Situating the *History* Attributed to Aristakēs Lastivercʻi, 1000-1072

The Empire of New Rome & Caucasia in the Eleventh Century

Nicholas S. M. Matheou

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Abstract

This thesis answers a major scholarly *desideratum* in Armenian, Byzantine, Kartvelian (Georgian), Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies more broadly, by providing a foundational study of the eleventh-century Armenophone *History* attributed to Aristakēs Lastiverc‘i. This is the sole surviving Armenian-language historiographical work written in the eleventh century that discusses the era, and is the earliest surviving historiographical work in any language to discuss the Middle East’s eleventh-century Muslim Turkish raids and Seljuq invasions. Hence the *History* is widely known and used as a “source”, but the only dedicated study was completed by the original critical editor more than fifty years ago with limited parameters and limiting assumptions. Thus this thesis provides a (re-)foundational study of a source central to several disciplines.

In doing so the project develops a critical historical approach to technical analyses of historical compositions. Such foundational studies are usually emblematic of disciplinary history’s empiricist and positivist hegemonic norms: providing an overview of previous scholarship, describing the narrative structure, deducing underlying sources, giving an overview of the textual transmission, and placing the composition in broader literary traditions, as well as providing the writer’s historical and social “context”. Disciplinary history’s inherent positivism and empiricism has been consistently critiqued from several directions over the last forty years or so, but none of these tendencies, most falling under the umbrella term “postmodernism”, have provided alternative approaches to foundational analyses of historical compositions – an essential task for a wide range of further enquiries.

This project, therefore, attempts to answer this shortfall. We begin in the introduction with an outline of the project’s critical historical conceptualisation, turning then to a critique of Armenian studies’ hegemonic narrative of the eleventh century, before ending with a critical overview of the empire of New Rome’s hegemonic cycle in Caucasia, culminating in the eleventh century with the *History*’s conjuncture. Thereafter the study proper begins, starting from a firm distinction between analysis of the work, the actual empirical base, and the writer, an imagined historical actor. In part I we focus solely on the work, adopting a consciously empiricist standpoint to provide a foundational study of this historical composition, critiquing previous scholarship, deducing the narrative structure through a detailed description, critically imagining underlying sources, historically and socially situating the work’s afterlife in subsequent Armenophone compositions and manuscript transmission, and finally locating it within the Armenophone tradition of historiography. This empiricist analysis ends with the argument that the *History* was conceived as a historiographical composition insofar as that provided the vehicle for an effective homily.

This argument provides the pivot to part II, a study of the writer, which departs from part I's empiricist standpoint to adopt a critical framework combining initial social-historical analysis with a socially symbolic reading of the *History* as a complex narrative. Having explicated this critical framework, the first subsection elaborates the social categories into which Aristakēs falls as a historical actor: *vardapet*, citizen of Arcn, identified Armenian, Roman subject, and elite man. In each subsequent subsection one of these categories is historicised in turn with concrete content for the *History*'s conjuncture, in each case coupling broader social-historical analysis with a socially symbolic reading to identify the given category's content in the narrative's ideological structure. In such manner it becomes possible to critically imagine this historical actor without reifying them – that is, without making them seemingly objective as a "real person".

In conclusion these categories are brought into relation with each other in a situated imagining of Aristakēs and the *History* as historical actors. Rather than a reified "person", Aristakēs is revealed as a complex historical actor who participated in his historical time and place, composing the *History* as another historical actor to project a specific meaning of History across elite actors whose lived experience resonated with the work's ideological structure. This situated imagining, then, arrives at the project's final argument: the concrete complexity of the social system(s) indicated by this thesis cannot be adequately comprehended within disciplinary borders as they currently stand. Rather than discrete fields implying mastery over whole "cultures", or, more honestly and problematically, *nations* and *states*, it is necessary for a real movement to abolish these borders, and develop a critical area studies of Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia.

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Obviously this list isn't exhaustive, there are many others but you know who you are and how grateful I am. All our endeavours are collective, and I'm enormously lucky to have had such wonderful people write this thesis with me. Any remaining shortfalls are, of course, my own – except sentences over fifty words, which represent Mirela's failure to teach me proper style.

Nik, Oxford 2018.

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List of Abbreviations

For full references see the bibliography. As far as possible primary texts are referenced through internal book and chapter numbers – for example, ST III.40 refers to book three, chapter forty of the Universal History, while for compositions without separation into books, such as Davit‘ Gandzakec‘i’s Penitential, the chapter number is given alone. Thus it is easy for the reader to find the relevant section regardless of whether they are consulting an edition or translation. Where this is impossible, such as for Samvel Anec‘i’s Chronicle, the pages of the standard critical edition are given. The only exception is the History itself, which is given with page and line references in order that the original Armenian can be easily found.

AL: Aristakēs Lastiverc‘i’s *History*.

DG: Davit‘ Gandzakec‘i’s *Penitential*.

MH: *Matenagirk‘ Hayots‘*.

MU: Matt‘ēos Uṙhayec‘i’s *Chronicle*.

SA: Samvel Anec‘i’s *Chronicle*.

ST: Step‘anos Tarōnec‘i’s *Universal History*.

TA: T‘ovma Arcruni’s *History of the Arcrunik‘*.

List of Maps

Note on Translation & Transliteration

There are various languages represented in this thesis, in particular Armenian, Georgian and Greek, and consistency and balance in their treatment has been a key concern, particularly in order to avoid methodological nationalism. Anglicisation can be an unhelpful practice and is almost always applied inconsistently, as well as being standard in Byzantine studies, but mostly avoided in Armenian and Kartvelian studies. Thus, in the interests of balance and consistency, I have elected for a strict policy of transliteration, so that, for example, it is 'Kōnstantinos' rather than 'Constantine', 'Yovhannēs' rather than 'John', and 'Giorgi' rather than 'George'. In the interests of balance I have also chosen to vary geographic terms, for example the plain of 'Basiani' in Georgian rather than Armenian 'Basean', since there is no prior reason to opt for the latter and both languages have long been present there. Likewise I have chosen standard modern names for geographic features such as rivers, so that it is the Turkish Aras, rather than Greek Araxes or Armenian Araks, and Turkish Čoruh rather than Georgian Tsorokhi. Finally in a few instances two linguistic renderings or alternative names have been given together to avoid chauvinistically prioritising one over the other, such as Tao- (Georgian) Tayk' (Armenian), or Theodosioupolis- (Greek) Karin (Armenian).

In terms of transliteration I have adopted a combined system, in order to systemise as far as possible across the represented languages. Thus Greek is represented with full diacritics and the use of *kh* to denote χ, so that it is coongruent with Armenian խ and Georgian ხ, not with the conceit that χ is still the aspirated *k* of classical antiquity or η an elongated *e*, but so that the systems are aligned as far as possible and the original spellings easily predicatable. Likewise Armenian and Georgian have been rendered with a moderately Anglicised version of standard practice for Grabar and Old Georgian, using *kh* rather than x for խ and ხ, and representing ւ as *v* where relevant. It is hoped that this will lessen the frustration for Anglophone readers when predicting original pronunciations. Finally, in the interests of space original languages have not been given, these can be found through the citations in the bibliography. All translations' origins are clearly indicated, sometimes with my own revisions based on comparison with the original text, except in the case of the *History* where the translation is my own completed with comparison to Bedrosian and Canard and Berberian's renderings.

Introduction

Introduction

This thesis historically and socially situates *The History Concerning Events Caused by Foreign Nations who Surround Us*, composed *c.*1072-1079, and attributed to a writer named Aristakēs Lastiverc'i ('of Lastiver'). In the process we glimpse vistas of a critical social history of the empire of New Rome and Caucasia in the eleventh century.[1] The *History* covers the years 1000-1072, when first New Rome reached the height of its medieval hegemonic cycle,[2] annexing three Caucasian polities *c.*1000-1045, before Turkish invasions overran these regions alongside all imperial provinces in Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and north-western Syria.[3] The Turkish invasions heralded the Middle East's most profound transformation since the seventh-century emergence of Islam: from the establishment of Seljuq dominion in Oxiana and the Iranian plateau *c.*1040;[4] through campaigns and conquests across the Middle East in the 1040s, 50s and 60s; up to the watershed 1070s and Sultan Malik-Shah I's super hegemony 1072-1092, when Muslim Turkish polities were established across New Rome's eastern provinces.[5] Thus New Rome and the Fatimid caliphate's hegemonic condominium in the Levant, the former in the north and the latter in the south, was shattered between the 1040s and the 1070s. These imperial polities had experienced rising hegemonic cycles after the end of Abbasid super hegemony over the Middle East *c.*861, New Rome from the late ninth century, and the Fatimids from the mid tenth.[6] From the vantage point of the early 1040s both seemed poised for a long period of continued condominium, but in the 1070s both entered profound crises from which they were unable to regain their previous hegemonic positions. The centuries' long interregnum that followed formed the conditions for the era of the Crusades, brief periods of this or that polity's dominance notwithstanding, as well as for the intersecting processes and cycles that would eventually generate Ottoman super hegemony over the Middle East.

Thus the eleventh century is a transformative period for the empire of New Rome and Caucasia, but this puts its historical specificities in danger of erasure amidst an overdetermination of competing totalising narratives – narratives that seek to reduce all phenomena to a single logic. The various significances ascribed to such a broad set of intersecting processes and cycles, traversing so many interconnecting times and places, has created several equally totalising

[1] This nomenclature is preferred to "Byzantium", as it recognises the use of 'Roman' as both an internal and external identifier across the polity's history, alongside Constantinople's ideological justification as the new Rome, without erasing distinctions with the pan-Mediterranean Roman Empire of Antiquity. For the most part I have also adopted the term 'Roman' to refer to people or elements of the state, occasionally qualified by 'East' to avoid confusion with other potential 'Romans'.
[2] On this use of hegemony see Appendix II: Glossary of Technical & Theoretical Terms.
[3] On these geographic designations see below, 26-27.
[4] On 'dominion' and 'condominium' see Appendix II.
[5] See generally Peacock (2015).
[6] On the rise of medieval New Rome see Whittow (1996), 310-390; on the Fatimids see generally Brett (2017).

eleventh centuries depending on disciplinary specialisation and ideological conditioning.[7] For the region of the north-west Middle East covered by this thesis, particularly Caucasia but also Anatolia and Upper Mesopotamia, there is: "the rise and fall of Byzantium";[8] "the fall of the medieval Armenian kingdom(s)";[9] "the unification and rise of Georgia";[10] "the end of Hellenism in Anatolia", "Turkification", "Islamisation", and the eventual "rise of the Ottomans";[11] and finally the "rise of Latin Christendom".[12] Each of these narratives reflects different ideological visions, whether Armenian, Georgian, Greek or Turkish nationalism, Western imperial chauvinism, Orientalism, liberal state fetishism,[13] or some combination of different elements. These are returned to below, suffice to say that, in the overdetermination of these variously totalising narratives, the eleventh century is obscured as a specific conjuncture with its own internal dynamics.[14]

Hence this thesis *situates* the *History* attributed to Aristakēs, firstly in its own historical and social conditions, but also within, against, and beyond the various narratives that would co-opt the work. To situate is to locate a given phenomenon among variously related elements, so that it is grasped in its movement, and can be clearly located in both its specificity and its generality. Situating a historical composition necessarily involves different standpoints: sometimes empiricist,[15] establishing what might be known in absolute terms; sometimes deconstruction, particularly for immanently critiquing and dismantling totalising narratives; and sometimes, finally, critical imagination, using bases established by mixed empirical analysis and deconstruction to *imagine* those inevitably obscured parts of the social system, whether by the extent and nature of surviving sources, or by the worldviews produced in our own determinate conjunctures. Although the *History* attributed to Aristakēs is not unknown, the only dedicated study was completed by the original critical editor some fifty years ago with limited parameters and limiting assumptions.[16] So this thesis addresses a major scholarly *desideratum*, providing in the first instance the first ever critical analysis of the *History*. But it also attempts to go beyond the basic impasse that produced the work's scholarly neglect by avoiding any attempt at a totalising narrative, and instead solely aiming to historically and socially situate the work and its writer. Aristakēs and the *History*'s specificity has been ignored because scholars of several disciplines have already presumed this

[7] On 'ideology' see Appendix II.
[8] On this see generally Angold (1997); and more recently: Kaldellis (2018), 32-61.
[9] Garsoïan (1997a), 187-198.
[10] Rayfield (2012), 73-84.
[11] On these themes see generally Vryonis (1986); Beihammer (2017); & Peacock & Nur Yildiz (2012).
[12] See generally Frankopan (2012) & the relevant chapters in: Luscombe & Riley-Smith (2004).
[13] On 'fetishism' see Appendix II.
[14] On 'conjuncture' see Appendix II.
[15] On 'empiricism' as understood here see Appendix II.
[16] On previous scholarship see subsection I.2.

on the basis of his generality: we already know how an eleventh-century Armenian responds to their era, it is only necessary to casually reference how Aristakēs recites the script.[17]

So this project situates the writer and the work within the historical dynamics of the social system that produced them, and within, against, and beyond any totalising narrative that seeks to reduce them to a singular logic. It is split into two even halves, part I, 'The Work', and part II, 'The Writer'. The first half takes an empiricist standpoint in the analysis of the *History* as a historical composition. In the second half we turn to the writer, using a combined social-historical approach to critically imagine this historical actor.[18] In the conclusion, finally, we situate both writer and work as historical actors, bringing into focus vistas of a critical social history of New Rome and Caucasia in the eleventh century. Before this, however, it is important to first outline the project's conceptualisation as one that develops a critical historical approach to foundational studies of historical compositions. Then, in the next subsection, we turn to scholarly narratives of the eleventh century, providing an immanent critique and solutions to methodological pitfalls.[19] Finally we turn to a critical overview of New Rome's hegemonic cycle in Caucasia, producing the historical conjuncture in which the *History* was composed.

Towards a Critical Historical Approach to Historical Compositions

This project articulates a move towards 'critical history' for a task that is eminently in the tradition of 'disciplinary history': providing foundational technical analysis of a historical composition for other scholars' use.[20] This follows recent studies of the *History*'s earlier contemporary and later successor in the tradition of Armenophone historiography, the compositions attributed to Step'anos Tarōnec'i ('of Tarōn')[21] and Matt'ēos Uṙhayec'i ('of Edessa'),[22] by Tim Greenwood and Tara Andrews respectively. Each of these studies provides in-depth analysis of a historical composition and the attributed writer as a historical actor, setting out the fundamentals in terms of narrative structure, underlying sources, previous scholarship, and so on, as well as providing historical and social readings of the given narrative. Hence Andrews and Greenwood's studies are significant examples of a type of foundational analysis common across various disciplines of ancient and medieval history. These begin with a view of the attributed writer, mostly noting how little is known, but positing what can be said as objective truth claims. In such manner the given writer is made seemingly objective and real – they are *reified* – but rarely situated in their social

[17] For a critique of previous scholarship see subsection I.2.
[18] On the use of 'actor' and 'historical actor' see Appendix II.
[19] On 'critique' and 'immanet critique' see Appendix II.
[20] On 'critical' and 'disciplinary' history see: Wild On Collective (2018): & Appendix II.
[21] Greenwood (2017).
[22] Andrews (2016).

relations as a historical actor.[23] At most this move is made implicitly through a separate section titled "historical context".

Such studies are therefore emblematic of 'disciplinary history', recently critiqued by the Wild On Collective, meaning the positivist historiographical enterprise as conceived from the academic discipline's eighteenth-century origins: 'gathering facts in order to produce interpretations by referring them to supposedly given contexts and organising them into chronological narratives.'[24] This mode of history writing has been critiqued several times in recent decades,[25] most falling under the often misleading term "postmodernism", yet disciplinary history remains hegemonic – that is, it remains the norm by which other historiographical modes are judged.[26] This is reflected in scholars continuing to operate with entirely separate categories of "theory" and "history", so that John Haldon's words written in 1985 still ring true today: 'Depending on your outlook theory is seen either as of positive value to an advance in the understanding of a particular problem or set of problems; or as an irritating irrelevance, indeed a hindrance, to the progress of good research work.'[27]

This false binary is reinforced by disciplinary history's unwavering commitment to 'ontological realism', an understanding of what can be known – an *epistemology* – that operates in absolute terms, asserting that 'past events are objectively available for discovery, description, and interpretation.'[28] Thus "theory" is reduced to a "method" by which a reified, singular Past is uncovered, rather than a set of premises which condition both the mode of interpretation and the mode of knowledge construction. In this understanding theory is implicit in any historiographical endeavour, as the Wild On Collective astutely note: 'History's anti-theoretical preoccupation with empirical facts and realist argument nevertheless entails a set of uninterrogated theoretical assumptions about time and place, intention and agency, proximity and causality, context and chronology.'[29] Historians analyse human social systems, relations, experiences and meanings, and so must make their premises explicit, conscious and reflexive. Otherwise a reproduced guild mentality will continue to put the discipline into 'disciplinary history' – "doing history" becomes 'a self-evident technical undertaking and students need simply to develop the methodological habit of gathering factual evidence to be contextualized and narrated' – hegemonic norms that punish and limit alternative epistemological enquiries, orientations and standpoints.[30]

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[23] On reification see: Rehmann (2013), 78-83.
[24] Wild On Collective (2018). On 'positivism' see Appendix II.
[25] Classically: White (1973).
[26] This plays out variously depending on period, but has general tendencies critiqued in Matthew Kinloch's recent DPhil Thesis (2018).
[27] Haldon (1985), 95.
[28] Wild On Collective (2018); for an alternative 'critical realist' epistemology see: Collier (1994).
[29] Haldon (1985), 96; Wild On Collective (2018).
[30] Wild On Collective (2018).

