, see Krzysztof Stopka, *Armenia Christiana: Armenian Religious Identity and the Churches of Constantinople and Rome (4th - 15th Century)*, (Krakow, 2016), pp. 215-219; La Porta, 'Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange', p. 277; van den Oudenrijn, 'Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Armenie' (1958), pp. 110-124; Gëorg Oskean, 'Hamrōt aknark mə K'arozōł ew Miabanoł Elbarc' patmut'ean Hayastani mēj' (A Brief Remark on the History of the Preaching and Unitor Brothers in Armenia), *Bazmavēp*, 2 (1922), pp. 49-51; idem, *Bazmavēp*, 5 (1922), pp. 138-139; idem, 'Hay-Dominikean Matenagitakan Canōt'agrut'iwnner' (Armenian-Dominican Bibliographical Notes), *Bazmavēp*, 8 (1922), pp. 229-231; idem, *Bazmavēp*, 2 (1923), pp. 35-39.

¹⁶ La Porta, 'Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange', p. 282. For a specific example, see La Porta, Sergio, 'A Fourteenth-Century Armenian Polemic against Judaism and Its Latin Source', *Le Muséon*, 122 (1-2) (2009), pp. 93-129.

educational institutions such as the Tat'ew monastery.¹⁷ One of the most committed opponents of the rapprochement of the two churches, the theologian and philosopher Yovhan (Yohan, Yovhannēs, Yohannēs) Orotneč'i, even adopted and adapted the curriculum of the Dominicans that had been used by the Unitores at K'rna monastery since 1344.¹⁸

Knowledge about the content of the Dominican education would normally derive from the intellectual exchanges between the Apostolic and Catholic Armenian priests, monks, and *vardapets* (doctors of the church), regularly taking place in the monasteries. This kind of encounters were possible not the least because the representatives of both camps often attended the same schools and studied under the same *vardapets* before they claimed allegiance to one of the sides, or one of them taught the other, as was the case, for instance, with the Armenian Unitor Fra Mxit'arič' Aparanec'i and his teacher Sargis Aprakunec'i¹⁹. Another example is the founder of the Unitor movement Yovhan K'rneč'i, who studied in the school of Glajor under Esayi Nč'ec'i,²⁰ an Apostolic Armenian *vardapet*, the author of the letter instructing the Armenians of Atropatene on how to confront the proselytising advancement of the Catholics²¹.

The suspension of the activities of the Dominican Fratres Peregrinantes in Greater Armenia in 1363 was conducive to the strengthening of the position of the Armenian Apostolic Church. However, approximately five years before the Aprakunik' events, in 1374, the Fratres Peregrinantes returned to the region with more vigour and determination, and

¹⁷ La Porta, 'Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange', p. 289.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 289.

¹⁹ Van den Oudenrijn, 'The Monastery of Aparan', p. 284.

²⁰ Van den Oudenrijn, 'Unitours et Dominicains d'Armenie' (1956), p. 98.

²¹ Here is an excerpt of Esayi Nč'ec'i's letter to the Armenian Bishop of Tabriz Matt'ēos: 'If a *vardapet*, a priest, or a lay person from amongst the Franks, the Romans, or the Syrians visits you, may you receive them with honour as your brothers and colleagues in Christ, and may you rejoice together for the unity of faith and hope in Christ. But if they oppose you and attempt to convert you from the tradition of the Holy Faith and that of the first *vardapets*, do not accept them as the pupils of Christ, but as dividers of the Church and opponents of Truth, and as wolves hidden in sheep's clothing.

Similarly, should anyone from amongst you ... join the adversary and with a wide open mouth and foul tongue begin to blaspheme the religion of Armenia, the bishops, the priests, and the officials, do not greet them and do not accept them in your house' (Esayi Nč'ec'i, 'Tułt' Esayeay Vardapeti ar Tēr Matt'ēos' (Epistle of Esayi Vardapet to Tēr Matt'ēos), *Črak'al* (1860), pp. 157-164 and (1861), pp. 205-211, on p. 162).

relaunched their campaign of proselytization.²² The activity of this new wave of Catholic missionaries is believed to have eventually provoked the violent reaction of the Apostolic clergy and led to the serious confrontation in the monastery of Surb Xaç‘ of Aprakunik‘.²³

From the very beginning of the rapprochement process strong opposition to these plans was put up in the influential ecclesiastical educational establishments of the Siwnik‘ region in Greater Armenia, such as the monasteries of Tat‘ew and Glajor, and, to a lesser degree, by certain circles in Cilician Armenia.²⁴ It was expressed in an outright refusal to make any concessions regarding ‘the mixing of water in the Eucharistic cup and the celebration of the feast of the Nativity with the Latins on December 25 instead of the traditional Armenian date of January 6.’²⁵ Moreover, for the Apostolic Armenians a major source of displeasure and rancour at the Catholics was the widespread practice of re-baptising the population and re-ordaining the priests.²⁶

The initial reaction of the Apostolic Armenians was, however, spontaneous and ineffective. Most importantly, they were losing the battle on the intellectual level against the much better prepared Catholic missionaries and the *Fratres Unitores*, whose education included rigorous training in philosophy and theology of the Latin Church. A reversal of

²² Raymond J. Loenertz, *La Société des Frères Pèrègrinants : Étude sur l’Orient Dominicain*, (Rome, 1937), p. 147; Gēorg Oskean, ‘Hay-Dominikean Matenagitakan Canōt‘agrut‘iwnner’ (Armenian-Dominican Bibliographical Notes), *Bazmavēp*, 9 (1922), pp. 262-263, on p. 262. For more details regarding the history of the *Fratres Peregrinantes* in Armenia, see Raymond J. Loenertz, ‘Les Missions Dominicaines en Orient et la Société des Frères Pèrègrinants’, *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, III (1933), pp. 5-55, especially pp. 20-39.

²³ See, for instance, La Porta, ‘Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange’, p. 285; van den Oudenrijn, ‘The Monastery of Aparan’, p. 296; idem, ‘Unitours et Dominicains d’Armenie: IV. Les adversaires de l’union’, *Oriens Christianus, Hefte für die Kunde des christlichen Orients*, 45 (1961), pp. 95-108, on pp. 95-104.

²⁴ Cowe, ‘The Role of Correspondence’, p. 52. See also a colophon by the scribe Hayrapet, written in 1309 in Cilicia, in which he complains that Chalcedonian Kostand (Constantine) exiled him and his colleagues to Cyprus because they refused to accept the Chalcedonian definition of the hypostatic union of the divine and human natures in Christ (Levon Xaç‘ikyan, *ŽD Dari Hayeren Jeřagreru Hiřatakaraner* (The Colophons of the 14th Century Armenian Manuscripts), (Yerevan, 1950), n 86, pp. 62-63).

²⁵ Cowe, ‘The Role of Correspondence’, pp. 52-53.

²⁶ For the discussion of this issue, see van den Oudenrijn, ‘The Monastery of Aparan’, pp. 286-294 and ‘Unitours et Dominicains d’Armenie’ (1961), pp. 96-102.

fortune occurred when intellectual giants such as Yovhan Orotneč'i²⁷ and Grigor Tat'ewac'i joined the debate on the side of the Apostolic Armenian clergy. This coincided with the period when the Fratres Peregrinantes returned to the region and resumed their proselytising activities. The reports of serious confrontation between the two communities belong to this period.

3. PRIMARY SOURCES

For the events of Aprakunik' scholars have mainly been consulting three primary sources, which contain narratives that provide widely differing perspectives. The viewpoint of the Fratres Unitores is presented by Fra Mxit'arič' Aparanec'i (ca 1340s-1417) in a section of his *Girk' Ullap'arac'* (The Book of the Orthodox),²⁸ which was finished in around 1415,²⁹ approximately three decades after the described events. The point of view of the Apostolic Armenians is found in two sources: in T'ovma Mecop'ec'i's (1378-1446) *Patmut'iwn Lank-T'amuray ew Yağordac' Iiwroc'* (History of Tamerlane and His Successors),³⁰ which reaches 1440 relating Ĵahanshah's invasion of Georgia and should be dated around 1440s; the second source is a colophon by Grigor Tat'ewac'i (1346-1409), originally written in 828 of the Armenian Era (=1379/80) and preserved in several later manuscripts, albeit with some variations.

Not only do these sources differ in the perspective they present but there are also noticeable discrepancies regarding the sequence and the main protagonists of the events.

²⁷ According to van den Oudenrijn (ibid., p. 104), it was Yovannēs Orotneč'i, who prepared a theological reaction to the Unitores by establishing the school of Tat'ew, where along with his student Grigor Tat'ewac'i, they staged the resistance against the teachings of the Unitores.

²⁸ For the complete extract, manuscript information, and the text's translation into Latin, see van den Oudenrijn, *Linguae Haicanae*, pp. 215-228. For the English translation, see Appendix II.

²⁹ Nerses Ter-Vardanyan, 'Mxit'arič' Aparanec'i Matenagirə (šurj 1345-1417 t'.t') (Mxit'arič' Aparanec'i, Author of Manuscripts [ca 1345-1417]), *Ejmiacin: Paštonakan Amsagir Hayrapetakan At'ořoy*, 61(9) (2005), pp. 56-65, on p. 65. Van den Oudenrijn suggests the date 1410 ('The Monastery of Aparan,' pp. 283-284).

³⁰ The critical edition of this text is published in Levon Xaç'ikyan (ed.), *T'ovma Mecop'ec'i: Patmagrut'iwn* (T'ovma Mecop'ec'i: Historiography), (Yerevan, 1999), pp. 1-217. There is a 1987 English translation of the text by R. Bedrosian, which is based on the K. Šaxnazaryan's 1860 Paris edition. In the present work I provide my translation of relevant extracts taken from Xaç'ikyan's critical edition (see Appendix III).

3.1 Grigor Tat'ewac'i's Colophon

The colophon to the *Book of Commentaries* (or *Scholia on the Incarnation*) by Cyril of Alexandria was written, as the Apostolic Armenian scholar claims, in the monastery of Tat'ew in the province of Siwnik', not far from Aprakunik'.³¹ Chronologically, this is our first source that attests to the bitter confrontation that took place in the Ernĵak province, authored by one of its main protagonists. It starts with the attribution of the discovery of Cyril's text in the repository of the monastery to divine providence and continues with a brief description of how this text was used by the monks for educational purposes, as well as to combat the *alt'armayk'*, that is to say, the Catholic Armenians.³²

Cyril's work had long been highly esteemed by the ranks of Apostolic Armenians as an effective means against the supporters of the Chalcedonian definition of faith³³, and it was also deployed to challenge the proselytising efforts of Catholic missionaries and the *Fratres Unitores*.³⁴ In this regard Tat'ewac'i's words are revealing for he describes the book as '[t]hat which with hope had ardently been desired for its uprightness' and 'which was needed and longed for since early times'. Moreover, Tat'ewac'i and his colleagues treat the discovery of

³¹ The colophon has been preserved in two variants: complete and incomplete. The complete colophon consists of a bewildering preamble and a section which contains historical information and the "remember" part of the colophon. It is found, for instance, in the Berlin MS. Or. Peterm. I. 32 (1657), folios 251v-253r, and the Matenadaran MS 115, folios 401r-402v (1688). What is more interesting, the obscure preamble is found on its own in another manuscript of Cyril of Alexandria's *Book of Commentaries* (1394, Bodleian MS. Arm. e. 20, folio 172v-173r). The incomplete colophon, on the other hand, contains only the historical and the "remember" parts. One copy of the colophon in that format has been preserved on folio 5r in the Bodleian Libraries' MS. Arm. e. 36 (1689) and is reprinted in Xaç'ikyan, *ŽD Dari*, n 657, pp. 529-530 (for the translation of this part, see Appendix I). It follows the table of contents and is written with a different hand than the rest of the manuscript. The possible reasons for such variations are discussed below.