This thesis contends that history must be written as theory and theory as history,[31] otherwise the political unconscious reflected in historiographical endeavours will remain implicit and, often, insidious, reproducing reactionary ideology behind the scholar's back – that is, regardless of their particular intentions, which, needless to say, in the vast majority of cases are innocent.[32] Yet so far there have been very few attempts to develop critical historical approaches to "bread and butter" analysis, such as placing a historical composition on a technical foundation for other scholars. Andrews and Greenwood's studies achieve significant advances within the norms of disciplinary history, but if critical history is to develop as a fleshed out framework then it must be able to do such "bread and butter" analyses on different epistemological premises. Disappointingly, however, many analyses tending towards critical history and falling under "postmodernism" reproduce disciplinary history's epistemology in negative, accepting the absolute terms but asserting their impossibility, arriving then at an impracticable nihilism.[33] Nihilism is a useful standpoint in the smashing of heavily reified hegemonic narratives, to be sure, but generalised across historical enquiry it makes impossible the kind of technical foundation of historical compositions necessary for a wide range of analyses.

This project, therefore, is a move towards a critical historical approach to historical compositions, aiming to achieve the same technical foundation established by studies such as Andrews and Greenwood's, but to move beyond their positivist limitations. The result is inevitably mixed and imperfect, and this should be acceptable: pure theory is as misleading as positivist historiography, in concrete practice different solutions emerge for different necessities. This theoretical ethic can be characterised as *anarchist*,[34] in the sense described by David Graeber in his *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*, 'accepting a diversity of high [and low] theoretical perspectives, united only by certain shared commitments and understandings.'[35] For example, part I takes an empiricist standpoint in the analysis of the work, but this is attempted in an explicit, conscious and reflexive manner, and this standpoint shifts for the analysis of the writer. Thus, it is hoped, a historical composition can be technically analysed, without this leading through an ontological realist conservatism to particular interpretations – especially nationalist ones. For this is the crux, our means must be congruent with our ends, and even apparently neutral technical analysis operates in a reifying, ideological manner. In the first and final instance, therefore, critical history is unashamedly political, and does not attempt to hide, mask or sublimate this through the ideology

[31] See generally the approach in Banaji (2010).
[32] On the concept of a political unconscious see: Jameson (1981), 1-88.
[33] For a relevant example see generally Jenkins (1991), which is otherwise brilliant but forestalls attempts such as the analysis here.
[34] See the entry for 'Anarchist Heuristic' in Appendix II.
[35] Graeber (2004), 8.

of objectivity.[36] Critical history is guided by an invariant focus on the potentials for greater human freedom and equality, and so also the social, political-economic and ideological systems that forestall these. It parallels attempts to build what Abdullah Ocalan has termed the *Sociology of Freedom*,[37] developing, again in Graeber's words, 'a series of diverse perspectives, joined together by their shared desire to understand the human condition, and move it in the direction of greater freedom.'[38]

Hence even initial framings are unashamedly theorised and political. The terms 'hegemony' and 'conjuncture' will resurface throughout this thesis, forming a critical-historical mode of periodisation that recognises how history has been constructed as the story of statehood, albeit often mystified as histories of "peoples", and understood in liberal fetishistic terms – the Enlightenment tradition of historical progress towards capitalist modernity and liberal democracy, part of disciplinary history's heritage and political unconscious.[39] Firm criteria for periodisation can be established, and liberal state fetishism inverted and politicised, by viewing historical transformation not as the rise and occasional fall of peoples-come-states, all on a trajectory towards capitalist modernity, but as cycles of always-already inter-state hegemonic systems that produce particular historical conjunctures,[40] in which counterpolitical contestation is inherent, and social and political-economic dynamics come together and play out.[41] Hegemony is generalised social, political-economic and cultural dominance by a given institution or apparatus of institutions, in particular polities like New Rome or the Caucasian kingdoms, but also parapolitical hegemonic apparatuses like churches. At the level of polities, inter-state dynamics produce an embedded regional hegemonic system, with cycles of a given polity's dominance. Similarly, within polities hegemonic classes, class fractions and institutional apparatuses exercise disciplining political-economic and cultural control over the organisation of social dynamics, directing exploitative domination to their particular interests.[42] These two levels also interact, with particular hegemonic apparatuses extending hegemony beyond the "home" polity, such as the imperial church's political practices with the Georgian and Armenian churches. Likewise, in the case of the empire of New Rome between the ninth and eleventh centuries, the salaried title- and office-holding imperial class was hegemonic within the imperial system, while real or fictitious

[36] The approach is thus resonant of Marx's statement 'I am referring to *ruthless criticism* of all that exists, ruthless both in the sense of not being afraid of the results it arrives at and in the sense of being just as little afraid of conflict with the powers that be.'
[37] See the hypothetical and conceptual frameworks developed across: Ocalan (2015), (2017) & *forthcoming*.
[38] Graeber (2004), 8.
[39] On capitalist modernity and hegemony see Appendix II.
[40] For the use of 'always-already' see Appendix II.
[41] See generally world-systems theory as developed by Wallerstein (1974-2011), Abu-Lughod (1989) and Arrighi (2007).
[42] On 'exploitative domination' and 'class & class fractions' see Appendix II.

entry to this class extended Roman hegemony beyond the territory directly dominated and exploited by the empire.

If hegemony provides a critical and politicised epistemology for periodisation, *situation* is an analytical answer to disciplinary history's essentialising focus on "placing" reified, immobilised "facts" into "context". As the Wild On Collective note in thesis four on critical history, "facts" are always-already mediated, categories are social, and concepts are historical, while, as thesis six puts it, 'every reference to context (as index of meaning) is itself an argument about social relations and arrangements that cannot be presumed and should be elaborated.' As a mode of analysis, then, situation means to locate a given phenomenon, in the first instance in the historical system of social relations it emerged from and participated in, but also in terms of its ideological construction across time and place. Situation therefore seeks to grasp phenomena in their movement, even at a most basic level, responding to Ocalan's call to transcend the subject-object binary characteristic of positivism.[43] Situation is thus inextricable from an understanding of particular historical conjunctures, in their specific dynamics, as well as their general resonances across time and place. As will be seen in part I, conjunctural situation is applicable even to the apparently most technical tasks, such as discussing manuscript copying traditions. Even this is able to, in the words of thesis seven, 'not only account for, and thereby denaturalise actually existing arrangements', but also to 'challenge the very logic of past and present…upon which both disciplinary history and the actual social order largely depend.' In such manner it becomes possible 'to understand the existing world in order to question the givens of our present so as to create openings for other possible worlds.'

Narratives of the Eleventh Century

Greenwood has recently noted that in modern and contemporary Armenian studies 'eleventh-century Armenia' is usually analysed in terms of three historical trajectories: Roman annexations; Turkish invasions; and the late-eleventh century establishment of new principalities 'to the west and south of historic Armenia'.[44] Some of these themes were identified and connected in medieval compositions, notably the *Chronicle* attributed to Matt'ēos, which constructs a vision of predatory and perfidious Romans wilfully destroying their buffer states by annexing Armenian ethnicised polities, replacing them with effeminate eunuchs as governor-generals of administrations that collapsed before the Seljuqs. Thus modern and contemporary scholars find an ally for their perspectives in a reified image of Matt'ēos, as they too sought to present the imagined national community's past in terms of 'political and religious independence; tenacious and costly resistance to external threats which were ultimately defeated; and a distinctive and defiant cultural

[43] Ocalan (2015), 58-59; situation is a term with a long social-theoretical and political background, see generally: Goffman (1956); Debord (1967).
[44] Greenwood (2017a).

legacy, expressed in ecclesiological, linguistic and architectural terms.'[45] Greenwood attributes this to the formative phase of modern Armenological historiography, with its 'dominant mode of romantic nationalism' tied to the project of establishing Armenian nationhood, and thus inherent right to statehood,[46] as he writes:

> The accounts of political capitulation by Armenian kings and princes and consequent annexation of their territories by a resurgent Byzantium sat very uncomfortably with the prevailing political aspirations of the time, which were validated through an imagined Armenian past centred on an independent Armenian polity and a united Armenian Church under the leadership of the Catholicos. Finding members of the Armenian elite voluntarily giving up their ancestral domains in exchange for status and territories in Byzantium did not advance the campaign for Armenian self-determination.[47]

With such a heavily reified hegemonic vision, 'eleventh-century Armenia' can only form an era of profound loss, so that very little specifically Armenological scholarship has focused on the period as such, preferring to see it as transitional between a Bagratuni Silver Age, and an Armenian Cilician Bronze.[48] Thus scholarly interest picks up at the close of the eleventh century,[49] with the period's significance characteristically summed up by S. Peter Cowe, who claims that the era 'marks yet another upheaval in the traditional semi-feudal *nakharar* system, for long the backbone of the Armenian social structure', but 'At the same time, the resettlement in Sebastia-Cappadocia offered a certain period of consolidation, leading to the creation of a new state around the nucleus of the Rubenian/Rubenid holdings at Baka (Vahka) in the Anti-Taurus Mountain range, which in due course developed into the Cilician kingdom.'[50]

Thus Greenwood's observations are absolutely correct, but the critique does not go far enough. The perspective of Armenian specialists is conditioned even now by Armenian Studies' methodologically nationalist common sense,[51] which is inherent even in the framing of the object of study as 'eleventh-century Armenia'.[52] Methodological nationalism is the assumption of nations as History's organising principle and basic units of analysis,[53] even if this is hidden beneath a veneer of peoplehood, or the pseudocritical 'ethnic group'[54] and Anthony Smith's *ethnie* – all simply imaginings of embryonic will-be or would-be nations.[55] These terms are the usual

[45] Greenwood (2017a).
[46] Greenwood (*forthcoming*).
[47] Greenwood (2017a).
[48] Greenwood also rightly notes that the trauma of the Genocide, and the apparent similarity of the eleventh-century Turkish invasions, may have conditioned a relative lack of interest, see: Greenwood (*forthcoming*).
[49] E.g. Dedeyan (2003).
[50] Cowe (2004).
[51] On 'common sense' see Appendix II.
[52] Greenwood tends to discuss 'historic Armenia', but this still naturalises an ethnicised Geography.
[53] See generally: Schiller & Wimmer (2002).
[54] On the problem of 'groupism' in ethnicity and nationalism studies see: Brubaker (2004), 7-27.
[55] Thus the title of Smith's (1987) book, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*.

responses to the modernist critiques of nationalism advanced by Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner and Eric Hobsbawm. Modernism is hegemonic in ethnicity and nationalism studies, a position which argues that nations only emerge in capitalist modernity.[56] The use of 'ethnic group' and 'people' as analytical terms across ancient and medieval disciplinary history, however, demonstrates modernism's insufficiency. Modernism's ontological realist assumptions, asking when *the* nation *as such* emerges, ultimately merely reify the nation states of capitalist modernity. Thus the word "nation" has become problematic, smugly labelled "anachronistic",[57] while the underlying conception of coherent groups-out-there-in-the-world as subjects of History remains the same.

A relevant outcome in Caucasia is seen in Donald Rayfield's *History of Georgia*, which begins 'This is a history of Georgia firstly politically, as a country in its modern (*de jure*) boundaries; secondly, geographically, as the region of Transcaucasia…[and] finally historically, with boundaries which at periods reached far into today's Turkey, Azerbaijan and Armenia',[58] and likewise he states in the first chapter 'The origins of the Georgian people(s), their *ethnogenesis*, like that of most nations, precedes documentary evidence.'[59] There are indications that Rayfield is aware of apparent critiques of nationhood: 'Georgia' is qualified by modern-political, geographical, and historical criteria, and tellingly the modern-political definition comes first. 'Georgian people' is qualified by a tentative suggestion of plurality, and Georgian origins are glossed with the unexplained but implicitly common sense term *ethnogenesis*, a superficially constructivist veneer implying some kind of "making", but a formation process that happens once and produces the objective *genesis* of an *ethnos*. Hence, these small concessions notwithstanding, the vision remains more-or-less the same as a century ago, as well as identical to the ideology of the global state system: the world is populated by objective and coherent nations, the origins of which, stretching deep into the past, form the predicate to History and human culture.[60] Thus Rayfield's eleventh-century chapter is titled 'Unification', presuming Georgia's eventual emergence as a nation state, which then becomes a given context that attributes meaning to historical action – various magnates 'pursued unification' and 'upheld a centralised monarchy', while 'The Byzantines naturally wanted Georgia as fragmented as Armenia, even though a

[56] For a longer discussion see generally: Afanasyev & Matheou (2017); Anderson (1981); Gellner (1983); & Hobsbawm (1992).
[57] This argumentation has been recently smashed for race, similarly claimed to be solely "modern", see the groundbreaking analysis in Heng (2018), esp. 1-54.
[58] Rayfield (2012), 7.
[59] Rayfield (2012), 11.
[60] This is particularly clear in the cultural bodies of the 'United Nations', and their nationalised valorisation of human culture and sociality.

centralised monarchy was more use to them against the Seljük [*sic*] menace than a patchwork of quarrelling principalities.'[61]

Hence the framing of such methodological assumptions as *nationalist*, they propagate the vision of a coherent and transhistorical nation out-there-in-the-world, and implicitly or explicitly this nation's right to statehood. The same is found in the standard introduction to "Armenian history", *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, edited in two volumes by Richard Hovannisian.[62] The second volume starts:

> The history of the Armenian people is long, complex, and in many ways epic and heroic. Emerging as an organized state by the middle of the second millennium B.C., Armenia lay at the ancient crossroads of orient and occident on the highland located between the Mediterranean, Black, and Caspian seas. The Armenian plateau became the buffer and coveted prize of rival empires…Through all the turbulence, however, the Armenians created a rich and colourful culture and defensive mechanisms for survival. Even during long periods of foreign dominion, internal religious and socioeconomic structures allowed them to preserve their distinct way of life.[63]

This is self-evident nationalism, positing a coherent group that emerged as a state deep in pre-history, and had internal structures that remained separate from 'foreign' social systems over several millennia, into the modern and contemporary era. There are obvious conditions to the excesses of methodological-come-political nationalism in Armenian studies, the Genocide and its ongoing denial, but we do no justice to victims or survivors by reproducing the same ideology that makes such atrocities possible.[64] Moreover many scholars operating with such assumptions would vehemently refute *political* nationalism, or that they reproduce nation-state ideology – Cowe, for example, who nevertheless talks of 'the Armenian social structure', another pseudocritical framing for "Armenian nation".[65] In the final instance, then, methodological nationalism comes down to one basic problem: the state itself. Behind the ideological façade of national histories lies the assumption that History is the story of statehood's becoming, the Enlightenment tradition that views the state as the universal and transhistorical marker of progress into higher stages of humanity, which is then mystified as "peoplehood" at lower stages in the

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[61] Rayfield (2012), 73-84; cf. Martin-Hisard (2011), 285, discussing the K'art'velian Bagrationi's 'policy of unification'.
[62] Hovannisian (1997), vols. I-II.
[63] Hovannisian (1997), vol. II, vii.
[64] This is a strong conditioning factor behind, for example, Richard G. Hovannisian's project to provide a transhistorical history of the 'Armenian people', both in the form of the edited history published in 1998, and Mazda Publishers' UCLA Armenian History & Culture Series, with its run of volumes on the transhistorical "Armenian" nature of given geographic areas.
[65] See Cowe (2015), 77-78, attacking how 'Modern scholarly narratives of the development of Anatolia from the medieval period onwards have generally reflected a nationalist focus', yet also using "Armenian" as an analytical category, and talking in terms of a perennial polity of Greater Armenia in the Armenian plateau.

supposedly pre-state "premodern" world.[66] In establishing 'the Armenian people' as reaching deep into the past, scholars stake the Armenian nation's right to participate in this march of Progress. Thus the organising principle of "Armenian history" is the existence or potential for a centralising ethnicised Armenian state – a nation state *avant la lettre*. 'Eleventh-century Armenia', then, can at best be transitional between Bagratuni and Rubenian iterations, a time of 'consolidation', whilst at worst it forms the period of New Rome's self-defeating betrayal, struck by instant karma for violating the sacred principle of statehood by annexing its Armenian 'buffers' – a notable resonance with Rayfield's claim that 'The Byzantines' benefited from a centralised Georgian monarchy.

This vision for 'eleventh-century Armenia' is laid out by Nina Garsoïan in her chapter in volume I of Hovannisian's edited history. This is the standard piece on Roman annexations, widely cited and so important to critique in detail here. The methodological pitfalls uncovered can be found more pronounced in the work of other scholars, but it is important to critique them in Garsoïan's work as the most prominent and astute. Thus these pitfalls are revealed as a common sense structurally reproduced across the discipline, rather than the analytical sins of individual scholars.[67] Her piece begins:

> Two factors emerge from the course of events described in the preceding chapters as the major causes hindering all efforts to create a stable and centralized state on the Armenian plateau. The first was the perpetual centrifugal tendency of the *naxarar*s, whose loyalty to their own house rather than to any common ruler was reinforced by the fragmented character of Armenia's mountainous setting…The second factor was any break in the precarious international balance that prevented either of the formidable powers to the east and west of the plateau from overwhelming Armenia and annexing it outright.[68]

Garsoïan thus begins from the premise that the historical question is why there is no centralising Armenian state, the apparently normative situation, deviations from which must be explained. These two factors are thus naturalised, and claimed to explain the 'fragmentation' of 'Armenia' into different polities. 'Byzantium' in this vision forms the cunning imperial fox, its 'ultimate goal, even when it was masked for a time by diplomatic compromise, remained the total incorporation of the Armenian realms within the empire.'[69] In this understanding the *nakharar*s weathered 'Muslim conquest and subsequent oppression of Armenia', and in the ninth century struggled to 're'-establish 'autonomous and eventually independent entities in Armenia after a hiatus of several centuries', but lacking 'common purpose' eventually succumbed to Roman imperialism.