³² The word *alt'armay* (plural *alt'armayk'*, from Turkish *aktarmak* = to change, transfer; derivative abstract noun *alt'armayut'iwñ*) was a derogative term used by the Apostolic Armenians to mock and/or deprecate the Armenians who adopted Catholicism (Step'an Malxaseanc', *Hayerēn Bac'atrankan Baĵaran* (Explanatory Dictionary of Armenian), Vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1944), p. 44).

³³ There are numerous references to and quotes from Cyril of Alexandria's works deployed to support the tenets of the Apostolic Armenian faith in the *Girk' T'it'oc'* (Book of Letters), an important collection of theological letters that have preserved the history of the Armenian Church and its relations with neighbouring Churches (see, Norayr Polarean (ed.), *Girk' T'it'oc'*, (Erusalem, 1994).

³⁴ La Porta, 'Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange', p. 291.

this manuscript as a divine sign, ‘as an invitation from the Spirit’ to act against the adversaries of the Apostolic Church.

The colophon states that the number of supporters of the Unitor movement increased and describes their teaching as ‘bitter and cruel’. This clichéd expression was often used by scribes to describe adverse conditions in which they found themselves,³⁵ especially when speaking about invasions, mistreatment of Christians by the “unbelievers”, and various other calamities. This remark by the influential clergyman evinces the seriousness with which the conflict between the two factions was perceived.

Another interesting detail that this colophon provides concerns the educational methods practised at Tat‘ew monastery. Copying texts of important Christian authors was considered to be an effective way of exercising one’s mind and receiving true knowledge.³⁶ The number of copies of this particular treatise by Cyril made under the supervision of Tat‘ewac‘i and the regular copying of it in subsequent centuries seem to be the reason why this colophon by Tat‘ewac‘i reached us in different variants. For instance, the copy of the same work made in 1394 in Hermon monastery, not far from Tat‘ew (Bodleian MS. Arm. e. 20), contains a colophon (folio 213r) in which the scribe, *vardapet* Yohannēs, repeats almost literally the words of Tat‘ewac‘i about how ‘ardently’ he ‘desired for its uprightness’ and how he uncovered it ‘at an unexpected time in the chest of books’ but then continues with personal details and information about the circumstances under which he made this copy. It is reasonable to assume that scribes practised by copying from the original made by Tat‘ewac‘i himself or his students and rewrote only the section which contained personal information.

³⁵ See Avedis K. Sanjian (ed. and trans.), *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 1301-1480: A Source for Middle Eastern History*, (Cambridge MA., 1969), pp. 19-20.

³⁶ The fact that the monks of the monastery had access to sufficient material for producing so many manuscripts hints at the financial affluence of this establishment, which, as it is known from many sources, was sponsored by the Ōrbelyan family. For the support that the Ōrbelyans provided to the educational establishments of Syunik’, see Grigor M. Grigoryan, *Syunik’ ǎ Ōrbelyanneri Ōrok’ (XIII–XV Darer)* (Syunik’ in the Days of the Ōrbelyans (XIII–XV Centuries), (Yerevan, 1981), pp. 156-237.

More pertinent to the present study is Tat'ewac'i's subsequent mention of his and his companions' trip to the environs of K'rna. There is no reason to disagree with Anuš Minasyan³⁷ that Tat'ewac'i refers to the same events recounted by Fra Mxit'arič' and T'ovma Mecop'ec'i, for the time, the location, and the outcome of these events match well. We learn that the copied texts were taken to the monasteries where the Unitores dwelt and were successfully deployed to regain control of the congregations which had adopted Catholicism:

And taking [it, i.e. the manuscript], we went to the abovementioned province [i.e. Ernĵak, where K'rna was located] and with this hurled and struck the blasphemer's forehead, and the phalanx of the *alt'armayut'iwn*³⁸ dispersed. And we seized many monasteries from them and there was joy in the orthodox ranks for many years. This happened in the year 828 [=1379/80] of the great movable calendar³⁹.

Despite the aggressive tone, I believe that Tat'ewac'i does not explicitly refer to physical confrontation, as suggested by La Porta in his translation and interpretation of this passage,⁴⁰ but rather to an ideological victory achieved with the help of Cyril's *Book of Commentaries*.⁴¹ Cyril's treatise, which advocated miaphysite theological positions adopted and staunchly defended by the Armenian Apostolic Church, was deployed as an ideological weapon to fight against the dyophysite theology of the proponents of Catholicism. It was circulated in a period when the Apostolic Armenian clergy, led by Tat'ewac'i, were preparing

³⁷ Anuš Minasyan, 'Hovhan Orotneč'u Kyank'ə u Gorcuneut'yun'ə' (The Life and Work of Hovhan Orotneč'i), *Banber Erevani Hamalsarani. Hayagitut'yun*, 2(17) (2015), pp. 3-19, on p. 12.

³⁸ See above n. 32.

³⁹ For the discussion of different types of calendars used by Armenian scribes, see Sanjian, *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts*, pp. 34-41.

⁴⁰ La Porta, 'Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange', p. 287. It should be mentioned that the aforementioned Matenadaran MS 115 (f. 402r) (see n. 31) does not contain the word *unĵui* ('with this'). This must be the reason why La Porta has translated *սլինգայքսքայնալ* literally as 'slinging stones' and rendered these lines as 'slinging stones we beat [their] blaspheming foreheads'.

⁴¹ Minasyan ('Hovhan Orotneč'u Kyank'ə', p. 12) also believes that the Apostolic Armenians went to Aprakunik 'armed' with the treatise of Cyril of Alexandria, which contained arguments in defence of the Apostolic Armenian definitions and practices of Christian faith.

their intellectual response to the advancements of the Fratres Unitores and the Catholic missionaries.⁴²

Tat'ewac'i's words in the aforementioned passage allude to the battle of David against Goliath, in which 'David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead'⁴³. The similarity of the wording, especially the use of the verb *parsak'areal* (slung) and the image of striking the adversary's forehead, is conspicuous and, to my mind, deliberate. For Tat'ewac'i, it appears, the reclaiming of the monasteries from the Catholic Armenians was a momentous event that happened by the divine will as David's victory over the Philistine⁴⁴ symbolising the triumph of true faith over its adversary.

Admittedly, the extended metaphor used by Tat'ewac'i may be interpreted in two different ways. On the one hand, the Apostolic Armenians' triumph over their opponents could have been scored on the intellectual battlefield with fierce and intense theological debates that often took place in the monasteries.⁴⁵ On the other hand, it should not be excluded that the allusion to the biblical battle might have been a rhetorical device to conceal actual violence that erupted during Tat'ewac'i and his companions' trip to Naxijewan. Despite this ambiguity in the words of Tat'ewac'i, the fact that he links the success of the Apostolic Armenians in reclaiming the monasteries from the Catholics to the influential theological treatise of one of the most important and revered Church Fathers suggests an intellectual confrontation.

⁴² In this respect, the most important work to appear in this period was Grigor Tat'evac'i's *Girk' Harc'manc'* (Book of Questions), which challenged many religious tenets and beliefs of the Catholic faith (see La Porta, 'Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange', p. 291).

⁴³ *ձգեաց Չաւիթ զձեռն իւր ի մախաղն, եւ առ անտի քար մի, եւ պարսաւարեաց եւ եհար զճաղատ ալլազունի* (1 Sam 17:49; in the Armenian version of the Old testament this passage is found in 1 Kings 17:49). English text: Eds. Michael D. Coogan et al, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, 4th edition, (Oxford, 2010); Armenian text: Yovhann Zōhrapēan, *Astuacašunč: Matean Hin ew Nor Ktakaranac'* (Bible: The Text of the Old and New testaments), (Venice, 1805).

⁴⁴ Cf. the commentary on this episode in Coogan et al, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, p. 427.

⁴⁵ As mentioned earlier, such debates were not uncommon in that period. In this respect, Mxit'arič's account of the Aprakunik' events, when Sargis is allegedly interrogated by the Fratres Unitores, must have been a reference to such a theological debate.

3.2 Mxit'arič' Aparanec'i's Account

Aparanec'i's account of the events in Aprakunik' should be discussed within the context of his *Book of the Orthodox*, in which it is included. His treatise, on which Aparanec'i worked between *circa* 1390 and 1415,⁴⁶ is an attempt to provide persuasive arguments in support of the orthodoxy preached and practised by the *Fratres Unitores*, which is why it is not surprising that the main focus of the passage that relates the events of Aprakunik' is the vilification of the supporters of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The main villain is Małak'ia Łrimec'i, whom Mxit'arič' claims to have known personally and whom he endeavours to defame by dispelling the myth of his piety.⁴⁷ His zeal in doing this is so great that he pays little attention to the flow of his narrative and repeats some of his accusations over and over again.

According to Mxit'arič', the events took place '[i]n the year 825 (=1376/77) of the Armenian Era in the province of Ernĵak, in the upper monastery of Aprakunik''. At the time three ecclesiastical institutions are known to have existed in the village of Aprakunik': the monastery of *Surb Karapet* (Saint John, i.e. John the Precursor)⁴⁸, the monastery of the *Surb Xaç'* (Holy Cross)⁴⁹, and the church of *Surb Gevorg* (Saint George)⁵⁰. We can assume that the events unfolded in the monastery of *Surb Xaç'*, which was known as the 'upper monastery'⁵¹ and which was situated approximately 550 metres northeast of the Saint

⁴⁶ Ter-Vardanyan, 'Mxit'arič' Aparanec'i Matenagirə', p. 65.

⁴⁷ Ter-Vardanyan is right to challenge Č'amč'ean and Ališan's view that Mxit'arič' was Małak'ia's student based on Mxit'arič''s claim that he had known Małak'ia for 10 years before the latter's death (ibid., pp. 57-59). The way Mxit'arič' describes the events that led to Małak'ia's death suggests that the loyal Catholic monk could hardly have been the student of Małak'ia during the period when Małak'ia was fighting against the *Fratres Unitores* and the Catholic missionaries.

⁴⁸ Ayvazyan, *Naxiĵevani ISSH Haykakan Hušarjannerə*, pp. 97-98, n 287.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 99, n 291.

⁵⁰ Ibid., n 292.