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[66] For alternative framings see generally Ocalan (2015) & Scott (2017).
[67] Garsoïan (1997a).
[68] Garsoïan (1997c), 186.
[69] Garsoïan (1997a), 188.

The next subsection returns to these claims in a critical overview of New Rome's hegemonic cycle in Caucasia, here what is important is the representation's inherently nationalist logic. The apparently voluntary nature of most annexations is left by-the-by, instead they are described as 'intrusions' into 'intrinsically Armenian territory'.[70] The annexation of Vaspurakan is narrated exactly as in the *Chronicle* attributed to Matt'ēos, and is attacked from an implicitly nationalist perspective with the statement that the region was thereafter 'governed by a non-Armenian *strategos* (governor-general)'.[71] This implicitly sides the scholar with 'native' elites, and justifies their exploitative domination as natural, a nationalism made explicit with the comment 'The transformation of the independent Armenian realms into ordinary Byzantine provinces should probably not be viewed as exclusively destructive *despite its obviously negative aspects*.'[72] Those not 'exclusively destructive' features are the maintenance of some power by local, apparently Armenian elites, the appointment of some Armenians as governor-generals, and the service of some Armenian aristocrats in the imperial state apparatus.

Hence the continued strength of eleventh-century 'Armenia' is *despite* New Rome's domination, a view that both identifies the scholar with would-be national elites, and generalises their assumed experience and desire for independence across all strata of the social system. Typically Garsoïan's main "positive" in the period is the appearance of new Armenian elites that formed the bases for new Armenian polities. Hence at the summation of her list of 'redeeming features' of Roman dominion she writes:

> Finally…almost all the leaders who sought to re-create Armenian principalities on the middle Euphrates and in Cilicia at the end of the eleventh century…after the disappearance of Armenian independence and the collapse of imperial rule in the East, had begun their careers in the imperial service and usually continued to base their claim to authority and legitimacy on their Byzantine official position and titles, even when Constantinople could no longer provide them with any support and although all were ethnic Armenians.[73]

This apparent contradiction – which is only such from a nationalist perspective that presumes "Armenian" desire for an "Armenian" state – is not interrogated however. Instead it is quickly stated that Roman domination had 'an undeniably deleterious effect on the country.'[74] This effect is broken down into the loss of 'independence and sovereignty', the changing of administrative and demographic structures, and the imposition of imperial taxation – interestingly claimed to have 'increased the economic burden of the general population even where occasional privileged members of the upper classes continued to prosper.'[75] This statement is unreferenced, to my

[70] Garsoïan (1997a), 189.
[71] Garsoïan (1997a), 190.
[72] Emphasis added, Garsoïan (1997a), 193.
[73] Garsoïan (1997a), 194-195.
[74] Garsoïan (1997a), 195-196.
[75] Garsoïan (1997a), 196.

knowledge only one source intimates the possibility,[76] but of course political-economic transformations may have increased commoners' experience of exploitative domination.[77] Yet commoners were exploited and dominated previously too, but Garsoïan naturalises this 'native' exploitative domination as 'local customs' – the essence of an ideological framing. Moreover, in accepting 'native' elites uncritically – indeed, more-or-less identifying with them – the entire framing is inherently nationalist.

Yet this critique is not aimed at Garsoïan as such, there are many more explicitly nationalist statements elsewhere in the discipline.[78] The point is to demonstrate methodological nationalism's permeation of even the most critical Armenological work, revealing it as the disciplinary common sense. Indeed, Garsoïan took so seriously the question of why a state did not develop that her latest work proposed the Armenians as a definitively "stateless nation", with a coherent sense of self that emerged from a formative period between the fifth and ninth centuries, tellingly termed 'the interregnum' – thus still defined by statehood.[79] This is the claimed era when 'the identity of Armenia seems to have been forged, as that of a nation existing outside the framework of a political state', and explicitly moves against what is termed a 'political approach', seeking to explain 'the continuous survival of "Armenia", in spite of the numerous vicissitudes of its tumultuous history.' Yet this 'stateless' period remains organised around an apparatus of hegemonic institutions, the Armenian Church, which are continuously inextricable from state institutions as such, and themselves have their origins in the late antique Roman Empire and Aršakuni kingdom of Armenia – indeed, ecclesiastical institutions *are* state institutions, albeit parapolitical ones, understood in a broader sense of institutionalised hegemonic apparatuses of exploitative domination. Hence the 'identity of "Armenia"' proposed as generalised is instead a specific hegemonic institutional vision, that retains a direct relation to statehood. Nevertheless Garsoïan presents the notable example of a scholar working within a methodologically nationalist framework, and yet explicitly writing against normative Armenian nationalism.[80]

Ultimately, however, this is not enough – as seen, methodological nationalism preserves straightforward chauvinism latent within itself. This is particularly clear in Garsoïan's study of 'the problem of Armenian integration into the Byzantine Empire', which begins from the premise that the 'problem' for New Rome was to 'absorb' and 'assimilate' this apparently foreign body –

[76] Kekaumenos' *Stratēgikon* when discussing the theme of Iviria, see: n.775.
[77] On 'commoners' see Appendix II.
[78] See, for example Hairapetian's (1995), 215, analysis of the period's literature in terms of the 'growth of national culture'; or Akopyan's (2015) characterisation of the 'Bagratid era' as a time of 'consolidation' for 'Armenian national forces'. There is also the older work of Peter Charanis (1963) and Hratch Bartikian (2007), a small tradition of "Armeno-Byzantine" studies, that is heavily methodologically nationalist in both Greek and Armenian terms.
[79] See Garsoïan (2012), vii-xviii.
[80] This is particularly clear in her work on Late Antiquity, for which she has suffered chauvinist polemics from scholars in the Republic of Armenia.

an obviously problematic and nationalist starting point.[81] The piece does tend towards critically breaking up the category of 'Armenian', demonstrating its many valences at different social strata and in different political-economic conditions, and so the pronounced variation across time and place – as she notes, 'the generic term "Armenian" is far too imprecise and all-inclusive to serve as a useful tool for investigation. It needs considerable refinement and subdivision to isolate its components.'[82] Thus Garsoïan recognises the need to deconstruct a homogenised Armenianness, but retains the understanding that an objective, if refined, definition of the national community is still possible. This is clear in her eventual exclusion of Chalcedonians from authentic Armenianness, 'a separate entity or "nation" (Arm. *azg*) of their own, distinct from both the Greek and the Armenian worlds', a more-or-less explicit assertion that the independent Armenian Church is definitive.[83] Similarly, the methodologically nationalist assumption of the 'problem' of 'assimilation' is key to her analysis of the eleventh century:

> With the annexation of vast new Armenian territories by Byzantium between 1021 and 1064, the empire found itself faced with the same problem…How to absorb the sudden addition of a large *alien Armenian population* to the considerable numbers already settled in the empire, all the more so, in that their presence now created pockets of concentration where the new minorities formed a majority of the inhabitants.[84]

The subsequent account focuses more-or-less entirely on the experience of relocated royals from the annexed polities, generalising their claimed lack of integration across the population. In an account almost entirely based on the *Chronicle* attributed to Matt'ēos, Garsoïan claims that 'the Armenians…chose' a divergent path from New Rome, which represents an 'imperial failure' in need of explanation. Yet this explanation is contradictory, claiming that of the ex-royal Arcruni only the former king Yovhannēs-Senek'erim held an official position in the imperial apparatus, his sons choosing to avoid Roman offices, their authority 'over the surrounding population' resting 'on their own means and especially their own prestige' – yet she notes shortly after that Yovhannēs-Senek'erim's son Davit' 'was *strategos* of Cappadocia like his father.'[85] This royal thematic succession, monopolising the governor-generalship of Cappadocia for fifty years, points to the real antagonism at the heart of concrete tensions between identified Romans and Armenians in the eleventh century: the contradictory reification and politicisation of a materially-charged Armenianness *within* the political-economic conditions of imperial hegemony.[86] This, however, is absent from Garsoïan's account, which generalises specific elite actions as those of 'the

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[81] Garsoïan (1998); for a relevant critique of "assimilation" see: Matheou (*forthcoming* a).
[82] Garsoïan (1998), 68; compare with Greenwood's (2016) comments about 'Armenian' and 'Byzantine' as categories.
[83] Garsoïan (1998), 108-109.
[84] Emphasis added, Garsoïan (1998), 109.
[85] Garsoïan (1998), 111-112.
[86] This argument will be made in Matheou (*article in process*a).

Armenians', subordinates the *History*'s worldview to that of the *Chronicle*, and arrives at the pure methodologically nationalist position that:

> …Greeks and Armenians [despite occasional openings] returned to their divergent paths. The soldiers…became increasingly unreliable. Armenian settlers…sided with the enemies of the empire…Religious antagonism had unquestionably played a major role, although its absence in the case of the *Cat'* [Chalcedonians] did not lead to the expected fusion. Resentment over the abolition of the medieval kingship became the focus of medieval historians. Class was of some significance at times. But even without any continuous pattern of persecution, in fact, with some periods of actual benevolence, the empire failed to absorb the Armenians…The overwhelming mass of the Armenian inhabitants of the empire, isolated by language more than ethnic background, by religion (which prevented them from assuming the authentic, Orthodox, Byzantine identity), and at last by the mythology surrounding their lost king, remained alien and alienated—incorporated but not assimilated.[87]

Thus, despite certain tendencies towards a more critical position, the inherently methodologically nationalist framework that Garsoïan – indeed, Armenian studies as a whole – operates within, coopts these potentials to a chauvinist standpoint.[88] Only Seta Dadoyan has gone forcefully against this hegemonic vision. Dadoyan's a three-part history of 'the Armenians in the medieval Islamic world' practically dissolves unitary Armenianness into its many various instantiations depending on social stratum, time, and place. Of particular importance is her emphasis on the consistent presence of heterodoxy, and Armenian ethnicised actors' liminality in the interstices of competing hegemonic systems.[89] Dadoyan's work thus breaks major ground in the discipline, but ultimately fails to decentre Armenianness, characterising the eleventh and twelfth centuries as another "between period", an 'intermezzo', hence defined by statelessness like Garsoïan's 'interregnum'. It therefore remains within a nationalised vision, albeit one of an imagined community defined by heterogeneity and liminality.[90]

Ultimately what maintains methodological nationalism in the field is the unquestioned reification of a land called "Armenia", and so its inhabitants, "the Armenians" – and notably ethnoterritoriality is also central to the *History*'s Armenian nationalism too, an instance of the resonance of ideological forms between different historical conjunctures. For this reason, then, although Greenwood avoids the many excesses of methodological nationalism, the preservation of 'eleventh-century Armenia' as the object of study leads, inexorably, to more-or-less nationalist conclusions – a progression especially clear in Rayfield's historical vision of "Georgia", mirrored

[87] Garsoïan (1998), 123-124.
[88] On this co-opting effect of nationalist ideology see Étienne Balibar on the 'nation-form', Balibar (1991), 86-106; & recently applied to a critique of Armenian studies in Aslanian (2018), 81-126.
[89] See generally Dadoyan (2013).
[90] Dadoyan also fails to go beyond positivist empiricism, so that her many groundbreaking perspectives are often let down by reifying social characterisations.

too in Robert Hewsen's otherwise brilliant historical-geographical work on "Armenia".[91] This reification of a particular "country", what I have elsewhere termed 'country fetishism',[92] anchors methodological nationalism in something apparently objective, that nevertheless implies teleological realisation as an ethnicised state. Thus methodological nationalism is revealed to be a particular iteration of the general problem of methodological *statism*.

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The solution to going beyond methodological nationalism, therefore, is to adopt a methodologically *anti-state* position: an *anarchist* heuristic that re-centres History as struggle between hegemony and counterpower, and maintains an invariant subaltern perspective.[93] For the purposes of this project, this begins from a double movement of denaturalising ethnicised geographies – Armenia, Georgia, Kurdistan and so on. The naturalisation of ethnicised geographies, reifying the connection between "the land" and its apparent "natives", is the anchor of methodological nationalism, and thus antithetical to critical history. This also necessitates denaturalising the successive statehoods of "Armenia", asserting all state systems as part of an always-already inter-state hegemony, with the rulers and elites of each polity inevitably having more shared interests, however contradictorily, than with "their" Armenian, Georgian, Kurdish or Roman commoners. This double movement is articulated over the entire thesis, but it is necessary to define the geographic terms that replace these ethnicised geographies: Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia, and, most importantly, Caucasia.

Anatolia solely refers to the historic peninsula of Asia Minor, roughly bounded in the south and south-east by the Taurus-Zagros rage, in the east by the Upper Mesopotamian ('Armenian') highlands, and in the north-east by Caucasia beginning around the Pontus region and Aras River. Upper Mesopotamia refers to the north of the Tigris-Euphrates river system, where the river sources lie in the region generally known as 'Armenia minor', 'the Armenian highlands', or 'western Armenia', as well as 'South-East Anatolia' and 'north Kurdistan'. Caucasia geographically extends out from a core area around the Greater and Lesser Caucasus mountains, the former dividing North from South Caucasia, and the latter limiting the Upper Mesopotamian highlands in the north and north-east. North Caucasia stretches westward towards Crimea and the sea of Azov, north to the plains between the Don and Volga rivers, and north-east over the Caspian towards the Central Asian steppe; while South Caucasia stretches westward down the Black Sea

[91] See, for example, how his otherwise brilliant historical atlas is framed as of 'Armenia', and so naturalises this space as inherently 'Armenian', and the blurring across time and space in his other region-specific work which functions to ethnically inscribe territories as 'Armenian' as a function of nature and objective national history, see: Hewsen, (1998), (2000a), (200b), (2002), (2003a), (2003b), (2004), (2006), (2008), (2009), (2011), (2013).
[92] Matheou (*article in process* b).
[93] On the 'subaltern' see Appendix II.

coast to include the Pontus, southward inland to the sources of the Euphrates, Tigris and Aras rivers, and eastwards to the regions around Lake Van, finally to the Caspian Sea coast and Lake Urmia region in the south-east. This thesis only covers those parts of South Caucasia discussed in the *History*: the western, southern, and central areas enclosed by the polities of New Rome, Great Armenia, Vaspurakan and Ap'khazet'i-K'art'li. This is the *History*'s narrative landscape, designated, including Tao-Tayk' but partially excluding Georgian ethnicised Ap'khazet'i and K'art'li, either the 'land of the Armenians' or the 'land of the East'. Nevertheless, although these are the main areas treated in the thesis, with much of Caucasia absent or little covered, it remains important to insist on a broader regional situation.

The insistence on Caucasia as a historical-cultural as well as a geographic region, moreover, destabilises common-sense assumptions about regional social systems, forcing instead a pluralising indeterminacy in how sociality is imagined.[94] For example, the standard narrative for both "Armenia" and "Georgia" claims that high aristocratic families, Armenian *nakharar*s and Georgian *aznauri*s, alongside the respective "national" churches, "preserved" the "national culture" and "social structure" under "Arab domination".[95] This seems common sense if the organising principle of History is ethnoterritorial blocs and their survival or otherwise, so that things named "Armenia" and "Georgia" always remain more-or-less intact, developing internally but bounded externally, ready to re-emerge phoenix-like throughout history. But as a claim about Caucasia as a geographic and historical-cultural region this is nonsensical: elites and hegemonic institutional apparatuses like churches are always-already integrated into, and reproduced by, broader intra- and transregional hegemonic systems. Thus *nakharar*s, *aznauri*s, and the Armenian and Georgian churches are necessarily internal to the caliphal state system as it functioned in Caucasia,[96] as well as to myriad other intersecting hegemonic apparatuses at varying macro and micro scales, like local emirates and their own lordships. Hence the question becomes one of social and political-economic dynamics that traverse intersecting elitedoms and apparatuses of (sub-)hegemonic institutions within and across a broad region,[97] rather than the internal developments of transhistorical ethnoterritorial blocs and their billiard ball interactions with each other.

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[94] For a comparable framing focused on Georgian elements, see generally Rapp (2012a & b). Of course, adopting Caucasia without pursuing a critical-historical project does not necessarily avoid methodological nationalism or statism, as demonstrated by the work of Toumanoff (1963) on 'Christian Caucasia', 36, who talks of 'the locus of Caucasian society: the land of its two chief components, the Armenian and the Georgian nation.' Similarly the experience of Russian imperialism shows the potential for an ethnicised Caucasianness, see: King (2008), 99-142.
[95] Garsoïan (1997b), 117-142; & Rayfield (2012), 55-72.
[96] See generally Vacca (2018).
[97] On an 'elitedom' see Appendix II.

This perspective is developed below for a critical overview of New Rome's hegemonic cycle in Caucasia. Beforehand, however, it is important to return to the *Chronicle* attributed to Matt'ēos, and examine the account's elevation to normative status. As first Christopher MacEvitt and then, more expansively and conclusively, Andrews has argued, the *Chronicle*'s narrative is representative of its conjunctural situation: northern Syria and Upper Mesopotamia in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries.[98] Drawing on apocalyptic compositions circulating among Armenian and other ecclesiastics in the late eleventh century, the writer has constructed their narrative around a prophecy that predicts first the Turkish invasions, then the First Crusade, and finally a Last Roman Emperor's messianic restoration of Christian power. This is the classic pseudo-Methodian schema updated for the Turkish invasions and First Crusade, and demonstrates the extent to which Matt'ēos is situated in a new conjuncture, in Greenwood's words, 'His *History* may offer a dramatic sweep of eleventh-century affairs but it does so from a twelfth-century perspective.'[99]

Again, however, this argument can be taken further. Garsoïan does not dispute that Matt'ēos' anti-Romanness is more pronounced than that of Aristakēs, but plots both on a single trajectory, and takes the *Chronicle* to represent its final development. This justifies centring the *Chronicle*'s account, largely subordinating the *History*'s narrative to its worldview. As for the *Chronicle*'s pre-eminence in scholarship more broadly, on the one hand, Matt'ēos' more expansive and chronologically structured account engenders the tyranny of a coherent linear narrative, and, on the other, the *Chronicle*'s nationalist perspective resonates more closely with those of the modern and contemporary era. All this has conspired to elevate his testimony to normative status. Yet Matt'ēos' account is not merely specific to the twelfth century, it remains more-or-less particular even within this conjuncture, and failure to appreciate this situated position has created serious methodological problems.

One example will suffice: Matt'ēos' account of the kingdom of Vaspurakan's 1021 annexation. This is presented as the beginning of Armenia's downfall, with the king Yovhannēs-Senek'erim observing 'Persian' raids, these 'Persians' constructed explicitly as Turks, and 'chronicles and utterances of the divinely-inspired prophets' revealing their apocalyptic nature.[100] So the king decides to 'hand over the land of his ancestors to the Greek emperor Vasil and in its stead to obtain Sebastia', 'and thus Armenia was abandoned by its kings and princes.'[101] This narrative constellation is repeated across the *Chronicle* thereafter: the Turks prefigure the coming apocalypse, driving Armenian princes to the Romans, or otherwise tricked by 'Roman

[98] See generally MacEvitt (2007) & Andrews (2017).
[99] Greenwood (2017a).
[100] MU, I.48.
[101] MU, I.49.

perfidiousness', so that the land and church are abandoned in the face of the onslaught. Eschatology aside, this constellation has been carried over into modern and contemporary historiography, but the first of many problems is that these 'Persians' almost certainly were not Turkish raiders.[102] Rather they were the Shaddadid emirs,[103] named 'Persians' in tenth- and early-eleventh century Armenophone compositions, and the *Chronicle*'s writer has consciously or unconsciously re-presented these as Turks. In the *History*, for example, Yovhannēs-Senekʻerim is merely described as 'harassed by the Persians', so that he gave 'his patrimonial inheritance, the house of Vaspurakan, to the autocrat Vasil.'[104] Aside from noting that 'from then onwards the Romans ruled the East', however, Aristakēs does not construct the event as part of the downfall of "Armenia", nor does he reference Turks. Indeed, the *History*'s account forms an aside in the narrative of an abortive imperial usurpation, and implies that Yovhannēs-Senekʻerim was already governor-general of Sebasteia, having exchanged his kingdom 'two or three years prior'.[105]

The point, however, is not to resolve these accounts in positivist manner, but to demonstrate their radical indeterminacy, so that modern and contemporary scholars' prioritising of the *Chronicle* is revealed to be thoroughly ideological. For, even if it is accepted that these invaders were Turks, perhaps in the pay of the Shaddadid emirs, this would still not necessitate accepting the *Chronicle*'s attribution of nationalist meaning to the annexation – even limited to a 'twelfth-century perspective'. The decision to do so, tyranny of a coherent narrative aside, is due to the resonance of Mattʻēos' of desire for Armenian independence with modern and contemporary scholars' methodological and/or political nationalism. This is demonstrated by the apparent irrelevance of another composition contemporary to the *Chronicle*, which also understands these invaders as Turks but reveals an entirely different worldview. This is the anonymous continuator to the tenth-century *History of the Arcrunikʻ* attributed to Tʻovma Arcruni, a kind of official history of Vaspurakan continued by different writers, this one writing in the 1120s for the local post-Roman magnate.[106] As they write:

> Now because of our sins the race of Elamites ('Persians', Arm. *Ełimacikʻ*) attacked us…and continually vexed the nation of Christians and put them to the sword. Then King Senekʻerim thought of the Lord's command 'If they expel you from one city, flee to the next.' There was no assistance anywhere else save from the Lord, and the Lord's help supported the emperor of the Greeks. At that time the imperial authority and the divinely protected city of Constantinople were held by a God-loving and pious man named Vasil. The emperor of the Greeks had no control over the land of the Armenians, but these all freely ruled over their

[102] If they are then it is the earliest appearance in Caucasia by some thirty years, with an absence for the entire intervening period.
[103] Minorsky (1953), 5.
[104] AL, 537.15.
[105] AL, 537.15.
[106] Thomson (2000), 57-72.

> provinces, although they could not endure the onslaught of the Muslims. *Then the survivors of the house of T'orgom turned to the emperor of the Greeks as a son to his father. The Greeks, filled with divine love, had compassion for the appeal of their children, and summoned them from their various provinces*.[107] They gave them gifts, appointed them at the royal court, gave them great cities in exchange for their cities and in return for their castles, impregnable fortresses and provinces, villages, estates, and holy hermitages. So the Arcrunik', descendants of Hayk [and] Senek'erim, exchanged their ancestral homes…and moved into Greek territory with 14,000 men, not including women and children, passing under the yoke of the Romans. Likewise the Bagratuni Gagik, son of King Yovhannēs, also exchanged his ancestral [lands]…and went to Roman territory. They ruled over the eastern part of Armenia, the great city of Van, the province of Vaspurakan, the royal city of Ani, and the land of the Armenians.[108]

Self-evidently this worldview is markedly removed from those represented in both the *Chronicle* and the *History*, unequivocally positioning the imperial annexations as an act of paternal benevolence. There are resonances in the understanding of the Turkish invasions as due to Armenian corporate sin, a framing close to the *History*'s, and present in the *Chronicle*'s otherwise apocalyptic trajectory, yet the overall thrust is entirely opposite. Importantly the continuator represents both Arcruni Vaspurakan and Bagratuni Great Armenia's annexations in these terms, emphasising how the Armenians were independent and freely chose to place themselves 'under the yoke of the Romans', so that the entirety of 'the land of the Armenians' was in imperial control. There is no reason why Matt'ēos' representation should be preferred over the continuator's as the 'twelfth-century perspective' of identified Armenians. As with the *History*, the continuator's account is less coherent or linear than the *Chronicle*'s, providing a positivist explanation for its preference. But the fact that it has been entirely ignored, despite occasional reference and inclusion in both editions and translations of the widely known composition attributed to T'ovma, indicates the extent of the field's methodologically nationalist common sense. Simply, such shameless pro-Romanness cannot be included in Armenological narratives of the eleventh century as they currently stand.[109]

New Rome's Hegemonic Cycle & Caucasia: A Critical Overview

By way of conclusion it is important to provide a critical overview of medieval New Rome's hegemonic cycle in Caucasia, producing the *History*'s conjuncture. Thus far the empire of New Rome has not been defined, and this is not the place to critique in full Byzantine studies' iterations of methodological statism. Nevertheless, these are important to note insofar as they have

[107] Emphasis added.
[108] TA, 307-308.
[109] Indeed, these narratives have almost erased the more moderated pro-Romanness in the *History*, and masked entirely the *Chronicle*'s complex relation to Romanness, as brought out in MacEvitt (2014) & Andrews (2017), 74-100.

conditioned scholarly understandings of New Rome's hegemonic cycle, its conquest of Caucasia, and the eleventh-century crisis.[110]

New Rome refers to the historical state system commonly known as "Byzantium", emphasised *as* a state system, rather than a nebulous "civilization" or "culture". A previous generation of Byzantinists' liberal common sense conditioned their view of a bureaucratic political system separate to, but intervening in a distinct "economic sphere". Thus they fetishized the state as separate to society, and adopted a mystified approach that analyses the "effectiveness"[111] of imperial "governance" through the evaluation of "good" and "bad" imperial policies. A policy's relative "good" or "bad" nature is based on the criterion of what maintained or expanded exploitative domination and hegemony – in short, methodological *imperialism*.[112] Hence for the eleventh century there are debates over the extent to which the imperial fisc had a conscious monetary policy to debase coinage, and so the extent to which they "understood" naturalised liberal characterisations of historically-specific capitalist economics, as well as whether annexing Caucasian polities was a "good" policy, or removed essential buffers and therefore "bad".[113] Hence liberal ideology functions in the service of a state fetishist common sense that permits value judgements of, for example, the mass relocation of human actors – ethnic cleansing and demographic engineering – as a "good" imperial policy.[114] The clearest state fetishism in the discipline today, however, is the work of Anthony Kaldellis, who ignores both economic conditions and the reality of violent coercion, and projects a vision that inverted but retained the parameters of Greek nationalism, naming New Rome the 'medieval Roman nation state'.[115] This 'nation state' is defined in idealist liberal terms as a 'monarchical republic',[116] and the medieval hegemonic cycle is christened its 'Golden Age'. Kaldellis dismisses the possibility of analysing the dynamics of the eleventh-century crisis, but through the highly problematic title *Streams of Gold, Rivers of Blood* implyies the influx of non-national barbarians as key.[117]

To cut across this liberal state fetishism and methodological imperialism, therefore, New Rome is characterised as a *tributary* state system, in the historical materialist sense of a political economy based on centralised taxation.[118] This state system was centred in Constantinople with unbroken institutional continuity from 395 to 1204, and throughout was based on the exploitation

[110] On the definition of 'crisis' in this thesis see Appendix II.
[111] See, for example, how governmental "effectiveness" forms a crucial criterion of analysis in Neville (2004).
[112] Perhaps the most prominent recent example is Treadgold (1997).
[113] Angold (2009), 583-610.
[114] This is clearest in the oft-cited Charanis (1961).
[115] Kaldellis (2007), 42-119.
[116] 'Idealist' in the sense of ignoring material conditions, see: Kaldellis (2014).
[117] Kaldellis (2017), 271-279; cf. Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech, where he notes 'Like the Roman…'.
[118] See generally Haldon (1994) & Banaji (2011), 1-44.

of surplus labour-power and its surplus products in the form of tax, distributing appropriated surplus to reproduce the imperial class.[119] After an extended period of crisis in the seventh and early eighth centuries, New Rome's political-economic configuration stabilised *c.*750-850 in the system of territorial production known as the theme system,[120] and thereafter the empire experienced a rising hegemonic cycle from *c.*861.

The broader regional conditions for this cycle were the late-ninth century collapse of caliphal super hegemony. The caliphal hegemonic cycle had enclosed most of South Caucasia and Upper Mesopotamia in the province of Armīniya, with governor-generals, *ostikans,* based at Dvin.[121] Over two centuries Armīniya engendered increased political-economic coherence among regional elites and hegemonic apparatuses, including the Armenian Church – a significant element of Garsoïan's 'interregnum' – and especially for identified Armenian aristocrats. Despite occasional revolts coinciding with changes to taxation and moments of caliphal weakness, the *nakharar* families were quickly integrated into the state system, with a 'prince of the Armenians/Armenia'[122] (*iškhan Hayoc'*) continuously appointed over the eighth and ninth centuries, almost all from the Bagratuni house. Within this formal structure, alongside tax exemptions and privileges, and a yearly stipend of 100,000 dirhams for their cavalry, the *nakharar* families cohered as a provincial elitedom. The Armenian ethnicised polities that emerged in the ninth century are thus not the phoenixes of nationalist imagination, but products of the caliphal hegemonic cycle, and particularly the subsequent hegemonic interregnum. This followed the 861 murder of Caliph al-Mutawakkil, when centrifugal forces set in across the state system. Thus Ašot I Bagratuni's recognition in 862 as 'prince of princes of the Armenians/Armenia' represents a moderate titular shift, and fits into a system-wide pattern of increasingly autonomous provincial elitedoms.

In the hegemonic interregnum conditions of imperial competition empowered subhegemonic elites, represented in Ašot's double recognition as 'king of the Armenians' in 884 by caliph and emperor – a move on the caliph's part to offset the *ostikan*'s increasingly autonomous action. Hence K'art'velian kingship's recognition in the same conjuncture, asserted by the ruler of Tao-Tayk' in 888, who was then crowned 'king of the K'art'velians' by the ruler of Great Armenia in 899. Ethnicised Georgian polities had emerged earlier in the ninth century, Ap'khazet'i in the western Greater Caucasus and Black Sea Coast, and Tao-Tayk' in defensible highlands and

[119] For a longer discussion of the political economy of New Rome see: subsection II.6.
[120] For a full analysis of this period of crisis see: Haldon (2016); for the legal and administrative developments of this period see: Humphreys (2014), 249-272; & Brubaker & Haldon (2011), 453-530.
[121] For detailed discussions of this period see: Garsoïan (1997b), 117-142; Dadoyan (2011), 43-112; & esp. see generally Vacca (2013), (2017) & Eger (2014).
[122] Both options are given here since the terms for 'Armenia' and 'Armenians', *Hayk',* are identical, only rarely distinguishable by the verb.

valleys around the Çoruh river basin (Georgian *Č'orokhi*), between the Pontus to the north and west, the plain of Theodosioupolis-Karin to the south, and the Greater and Lesser Caucasus to the north and east – the *History*'s core geography.[123] These had had a different trajectory to the Armenian ethnicised polities, Ap'khazet'i remaining under Roman dominion in the eighth century and Tao-Tayk' founded by elites fleeing from K'art'li. Nevertheless they too were integrated into a sub-hegemonic condominium of Caucasian polities in the late-ninth century's interregnal conjuncture. Likewise Vaspurakan around Lake Van in the Upper Mesopotamian highlands became the centre of an alternative 'kingdom of the Armenians' in 908, with Gagik I Arcruni crowned by the *ostikan*.[124] Cyril Toumanoff christened the tenth century a time of 'Bagratid condominium' over 'Christian Caucasia',[125] but this intra-regional condominium included Christian polities not ruled by the Bagratuni, as well as Muslim polities, and was sub-hegemonic *vis-à-vis* the increasingly autonomous *ostikan*s of the early tenth century, and New Rome as the emergent regional hegemon.

Thus medieval Caucasian kingship and its quick generalisation represents the interregnal conjuncture.[126] Situated, moreover, in an ecologically fragmented, largely upland, and politically-economically complex and contested region, reproducing exploitative domination was precarious.[127] Caucasian kingship in the tenth century thus appears markedly corporate, with rulers having a shared interest in asserting collective dominion, and magnates ostensibly subordinate to a given monarch found cooperating with another.[128] Indeed, the tension between the royal level and that of aristocratic magnates, all situated in a fragmented and difficult to control region exhibiting strong counterpolitical tendencies,[129] helps explain royals' continued willingness to integrate into hegemonic imperial systems that contradictorily shored up their power – a dynamic seen in Ašot IV's visit to Basileios II to obtain support against 'surrounding magnates', recorded in the *History*.[130] It also explains the continued pluralisation of kingship over the tenth century, as magnates obtained or claimed the right for apparently more limited forms, such as the emergent monarchies at Kars and Loŕi, and the effectively royal principality in

[123] On this process see generally Rapp (2012b).
[124] Cowe (2000), 73-86.
[125] 'The complexity of the Caucasian political system was increased by the fact that, parallel to the Armenian monarchy and its dependencies, there existed the supra-national, dynastic condominium of the Bagratids. The King of Armenia was its doyen and the King of Iberia second after him; then came the other Bagratid branches: Taraun, and later Kars and Lor'i, in Armenia, and Tao and Cholarzene-Artanuji in Iberia. Neither system was however to survive. The delicate fabric of Bagratid rule in Armenia was menaced from the outset by feudal insubordination and foreign pressure; and the condominium collapsed through a lack of family solidarity.' Toumanoff (1966), 613.
[126] Greenwood (2011), 43-64.
[127] Compare with Scott (2009), 1-39.
[128] See, for example, the episodes in *Life of K'art'li*, 144-149; & ST, III.30, 38, & 41.
[129] Cf. Matheou (*forthcoming* b)
[130] AL, 531.17-532.19.

Siwnik'.[131] Hence by the year 1000 more powerful subhegemons claimed the title 'king of kings': the ruler of great Armenia, Gagik I, claimed the title '*shahanshah* of the Armenians and K'art'velians (Armenian *Virk'*)', while Gurgen of K'art'li contemporaneously claimed the title 'king of kings (Georgian *mepet' mepe*) of the K'art'velians'.

By the same point, however, these subhegemons recognised imperial hegemony in one way or another. New Rome's rising cycle had manifested regionally in a series of eastward expansions, first *c.*850-910 into the purposefully maintained 'shatter zone' between New Rome and the Caliphate,[132] resulting in a number of newly established 'large' and 'small' 'Armenian themes' in eastern Anatolia and Upper Mesopotamia, heavily settled with identified Armenians as agrarian commoners and soldiers.[133] The first half of the tenth century also saw the conquest of urban emirates like Melitene in 934 and Theodosioupolis-Karin in 949. A pattern of annexing Christian aristocratic polities also developed, like the theme of Mesopotamia *c.*910 and Tarōn in 967, both in Upper Mesopotamia,[134] a pattern that expanded into Caucasia in the eleventh century with royal annexations – yet already by the 960s a colophon from Vaspurakan refers to two rulers, the Arcruni '*shahanshah* of the house of Armenia/the Armenians', and the 'emperor of the Greeks, valiant and virtuous, victorious in battles against the heathens'.[135] By the year 1000, when the *History* begins, the empire of New Rome enclosed all of Anatolia, and stretched across Upper Mesopotamia into north-western Syria,[136] as well as the south-western reaches of Caucasia. In this year, when Davit' *kouropalatēs* of Tao-Tayk' died and Basileios II came to Caucasia to claim his polity, the emperor was met by Yovhannēs-Senek'erim of Vaspurakan and his brother, receiving the king's homage and apparently informing surrounding Muslim magnates that he was under imperial protection.[137] Basileios was also met by Bagrat of Ap'khazet'i and his father Gurgen of K'art'li, granting them imperial titles and confirming control over some of Tao-Tayk's former strongholds.