⁵¹ Argam Ayvazyan, 'Abrakunisi Surb Karapet Vank'ə' (The Abrakunis Monastery of Saint Karapet), *Eĵmiacin: Paštonakan Amsagir Hayrapetakan At'oroĵ*, 33(7) (1976), pp. 45-52, on p. 48; Mesrovb Smbateanc', *Nkaragir Surb Karapeti Vanic' Ernĵakay ew Šrĵakic' Nora* (The Description of the Ernĵak Monastery of Surb Karapet and of its Environs), (Tp'lis, 1904), p. 4.

Karapet monastery⁵². After the events under scrutiny, in 1381 Saint Karapet was turned into a major educational centre by Małak‘ia Łrimec‘i and played an important role in the spiritual life of the province of Ernĵak⁵³, primarily serving as a powerful deterrent to the spread of the Unitor movement in the area. Its strategically significant location, namely within a short walking distance⁵⁴ from the main centre of the Unitor movement the K‘řna monastery, located on the opposite bank of the river Ernĵak, was conducive to frequent interactions between the two communities.

One of the protagonists of Mxit‘arič‘‘s narrative is the superior of the Surb Xaç‘ monastery, ‘a certain brave and decent’ *vardapet* Sargis, whose piety Mxit‘arič‘ stresses by stating that he ‘did not eat meat or drink wine’. In general, Sargis is presented in a positive light throughout the account with the exception of the episode when Mxit‘arič‘ calls him ‘very faint-hearted and cowardly’ for not interfering when his students are punished for sympathising with the Catholics.

Mxit‘arič‘ claims that Sargis was fascinated by Peter of Aragon’s *Book of Virtues*, an authoritative text on the three theological and four cardinal virtues. It was translated into Armenian in 1339⁵⁵ and became enormously popular amongst both Catholic and Apostolic Armenians. A 1386 colophon⁵⁶ indicates that the *Book of Virtues* was even copied and most likely used in teaching by the great rival of the Fratres Unitores Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i.⁵⁷ According to Mxit‘arič‘, Sargis adopts Catholicism under the influence of this work and begins to teach it to his students, who then hasten to preach the Catholic doctrine openly in the area.

⁵² Ayvazyan, *Naxiĵevani ISSH Haykakan Huřarjannerə*, p. 99; Smbateanc‘, Nkaragir, p. 48.

⁵³ For more details, see Ayvazyan, ‘Abrakunisi Surb Karapet Vank‘ə’, pp. 46, 48-49.

⁵⁴ According to Google maps, the distance between Aprakunik‘ (Aragunus in Azeri) and K‘řna (Kırna in Azeri) villages, where the monasteries were located, is around 2.5 km. The maps drawn by Smbateanc‘ (in *Nkaragir*) and Ayvazyan (in *Naxiĵevani ISSH Haykakan Huřarjannerə*) supply the same information.

⁵⁵ Van den Oudenrijn, ‘Uniteurs et Dominicains d’Armenie’ (1958), p. 119.

⁵⁶ See Xaç‘ikyan, *ŽD Dari*, n 707, pp. 564-565.

⁵⁷ For more on this colophon, see below.

At this point in the narrative, Mxit'arič' introduces its main protagonist and the arch-villain, describing him as 'a certain evil servant of Satan, called Małak'ia' from Ęrim (Crimea). To justify his characterisation, Mxit'arič' claims that Małak'ia was 'the pupil of a certain false and deceitful hermit, who was called ...', and here Mxit'arič' leaves the space blank for he either does not know his name, or has forgotten it after so many years. Mxit'arič' goes on to challenge Małak'ia's piety by asserting that 'this shameless Małak'ia came from the East and called himself a hermit and a herbivore'; however, 'he would conspicuously eat much the food for fasting and secretly he would behave furiously and unscrupulously'. The criticism of Małak'ia's eating habits, especially in connection with fasting, reflects one of the controversies that surrounded the dialogue between the Armenian and Catholic churches,⁵⁸ though in the present context Mxit'arič' is not concerned with the theological aspect of the debate: instead, he is keen on stressing Małak'ia's hypocritical behaviour regarding such an important element of a Christian hermit's life as fasting.

Then, we are informed that in an unspecified way but 'with satanic falsehood and deceitfulness,' Małak'ia established control over the upper monastery of Aprakunik', which was previously in the hands of the Fratres Unitores, and installed there Sargis *vardapet*. Małak'ia's main goal, according to Mxit'arič', was 'to destroy the unity and the orthodoxy' in the province.

However, under the influence of Sargis and his students, as well as the bishop of Sis in Cilicia, Małak'ia himself adopted the Catholic doctrine, which did not last long for 'the Satan, the root of all evil, quickly deceived his mind with the worldly glory and he became an apostate like Yulianos,' alluding to the Roman Emperor Julian the Apostate. To punish Sargis' students who adopted Catholicism, Małak'ia first took them 'to the fortress of Erənjak and had them intimidated by the suffering of death so that they would repudiate the

⁵⁸ See, for instance François Tournebize, 'Les cent dix-sept accusations présentées à Benoît XII contre les Arméniens', *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 11 (1906), pp. 163-181, 274-300, 352-370, on pp. 282-283.

truth’ and then to his monastery, where he ‘silenced them with a great amount of suffering and pulled out all their hair.’ Moreover, ‘the deceitful Małak‘ia, still not being satisfied due to his ignorance and wickedness,’ endeavoured to destroy all Catholic congregations in the area, for ‘he travelled to the neighbouring lands of Armenia and with false gossips and mendacious words, and with deceitful demeanour he deluded many with sorrowful sighs.’ This testimony implies that after the events of Aprakunik‘ Małak‘ia continued his campaign against the Fratres Unitores by visiting various locations and preaching the beliefs of the Armenian Apostolic Church. He was also attempting to secure the support of the local lay authorities, for Mxit‘arič‘ claims that Małak‘ia ‘collected many riches, plundering everyone, both the poor and the wealthy’ in order to bribe Armenian and Muslim princes to the Apostolic side, an accusation repeated four times in this brief historical overview.⁵⁹ Since the adoption of Christianity the monastic establishments in Armenia relied heavily on the sponsorship and protection of local princes and their interference with this matter would have played a decisive role in securing victory.

Małak‘ia efforts were obviously very effective, prompting his adversaries to take drastic measures to stop him. As Mxit‘arič‘ relates, in the last days of his life Małak‘ia settled in ‘a village, called P‘oradašt,’ where ‘he pretended to consume the Lent food, threatening the true believers’, but ‘God could not bear so much wickedness’ and ‘threw at him the pain of death’ while he was consuming food; ‘and like Herod while suffering he left an evil legacy slandering the Christians who were six miles away saying that they had poisoned him’; after his death, however, ‘some wicked servants of Satan and ignorant people from a faraway land, not knowing about his deeds but only about his false fame, ascribed him false miracles and various acts of kindness which had never happened.’

⁵⁹ Van den Oudenrijn, *Linguae Haicanae*: տայր կաշառս (gave bribes) p. 219; բազում կաշառք պատրեալ (deceived with many bribes) *ibid.*; կաշառք յափշտակեաց (with bribes he snatched) *ibid.*; վսսն կաշառաց չարեաց (for the evil bribery) p. 220.

account of the past, speak about the present, comprehend the future, and issue warnings.⁶⁰ In other words, Mecop‘ec‘i is interested in relating the events that shaped his time and to provide didactic material that would educate his audience.⁶¹ The account of the events that unfolded at the time in the Ernĵak province serves this function and aims at extolling the Apostolic Armenians who, under Yovhan Orotnec‘i’s leadership, gained control of some of the monasteries which were in the hands of the Fratres Unitores; the latter, on the other hand, receive Mecop‘ec‘i’s fierce criticism and utter condemnation.⁶²

Mecop‘ec‘i, in general, does not always follow a linear narrative: as far as the main participants of the episode under consideration are concerned, they are introduced earlier in his account, in Chapters VI and XIX, whereas the incident itself is related in Chapter XX. From his narrative it is not clear when these events actually took place but from the context we can assume that they happened around 1380, which is close to the date 1376/77 provided by Mxit‘arič‘ and 1379/80 given by Tat‘ewac‘i.

The first participant of the Aprakunik‘ events whom Mecop‘ec‘i presents is the prominent theologian and *vardapet* Yovhan Orotnec‘i, who ‘made the Armenian people gleam radiantly with *vardapets* and priests, with beautiful order and orthodox confession of faith’. Moreover, Orotnec‘i fought ‘day and night against the Christ-hating *alt‘armayk‘* of the Ernĵak district’. His characterisation of Orotnec‘i, symbolising light and orthodoxy, and the Unitores, who are accused of hating Christ, is unequivocal and reveals the perspective from which the account of the events of Aprakunik‘ will be presented. This juxtaposition of the

⁶⁰ L. Xaç‘ikyan (ed.), T‘ovma Mecop‘ec‘i: Patmagrut‘iwn, I, p. 2: *Պարտ է գիտել ուսումնասիրաց եւ բանասիրաց անձաց, զի ժամանակն բաժանի յանցեալն, ի ներկայն եւ յապառնի: Եւ վարդապետաց եկեղեցոյ պիտոյ է վասն երիցն գիտելոյ. վասն անցելոյն պատմել, վասն ներկային խօսել, վասն ապագային իմանալ եւ զգուշացուցանել: Նոյնպէս եւ մեզ պարտ է սակաւ մի համառօտաբար վասն ներկային, զոր ի մերում ժամանակիս եղև, պատմել, զոր չար թագաւորքն անհաւատք Արեւելից կորուստ բերին Հայկազեան սեռիս ի վերջին ժամանակիս եւ ամենայն օտարացեղ ազգաց ցուցանել.*

⁶¹ See Marco Bais, ‘Il tempo e la storia. Considerazioni sul prologo della Storia di Tamerlano e dei suoi successori di T‘ovma Mecop‘ec‘i,’ *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 83(2) (2017), pp. 459-479, on pp. 461-477.

⁶² See Marco Bais, ‘La Chiesa armena e Roma nella *Storia di Tamerlano* di T‘ovma Mecop‘ec‘i,’ *Mélanges de l’Ecole française de Rome* 130-1 (2018), pp. 9-19, on pp. 11-12.

“orthodox” Apostolic Armenians and “the false Christians” is, in fact, a recurrent motive throughout his narrative.

Next, Mecop‘ec‘i introduces Małak‘ia Łrimec‘i by referring to the fact that Orotneč‘i was buried in the monastery of Ernĵak, ‘next to his student, the holy hermit Małak‘ia’. This fact evinces that Małak‘ia was greatly esteemed by his contemporaries for one of the most important Armenian religious figures of the fourteenth century, perceived as such already during his lifetime, was laid to rest next to him three years after the latter’s death. Mecop‘ec‘i informs his audience that Małak‘ia was ‘from the maritime city of Crimea [Kafa], son of an extremely wealthy family’; but he left everything there and came to Siwnik‘ to study under Yovhan Orotneč‘i, from whom he subsequently received his authority of the doctor of the church. Mecop‘ec‘i underscores that Małak‘ia was actively involved in building and supporting several Armenian monasteries in Naxčawan (Naxijewan). As a result, the Fratres Unitores, who had by then expanded their influence in the area, felt threatened by this development and staged ‘a strong opposition’ against him, which eventually led to Małak‘ia being poisoned by the Catholic mother of his godson.