The process of imperial hegemony's permeation of Caucasia over the tenth century should be imagined as 'pulses…transmitted simultaneously from different *foci*, engendering a spectrum of receptions and reactions' across the region.[138] Hence the process was complex and, often,

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[131] Cf. Greenwood (2011), 43-64.
[132] On shatter zones see: Scott (2009), 1-39.
[133] The earliest manifestations in the campaigns against Paulicians in Tephrike (Divriği), but then into the Taurus-Zagros borderlands between Anatolia and Upper Mesopotamia. On Paulicians see generally Garsoïan (1967); for a general study of the frontier see: Eger (2014); on the Armenian settlement see: Cowe (2004), & Matheou (*article in process*a). For a general overview of Roman interaction with specifically Armenian ethnicised actors see: Greenwood (2008).
[134] On the social process of Roman expansion see: Greenwood (*forthcoming*).
[135] Greenwood (2008), 357.
[136] See: Shepard (2001), 19-40; & Holmes (2002), 83-104; eadem (2001), 41-56.
[137] ST, III.43.
[138] Greenwood (*forthcoming*).

contradictory, with Muslim emirates continued to play a prominent role up to the 990s and after, occasionally submitting Christian polities to tribute, their elites consistently intermarrying, so that a Muslim-Christian elitedom is dimly visible beneath largely hostile Christian sources.[139] This is reflected in the development of urbanness as the idealised setting for Caucasian rulers,[140] with rapid growth in cities over the tenth century. There was a general political-economic shift from the old Muslim emirates like Dvin and Theodosioupolis-Karin, to younger, rapidly growing centres like Ani and Arcn,[141] dominated by Christian polities and New Rome. This shift explains the evident growth in surplus available to Christian Caucasian elites in the later tenth and eleventh centuries, reflected in large building projects from Tao-Tayk‘ through Ani to Vaspurakan. Nevertheless in 1000 Basileios II named the Muslim Kurdish emir north of Lake Van, Muhhamid al-Dawla, *magistros* and *doux* of ‘the East’.[142]

Another measure of hegemonic permeation is the relationship of the Georgian and Armenian churches with the imperial ecclesiastical apparatus. The Georgian Church, in communion with the Eastern Roman Church from the seventh century, went through a process of ‘Byzantinisation’ over the tenth, particularly evident in the monastic foundations of Tao-Tayk‘, and their connection to the newly founded monastery ‘of the Ivirians’ in Mount Athos.[143] The Armenian Church, on the other hand, fixed as neither Chalcedonian nor fully Miaphysite from the early eighth century, was riven by competition between separatists and pro-imperials, establishing parallel ecclesiastical hierarchies in imperial territory for the first time,[144] but also suffering the co-optation or wholesale replacement of independent episcopates.[145] Another indicator of permeation is the general shift from a political economy based on the caliphate’s silver standard before the 960s, to New Rome’s gold standard and copper derivative thereafter.[146] Large hoards of early-eleventh century Roman coins have been found near Dvin and Ani, and urban elitedoms appear to have been significantly empowered during direct imperial control of Ani 1045-1065.[147]

The clearest indication of imperial hegemony’s permeation, however, is the deep participation of various Caucasian magnates and rulers in the imperial civil wars of the 970s and 980s,[148] and the practice of leaving polities to the empire on the previous ruler’s death. This lasted around a

[139] See, for example, Greenwood’s comments about the presentation of Armenian rulers discoursing on rulership with Muslim emirs, as well as the division of an Armenian magnate’s patrimony between the Shaddadids and Great Armenia, ST, III.48.
[140] Greenwood (2017a).
[141] Garsoïan (1997), 181-183.
[142] Holmes (2005), 321.
[143] Rapp (2012b), 15.
[144] Cowe (2004), 115-118.
[145] Greenwood (2008), 356-359.
[146] Greenwood (2008), 362; Akopyan (2015).
[147] Garsoïan (1997a), 181.
[148] Greenwood (2008), 348.

century, beginning with Tarōn in 967 and ending with Kars in 1064, and including Tao-Tayk‘ in 1000/1, Vaspurakan 1016/1021, and Great Armenia in 1045 – every major Christian Caucasian polity bar Ap‘khazet‘i-K‘art‘li. This century represents the Roman hegemonic cycle proper, with several other polities brought under direct imperial control in the same period.[149] Of course not every annexation had the same specifics: Tarōn’s elitedom had longstanding connections to the empire, the ruler holding the title *stratēgos* or ‘governor-general’ already in 900; Davit‘ *kouropalatēs* of Tao-Tayk‘ at first was granted lands in return for military assistance in 979, notably Theodosioupolis-Karin, but in the aftermath of giving aid to a failed rebellion was forced to bequeath the entire polity in 989, although supported thereafter in a series of conquests of Muslim polities north of Lake Van; Vaspurakan seems a more-or-less amicable instance of a voluntary exchange; while Great Armenia was hotly contested, and included periods of open warfare and imperial raids, although eventually it was negotiated, and in the meanwhile magnates like Grigor Pahlavuni *magistros* exchanged their own patrimonial lands. Nevertheless, particulars aside, the general pattern is representative of imperial hegemony realised – as Greenwood notes, even the use of written wills constitutes the adoption of a Roman legal practice.[150]

The adoption of this legal practice is accompanied by strong evidence for Caucasia’s subsumption under imperial hegemony by the early eleventh century. A hoard equivalent to fifty pounds of gold in imperial coinage of the 1020s has been found near to Dvin, and an inscription of 1033 refers to ‘the reign of Smbat *shahanshah*, son of Gagik *shahanshah*…during the time of the three kings of the Romans, when he [Smbat] received the triple honour *anthypatos*, *patrikios*, *vestēs* and *doux* of the East.’[151] Subsumption is evident in the presence of a pro-imperial aristocratic fraction during Great Armenia’s annexation, as well as Garsoïan’s noting of post-imperial Armenian elites using specifically Roman justifications of power. The annexation of Great Armenia may have come about for several contingent particulars, but it was a potential realised in this conjuncture because of Caucasia’s subsumption under Roman hegemony. The annexation of Vaspurakan, with the accompanying relocation of a large number of identified Armenian elites into Cappadocia, intensified an ethnicised process of territorial production begun there in the early tenth century, (re)producing a Romano-Armenian subhegemony ruled by royal governor-generals – a process intensified once more with the Bagratuni ex-king’s arrival in 1045, marrying the Arcruni ex-king’s daughter and governing as *megas doux* of Kharsianon.[152] In Ani and the old Bagratuni polity of Great Armenia a local urban elitedom was empowered, ruling with senatorial titles and accumulating wealth expressed in imperial coinage. Meanwhile old aristocratic elites

[149] Particularly urban emirates, such as Arčeš in 1024/25, Edessa in 1031 or Perkri in 1035, all recorded in the *History*: AL, 543.6; 546; & 548.16-549.26.
[150] Greenwood (*forthcoming*).
[151] Greenwood (2008), 362.
[152] See Cowe (2004),122-123; & Matheou (*article in process*a).

exchanged their patrimonial lands for salaried titles and estates elsewhere, entering the imperial class and operating as functionaries across the empire.

This was Aristakēs' world, intersecting transregional social systems irreducible to one polity or simple categories of Romanness and Armenianness, subsumed under generalised imperial hegemony, but full of contradictions with a multitude of latent potentials for different outcomes. The outcomes eventually realised were fundamentally conditioned by two factors: New Rome's political-economic crisis of the mid-to-late eleventh century, and the arrival of Turkish raiders into the Middle East. This is not the place for a full analysis of New Rome's eleventh-century crisis, but in brief the marked debasement of gold coinage clearly signals a fiscal crisis, indicating a worsening ability to ensure the circulation necessary for systemic reproduction.[153] A particular problem was paying the imperial class' salaries, with the title and office system going through inflation from the middle decades of the eleventh century. Likewise defeats to Pecheneg, Norman and Turkish adversaries signals some growing military difficulties. But the totalising scholarly narratives developed to explain these growing difficulties have proven unsatisfactory. Most importantly, it is extremely doubtful that these constituted a systemic crisis prior to the 1070s, with Cappadocian elites investing heavily in a monastery as late as 1060/1,[154] the rulers of Kars exchanging their polity with the empire in 1064, and Armenian provincials in Tarōn anxiously recording a land sale for tax purposes in 1067/8.[155]

In the 1070s, however, an existential crisis developed, extending up to the coming of the First Crusade in 1095.[156] It has become a truism to note that the battle of Manzikert was not a disaster in itself, but the immediately subsequent period remains a historical watershed, conclusively transforming New Rome's political economy and position within the Mediterranean and Middle East's inter-state hegemonic system. The crisis from the 1070s provided the conditions for the old Roman east to pass into the hands of post-imperial lords, whether primarily identified as Turkish as in central Anatolia, or Armenian and Kurdish as in much of eastern Anatolia, northern Syria, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia.[157] Alexander Beihammer is right to emphasise in a recent revisionist narrative that these processes were not solely or even primarily constituted by violent conflict,[158] with richly complex social and cultural developments taking place and a post-Roman world reproduced long after.[159] Nonetheless for a significant number of elites (re)produced through the previous social system, the transformation was experienced as total societal collapse.

[153] For an outline see generally Angold (2009).
[154] Cooper & Decker (2012), 118-119.
[155] Greenwood (*forthcoming*).
[156] On these processes see generally Frankopan (2012); & Beihammer (2017).
[157] MacEvitt (2008), 27-49.
[158] Beihammer (2017), 26-48.
[159] See, for example, Shukurov (2012).

These historical conditions, imperial hegemony and its consequent social systems dissolving and transforming amidst civil war, conquest, and a new political-economic dispensation, form the conjunctural situation for the composition of the *History* attributed to Aristakēs.

Fig. 1: Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia & Caucasia with modern nation-state borders (Google Maps).

Fig. 2: Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia & Caucasia with purposefully overlapping delineations between the respective terms (Google Maps edited by author).

Fig. 3: The Empire of New Rome, 1025 CE (Wikimedia Commons, following John Haldon, *The Palgrave Atlas of Byzantine History* (London, 2005), 60-61).

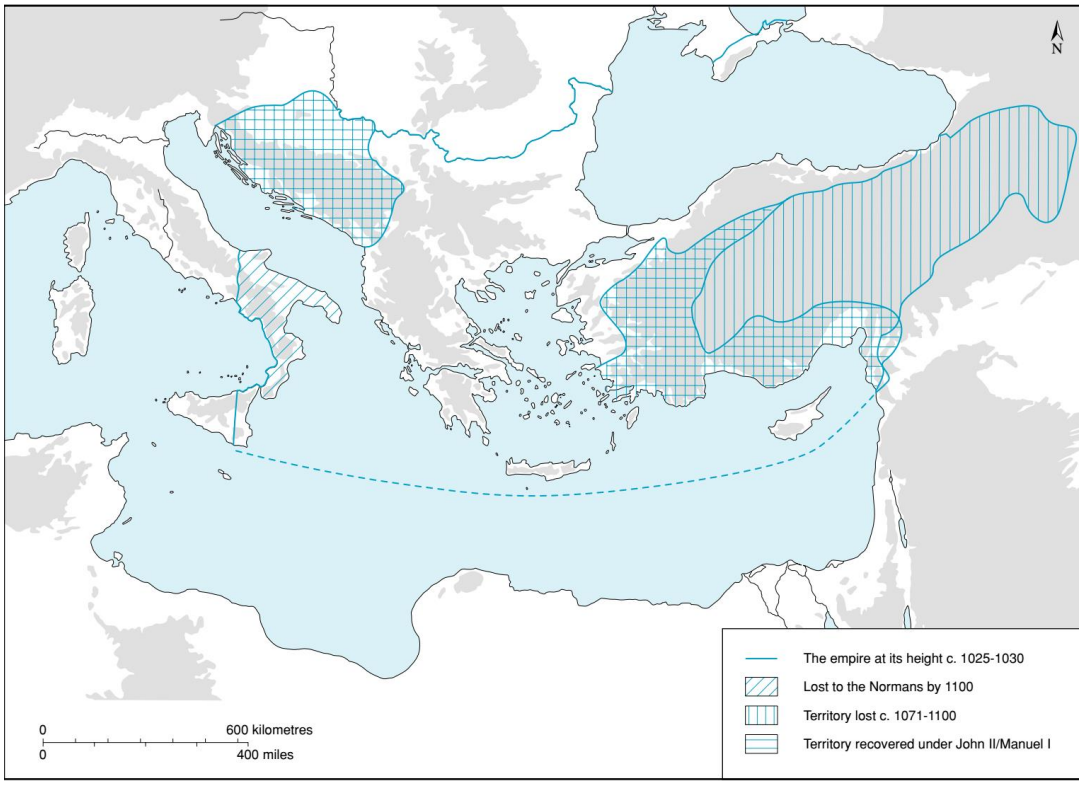

Fig. 4: The Empire of New Rome's Eleventh-Century crisis and partial recovery (Haldon (2005), 63).

Fig. 5: Tao-Tayk‘ and the surrounding region in the later tenth century (www.armenica.org, following Robert Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas* (Chicago & London, 2000), 109).

Fig. 6: Roman Upper Mesopotamia & Caucasia, *c.*1064 CE (www.armenica.org, following Hewsen (2000), 125).

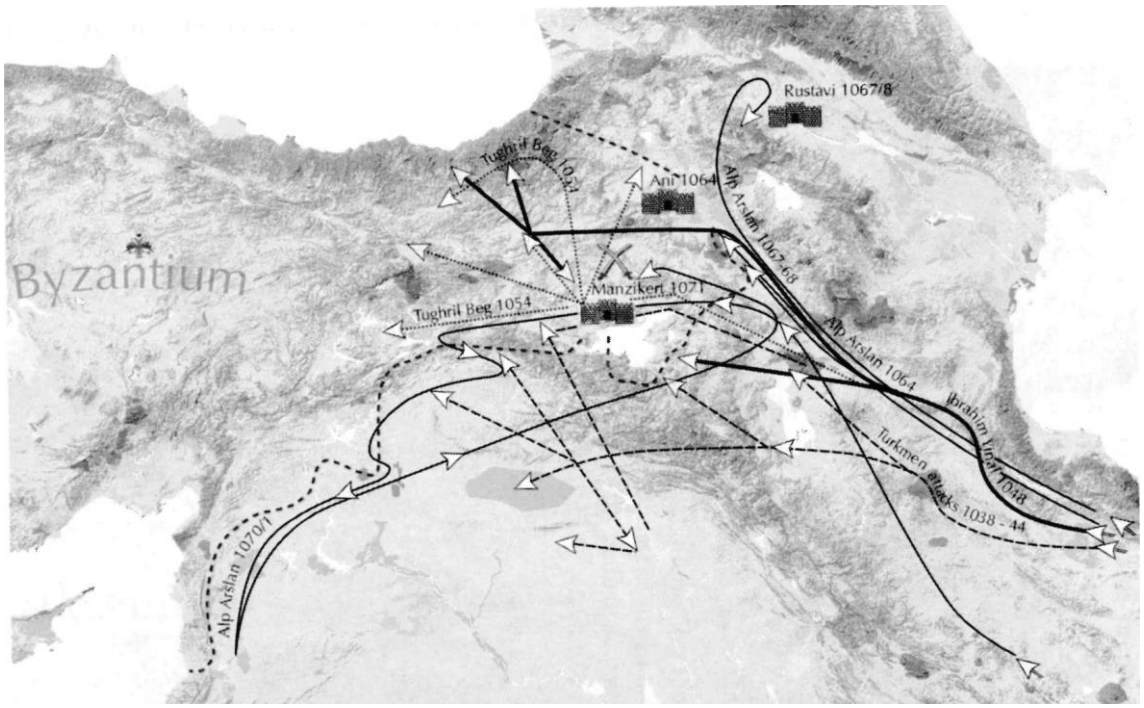

Fig. 7: Turkish raids and Seljuq campaigns into Upper Mesopotamia & Caucasia under Tughril Beg and Alp Arslan (Alexander Beihammer, *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia* (London & New York, 2017), xii).

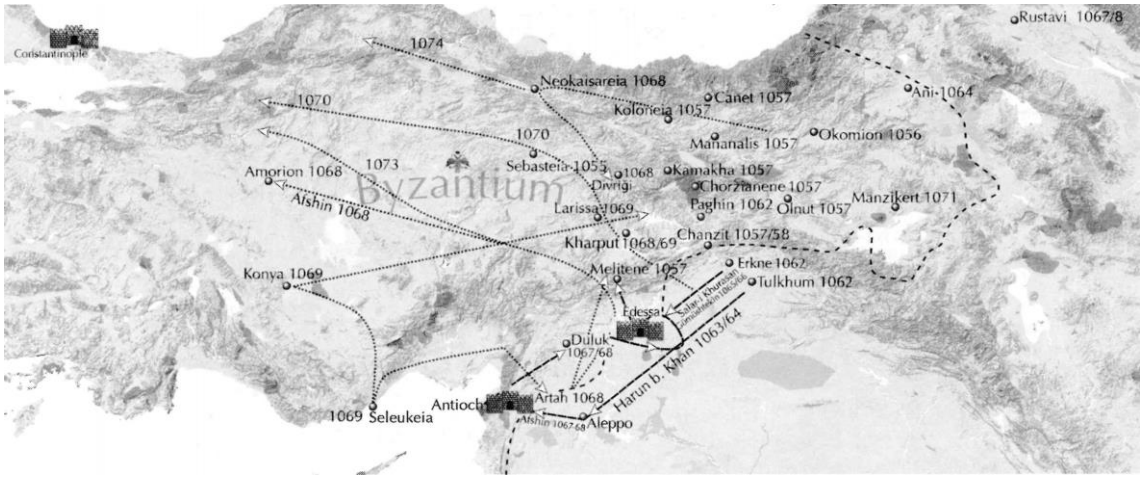

Fig. 8: Turkish raids into imperial territory during the 1050s and 1060s (Beihammer (2017), xiii).

Part I

The Work

I.1 Introduction

This first part focuses on the work as a historical composition. Foundational analyses of the *History* in particular, as well as ancient and medieval compositions more broadly, always begin from a reified image of the attributed writer. This positivist mode of analysis first establishes "facts" about "Aristakēs", and then seeks to interpret the work in their light. This has created serious methodological problems, with indicative nuggets extracted from the composition itself, reified into the writer as such, and turned back on the work.[160] For the *History* in particular, the attribution of two inconclusive homilies notwithstanding, all claims about the writer as a historical actor have been drawn from the narrative.[161] Hence the cart is put before the horse, beginning with a reified image rather than the actual empirical base. This thesis, therefore, seeks to put the horse back before the cart: a work composed in the late eleventh century and transmitted thereafter. In part II we return to the question of the writer, situating this historical actor through a combination of social-historical analysis and a socially symbolic reading, treating the *History* as a complex narrative for the first time. In this first section, however, we establish the fundamental bases for historically and socially situating the *History* attributed to Aristakēs Lastiverc'i.

While the analysis in this section operates on the methodological assumption that a single writer composed the *History*, as far as possible it functions without any reference to this writer, and entirely without reference to a historical actor called Aristakēs. The writer is assumed to have composed a single work in a bounded time and place, bringing together narrative elements from other works – "sources" – to re-work and re-situate them in a new composition. The corollary of this assumption is that it is possible to critically imagine underlying works and narrative fragments as separate compositions, and by imagining them to provide further historical and social situation for the *History* itself. Thus, as laid out in the Introduction's discussion of a move towards critical history, part I of this thesis is strictly empiricist. The methodological assumptions are 'empirical' in the sense that they are grounded in 'empirics', or, simply, 'sources', with technical analysis providing the basis for establishing broader knowledge claims. The central source is, obviously, the *History*, with this empiric analysed for its technical qualities, general characteristics, intersection with other empirically observable works, and so on.

In the process of this empiricist analysis other compositions underlying the *History*'s narrative are critically imagined, but although these are not empirically observable the broader analysis remains empiricist. It is an epistemological conceit to imagine any information without narrativisation, all information is always-already narrativised and so in absolute terms it is

[160] See: Canard & Berberian (1973), xiii-xlv; as well as in the most recent edition, AL: 493-495.
[161] On these homilies see: MH 16, 635-651.

impossible to "know" the presence of an underlying source in a given form. Nevertheless, it is possible through a conscious and reflexive empiricism to establish the basis for such knowledge claims, as long as this empiricism is understood as a momentary standpoint, not *the* mode of establishing knowledge, and as long as these claims are analysed thereafter from non-empiricist standpoints. This is the task of part II, which attempts to forge a critical historical path between the absolute epistemological claims of empiricism and its dialectical negation, the epistemological nihilism of reductive "postmodernist" discursive and narratological approaches.[162] Importantly, therefore, part I is not a *positivist* analysis – an uncovering of "historical fact" through apparent proofs, thereby revealing the past "as it was". Rather, it is empiricist in that it is grounded in an empirical base, the *History*, which is immanently critiqued in order to reveal its internal logics of arrangement and aspects of its circumstances of composition. But this approach is not understood as providing the answers as such, an empiricist fallacy that leads inexorably to positivism.

So part I is complementary but distinct to part II, the former strictly empiricist in standpoint, establishing the historical composition on a technical foundation, the latter a social-historical approach that moves within, against and beyond positivist readings. Part I starts with a general outline of the *History* in I.2. This begins from previous editions and translations, as well as the narrative's basic characteristics, length, layout, and language, before turning to surviving manuscripts, and ending with a discussion of previous scholarship and the historical conjunctures in which this was carried out. I.3 then turns to the *History* in all its specificity, describing the narrative structure in detail as this emerges over the work's progression and drawing general conclusions. The conclusions from this detailed narrative description inform subsection I.4, which critically imagines the possible source bases reflected in the deduced structure. Thereafter I.5 details the work's afterlife, asking why it was copied both in general and in the first empirically attested conjuncture. Finally, by way of conclusion, I.6 situates the *History* within the tradition of ancient and medieval Armenophone historiography and its academic study. The *History* is characterised overall as a situated work emerging from specific historical and social conditions, which nevertheless resonated sufficiently at a level of ethnicised Armenian generality to be transmitted into the contemporary day. These conclusions set up part II, which turns from this empiricist analysis, to a social-historical reading of the *History* that critically imagines both writer and work as situated historical actors.

[162] This is not to attack every approach grouped under the umbrella term "postmodernism", but those that function as the inversion of the positivism they critique, understanding all knowledge necessarily as absolute knowledge. For an introduction to the general philosophical standpoint taken here see generally Collier (1994).

I.2 General Outline

The *History Concerning Events Occasioned by Foreign Nations Who Surround Us* is the only extant eleventh-century Armenophone history to cover the period, with the earlier eleventh-century *Universal History* attributed to Step‘anos ending in the year 1000, and the first subsequent coverage in the twelfth-century chronicles attributed to Matt‘ēos and Samvel Anec‘i (‘of Ani’).[163] This makes the work a unique survival, transmitted from the Middle Ages into the modern and contemporary eras in twenty-seven manuscripts returned to below. The *terminus post quem* for composition has been established as 1072, with the last narrative notices the deaths of Rōmanos IV Diogenēs and Sultan Alp Arslan, with the death of Gagik II Bagratuni in 1079 the *terminus ante quem*, discussed as though alive throughout. The *History* was first edited and published by the Mkhitarist order in Venice in 1844, the text drawing on four Mkhitarist manuscripts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and in particular one of 1824.[164] This edition formed the basis for a French translation in 1864 and a modern eastern Armenian rendition in 1893, with two following editions from Venice in 1901 and Tbilisi in 1912 reproducing the same text. The first critical edition was published in 1963, having been prepared 1956-1958 by Karen Yuzbashyan from nine manuscripts in Yerevan’s Matenadaran, as well as one in the USSR’s Institute for the Academy of Sciences.[165] The nine Yerevan manuscripts include all but one of the seven pre-Mkhitarist manuscripts, the oldest transmissions as returned to below. Gurgen Manukyan completed a second translation into modern eastern Armenian on the basis of this new edition, published in 1971,[166] and Yuzbashyan himself completed a partial Russian translation in 1968.[167] A second French translation, published in 1974 by Marius Canard and Haïg Berbérian,[168] was based on Yuzbashyan’s partial Russian translation rather than the original Armenian, excluding significant sections of the work for their apparent lack of “properly historiographical” information:

> This [translation] was done according to the text of the new edition, and the work has been rendered in its entirety, with the exclusion of theological-religious excursuses which are devoid of real interest, and which, being [simply] the mode of literary expression in the Middle Ages, add nothing in themselves to an understanding of the author’s conception.[169]

[163] On the works attributed to Step‘anos, Matt‘ēos & Samvel see: Greenwood (2017); Andrews (2017); & SA.
[164] For full discussions of the *History*’s editing and publication history see: Canard & Berberian (1974), xlii-xliii; & AL, 495-498.
[165] Yuzbashyan (1963).
[166] Manukyan (1971).
[167] Yuzbashyan (1968).
[168] Canard & Berberian (1974).
[169] Canard & Berberian (1971), xliv.

Needless to say this thesis argues the opposite: it is *precisely* those sections shortly to be defined as homiletic that explicate the *History*'s ideological structure, revealing the logics by which "properly historiographical" empirical claims are emplotted.[170]

Robert Bedrosian completed the only English translation to date, made initially available in 1985 through a mail-order company called 'Sources of the Armenian Tradition', before being made freely available online in 1996 through his website.[171] Producing the first full version in an accessible modern language since the nineteenth century, Bedrosian's translation is the most important work done on the *History* after Yuzbashyan's 1963 edition – not least for the fact that he made the translation freely available, and so did more than any other to enable access by a broad range of readers. This thesis would have been much more difficult without Bedrosian's admirable project, which extends far beyond the *History* alone – the rich materials on his website, particularly his many translations of key works, means that, despite the apparent disparity in personal academic output, he sits alongside scholars such as Nina Garsoïan and Robert Thomson as having established the fundamental bases for an accessible Anglophone tradition of Armenian studies. Inevitably, however, the dedication to free and accessible translations made immediately available left shortfalls in Bedrosian's renditions. At several points the translation of the *History* is very loose, in some instances to the point of becoming misleading. In addition there is only a short page-and-a-half introduction, understandable given the nature of the project, but the most accessible basic scholarship on the work remains the introduction to Canard and Berberian's French translation.

The limited previous scholarship on the *History* as a historical composition is returned to below, this discussion can conclude with the most recent edition completed by Georg Ter-Vardanyan in the sixteenth volume of the *Matenagirk' Hayots'* series. This aims to edit and publish in chronological order all known original Armenophone compositions, and the new edition of the *History* as well as the homilies attributed to Aristakēs appears in the volume collecting all known eleventh-century works. Ter-Vardanyan's is the first edition to make use of all known manuscripts, including one pre-Mkhitarist transmission in Jerusalem not seen by Yuzbashyan, correcting his text in several instances and producing the definitive version going forwards. Unfortunately, however, this important philological scholarship did not accompany developing work on the *History*'s historical or social situation, so that Ter-Vardanyan's introduction reproduces Yuzbashyan's claims.

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[170] On emplotment see generally White (1973).

[171] The website was found at www.rbedrosian.com, but is now only available in archive at http://www.attalus.org/armenian/, accessed 01/06/2018.

The *History* is relatively brief in length, around sixty A4 pages in typed 11-point font, just over 27,000 words,[172] especially short when compared with other works in the tradition of Armenophone historiography. The work covers the period 1000-1072, albeit highly unevenly and with striking gaps, beginning with the death of Davit‘ III *kouropalatēs* of Tao-Tayk‘, and finishing with the death of Seljuq Sultan Alp Arslan. The narrative structure is described in detail below, for the moment it is only important to note that across this period the densest material broadly definable as “properly historiographical”, those densest with claims about “what happened”, is found in those sections covering the years 1000-1057/8. Finally, in terms of basic structure, the narrative is organised in twenty-five named chapters original to the *History*’s composition, prefaced by a verse lament termed here a preface, and followed by an idiosyncratic prose colophon here defined as a postscript.

The language of the work is mostly middle-register classical Armenian (*grabar*) with very few instances of medieval Armenian construction, a marked difference to the *Chronicle*. The syntax is fairly simple, with straightforward sentence structure in the non-homiletic sections, no ellipsis, and very limited use of metaphor. The exceptions are those sections defined as homiletic, referred to in most secondary literature as laments, but better characterised as a lamenting mode of narration. In these sections the register is higher and the tone more scriptural, with longer sentences, more complex syntax, and heavy use of metaphor. As the narrative progresses these homiletic sections take up increasing amounts of the work overall, and their qualitative separation from the more “properly historiographical” sections changes too, so that whereas the latter predominate in the first few chapters, followed by homiletic commentary, this pattern decays until it is entirely reversed by later chapters. In these sections “properly historiographical” material is often inseparable from its homiletic re-writing, but the two narrative tones remain distinguishable by their difference in register. Finally on language it is worth noting the marked differences between chapters 22 and 23 on the T‘ondrakean heresy, with their expansive and detailed narrative episodes, and the rest of the *History*. These differences are significantly due to the respective source bases, but language is also a marker of important shifts in narrative function between the sections.

Finally, the *History* is not dedicated to any patron, with the only clues for origins and purpose found in the postscript and bibliographical information in manuscripts, limited to the statement ‘The History…written by the *vardapet* Aristakēs Lastiverc‘i’.[173] The postscript is returned to in detail below and in part II, it indicates a monastic situation and an educational or hortatory purpose, but without any specifics in terms of place or personal agency aside from the writer’s own claimed role. Thus at the start to Chapter 25, ‘Concerning the King of the Greeks Who was

[172] This number is taken from the plain text version of Ter-Vardanyan’s edition, available at digilib.am/en.
[173] AL, 499-510.

Captured by the King of Persia', the writer notes that 'there is no need to record or narrate in writing incomprehensible or extremely difficult matters since no one has imposed such a task upon us nor demanded it of us'.[174] Hence the manuscripts which transmit the work form the only extra-narratival information that empirically situates the *History* as a historical composition – aside from this the only indicators for situating Aristakēs and the *History* as historical actors are found inside the narrative, as detailed in part II.[175]

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Twenty eight surviving manuscripts transmit the *History*, a relatively large number for Armenophone historiography, but of these twenty one were copied after the establishment of the Mkhitarist order in 1722. These subsequent manuscripts, although not all copied by the Mkhitarists themselves, show significant differences in the works transmitted alongside the *History*, indicating a break in the copying tradition around this point. Hence the twenty-one manuscripts copied between 1722 and 1844 provide few clues for situating the work in its immediate and subsequent conjunctures between the eleventh century and the onset of capitalist modernity, and for this reason are excluded from this discussion. Of the remaining seven (Ա-Է)[176] the earliest manuscript (Ա, Yerevan Arm. 2865) is dated to the mid-thirteenth century, the last (Է, Yerevan Arm. 1482) to 1678, with those in between dated 1599 (Բ, Jerusalem Arm. 341), 1646-1681 (Գ, Yerevan Arm. 3160), 1658-1661 (Դ, Yerevan Arm. 3502), 1668 (Ե, Yerevan Arm. 4584), and 1674 (Զ, Yerevan Arm. 3070) – and importantly all of these manuscripts transmit the composition in full. The relatively late date of most manuscripts is standard for Armenophone historiography, seven full versions in pre-Mkhitarist manuscripts even constitutes a relatively rich tradition. The general content of these manuscripts also points to an important intersecting historiographical copying tradition.[177]

The earliest, Ա, transmits two works alongside the *History*: the eighth-century *History of the Armenians* attributed to Movses Khorenac'i ('of Khore(a)n'), which claims to have been written in the fifth century and covers the biblical genealogy of 'Great Armenia' (*Mets Hayk'*) through the biblical past and antiquity up to the kingdom's fourth-century Christianisation, finishing with the Aršakuni polity's mid-fifth century end;[178] and the *Universal History* attributed to Step'anos, which starts from creation and moves through antiquity to the coming of Islam, reaching up to the late-ninth century establishment of the Bagratuni kingdom of Great Armenia, and ending in

[174] AL, 625.1.
[175] For a full discussion of the *History*'s manuscript tradition see: AL, 498-510.
[176] I have adopted the Armenian numerals here as these are the listings in the most recent edition by Ter-Vardanyan (2012), which used manuscripts not included in Yuzbashyan's 1963 critical edition.
[177] For a discussion of this tradition, with the focus on the relevance of this for the *Universal History*, see: For a discussion of this copying tradition see: Greenwood (2017), 83-87.
[178] On Khorenac'i see the extensive introduction to Thomson (2006).

Book III with the kingdom's tenth-century history and rising Roman hegemony.[179] Importantly these two works are placed in consecutive chronological order before the *History*, with the *Universal History* finishing in the year 1000 when the *History* begins, indicating an explicit purpose of gathering historiographical works, arranging them to provide a coherent vision of Armenian national history – two seventeenth century manuscripts even have the *Universal History* and the *History* running from one line to the next, only marking marginally that 'here is where the history of Tarōnec'i ends and that of Lastiverc'i begins'.[180]

The second oldest manuscript, Բ from Jerusalem, has similar contents, the *History of the Armenians*, the fifth-century *Epic Histories* attributed to P'avstos Biwzand, and the *History*, again all historiographical works arranged would-be chronologically, although the absence of the *Universal History* differentiates Բ from most other pre-Mkhitarist manuscripts. These are all currently in Yerevan, a potentially telling detail pointing to a regional Caucasian transmission,[181] all except Ձ transmit the *History of the Armenians* and the *Universal History* alongside the *History*, and all have these running consecutively as in Ա, alongside further historiographical works. Thus Գ transmits these three plus a geography also attributed to Khorenac'i, Դ has these same four works only with the geography immediately following the *History of the Armenians*, and Ե has the *History of the Armenians*, the *Universal History*, and the *History* in their original order, as well as a large number of full transmissions and excerpts from historical works chronologically arranged, including but not limited to Eusebius, Agat'angełos, the *Life of Mesrop*, Yovhannēs Mamikonean, the *Epic Histories*, Yełišē, Step'anos Orbelean, Socrates Scholasticus, Michael the Syrian, Vardan Aravelc'i, Kirakos Gandzakec'i, Tovma Arcruni, Smbat Sparapet and Łevond.[182] Similarly expansive content is found in Ձ, only as noted without the *Universal History*, but this reappears in the final surviving pre-Mkhitarist manuscript, Է, alongside the many other historiographical works noted in Ե.

So from early on the *History* circulated alongside other historiographical works in manuscript collections named *patmagirk'*, 'history books'. This is particularly seen in the first, Ա or ms. Yerevan 2865, one of the few Armenian manuscripts to survive from the Middle Ages and the probable originator of this historiographical tradition, albeit with a number of lost intermediaries.[183] Dated by dimension, script and scribal colophon to the mid thirteenth century, Yerevan 2865 is an extremely important manuscript that contains the earliest surviving texts of all three transmitted works, the *History of the Armenians*, the *Universal History*, and the

[179] On the *Universal History* see the extensive introduction to Greenwood (2017).
[180] ST, 630-632.
[181] Greenwood (2017), 86.
[182] For the full list see AL, 509-510.
[183] Ibidem, 85.