Mecop‘ec‘i’s characterisation of Małak‘ia is diametrically opposite to the negative picture presented by Mxit‘arič‘. He provides a passionate extolment of Małak‘ia’s devoutness by pointing out that he led an exemplary pious lifestyle:

And throughout his entire life he did not eat meat or drink wine. And he wore two pieces of sackcloth... And he had iron around his body, four fingers wide, and his limbs, up to his knees, were covered in shackles of criminals. And at the hour of his death our spiritual fathers, *vardapet* Yohannēs and the monk Matt‘ēos, who shrouded him, saw [it], and they informed everyone.⁶³

⁶³ Mecop‘ec‘i, Chapter 6: *Եւ զամենայն ժամանակս կենաց իւրոց միս ոչ եկեր եւ գինի ոչ էարբ: Եւ Բ. (2) քուրձ զգեցեալ էր... Եւ երկաթ զանձամբն ունէր՝ Դ. (4) մատամբ լայն, եւ քրքրով աւազակաց պատեալ էր զանդամս իւր, մինչ ի ծունկսն. եւ ի ժամ մահուն տեսին զնա հոգեւոր հարքն մեր՝ վարդապետն Յոհաննէս եւ Մատթէոս կրօնաւորն, որ պատեալ էին զնա. եւ յայտնեցին ամենեցուն.*

This latter claim evinces Mecop‘ec‘i’s reliance on stories that were transmitted among the Apostolic Armenian clergy and were taught in the schools.⁶⁴ This portrayal of Małak‘ia by Mecop‘ec‘i was eventually adopted by the Armenian ecclesiastical authorities and preserved in a summarised form in the menologion of the Armenian Church.⁶⁵

Another participant of the events of Aprakunik‘, Sargis *vardapet*, is introduced in the section XIX. Mecop‘ec‘i describes him as the ‘great teacher,’ an ‘evangelist,’ and as a man of great kindness and humility. He was revered for his deeds and demeanour by both the Armenians and the foreigners. Most notably, after the events of Aprakunik‘, accompanied by his students, Sargis moved to Surxar in K‘ajberunik‘ region to the monastery of the Holy Mother of God, also known as Xarabast, and from there he ‘illuminated the entire seacoast of the Vaspurakan district with learning and knowledge, and masses’. This remark allows us to assume that whatever happened in Aprakunik‘ did not affect Sargis’ reputation and he continued to serve as a *vardapet* amongst the Apostolic Armenians.

It is in relation to Sargis that Mecop‘ec‘i decides to tell his audience about what happened in Aprakunik‘. While ‘in the land of Siwnik‘’ Sargis was approached by a Catholic monk, who used to be an adherent of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The monk warned Sargis that the Fratres Unitores would come to his monastery and examine him on his knowledge of the *Book of Virtues* by Peter of Aragon. Sargis prepared well for the examination and surprised the Catholic monks with his deep knowledge of the text. The

⁶⁴ See, for instance, a colophon from 1391/92 copied in Aprakunik‘ monastery: ...*Արդ, եղև գրաւ համառատութեան բանից քարոզութեան ի թու[ին] Հայոց Պ. եւ Խ. [=840], առ ոսոս արդիւնաբան հոռետրին՝ Գրիգորի մեծի [Տաթևացոյ], յերկիրս յԵրնջանկոյ, ի վանս Ապրակունեաց, գոր մեծ ջանիւ էառ ի յաղթարմայից երկարնակացն քաջ նահատակն Քրիստոսի Մաղաբիաս...*; ‘... Now, the compendium of the words of instruction was completed in the year 840 (=1391/92) of the Armenian Era, at the feet of the meritorious rhetor Great Grigor [Tat‘ewac‘i] in the province of Ernjak, in the monastery of Aprakunik‘, which was redeemed with great effort from the *alt‘armay* professors of the two natures of Christ by the valiant martyr of Christ Małak‘ias ...’ (Xaç‘ikyan, *ŽD Dari*, n 736, p. 592).

⁶⁵ For the two versions of the text dedicated to Małak‘ia, see Appendix V from 1482 and Appendix VI published in 1706.

students of Sargis, who apparently were present at the examination, found Peter of Aragon's treatise agreeable and persuaded him to teach it to them. The 'humble and innocent' Sargis did not reject their request but, the students, 'being ignorant,' 'quickly weakened in faith' and abandoned the Apostolic teaching making a plan to join the *alt'armayk*.

Sargis was not happy with this development and sent Małak'ia Łrimec'i to Yovhan Orotneç'i asking his help before his students would join the *alt'arma* 'deniers of truth'. Thus, in Mecop'ec'i's version of the events, Małak'ia's participation is limited to the role of the messenger to the Tat'ew monastery, for he is not mentioned at all in the subsequent unfolding of the events.

The climax is reached when Orotneç'i, joined by 'his students and a multitude of priests,' came to the monastery of Aprakunik' in the province of Ernĵak, and set up a tribunal which was attended by both the clergy and the lay population of the village. Orotneç'i found out 'all the evil predisposition of the ignorant students,' who 'were declared guilty and were taken to prison: some were placed in shackles and some were beaten with stick.'

In the epilogue Mecop'ec'i presents the moral of this story by concluding that all the disobedient students suffered divine punishment: 'some drowned in the river; others disgracefully wandered around naked; half of them fled and went to the land of the Franks, and those from amongst them that spoke wickedly were placed in a copper [cauldron] and cooked.' This graphic description of the fate of the rebels was undoubtedly aimed at discouraging dissent.

Mecop'ec'i's description of the fate of the disobedient students contains interesting literary elements. First, he makes an allusion to the fifth-century *History of the Armenians* by Agat'angelos, in which the pagan king of Armenia Trdat turned into a boar and 'wallowed

naked in the plain'⁶⁶, later to be saved by the evangeliser of Armenia St Gregory the Illuminator through accepting Christianity. Moreover, the gruesome image of someone being put into a copper cauldron and cooked alive seems to be a literary topos, for earlier in his narrative Mecop'ec'i uses virtually identical wording to describe how the founder of the Timurid Empire Timur Lang (Tamerlane) punished betrayal.⁶⁷ Interestingly, this same topos, which must have been borrowed from Mecop'ec'i, was used by an anonymous scribe⁶⁸ to describe the tragic fate of the *vardapet* of Kolb, Jacob, who defected to the *alt'armayk'* taking with him ten other *vardapets*, and who, alongside his companions, was boiled alive in a cauldron by the Armenian princes after being severely admonished by Yovhan Orotneac'i and Grigor Tat'ewac'i.⁶⁹

4. REMARKS ON THE PRIMARY SOURCES

The three sources that directly or indirectly provide details regarding the incident in the monastery of Surb Xaç' in Aprakunik' evince conspicuous lack of objectivity from their authors thus rendering it difficult to reconstruct the actual sequence of events. Being an eyewitness to and an active participant of these events, Grigor Tat'ewac'i in his account only highlights the triumph of the Apostolic Armenians, attributing it to divine providence and

⁶⁶ Thomson, Robert W. (trans. and ed.), *The Lives of Saint Gregory: The Armenian, Greek, Arabic, and Syriac Versions of the History Attributed to Agathangelos*, (Ann Arbor, Mich., 2010), p. 276, §212.

⁶⁷ Xaç'ikyan, T'ovma Mecop'ec'i, IV, p. 9: *և լ [Թամուր] հուր ետ վառել. և եղին [զէդիլն] կենդանոյն ի պղնձի սանն և եփեցին զնա առաջի նորա և ամենայն բազմութեանն*, 'he [Timur] had a fire kindled, and they placed [Ēdil] alive in a copper cauldron, and cooked him in the presence of himself and of the entire multitude.'

⁶⁸ Conybeare (Frederick C. Conybeare, *A Catalogue of the Armenian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, (London, 1913), p. 338) describes the passage from which this story is taken as 'a notice of the Armenian catenae drawn up in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries from older material', but the manuscript itself is written by 'hands of the seventeenth or early eighteenth century' (ibid., p. 329).

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 339-340: *[Յակոբ անուն վարդապետ մի ի Կողբա] դարձաւ ի յարանտն Տոանկաց, և դարձոյց ի Հայոց 10 վարդապետ այլ ի յիր չար աղանտն... , և թարքմանեաց զայն գիրքն` ի Տոանկաց ի մերս և այնու կամեցն պատրել զագգն Հայոց... շատ իրատեաց զնա Յոհանէսն Որոտնեցին, և Գրիգոր Տաթևացին. և ոչ լուան նոցա. յետոյ կալան զնոսա իշխանքն Հայոց և ի պղնձ եղեալ հալեցին զնոսա...* Van den Oudenrijn uses this account, in addition to Mxit'arič's testimony, to support his evaluation of the events as 'a bloody persecution' (see above), without, however, considering the possibility that the reference to boiling dissidents alive in a cauldron could be a mere literary topos.

thus justifying the outcome of the confrontation. On the other hand, writing about 60 years after the events T'ovma Mecop'ec'i relies heavily on the oral testimony of the Apostolic Armenian clergy for his interpretation of the events. He reiterates the narrative already constructed in his milieu, effectively moralising the denouement of the confrontation. Finally, Fra Mxit'arič' Aparanec'i claims to have known the main protagonist in person, thus attempting to remove doubts regarding the authenticity of his interpretation. However, the apparent inconsistencies and the emotionally charged language of his narrative display marked bias against the Apostolic Armenians, especially against Małak'ia Łrimec'i. How much Aparanec'i exaggerates, omits, or adds to his version of the events cannot be established but the collation of the three testimonies enables us to draw some conclusions with regard to the nature of the conflict and its consequences.

Grigor Tat'ewac'i's colophon establishes a relatively accurate date when the conflict occurred. The year 1379/80 is reasonably consistent with the date provided by Aparanec'i and Mecop'ec'i, and can be linked to the increase in the number of Catholic Armenians in the region caused by the resumption of the activities of the *Fratres Peregrinantes*. Moreover, all three texts concur that the measures taken by the Apostolic clergy against the proselytising efforts of the *Fratres Unitores* were effective and in the years to come allowed the former to regain control of many monasteries in the area.

When comparing the accounts of Mxit'arič' and T'ovma it is easy to notice that there are a few points that show agreement. To begin with, both narratives claim that Sargis *vardapet* knew well the *Book of Virtues* and he taught it to his students, who liked the book and eagerly adopted its teaching; they were punished for that, some severely; Małak'ia was instrumental in taking some monasteries from the *Fratres Unitores*; Małak'ia died while consuming food. Furthermore, both authors depict Sargis *vardapet* positively but also show their disapproval of Sargis' certain actions: when his students were punished for

sympathising with the Catholics, Mxit'arič' calls him 'very faint-hearted and cowardly' for not interfering, whereas for T'ovma Sargis succumbs to his students' request to teach the *Book of Virtues* because he was 'humble and innocent'.