History.[184] A scribal colophon alongside marginal comments indicate that it was copied in a monastery in south-central Caucasia, the core of the old Bagratuni polity around Širak, either in or somewhere near to the communities named in the comments, at Ani, Bagnayr, Marmašen and Mren. The scribe named in a colophon is a certain Yohan, and in a recent article Karen Matevosyan has argued convincingly that this scribe also wrote the six marginal comments which mention the monastic communities.[185] Thus the latest dated comment, noting how 'in the year 685 (1236) the Tatar took Ani and the whole universe', establishes the *terminus post quem* for the manuscript's copying, indicating, alongside the script and dimension, that this was done in the middle years of the thirteenth century. The scribal hand is exemplary, and the manuscript in general is high quality, with a famous illumination of Movses Khorenac'i and his patron Sahak Bagratuni. The scribal colophon is found at the end of the *Universal History*, just before the beginning of the *History*, both of which have their own so-called authorial colophons, both appearing at the end of the works. The particular contents of the scribal colophon are less relevant than their indication of Yohan's monastic situation. There is no specific date, and it is not said whether the manuscript's arrangement was an original attempt to bring these historiographical works together, or if it forms a tradition stretching back beyond the mid-thirteenth century – although the absence of earlier scribal colophons than Ա's in all manuscripts suggests the former.[186]

A full discussion of either the manuscript tradition or Ա is beyond the scope of this thesis, a thorough outline has already been carried out in Ter-Vardanyan's recent edition, and Manukyan has discussed Yerevan 2865 in his recent edition of the *Universal History*.[187] What is important here is how this extra-narratival information helps to historically and socially situate the work. It is clear that early on in the *History*'s copying tradition it was transmitted as important testimony for the "history of Armenia/the Armenians" – indeed, that it plays a role in the construction and reproduction of this nationalist historiographical paradigm already in the first manuscript to transmit it, itself from the Middle Ages, albeit a conjuncture removed from the *History*'s. This may seem an obvious point, but it is worth emphasising as these manuscripts reflect the concrete processes by which a nationalist vision of "Armenian history" was reproduced over time and space from the *History*'s conjuncture into our own.[188] This vision did not and could not remain the same, inevitably given the nature of nationalist ideology. Although continually informed by the same works, these are necessarily re-situated and so re-imagined in the new conditions of each

[184] For a full discussion see: ST, 629-631; & Greenwood (2017), 84-86.
[185] Matevosyan (2008).
[186] It was standard practice in Armenophone manuscript copying to include previous scribal colophons, as, for example, those later manuscripts to carry the *History* which also preserve Yohan's colophon.
[187] ST, 630-1.
[188] In intellectual history this has been termed 'transtemporal serial contextualism', see generally Armitage (2012).

specific conjuncture, as the construction of Armenianness they are summoned to bolster is situationally reproduced. But there is an underlying continuity despite this, a continuity upon which a mystified and internally contradictory vision can be continually re-instantiated and appear to successive human actors as singular. Thus, despite the ever-shifting conditions in which Armenianness was reproduced as a multitude of lived and experienced phenomena, "Armenian history" continued to be hegemonically re-instantiated as a singular metanarrative that disciplined this wide variety of lived experiences for the ideological necessities of each given conjuncture.

Two conjunctures, or, better put, two *cycles* of conjunctures, are of paramount importance for the stripping of the *History*'s own conjunctural specificity, and its immediate re-situation at the level of Armenian national generality. The first is the Roman hegemonic cycle in Caucasia outlined in the introduction, crucial for the *History*'s immediate historical and social situation, and taking centre stage in part II's social-historical reading. The second cycle of paramount importance is capitalist modernity, particularly as this developed over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and from which we have yet to emancipate ourselves into a democratic modernity.[189] All formal scholarship on the *History* has been carried out in this cycle, in a succession of situations in which Armenian studies was developed as an ideological strut to both empire, in particular the Russian Empire as it expanded into Caucasia,[190] and, more importantly, to the project of building Armenian nationhood – which, as laid out in the introduction, is to say the project of justifying inherent "Armenian" right to statehood.[191] The interaction of these two cycles, the first insofar as it conditions the horizons of possibility in the second's hegemonic organisations of "Armenian history", is crucial for how the work has been treated by modern and contemporary historians.

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Part II elaborates the importance of the Roman hegemonic cycle, for the moment it can simply be stated that the *History*'s ultimately nationalist ideological horizon allowed its continuous re-situation in successive instantiations of this vision, albeit in a limited and generalised fashion given the historiographical stuff – the empirical claims about "what happened" – this horizon attempted to organise.[192] Another of these successive instantiations is discussed in subsection I.5 below, which details the work's afterlife and returns to ms. Yerevan 2865, the question of why the *History* was copied in the mid thirteenth century, and the manuscript tradition's nationalist arrangement, situating the answers in the institutional culture of the Armenian Church. The

[189] On 'democratic modernity' see Appendix II & generally Ocalan (2017).
[190] This is particularly clear in the career of Nikolai Marr, for example.
[191] For a brilliant analysis of this phenomenon in regards to material culture see: Maranci (2001).
[192] On 'historiographical stuff' see appendix II.

remainder of this general outline, therefore, discusses previous scholarship on the *History* in the modern and contemporary era.

As detailed in the introduction for the period in general, discussing previous scholarship on the *History* is complicated by the fact that there is barely any specifically dedicated either to the work, or to a reified image of the writer. There are a number of primarily philological studies, including those by Yuzbashyan and Manukyan, and the former also wrote a handful of social historical studies that used the *History* as a central source.[193] These, together with two further articles discussed in detail below, form the corpus of scholarship on the *History*.[194] Hence, although widely mined for "historical facts", the work suffers by proxy from the same assumptions as the eleventh century in general: if the organising principle of Armenian history is the presence or potential for a nation state *avant la lettre*, then an era in which several ethnicised Armenian polities were annexed can only be discussed as one of "failure" and "decline". Thus Aristakēs becomes the historian of catastrophe, providing a few interesting "historical details", but otherwise simply a generalised Armenian voice that articulates the pain of this century.

Such a logic is self-evident in the title of Yuzbashyan's 1974 PhD thesis, *The Narrative of Aristakēs Lastivertc'i and the Decline of the Bagratid Era*, and the nationalist and so inevitably *statist* common sense of the discipline is typified in his Russophone *History of the Armenian States in the Bagratid and Byzantine Period, 9th-11th Centuries*.[195] It is important to historicise this scholarship too, with the book appearing in 1988 during a rise in Armenian nationalism, two years before Yuzbashyan's election to the Armenian parliament just prior to the USSR's collapse. There he represented the Armenian National Movement, sitting on the Standing Committee on Foreign Relations. Reflecting his scholarly interest in "foreign relations" between New Rome and "the Armenian states", a phrase used in his articles,[196] this is a particularly clear moment demonstrating the intersection between Armenian studies and the project of building Armenian nationhood – the first president of the independent Republic of Armenia, Levon Ter-Petrosyan, is another contemporary example. But this is not to isolate Yuzbashyan for some special sin, methodological nationalism is the common sense of the whole field, even for its most critical luminaries like Garsoïan.[197] Likewise the title given to Canard and Berberian's French translation, 'Aristakēs of Lastivert: The History of the Troubles of the Armenian Nation (*Aristakès de Lastivert: Récit des malheurs de la nation arménienne*)', is an all too telling translation of the *History*'s actual title.[198] Importantly the same attitude is found beyond Armenian studies, where

[193] These are: Manukyan (1967a); (1967b); & (1977); Yuzbashyan (1958); (1960); (1973); & (1979).
[194] For an exhaustive bibliography of previous scholarship see: AL, 519-525.
[195] Yuzbashyan (1988).
[196] Ibidem.
[197] See the critique at pages 12-16.
[198] Canard & Berbérian (1973).

the immediate assumption that the *History* represents the generalised Armenian voice of catastrophe reacts back on its positivist use as a "narrative source". Thus Anthony Kaldellis' recent narrative history of New Rome's 'Golden Age' 955-1095 – its hegemonic cycle and the immediate aftermath – passes this judgement in a dedicated sources section:

> **Aristakēs of Lastivert** (Armenian): A ecclesiastic writing in the 1070s, Aristakēs covers the history of Armenia and its neighbors during the eleventh century. He provides useful information that is not always fictionalized or garbled, but it is marred by the purpose of his work, namely to lament; its title is *History Regarding the Sufferings Caused by the Foreign Peoples Living Around Us*.[199]

The obviousness of Aristakēs' reified image as lamenter-in-chief for eleventh-century "Armenia" thus enables Kaldellis to discount vast stretches of the *History* as "mere" lamentation,[200] an assumption explicit in Yuzbashyan and Canard and Berberian's translations leaving out several of these sections entirely. Similarly the mention of 'useful information…not always fictionalized or garbled, but…marred by the purpose of his work', is emblematic of positivist mishandling of the composition as a complex narrative: there is a "hidden truth" that can be extracted more-or-less seamlessly from the logics by which this 'useful information' is always-already arranged, a fallacy long critiqued in the human sciences in general, and historiographical disciplines in particular.[201] The clues to historically and socially situating 'useful information' are found precisely in those lamenting sections, which explicate the logics by which historiographical stuff is emplotted.

Yet this is not a problem of non-Armenologists using Armenophone sources – although it is clear that Kaldellis does not allow them the intentional complexity he accepts in Grecophone historiographical works, a species of methodological imperialism where ethnicised Armenian writers must remain particular and limited, while Roman worldviews can become general and normative.[202] Nevertheless the logics reflected in Kaldellis' analysis are the same as those projected by Armenian studies itself – the *History*, or really a reified image of Aristakēs, is the Armenian voice of decline and collapse – only stripped of the emotional attachment of Armenian specialists. This is seen in Canard and Berberian's introduction, essentially a re-writing of Yuzbashyan's, which formed the fundamentals for his PhD thesis as well as the eleventh-century

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[199] Kaldellis (2017), 304.
[200] This is referred to several times, and clearly plays a role in his analysis, see: Kaldellis (2017), 211, 222 & 251
[201] Classically by the late Hayden White, see generally White (1974).
[202] For example, Michael Psellos' 'omissions and characterizations are politically motivated', and Michael Attaleiates '…is usually reliable—which makes him dangerous to use because he often distorts for political reasons', while the *History* is '…not always fictionalized or garbled, but it is marred by the purpose of his work', and the most damning judgement is reserved for Matt'ēos: 'He is extremely unreliable regarding our period, offering romantic tales, garbled chronology, and fictitious letters and events, and is heavily biased against the Byzantines, especially in their dealings with Armenians. Unfortunately, he is sometimes our only source.' See: Kaldellis (2017), 303-304.

sections of his book.[203] The introduction begins with the telling sentence 'The eleventh century, in the history of Armenia, is an era rich in tumultuous events.'[204] It then goes on to describe 'the kingdom of Ani's peak of power and the decline that followed, the seizing of Armenian territories by Byzantium, the Seljuq invasions, the destruction of towns, the mass slaughter of the population or its life in captivity' and so on and so forth. From the start this is not an account of crisis and transformation in historical social systems but, as ever, a mournful tale of national disaster. Here too, much as for Kaldellis, the *History*'s importance is less a particular worldview that might reveal aspects of general social dynamics in a historical time and place, and more in the disparate "facts" provided and the emotive manner in which these are communicated. The difference, of course, is in the subjective value judgement of this emotiveness: where Kaldellis denounces it, for Canard and Berberian the 'richness of the background and the authentic character of the exposition, alongside the spontaneity of the impression, and finally the picturesque and authentic art, assures the *History* of Aristakēs of Lastivert a place of honour among the best of those monuments of Armenian historiography of the Middle Ages.' The same is then found in the introduction to Ara Doustourian's 1990 translation of the *Chronicle* attributed to Matt'ēos:

> Aristakēs of Lastivert (eleventh century) has aptly been called the "Armenian Jeremiah" for his account of the events in Armenia from 1001 to 1072, in which he lamented the impending destruction of his native land by the Seljuk Turks. Aristakēs devoted a good portion of his history to the Seljuk penetration of eastern Anatolia through the battle of Mantskert (Manzikert, 1071); he is less successful in analyzing facts and events, tending to attribute them to divine providence.[205]

The implication is obvious, the story is already known – decline, massacre and exile, a national fate tied (as all national fates) to that of an ethnicised state, the Bagratuni polity. Only the quality of the exposition must be judged, and, in this instance, found worthy of being the "Armenian voice" of an era in need of an "Armenian Jeremiah". This is clear again in Canard and Berberian's introduction, which embarks on a long excursus about 'Bagratid Armenia' as a preface to discussing the *History* itself, a retelling of the 'accomplishment of the grand task of the Bagratids, the creation of an Armenian state'.[206] This is the *History*'s "context", its external, pre-existent predicate, so that the composition itself becomes mere reporter as opposed to any kind of historical actor in its own right. Denied of all historical participation, the importance of the *History* is claimed to be not only in the 'truth and exactitude' of the recounting, but also in the way the rhetorical exposition provokes emotional reaction. So Doustourian, Canard and Berberian exhibit the exact same fallacy as that of Kaldellis – there are positive "facts" to be extricated from the

[203] Canard and Berberian (1973), xiii-xlv.
[204] Canard & Berberian (1973), xiii.
[205] Doustourian (1990), 9.
[206] Canard & Berberian (1973), xvi.

presentation – only here the exposition, full of imagery and emotiveness, complements and enriches rather than mars and distorts.

Part of the reason for the *History*'s limited use, even by those who identify emotionally with its narrative, is its ill-suited qualities for a heroic tale of national resistance and struggle. Of course Armenianness is the ultimate ideological horizon, but this does not read as forcefully as the anti-Chalcedonian message of the *Universal History*,[207] and it articulates a highly complex relation to New Rome, lacking the uncompromising blame present in the *Chronicle*. Hence, although the *History* was continually re-situated in successive nationalist visions, the horizons of possibility were continuously conditioned by the original conjuncture from which it emerged, when many elements of a chauvinistic Armenianness had broken down and were in the process of re-constitution. Thus the work retains almost none of its specificity in modern and contemporary scholarship, unlike previous and later Armenophone historiographical works, which, albeit also subjugated to a hegemonic vision of the tradition, retain their own reified personalities in the process. The *History*, on the other hand, is solely characterised as an artful exposition on the nation in the eleventh century, the writer's reified personality as 'the Armenian Jeremiah' notably emphasising their own secondary status. Thus Canard and Berberian write:

> Our author wrote the general history of Armenia; he considers the destiny of the whole people, which explains the tendency to include in his *History* philosophical excurses. The idea of the unity of the Armenian people, an idea which, in large part, had been conditioned by the cruel necessity of constant struggle against foreign adversaries, is reflected previously in the ancient works of Armenian historiographical literature. In the work of Aristakēs, this idea receives a further development. It is this, other circumstances apart, that determines the place of the *History* among the numerous historical works of Armenia in the Middle Ages.

This passage could not be clearer in bearing out the full critique: the *History* attains its place among the historiography 'of Armenia in the Middle Ages' because of its contribution to a project to establish the transhistorical unity of the Armenian people, which is a given anyway because of Armenia's "context". And this is not some straw man critique of an irrelevant introduction from the seventies, it continues to be cited as *the* outline of the *History*. This critique is thus directed not simply at Canard and Berberian's introduction, nor solely at the limited scholarship dedicated to the *History*, but generally at the use of the work as a "narrative source", practically every instance of which operates on the same assumptions.[208] This is, moreover, not to denounce the analytical sins of these scholars as individuals, but to demonstrate how pervasive nationalist and

[207] See, for example: Greenwood (2017), 253-283.
[208] One notable exception here is the work of Catherine Holmes which, although utilising the *History* in more-or-less the same manner for her monograph on Basileios, then sought to explore further the concrete reasons for this material being found in the work – a project this thesis explicitly builds on. See: Holmes (2005) & (2006).

imperialist common sense is in our fields. Ultimately, therefore, the critique is a call to develop methodological heuristics that are unashamedly political in attempting to overcome these insidious assumptions.

To my knowledge, only two articles address or use the work in a different manner to those critiqued above, Greenwood's 'Aristakēs Lastiverc'i and Armenian Urban Consciousness', and Thomson's 'Aristakēs of Lastivert and Armenian Reactions to Invasion'.[209] To begin with Thomson, this article does admittedly start from a methodologically nationalist premise: to investigate 'Armenian Reactions', with a reified image of Aristakēs situated explicitly as one instance in a series of 'Armenian writers' who 'tried to explain the varied fortunes of their country.' Nevertheless, Thomson situates this image in place, in Arcn near to Theodosioupolis-Karin (Erzurum); in time, roughly living *c.*1000-1080; and as a historical actor, a *vardapet*, in the institutional apparatus of the Armenian Church. These explicit situations already separate Thomson's approach from that of Yuzbashyan and Canard and Berberian, who see the writer first and foremost as a representative of a transhistorical "Armenian voice". Thomson, conversely, begins from a reified but specific image of the writer, noting that 'What interests me here is how Aristakēs came to grips with such disasters and what explanations he found for them. Although concentrating on Aristakēs, I shall try to put his views into the wider framework of Armenian historical writing and bring out the parallels with other Armenian writers.' Hence Thomson provides the only scholarly attempt at a specific social situation of Aristakēs as an actor and the *History* as his composition – even to the extent of naming him a 'local historian' – and couples this with comparative perspectives across Armenophone historiography. In terms of narrative analysis, Thomson argues that Aristakēs' training as *vardapet* was key, and that he saw the transformations of the eleventh century as punishment for collective Armenian sin, both generally unspecified, as well as specific sins tied to city life and trade. These arguments are returned to in part II, suffice to say that this thesis generally moves in a similar direction, only deconstructing the positivism of Thomson's analysis, and coming to different conclusions about the worldview represented in the *History*.