Another interesting similarity is found in the way both authors declare the orthodoxy of 'their' Christian faith, at the same time stressing that the other party holds false beliefs.⁷⁰ This was a recurring motif attested in a large number of contemporary colophons and marginalia.⁷¹ The representation of the "other's" faith as evil and false was part of the strategy in the struggle to attract and retain as many supporters as possible. The similarities, however, end here and it is not difficult to notice that both authors attempt to moralise the events of Aprakunik' in a way that is more appropriate to the main goal of their work.

5. IN THE AFTERMATH

The extant evidence suggests that the nature of the relationships between the two communities of Armenian monks did not change much after Aprakunik' passed again under the control of the Apostolic Armenian clergy. The *Fratres Unitores* continued their proselytising activities in the region primarily through preaching,⁷² whereas the Apostolic Armenians attempted to strengthen their positions by establishing new educational centres⁷³ which would enable them to increase the number of their followers. An example of the latter

⁷⁰ Mecop'ec'i praises Yovhan Orotneč'i for making 'the Armenian people gleam radiantly with *vardapets* and priests, with beautiful order and orthodox confession of faith (*նւղղափառ դասնութեամբ*) ... combatting day and night against the Christ-hating *alt'armayk'* of the Ernjak district' (Xaç'ikyan, *T'ovma Mecop'ec'i*, VI, p. 12). On his part, Mxit'arič' accuses Małak'ia of claiming 'the upper monastery of Aprakunik' from our orthodox folk (*ի սերոց ուղղափառ ժողովրդեանն*)' and of 'wishing to destroy the unity and the orthodoxy (*զուղղափառութիւն*) in this same province' (van den Oudenrijn, *Linguae Haicanae*, p. 219).

⁷¹ See, for example, Xaç'ikyan, *ŽD Dari*, n 338, p. 275 and n 431, p. 344, as well as the marginalia to the *Matenadaran MS 46* discussed below.

⁷² According to van den Oudenrijn ('*Unitours et Dominicains d'Armenie*' (1958), p. 123), the translation work at K'ina seems to have ceased before the mid-fourteenth century and only a fragment of the *Fratres Unitores'* catechism (end of 14th century) found in MS 1609 of the Mekhitarist library and Mxit'arič's *Girk' Ullap'arac'* (MSS 334 and 1663 of San Lazzaro) have reached us.

⁷³ Van den Oudenrijn, 'The Monastery of Aparan', p. 296 and '*Unitours et Dominicains d'Armenie*' (1961), pp. 103-105.

was Tat'ew monastery's expansion and rise in significance with the efforts of Yovhan Orotneč'i and Grigor Tat'ewac'i.⁷⁴

The polemical exchanges also continued. Many texts by Latin authors found their way into the libraries of the Apostolic Armenian schools.⁷⁵ An illustrative example is the Matenadaran MS 46, which is a copy of the *Book of Virtues* by Peter of Aragon made in 1386/87 by none other than Grigor Tat'ewac'i, known for his polemical writings against the adversaries of the Apostolic faith. The colophon and the marginalia⁷⁶ found in different parts of the manuscript represent an interesting pattern of interaction between a medieval Catholic reader, who calls himself Ignatios, and Tat'ewac'i. Ignatios' scribbling elucidates Tat'ewac'i's motives: 'Not few weeds but many has the cursed Grigor Tat'ewac'i sown with the wheat.' Similar comments and accusations of amending certain parts of the text appear on other folios, too.⁷⁷ Tat'ewac'i must have adapted this very popular Catholic text for educational purposes presenting it in the way that would not be at variance with the Apostolic Armenian faith, thus preventing his students from succumbing to the temptation of switching sides.⁷⁸

We can only guess how the Catholic monk came into possession of Tat'ewac'i's manuscript. Yet, considering the fact that the two communities lived in the same neighbourhood and that there were frequent encounters between their members, it is reasonable to suggest that manuscripts were meant to change hands, so that their owners would be able to instil their ideas into those who were of different opinion.

⁷⁴ See, for instance, Grigoryan, *Syunik'ə*, pp. 165-176.

⁷⁵ For some examples, see La Porta, 'Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange', pp. 291-293.

⁷⁶ See Appendix IV.

⁷⁷ For instance, Xaç'ikyan, *ŽD Dari*, n 707, p. 565: *Ո՛հ, Տաթևացի, ոչ երկնչիս յԱստուծոյ՝ խառնելով զթոյնդ անսպական զինւոյս, որ սպանէ ոգիս պարզամտաց* (Oh, Tat'ewac'i, aren't you afraid of God, mixing your poison with unadulterated wine, which kills the soul of simple-minded people?).

⁷⁸ A comparative study of Peter of Aragon's original text and Tat'ewac'i's version, which is yet to be done, would elucidate the changes made by the Apostolic Armenian theologian.

However, the *modus vivendi* dramatically changed in 1386 with the first incursion of Timur into the Armenian Plateau. The entire population of the region suffered the devastating effects of the Timurid conquest: towns, villages, and monasteries were plundered and destroyed causing people to flee in different directions.⁷⁹ Moreover, the gradual spread of Islam posed additional problems to various Christian communities of the area. Despite this momentous change, the Catholic Armenian communities continued to exist in the region until 1743, when a new war between the Ottomans and the Persians forced them to abandon their monasteries for good.⁸⁰

6. CONCLUSION

The three narratives examined in this paper present the events that unfolded in Aprakunik' from a particular perspective and evince the complexity of relations between the Apostolic and Catholic Armenians in the late fourteenth century. Looking beyond the ideologically charged elements of these versions of the events, we can conclude that in 1379/80 in the monastery of Surb Xaç' in Aprakunik' a serious incident occurred, during which the Apostolic Armenian monks and priests, apparently supported by the lay authorities of the region, resorted to violence to suppress dissent and to hinder their students' conversion to Catholicism. This, however, should be seen as an isolated event rather than a complete change of tactics by the Apostolic Armenians, for there is no evidence that the violence, in one form or another, spread in the area around Aprakunik' affecting other establishments of the *Fratres Unitores*. On the contrary, both Mxit'arič' and Tat'ewac'i hint at non-violent measures that had been taken by the Apostolic Armenians in the aftermath of the events.

⁷⁹ Xaç'ikyan, *T'ovma Mecop'ec'i*, pp. 1-112; idem, *ŽD Dari*, 1950, pp. 569, 574–575, 577–579, with the English translations in Sanjian, *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts*, pp. 104-108; see also Robert Bedrosian, 'Armenia during the Seljuk and Mongol Periods', *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times. Volume I: The Dynastic Periods: From Antiquity to the Fourteenth Century*, (New York, 1997), pp. 241-271, on pp. 267-271.

⁸⁰ Marcus A. van den Oudenrijn, 'Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Armenie: V. Les Dominicains de Naxiĵewan', *Oriens Christianus, Hefte für die Kunde des christlichen Orients*, 46 (1962), pp. 99-115, on p. 114.

Mxit'arič' asserts that Małakia Łrimec'i continued his preaching activities in the neighbouring regions using diplomacy to attract the lay authorities to his side, whereas Grigor Tat'ewac'i's account suggests that battles were fought on the ideological battlefield with Cyril of Alexandria's *Scholia on the Incarnation* being one of their main weapons. The polemical writings of Yovhan Orotneč'i and Grigor Tat'ewac'i, as well as the establishment of new schools became means of ensuring control over congregations and propagating the Apostolic Armenian definition of faith.

Finally, the fact that the Catholic Armenian congregations continued to exist and operate in the immediate vicinity of the Apostolic Armenian monastic centres in the Naxiĵewan region for many centuries to come also confirm that the events of Aprakunik' did not cause a dramatic change in the relations of the two communities. Instead, very soon both communities were to face another, a much more formidable adversary: the increasing Islamization of the region posed significant threats to the very existence of the Christian communities and urged them to seek ways of survival.

David ZAKARIAN

University of Oxford

david.zakarian@orinst.ox.ac.uk

Abstract

This article examines an episode in the relations between the Catholic and Apostolic Armenian clergy in the fourteenth century, when allegedly the representatives of the Armenian Apostolic Church resorted to considerable violence to discourage the students of

the monastery of Surb Xač' (Holy Cross) in the Naxijewan region of Greater Armenia to convert to Catholicism. It explores the primary sources that contain information about this incident and endeavours to reassess the impact that this conflict had on the relations of the two communities.

Keywords: Fratres Unitores, Armenian Apostolic Church, Aprakunik', Catholic Armenians

APPENDIX I

1379/80

Place: Tat'ev Monastery; Scribe: Grigor Tat'ewac'i; MS. title: *Book of Commentaries* by Cyril of Alexandria

Source: Bodleian MS Arm. e. 36, f. 5r; Xač'ikyan, *XIV Dari*, n 657, p. 529-530

*Ջոր այսու յուսով տարփացող եղեալ
սորին ուղղութեան, վերջինս [ի]
բանասիրաց եւ տրուպս պետաց Գրիգոր
կոչեցեալ՝ ինդրող բանի, գոր ի վաղ
ժամանակաց տենչացեալ կարօտ էաք,
յեղակարծ ժամու գտեալ եղեւ ի յարկեղս
գրոց յեկեղեցոջ առաքելական աթոռոյն
Տաթևու, յորում ժամանակի էր կրկին
ընձիւղեալ դառն եւ դաժան երկաբնակ
աղանդն քաղկեդոնի ի կոչեցեալ գետն
Քոնա, շրջաբնակ գաւառօք: Եւ մեք՝
զգիւտ սորա ի հրաւիրմանէ հոգւոյն
ընկալեալք, առեալ իւրաքանչիւր ոք
օրինակեցաք՝ ի վարժումն ուղղասէր*

That which with hope had ardently been desired for its uprightness by me, the last of the philologists and the most unworthy one of the leaders, Grigor by name, a seeker for the Word, and that which was needed and longed for by us since early times was found at an unexpected time in the chest of books at the apostolic throne of Tat'ew, at the time when once again the bitter and cruel Chalcedonian heresy, which professes two natures of Christ, came forth in the village of K'ina and the surrounding provinces. And every one of us, having perceived the finding of this as an

մտաց: Որ⁸¹ եւ ես ըստ իմում կարի
 տիւեղծ մատամբ գծագրեցի զսա, առ ոտս
 մեծի վաժապետին իմոյ Յոհաննու
 Որոտնեցոյ, որ եւ կրկին ընթերցմամբ
 լուսաւորեալ առաջնորդեցայ ի սմանէ: Եւ
 ապա առեալ ընթացաք ի վերոյ ասացեալ
 գաւառն, եւ պարսաքարեալ սովաւ⁸²
 հարաք զհայհոյիչն ճակատ, եւ ցրուեցաւ
 փաղանկն աղթարմայութեան, եւ բազում
 վանորայս առեալ ի նոցանէ եղև
 ուրախութիւն ուղղափառաց դասուց ամս
 բազումս: Յորում եւ էր թիւ
 շրջագայութեան տօմարիս մեծի Պ. եւ ԲԸ.
 ամի:

invitation from the Spirit, took and copied
 it as an exercise for the mind that loves
 precision. I, too, to the best of my ability,
 with my gnarled fingers copied it at the feet
 of my great teacher Yohan Orotneç‘i, and
 having read it again I was enlightened and
 guided by it. And taking [it], we went to
 the abovementioned province and with this
 hurled and struck the blasphemer’s
 forehead, and the phalanx of the
alt‘armayut‘iwn dispersed. And we seized
 many monasteries from them and there was
 joy in the orthodox ranks for many years.
 This happened in the year 828 (=1379/80)
 of the great movable calendar.

APPENDIX II

Fra Mxit‘ariç‘ Aparanec‘i, *Girk‘ Ullap‘arac‘*, Extract.

Source: M. A. van den Oudenrijn, *Linguae Haicanae scriptores: Ordinis Praedicatorum Congregationis Fratrum Unitorum et FF. Armenorum Ord. S. Basilii citra Mare consistentium quotquot huc usque innotuerunt*. Bern: A. Francke, 1960, pp. 218-220.

Ի թվականութեանն Հաոց Պ. Բ. Ե. ի գաւառն
 յԵրրնջակո, ի վերի վանքն Ապրակունեաց,
 ոմն քաջ վարդապետ եւ առաքինի ըստ
 Հաոց որպիսութեանց, որ կոչիր Սարգիս,
 որո ոչ էր կերեալ միս կամ ըմբեալ գինի,
 ամենայն համանման աշակերտօք իւրօվք, ի
 ձեռն մերո գրոց Առաքինութեանցն, գոր

In the year 825 (=1376/77) of the
 Armenian Era, in the province of Ernĵak, in
 the upper monastery of Aprakunik‘, a
 certain brave and decent, in the Armenian
 understanding, *vardapet* called Sargis, who
 neither ate meat nor drank wine, alongside
 all his students became aware of the truth
 through our *Book of Virtues*, which was

⁸¹ Xac‘ikyan has *դրոց* here.

⁸² In Matenadaran MS 115 (folio 402r), copied in 1688, the word *սովաւ* is missing.

թարքմանեալ էին սուրբ վարդապետքն մեր
 նախնիք ի լատինացոցն ի հայ բարբառ,
 եղև տեղեակ ճշմարտութեան: Վասն որոյ
 ամենեքեան ի միասին եղին ուխտ եւ
 դաշինս ուղղափառութեան: Բայց վասն
 առաւել սիրոյն, որ տա մոռանալ զամենայն
 սկարութիւնս, անխոհեմտաբար եւ առանց
 զգուշութեան փութացեալ վաղվարեցան առ
 ի կատարել զուխտս իւրեանց: Վասն որոյ
 ոմանք յայտնապէս քարոզէին
 զճշմարտութիւն, ոմանք եկեալ մկրտեցան
 եւ եղեն քահանայք, եւ այլ այսպիսիք: Ընդ
 որս հիացեալ ոմն ճգնաւոր Սարգիս անուն,
 որ բնակէր ի յանապատս Շամբի ձորոյն,
 ասէր ընդ եղբորորդին իւր Ղուկաս
 քահանայն, որ էր առաջնորդ ամենայն
 կարգաւորաց Շամբի ձորին. օ՛վ Ղուկաս,
 ճշմարիտ է միաբանութիւնն եւ ուղղափառ
 դաւանութիւնն կաթողիկէ սուրբ եկեղեցոյ,
 վասն զի ոչ ոք չար, այլ ամենայն ընտիր ոք
 ազգիս Հառց, վարդապետք եւ առաքինիք,
 հետեւեցան եւ եղեն միաբան եւ հնազանդ
 սուրբ եկեղեցոյն Հռոմա ընդ շաւղաց սուրբ
 հորն մերո Նուսաւորչին: Իսկ ոմն չար
 արբանեակ սատանայի, անուն Մաղաքիա
 եւ աշխարհի էրէց, եկեալ ի Ղրիմ քաղաքէն,
 աշակերտ ոմն սուտ եւ կեղծաւոր
 ճգնաւորի, որ կոչուի ..., որ վասն
 չարութեան նորա աստուածասաստ
 բարկութիւնն Աստուծոյ իջոյց զձեղումնս
 տանն ի վերա նորա եւ սպան զնա: Վասն
 որո եւ Մաղաքիան ամօթալից եկն ի

translated from Latin to Armenian by our
 ancestors, the holy *vardapets*. Because of
 this they all together made a covenant and
 alliance of orthodoxy. But because of great
 love, which makes [us] forget all
 weaknesses, imprudently and without any
 caution they hastened to fulfil their
 covenant. Owing to this some explicitly
 preached the truth; others came and were
 baptised, and became priests and other
 similar things. Amazed at this, a certain
 hermit Sargis, who dwelled in the desert of
 the Šambi vale, said to his nephew
 [brother's son] the priest Łukas, who was
 the head of all monks in the desert of the
 Šambi vale: “Hey, Łukas, the union and
 the orthodox doctrine of the Holy Catholic
 Church is veracious, because none of the
 evil but only the worthy of the Armenian
 nation, the *vardapets* and the virtuous
 ones, followed and became united with and
 obedient to the Holy Church of Rome
 along the paths of our holy Father [Grigor]
 Lusaworič‘ [the Illuminator].” But a
 certain evil servant of Satan, called
 Małak‘ia, a provincial priest, had come
 from the city of Łrim; he was the pupil of a
 certain false and deceitful hermit, who was
 called ..., that because of his wickedness
 God’s chastising wrath brought the ceiling
 of the house down on him and killed him.
 Wherefore this shameless Małak‘ia came
 from the East and called himself a hermit

յարեւելլս եւ անուանեաց զինքն ճգնաւոր եւ
խորտաճարակ: Եւ իբրեւ յայտնեցաւ
կեղծաւորութիւնն իւր եւ ոչ կարէր ծածկել
զհնարս, յայտնապէս ուտէր յոլօվ կերակուր
պահոց եւ ի ծածուկ էր մոլի եւ առանց
խղճիմտաց: Սա սատանայական
պատրանօք եւ կեղծաւորութեամբ
յառաջագոյն խնդրեաց ի մերոց ուղղափառ
ժողովրդեանն զվերի վանքն Ապրակունեաց
եւ եբէր անդ զՍարգիս վարդապետն եւ
ժողովեաց բազում աշակերտս եւ
ժողովուրդս ի ամենայն տեղեաց: Եւ
կամելով բառնալ զմիաբանութիւնն եւ
զուղղափառութիւն ի նոյն գաւառէն, շրջէր
ընդ ամենայն տեղիս եւ ժողովեալ բազում
ինչս, տայր կաշառս հաւատացելոց եւ
անհաւատից եւ այնու պատրէր զբազումս:
Այլ իբրեւ լուաւ զճշմարտութիւնն ի վերոյ
ասացեալ վարդապետէն եւ աշակերտաց
նորա եւ ի Սըսոյ յեպիսկոպոսաց, զի ինքն
էր անտեղեակ օրինաց, յայնժամ առ
ժամանակ մի դադարեաց ի չարեաց եւ
դաւանեաց զճշմարտութիւնն: Այլ `
սկրնաչարն սատանայ փութօվ պատրեաց
զմիտս նորա ` փառօք աշխարհիս եւ նայ
եղէւ ուրացօղ որպէս զՅովհաննոս: Եւ
շրջեալ ընդ բազում տեղիս ժողովեաց
բազում ինչս եւ բազում կաշառօք պատրեալ
զիշխանս եւ զժողովուրդս Պարսից ընդ
ամենայն տեղիս, տարաւ զոմանս ի
աշակերտաց Սարգիս վարդապետին ի
բերդն յԵրընջակո եւ ետ ահացուցանել

and a herbivore. And when his
deceitfulness was revealed and he could
not hide his deception, he would
conspicuously consume ample food for
fasting and secretly he would behave
furiously and unscrupulously. This [man],
with satanic falsehood and deceitfulness,
initially claimed the upper monastery of
Aprakunik⁶ from our orthodox folk and
installed there Sargis *vardapet*, and
assembled a multitude of pupils and people
from all places. And wishing to destroy the
unity and the orthodoxy in this same
province, he travelled everywhere and
having gathered many riches, he bribed the
believers and the unbelievers, and with that
he deceived many. But when he heard the
truth from the abovementioned *vardapet*
and his students, and from the bishops of
Sis that it was him who was unaware of the
laws, then for a while he abstained from
falsehood and confessed the truth.
However, the Satan, the root of all evil,
quickly deceived his mind with the worldly
glory and he became an apostate like
Yulianos. And travelling in many places,
he collected many riches and with bribery
deceived the *işxans* [nobles] and the
Persian people everywhere; he took some
of the pupils of Sargis *vardapet* to the
fortress of Erənjak and had them
intimidated by the suffering of death so
that they would repudiate the truth. And

զնոսա չարչարանօք մահու, զի ուրացին
զճմարտութիւնն: Եւ ապա տարեալ զնոսա
ի վանս իւր, լելկեաց զնոսա բազում
չարչարանօք եւ փետեաց զամենայն հերս
նոցա, զի յոյժ կնաստ եւ երկչոտ էր Մարգիս
վարդապետն: Վասն որո եւ ոչ ասէր ինչ
կամ առնէր զոր եւ կարէր: Իսկ ի
չարչարելոցն եւ ոմանք ի յայլ
աշակերտացն՝ գաղտ փախեան եւ եկին
առմեզ, եւ ի մէնջ ի Մակու եւ անդի ի Կաֆա
քաղաք: Եւ ոմանք ի մնացելոցն գաղտ
մկրտեցան ի մէնջ ի հնաձանս
այգեստանեաց: Եւ ոմանք վասն ահի
մնացին գաղճ եւ ոմանք սրտաբեկ
ցրուեցան ի զանազան տեղիս, յորոց եւ
բազումք կան մինչեւ ցայսօր: Իսկ կեղծաւոր
Մաղաքիայն վասն տգիտութեան եւ
չարութեան իւր դեռեւս ոչ յագեալ, կամէր
ամենեւին բառնալ զամենայն ուղղափառ
միաբանսն ի աշխարհէս Հայոց, զի մի՛
ամենայն վարդապետք աշակերտօք
իւրեանց միաբանեցին ընդ ուղղափառ
Քրիստոնէից: Վասն որոյ շրջեցաւ ընդ
մերձակա աշխարհին Հայոց եւ սուտ
բամբասանօք եւ պատիիր բանիւք եւ
կեղծաւոր գնացիւք պատրեաց զբազումս
արտասուալի հառաչանօք: Եւ ժողովեաց
ինչս բազում, կողոպտելով զամենեսեանսն,
զաղքատս եւ զփարթամս: Եւ բերեալ ետ
բռնաւորաց եւ կաշառօք յափշտակեաց ի

then he took them to his monastery,
silenced them with a great amount of
suffering and pulled out all their hair, for
Sargis *vardapet* was very faint-hearted and
cowardly, which is why he did not say
anything or did what he could. But some
from amongst the ones who suffered and
some of the other pupils secretly fled and
came to us, and from us [went] to Maku
and from there to the city of Kafa. And
some of those who stayed were secretly
baptized by us at the winepress of the
vineyards. And some, owing to fear,
remained indifferent and others,
disheartened, dispersed in different
directions, many of whom are still [alive]
today. And the deceitful Malak'ia, still not
being satisfied due to his ignorance and
wickedness, wished to seize all orthodox
monasteries of the land of Armenia, so that
none of the *vardapets* with their pupils
would unite with the orthodox Christians.
For this purpose he travelled to the
neighbouring lands of Armenia and with
false gossips and mendacious words, and
with deceitful demeanour he deluded many
with lamentable sighs. And he collected
many riches, plundering everyone, both the
poor and the wealthy. And bringing [the
riches] he gave them to tyrants and with
bribery he seized many monasteries from
us. They say that just for one monastery he

մենջ բագում վանորայս: Որ եւ միայն վասն
 միո վանացն ասէր եթէ Ճ. Բ. Ռ. դահեկան
 կաշառ է տուեալ: Եւ զի ըստ իմաստնոյն
 եթէ դժոխք ոչ յագի, վասն այն յետ այնքան
 չարեացն կամեցաւ զամենայն ուղղափառ
 եւ միաբան քրիստոնէայ կարգաւորսն
 ջարբոնաւոր եւ ի կարգէ Լուսաւորչին
 արտաքսել ի աշխարհէս Հաոց, զի մի՛ Հաոց
 վարդապետքն աշակերտօք իւրեանց
 ծածուկ մկրտեսցին ի նոցանէ եւ այնպէս
 սակաւ սակաւ աճեսցի քրիստոնէութիւնն:
 Վասն որոյ վերստին շրջեցաւ ի զանազան
 տեղիս եւ ժողովեաց այլ եւս բագում ինչս
 վասն կաշառաց չարեաց: Եւ սպառնալով
 եկն մինչեւ ի գետ մի, ու կոչիր Փորադաշտ
 եւ բնակեալ ի տան մի ոչ կարէր հնարօք
 ուտել եւ ըմբել ըստ իւրո սովորութեանն,
 յաղագս որոյ եկեր պահոց կերակուր
 կեղծաւորութեամբ եւ սպառնալով
 ճշմարիտ հաւատացելոց: Եւ
 ամենակարողն Աստուած, ոչ տարեալ
 այնքան չարութեանն, նոյն ժամայն,
 մինչդեռ կերակուրն ի բերանոյ նորա էր,
 արկ ի նա ցաւ մահու եւ նա իբրեւ
 զձերովդէս ի չարչարանսն դեռեւս արար
 կտակ չարեաց, զրպարտելով
 զՔրիստոնէայսն, որք էին վեց մղոնաւ հեռի,
 եթէ նոքա, միջնորդով դեղեցին զիս: Եւ յետ
 սատակման նորա անդ եւ անցելո
 ժամանակ ինչ, ոմանք չարք եւ արբանեակք

offered a bribe of 120,000 *dahekan*⁸³. And, because in accordance with the wisdom the hell is not satisfied [cf. Prov. 27:20]; for that reason after all previous evil he wished to expel from the land of Armenia all the orthodox and Unitor Christians, the Capuchin monks, and those from the rank of the Lusaworič', so that the Armenian *vardapets* and their students would not be secretly baptised by them and thus the Christianity would not little by little spread. Because of that he again wandered around in different places and collected even more possessions for the evil bribery. And menacingly he came to a village called P'oradašt, and having settled in a house he was unable to eat and drink secretly as he was accustomed to. Due to this, he pretended to consume the Lent food, threatening the true believers. And the almighty God could not bear so much wickedness: at the time when the food was in his mouth, he [God] threw at him [Małak'ia] the pain of death; and like suffering Herod he left an evil legacy slandering the Christians who were six miles away saying that they had poisoned him. And after his death there, a while later, some wicked servants of Satan and ignorant people from a faraway land, not knowing about his deeds but only about his

⁸³ *Dahekan* is a golden coin related to Persian *dahgan* and Greek *draxme* (Heinrich Hübschmann, *Armenische Grammatik*, (Leipzig, 1897), p. 133, n 158 and Sanjian, *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts*, p. 446).

սատանայի եւ տգէտք ի հեռագոյն
 երկիրս, որ ոչ գիտէին զգործս նորա, բայց
 միայն զսուտ համբան, գրեցին ի վերա
 նորա սուտ սքանչելիս եւ զանագան
 բարութիւնս զնմանէ, որ ամենեւին ոչ էր
 եղեալ: Եւ այն եղև յօգուտ բազմաց, քանզի
 միաբան եւ ուղղափառ Քրիստոնէայքն
 ամենեքեան հաստատեցան ի հաւատս
 ճշմարիտ եւ ընկերակիցք կեղծաւորին
 վասն ստութեանցն նորա զայթակղեալ
 թողին յայտնապէս զկրօնս հայկազեան եւ
 մկրտեալ ճշմարիտ մկրտութեամբ եւ
 եղեալք քահանայք զնացին ի Կաֆա
 քաղաքն: Եւ մեք, որ ժ. ամ աւելի կացեալ
 էաք մերձ առ նմա հանդերձ բազում
 կարգաւորօք, հիացեալ զարմացաք ընդ
 այնքան սուտ բարբանջմունսն եւ զամենայն
 պատմութիւնս եւ զվարդապետութիւնս
 հայկակեաց այնպէս սուտ համարեցաք:

false fame, ascribed to him false miracles
 and various acts of kindness which had
 never happened. And it had a positive
 outcome for many, because the Unitores
 and all the orthodox Christians
 strengthened in the true faith, and the
 companions of the false man, who had
 been seduced by him, openly abandoned
 the Armenian religion and, having been
 baptised through true baptism, became
 priests and went to the city of Kafa. And
 those of us, who had stayed close to him
 for 10 more years along with many monks,
 were amazed and surprised at so many
 false tales, and we likewise considered all
 the stories and the *vardapetut' iwn* of the
 Armenians to be false.

APPENDIX III

T'ovma Mecop'ec'i, *Patmut' iwn Lank-T'amuray ew Yajordac' Iwroc'* (History of Tamerlane and His Successors), Extracts.

Source: L. Xaç'ikyan (ed.), *T'ovma Mecop'ec'i: Patmagrut' iwn*. Yerevan: Magaghat, 1999, pp. 1-217.

Դ

Եւ զանն Թաւրիզու սուլթան Ահմատ
 էլեալ զնաց փախստական,
 ճանապարհաւն Ըորշտունեաց Ոստանու,
 առաջնորդութեամբ ամիրային մարաց

IV

And the *lan* of Tabriz, Sultan Ahmat,
 under the leadership of the emir of the
 Medes, Ezdin [‘Izz al-Din Shir] fled via
 Ostan of the Rštunis, to Babylon, to the

Եզդնայ՝ ի Բաբելոն Բաղդաստ քաղաքն, առ
ազգականսն եւ զօրք իւր, զի ի նոյն
ժամանակին եւ նոցա տիրէին: Բսկ Էդիլն
ասացեալ, առաջնորդեալ Թամուրին ի
Թաւրէզ քաղաք, եւ ետ ի ձեռս նորին: Եւ
գաղտագողի խորհուրդ արարեալ ընդ
զօրս իւր կամէր սպանանել զլանկն եւ
զկաղն Թամուր ի քաղանիս քաղաքին: Եւ
մի ոմն իմացեալ զխորհուրդն ծածուկ,
եկեալ առ նա ասէ զդաւ նենգութեան Էդիլ
աղային: Եւ նորա զիտացեալ, յդեալ
կոչեաց զնա, եւ հուր ետ վառել. եւ եդին
կենդանոյն ի պղնձի սանն եւ եփեցին զնա
առաջի նորա եւ ամենայն բազմութեանն.
Եւ այնպէս կորուսին զնա:

Ի

[...] Եւ վարդապետն Սարգիս բան
տրտնջման ասաց նոցա, եւ յետոյ
ամենեքեան պատժեցան յԱստուծոյ.
Ոմանք գետակուրս եղեն, ոմանք
մերկացեալ խայտառակ շրջէին, կէսք ի
նոցանէ փախուցեալք զնացին յաշխարհն
Ֆռանկաց, եւ ի նոցա միջին
չարախօսութիւնս արարեալ ի պղնձի
եղեալ եփեցին, կէսք ի նոցանէ զղջացեալք
ապաշխարեցին, որպէս Ատոմն Մոկացին,
զի զղջացաւ եւ զնաց յԵրուսաղէմ, եւ
դարձեալ եկն ի գաւառն իւր եւ
զմարմնաւոր պատիժն կրեաց. սիրտն
ծակեցաւ եւ տարի մի շունչ ելանէր ի

city of Baghdad, to his relatives and
troops, for at the time they also ruled over
them. But the aforementioned Edil, led
Timur to the city of Tabriz and handed it
over to him. And having secretly
consulted his army, he wished to kill the
lank and the lame Timur in the city baths.
Yet someone, having learnt about the
secret plot, came to him [Timur] and
informed him about the treachery of Edil
ala. And when he [Timur] learnt [about
it], he got Edil summoned, and he had a
fire kindled, and they placed [Edil] alive
in a copper cauldron, and cooked him in
front of him [Timur] and the entire
multitude. And thus they destroyed him.

XX

[...] And the *vardapet* Sargis expressed his
displeasure with them, and afterwards all
were punished by God: some drowned in
the river, some disgracefully wandered
around naked, half of them fled and went
to the land of the Franks, and those from
amongst them that spoke wickedly were
placed in a copper [cauldron] and cooked.
Half of them sought repentance, like Atom
Mokac‘i who repented and went to
Jerusalem, returned to his district and bore
physical punishment. His heart was
punctured and in a year the air came out his
heart and then, in repentance he then gave
up the ghost.

սրտէն եւ ապա զղջմամբ աւանդեաց
զհոգին:

APPENDIX IV

1386/87

Place: Monastery of Vałatn; Scribe: Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i; MS. title: *Book of the Seven Virtues*
by Peter of Aragon.

Source: Xaç‘ikyan, *XIV Dari*, n 707, pp. 564-565.

(72u)

Զբազմերախտ տէրն իմ՝
զբարունապետ... (քերծուած)

(72r)

My most amiable lord, *rabunapet*⁸⁴
... (erased by scratching)

(80u)

Զբարերջանկացեալն էրանականն
կենաւք եւ զկայծակնամաքոր
հոգիամուխ արփիաւորեալն մտաւք,
զտիեզերալոյս բարունապետն՝ զտէրն
իմ Յովհաննէս Որոտնէցի, հանդերձ
ամենայն աշխատողաւքն ի սմա,
յարուցեալ դասաւորեցէ Քրիստոս ի
կեանս անմահ, ի պատիւ եւ ի
հաղորդակցութիւն սիրելեաց իւրոց,
ամէն:

(80r)

May Christ revive and provide
undying life to my luminous
rabunapet lord Yovhannēs
Orotnec‘i, who was blessed with
happy life and enlightened mind,
purified by fire and endowed with
the Holy Spirit, as well as to
everyone who worked with him, in
honour of and in communication
with the ones he loved. Amen.

(109p)

Յուսոյ զիրքս եւ Միրոյ
Որ շաղկապեալ /// [հաւատոյ,

(109v)

The Book of hope and of Love
Which were put together ||| of faith,

⁸⁴ From Hebrew *rabbi*, used in Armenian with the meaning of ‘headmaster, head teacher’. Another variant of the word used in this colophon is *rabuni* – ‘master, teacher, instructor’.

Հըյամանէ մեծ քարունյ՝ Յոհանիսի
Որոտն[եցոյ՝
Սւար]տեցաւ ի վանքս Վաղատնոյ,
Ձեռամբ Գրիգոր Տաթեւացոյ

(Յովհ. Որոտնեցոյ անունը եղծուած էւ
գրուած է «Պետրի ի Արգոնեցոյ»։)

(138ա)

Ո՛հ, կաղ իշուկս մինչեւ յերբ հասից
յաւարտ գրոցս:

Իգնատիոս

(28ա)

Ոչ սակաւ գորոմն սերմանել ընդ
ցորենոյն Գրիգոր Տաթեւացի անիծեալն,
բայց բազում:

(47ա)

... Ո՛ Տաթեւացի, ո՞չ երկնչիս յաստուծոյ
յստնեւելով զթոյնդ անսպական գինւոյ,
որ սպանէ ոգիս պարզամտաց:

(62բ)

... Որոտնեցին էւ Տաթեւացին գորոմ
յոգնապատիկ սերմանեալ է ի մէջ սուրբ
Գրգիս:

By the order of the great *rabuni*
Yovhanēs Orotn[ec՛i
Was] completed in the monastery of
Vałatn,
By the hand of Grigor Tet՛ewac՛i

(*Yovhanēs Orotnec՛i՛s name is corrupted
and substituted by “Petri i Argonec՛woy”
[of Peter of Aragon]*)

(138r)

Oh, with my limping donkey when will I
reach the end of this writing?

Ignatios

(28r)

Not few weeds but many has the cursed
Grigor Tat՛ewac՛i sown with the wheat.

(47r)

... Oh, Tat՛ewac՛i, are you not afraid of
God, mixing your poison with
unadulterated wine, which kills the souls
of simple-minded people?

(62v)

... Orotnec՛i and Tat՛ewac՛i have sown
multiple weeds in this holy Book.

APPENDIX V

Bodleian MS Marsh 438 (I-III), *Yaysmawurk'* (Menologion) (1482), folio 99v.

Յայսմ աւուր հանգեաւ ի Քրիստոս սուրբ
ճգնաւորն Մաղաքիա վարդապետն, որ
ամենեւին յար էւ նման էր սուրբ հարն
Բլարիոնի, եւ ոչ ինչ պակաս ի նմանէ.
անբիծ հաւատովն եւ ուղիղ վարուքն, եւ
անտանելի խստակրօն ճգնութեամբն: Նոյն
եւ առաջնորդութեամբն բազմաց վանորէից
եւ կրօնաւորաց մանաւանդ առաւելեալ
քան զԲլարիոն: Եւ ի թուականիս մերո Պ.
ԼԳ ամին դեղակուր եղեւ ի Ֆռանկ կնոջէ
միոյ, բանիւ եւ չար խորհրդով եւ նենգ
խորհրդով աղթարմա առաջնորդացն: Եւ
այնպէս փոխեցաւ ի սնտոյի կենցաղոյս
յանանց կեանսն յաւիտէնականս:

On this day the holy hermit Małak'ia
vardapet, who in everything resembled the
Holy Father Ilarion and in no way was he
worse than him, rested in Christ:⁸⁵ with
pure faith and upright lifestyle, and with
unbearably strict asceticism. He even
surpassed Ilarion with the number of
monasteries and monks under his
leadership. And in the year 833 of our [i.e.
Armenian] Era [=1384/85] he was
poisoned by a Frankish woman with an evil
mind and plan, and with the malicious
council of the *alt'armay* leaders. And thus
he passed from this vain existence to the
unpassing eternal life.

APPENDIX VI

“Yaysmawur yišatak varuc' surb ew ari čgnaworin Małak'iaiyi” (Commemoration of the holy and brave hermit Małak'ia on this day).

Source: *Yaysmawurk'* (Menologion). Constantinople: Grigor Marzvanec'i's Press, 1706, p. 173.

Յայսմաւուր յիշատակ վարուց սուրբ եւ
արի ճգնաւորին Մաղաքիայի, որ
ամենեւին յար էւ նմանէր հարանց հորն
Բլարիոնի. եւ ոչ ինչ պակաս ի նմանէ:

On this day is the commemoration of the
holy and brave hermit Małak'ia, who in
everything resembled the Father of Fathers
Ilarion, and nothing was missing in him:

⁸⁵ Ilarion and Małakia's celebration is on the same day – 12 Sahmi (21 October), and the text dedicated to Ilarion precedes Małak'ia's vita.

Ուղղափառ հաւատովն եւ անբիծ վարութն. եւ անտանելի խստակրօն ճգնութեամբն: Այլ եւ առաջնորդութեամբն բազմաց վանորէից կրօնաւորաց: Է՛ր նա յաշխարհէն Հոնաց, ի կողմանց հիւսիսոյ, ի մայրաքաղաքէն Ղրիմայ, Որդի առն մեծատան եւ բարեպաշտի, ի պատուական ազգէ, որոյ ածեալ նմա կին օրինաւոր ամուսնութեամբ: Բայց ոչ ի կամաց Մաղաքիային, այլ ակամայ բռնադատեալ: Եւ յետ Գ ամաց մեռաւ աղջիկն այն եւ ազատեցաւ Մաղաքիայն: Եւ զի էր յոյժ ուսեալ զամենայն ուսումն եկեղեցական կարգաւորութեան, զշարական եւ զմանր ուսումն: Եւ էր կարի հմուտ եւ տեղեակ Աստուածային գրոց զիտութեան: Վասն որոյ եմուտ ընդ լծով ծառայութեանն Աստուծոյ եւ ետ զկարգս քահանայական: Գնաց յԵրուսաղէմ եւ դարձաւ յարեւելս. թողեալ զտունս եւ զհայրենիս, եւ զնաց զհետ հոգւոյն կամաց ծառայել Աստուծոյ. եւ կեալ անարատ վարութ եւ անմեղութեամբ յաշխարհի: Եւ եղև մաքառեալ նմա ընդ երկնաբնակ [sic] հերձուածողաց: Եւ շինեաց Բ վանս. Բ քաջ եւ արի վարդապետաց յնթեոնուլ զգիրս Աստուածային եւ բացայայտել զխրթնած ածուկ բանս իմաստասիրաց յուսումն աշակերտաց: Որոց առաջնորդէր եւ բացայայտիչ մեծ հռետորն եւ բանիբուն իմաստուն վարդապետաց վարդապետն Կախիկ: Որ կախեալ կայր միշտ ի սիրոյն

with the orthodox faith and pure life, and with unbearably strict asceticism.

Moreover, [he was] the leader of many monasteries and monks. He was from the land of the Honk' [Huns], from the north, from the Crimean capital [Kafa]. He was the son of a noble and pious man, from an honourable race, who brought him a wife with a lawful marriage. But it was forced upon Malak'ia against his will. And three years later that girl died and Malak'ia was free.

And he had received excellent education in all the church regulations, in the *šarakans* [hymns] and in the liturgical texts of the breviary. And he was well versed in and knowledgeable of the science of the Divine Scriptures. Therefore, he entered under the burden of serving God and was ordained priest. He travelled to Jerusalem and returned to the east. He left his home and fatherland, and with eager spirit went to serve God. And with innocence he lived a pure life in the world. And he was to fight against the heretics who believed in two natures in Jesus Christ. And he built two monasteries for two honest and brave *vardapets* [so that they would] read the Divine Scriptures and explain the difficult writings of philosophers to the studying students who were led and instructed by the great rhetor, the eloquent philosopher, and the *vardapet* of *vardapets Kaxik* [Yovhan

Աստուծոյ: Նա եւ մեծ բարունապետն
Մարգիս, որ էր զարդարեալ ամենայն
առաքինութեամբ, հեզ եւ խոնարհ,
հանդարտ եւ խաղարարար: Այլ եւ
հոգետէս մարգարէաբար անյայտ իրաց եւ
անձանձիր յընթեռնուլ եւ յուսուցանեալ
զգիրս Աստուածային աշակերտելոց
անձանց: Չայս Բ վարդապետքս կարգեաց
Մաղաքիայն յերկու տեղիս՝ առ ի
յընթեռնուլ եւ յուսուցանել: Եւ ինքն կայր
սոցա ի ծառայութիւն եւ ի պատրաստել
զպիտոյս կարեաց: Եւ այնպիսի վարուք
կեցեալ ամս ԺԵ: Եւ ի թուականիս մերում
ԸՃ եւ ԼԳ ամին դեղակուր եղեւ ի
սանամօրէն իւրմէ՝ բանիւ երկաբնակ
աղթարմայ առաջնորդաց: Զի կինն այն
աղթարմայ էր՝ Ֆռանգ դաւանութեամբ
երկաբնակ: Եւ այսպէս փոխեցաւ ի սնտի
կենցաղոյս յանանց կեանսն
յաւիտենական Սուրբ ճգնաւորն
Մաղաքիայ վարդապետն. եւ եղաւ
սաղմոսիւք եւ օրհնութեամբ ի վանսն
Երրնջակոյ՝ ընդ հովանեաւ սրբոյն
Գէորգեա:

Orotneč[i], who was always suspended in
the love of God, as well as by the great
rabunapet Sargis, who was decorated with
ultimate virtue, was meek and humble,
calm, and a peacemaker. Like a prophet he
also knew the inmost secrets of the soul of
unknown things and indefatigably read and
taught the Divine Scriptures to the students.
Małak'ia appointed these two *vardapets* in
these two places so that they would study
and instruct. And he [Małk'ia] himself
served them catering for their needs. And
with this life he lived 15 years and in the
year 833 of our [i.e. Armenian] Era
[=1384/85] he was poisoned by the mother
of his godson instructed [to do so] by the
leaders of the *alt'armayk'* who believed in
two natures in Jesus Christ, because that
woman was *alt'armay* with the Frankish
confession of faith believing in two natures
in Jesus Christ. And thus the holy hermit
Małak'ia *vardapet* passed from this vain
existence to the unpassing eternal life, and
with psalms and blessings he was put to
rest in the monastery of Ernĵak under the
auspices of Saint Gēorg.