Finally, to turn to Greenwood's article,[210] this is the sole piece of scholarship to take the *History* not as a narrative source to be mined for "facts", nor as the reflection of a reified writer whose voice fits into a transhistorical Armenianness, but as a situated historical composition that speaks to the dynamics of the social system from which it emerged. The article takes on the common sense in Armenian studies that cities and "Armenia" were in fundamental contradiction, a position that essentially claims 'There were cities in Armenia but they were not founded by Armenians, they were not inhabited by Armenians – or at least Armenians who mattered – and they were not

[209] Thomson (2003); Greenwood (2017a).
[210] Greenwood (2017a).

exploited or developed by Armenians.'[211] But, far from this being the case, Greenwood demonstrates how the *History* presents the downfall of "Armenia" precisely in terms of a series of city sacks, revealing a specifically urban imagined geography. In the process of this analysis, and although noting that a reified image of Aristakēs fits into the 'standard profile of medieval Armenian historians', Greenwood reveals how 'there is much more that is decidedly atypical about the *History* of Aristakēs.' In addition to the urban imaginary, Greenwood's article makes the furthest analytical strides in the study of the *History*'s circumstances of composition and underlying sources, and this thesis is heavily indebted to the space these strides have opened up. Unfortunately the article is notable by its singularity in analysing the work as a historical composition and complex narrative, the primary *desideratum* answered by this thesis.

I.3 Narrative Structure

This general outline lays the foundation for a view of the work in all its specificity: a description of the narrative progression, deducing through this immanent analysis the overall narrative structure. "Narrative structure" refers to the relational logic of the work's assembling, arrangement and framing of its constituent claims – the logic of *emplotment*.[212] For the moment this is done as far as possible without analysis of the work's *ideological* structure, the system of logics and representations that impart specific projections of meaning to the audience, the topic of part II's social-historical reading. Hence this section operates on the useful empiricist conceit that *form* and *content* are meaningfully separable – in the final instance they are not, of course, and content will inevitably enter this description. Nevertheless, analysis carried out as if they are separable allows the narrative logic to be seen more clearly. The corollary of this analytical conceit is that the underlying materials assembled, arranged and framed – referred to as "historiographical stuff" to denote its essential meaninglessness prior to emplotment – is also separable from the narrative logic, allowing a critical imagining of the sources in which this stuff originated. In this section, therefore, the narrative is described in order to isolate and explicate the logic of emplotment. This is to my knowledge the first time such a basic analytical task has been carried out,[213] so it is essential to describe the narrative in detail as it progresses.

To begin from the title, rendered literally and in full this is *The History of the Vardapet Aristakēs of Lastiver Concerning Events Occasioned by Foreign Nations, Those Which Are Around Us*.[214] This is different to the standard rendering, and my own preference would usually be less literal.

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[211] Garsoïan (1984-1985; repr. 1999), 67-83.
[212] For the classic statement see: White (1973), 5-11; that analysis has been developed here for application to medieval historiography.
[213] Of course elements of the narrative framing have been discussed previously, not least by Yuzbashyan, but these philological studies have not described the narrative as a whole in order to deduce the overall conceptualisation and structure.
[214] AL, 526.

But it is worth beginning from the most literal rendering in order to emphasise the level of reification in the *History*'s reception. So, for example, the word normally rendered 'sufferings' (*anc'k'*) is here translated as 'events'. Etymologically *anc'k'* refers to a sense of "passing through", and is directly related to the verb here translated as "occasioned", perhaps more literally rendered as "things that have come to pass". Yet the title has canonically become 'the sufferings caused by', despite the fact that chapter 1's title has the exact same word where it is always translated as 'events'. Similarly the subtleties of the 'Foreign Nations Who' are important to register, as this phrase has been interpreted as referring to all non-Armenians, particularly Romans, but also by implication K'art'velians and other Christian non-Armenians. But were the *History* to be written a century later, and without the nationalist narrative that "blames" New Rome for the fall of "Armenia", then the term for 'foreign' (*aylaseṙ*, lit. 'other race')[215] would be standardly translated as 'Muslim'. The title is thus emblematic of the difficulty of cutting through reifications to properly situate the *History*.

The *History*'s main narrative is arranged in twenty-five named chapters followed by a prose postscript. Chapter 1 begins with a thirty-two line verse lament here defined as a preface, since this is the narrative function it performs, framing and foreshadowing the main thrust.[216] The preface is marked off from the rest of the chapter by the discourse marker: 'Well, so much for such things; but now it is the proper time for us to turn to the head of this narration'.[217] Immediately following the last line of verse, this marker signals the preface as separate within the narrative logic, and so to have a different function. In terms of form, the metre is simple and occasional rhyme is used to accentuate line endings, in particular the use of a final unvoiced aspirated alveolar affricate, *c'* (g), which provides an emphatic oral effect evident in the three final lines. In terms of content, the preface introduces themes that resurface throughout the subsequent narrative, particularly in the homiletic sections. These are the Armenians' loss of their home through sinfulness, with foreign nations used as instruments of divine wrath, after all levels of the assumed social hierarchy, rulers, aristocrats, ecclesiastics, plus a broader set of unnamed commoners, had turned away from God. Finally, in terms of purpose, the use of a verse preface is unique in the corpus of late antique and medieval Armenophone historiography. There are notable resonances with *gusan* and *ašuł* traditions of storytelling, where verse provides dramatic introduction to the performance, with the oral quality of the accentuated rhymes indicating a similar purpose.[218] Of course all texts were read aloud in the Middle Ages, even for personal reading, so orality need not necessarily indicate performance, but it remains suggestive.

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[215] 'Race' here rather than nation, since *seṙ* carries this sense rather than *azg*, comparable to the distinction in Greek between *genos* and *ethnos*.
[216] AL, 526.
[217] On 'discourse marker' see appendix II.
[218] On the *gusan*/*ašuł* tradition see: Van Lint (2012), 183.

Following the verse preface the *History*'s narrative proper begins. Chapter 1 is titled 'Events in the Lands of the Armenians',[219] but the contents are focused on the polity of Tao-Tayk' following the death of Davit' *kouropalatēs*, and particularly the emperor Basileios II's campaign to claim the region. The first narrative episode follows his arrival into Tao-Tayk', his various movements and stopping points, and his encounters with Caucasian actors.[220] This includes a brief conflict between the Varangians (*Uruzk'*) and the aristocratic military retinue of Tao-Tayk', the *azatagund*. The conflict is glossed by the writer as divine judgement for the aristocrats', the *azat*s, poisoning of Davit' *kouropalatēs*. Similarly the emperor is met by the king of Ap'khazet'i, Bagrat IV, and his father Gurgen of K'art'li, granting each imperial titles before continuing through Tao-Tayk's named cities and regions, and finally, having 'established over them officials, judges, and overseers; he then made his own road in peace, and reached his own Reigning City of Constantinople.' From the outset, therefore, and despite ostensibly being about 'the lands of the Armenians', chapter 1's narrative is focused on the emperor, his movements, and his interactions. Moreover, even if the space is Caucasia and the other actors Caucasian, they are irreducible to Armenianness, indeed they are more commonly ethnicised as Georgian. Chapter 1's first episode is also framed by dating mechanisms, firstly the twenty-fifth year of Basileios' reign, and secondly the year 450 of the Armenian era, before ending on the note 'and the land rested for fourteen years thereafter.' These dating notices, the sense of narrative time they create and the kinds of information they are associated with, are enormously important for critically imagining the central source around which the *History*'s narrative is built.

A shorter second episode follows thereafter, lasting only a paragraph and dealing with the Roman conquest of the Bulgarian polity.[221] The episode has no specific details, instead maintaining a generalised perspective and focusing on the moral-theological implications, before turning to the effect that relocated Bulgar soldiers had in 'the East'.[222] The episode is the first example of a mediating passage between the homiletic and historiographical sections of the *History*'s narrative, with scriptural quotes indicating this function, and ending with the discourse marker 'So much for these matters, but we must return to this narration/history (*patmut'iwn*).' Such mediating passages are analysed in detail in part II, and in this description are only noted. Chapter 1's final episode is a brief paragraph on the dated death of Bagrat IV, discussing how the emperor sent an edict to his son, Giorgi, demanding the return of fortresses and associated lands from Tao-Tayk'

[219] AL, 526-527.
[220] AL, 527.2-528.16.
[221] AL, 529.17-23.
[222] This use of 'the East' to refer to the Roman provinces of eastern Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia implies a dominant Constantinopolitan worldview, and the fact that it was internalised by Armenian and K'art'velian writers is revealing. K'art'velians began to use the term increasingly in the ninth and tenth centuries, with the *Universal History* and the *History* the first Armenophone compositions to use it widely, see: Rapp (2012a), 2.

given to his grandfather and appropriated by his father.[223] Giorgi refuses, and the episode is enriched with claimed-to-be direct quotations from the two ruler's literary correspondence. Noting briefly the successful defeat of a subsequent Roman army by the men of Tao-Tayk', the chapter ends with the statement 'This was the beginning of the end of the house of Tayk'.' This marker thus signals chapter 1's situation in a narrative cycle stretching across the *History*'s first four chapters, detailing over several episodes the conquest of Tao-Tayk' by New Rome.

Chapter 2 is titled 'Regarding the Kingdom of the Armenians/Armenia', with the first narrative episode focused on the Bagratuni polity.[224] It begins with a passage describing how 'it happened that at that time the king of the land of the Armenians was Gagik son of Ašot, brother of Smbat and Gurgen, from the line of the Bagratuni', but without precise dating or specifics. Instead the description of the kingdom is kept at a level of generality, noting how in Gagik's reign the land was at peace, the Armenian Church flourished, and 'children of the Holy Oath were illuminated'. This first passage thus forms another mediation between the homiletic and historiographical sections of the narrative, again full of scriptural quotations. Importantly the only specific details are actually concerned with the church, and particularly the patriarch, noting the instruction of the *kat'ołikos* Sargis (I, *r*. 992-1019) at Sevanavank', but without any dates for his reign or death. Several other prominent ecclesiastics appear alongside the patriarch, particularly *vardapet*s, but also abbots and others, including 'Step'annos Tarōnac'i [*sic*]', and one non-ecclesiastic, the aristocrat 'Grigor [Pahlavuni *magistros*], a man extremely learned in literature.' Hence, much as the passage on the Bulgarian conquest, this episode is impressionistic and general, with specification reserved for the kingdom's ecclesiastical rather than political or military features.

Following Gagik's death, noted without dating, the next narrative episode is concerned with subsequent conflict between his sons, Yovhannēs-Smbat and Ašot.[225] This section has a much greater level of specificity, the brothers' qualities are described and particular geographic places are named, but the narrative primarily revolves not around the conflict as such, but Giorgi of Ap'khazet'i-K'art'li's arbitration of a negotiated division of the kingdom. Hence Giorgi appears as the episode's primary character, so that when the initial deal breaks down Giorgi 'became greatly angered [and] in rage he sent soldiers to follow him [Yovhannēs-Smbat]'. Giorgi's soldiers plunder catholical churches in the process, 'for which the rightly just God punished them at the proper time by the hands of the Romans'. The episode thus centres Giorgi, not Ašot or Yovhannēs-Smbat, again despite the chapter title claiming to be about the 'kingdom of the Armenians'. That said, the episode concludes with a passage noting how Ašot went personally to the emperor to gain support, although not to confront Yovhannēs-Smbat, but 'on account of the

[223] AL, 529.24-28.
[224] AL, 530.1-6.
[225] AL, 530.7-532.19.

powerful men who surrounded his portion, who took many of his places from him unjustly'. But, returning with imperial troops, he grew stronger, so that many magnates voluntarily left their patrimonial lands to him, and the episode concludes with the discourse marker 'Until this point our narrative/history has been pleasing.'

The subsequent episode changes tack completely, with happenings in the Bagratuni polity absent from this point until chapter 10. This is enormously important: the *History* actually provides very few narrative episodes on the Bagratuni polity as such, despite its apparent ideological centrality. Instead chapter 2 continues with first a very brief notice on how 'in the four-hundredth and sixty-seventh year of our era (1018), the autocrat emperor [Basileios] sent a certain prince from Nikomitk'', who came, placed a poll-tax on the land, and began to rebuild the walls of Theodosioupolis-Karin.[226] This is the first date to appear in the chapter, with none provided for the episode on the Bagratuni polity. Another appears immediately afterwards with the notice that Petros I Getadardz (*r*. 1019-1058) was elevated to the catholicate while Sargis I was still alive,[227] and then again immediately after noting: 'in the four-hundred and seventieth year the autocrat emperor came to the East with a large army.'[228] With this notice the narrative returns to the cycle dealing with the imperial conquest of Tao-Tayk', also heralded by a transition from a certain level of generality to episodes more dense with specific information.

The first part of the episode notes the conflict between Basileios and Giorgi, with the former defeating the latter.[229] It is mentioned how 'In that place fell the great prince Urat…which caused great mourning in the house of Tayk'', a striking detail compared to the impressionistic account of intra-Bagratuni strife. At this point appears the longest mediating passage thus far, describing how the victorious Basileios 'sent troops to the four corners of the land, loosening marauders'.[230] This passage refers back to the imagery and themes of the verse preface, and is the first homiletic section. It begins by seeming to describe the more "properly historiographical" series of events, but in an expansive style full of scriptural imagery evoking the biblical destruction of kingdoms and cities. In each homiletic instance, however, this more "properly historiographical" account gives way to a full lamenting mode, complete with a shift from an extra-diegetic voice (a third-person narrator commenting "from outside") to an intra-diegetic one – 'How can I, with my poor knowledge and my ignorance more than any others, put into writing the manner of things in that moment, and how am I to lament suitably our calamity?' But this is not "mere" lamentation, it is homiletic in that it structures the narrative episode through example and illustration so as to arrive

[226] AL, 532.20.
[227] AL, 532.21.
[228] AL, 532.22.
[229] AL, 532.23-533.33.
[230] AL, 533.34-535.44.

at exhortations to repent and live a good Christian life.[231] Hence the audience are invited to 'Come now and consider this example', before a series of images that will resurface continually throughout the homiletic sections: *azat* women disgraced, the young and suckling babes killed mercilessly, the old and venerable killed in the squares. These events are tied to the previous narrative episode where Giorgi's troops had plundered catholical churches, with the writer stating bluntly 'I consider that these things befell them fittingly'.

This first instance of the lamenting mode is not as expansive as later instantiations, and the writer's voice even hedges the statement above by claiming they do not know whether this was punishment for the 'increased impiety of the inhabitants of the land, or whether [it happened] because of the fierce actions of the western troops who had been gathered from barbarian peoples.'[232] With this hedging note, the narrative episode concludes with Basileios' movements, returning to the region of Khałtk' (the theme of Khaldia) to winter in 'the temperate Pontus'.[233] This is the setting for chapter 2's final episode, with the *kat'ołikos* Petros meeting the emperor in Khaldia at the feast of Epiphany. This provides the situation for the central episode in the broader narrative logic, where the *kat'ołikos* co-celebrates the feast of Christ's baptism with Roman bishops in the presence of the emperor, and miraculous light appears when the Armenians' holy chrism touches the water. Part II returns to this episode in detail for a social-historical reading, suffice to say that this miracle functions to connect these earlier parts of the narrative with the later pivotal transformation of chapter 10. This is signalled by the notice that 'it was there that the destruction of the Armenians happened', for Yovhannēs-Smbat had sent the *kat'ołikos* with a will granting the emperor his polity after his death. The chapter then ends on the standalone notice that 'In those times the blessed and worthy patriarch, lord Sargis, passed from this world. His grave is at the Hoṙomos monastery.'[234]

Chapter 3, 'How the Emperor Turned Back a Second Time on the Land of Tayk', Where the K'art'velian (*Virk'*) Troops were Defeated',[235] is again focused on the narrative cycle of New Rome's conquest of Tao-Tayk'. Yet it is mostly about a brief revolt of Roman officers attempting imperial usurpation, another chapter title that sits awkwardly with the content.[236] The contents are detailed, largely focused on the emperor and his movements, and also include many phrases and value judgements in the writer's voice. The first episode begins briefly with 'the autocrat emperor' finishing his wintering in the Pontus and returning to Tao-Tayk', before turning to the revolt. Its development is described in detail, including the officers' reasons, their assembling of a large

[231] On Armenian homiletics see: Thomson (2006), 175-186.
[232] AL, 535.45.
[233] AL, 535.46-535.52.
[234] AL, 536.47.
[235] AL, 536.
[236] AL, 536.1-538.25.

army, and their settling on Nikephoros Phōkas 'the Crook-Necked' as imperial candidate. The episode then returns to the emperor, and the writer's voice intrudes at this point to provide mediating comments between this historiographical stuff and the broader ideological structuring. Thus it is noted that 'I do not know whether these laws are from God, that it is not meet for servants to revolt against their lords, or whether the emperor indeed had an especial infusion of grace', followed by a brief recounting of the previous revolts of Vardas Phōkas and Vardas Sklēros in the 970s and 80s.[237]

This leads to an explicit comparison with the latter revolt, including in its midst the one-line recounting of Vaspurakan's annexation. But this is only as predicate to the ex-king, now governor-general of Sebasteia, Yovhannēs-Senek'erim – erroneously named 'Davit'' Senek'erim, presumably confused with his son and successor as governor-general – deciding to betray Phōkas, killing him and sending his head to Basileios. The passage is thus rather confused and has been interpreted in various positivist ways, but regardless it is important to note that the annexation is not emphasised as a part of the downfall of "Armenia". Following Phōkas' death the revolt quickly falls apart, and the remainder of the chapter follows the emperor once more as he moves to the plain of Basiani, dealing summarily with a certain rebel named P'ers and his son Andronikos, who had promised lands from the *kouropalatēs*' polity to Giorgi should the revolt succeed. The final lines of the chapter are emblematic of the general perspective, with both the narrative logic and the rhetorical thrust on the "imperial side".[238]

Chapter 4, 'Concerning the Last Battle at Šłp'ay', is the final in the *History*'s Tao-Tayk' cycle, and picks up directly from chapter 3.[239] The first episode begins with the emperor in Basiani where he had previously met P'ers and Andronikos, and again has direct quotations from correspondence between Giorgi and Basileios.[240] The episode revolves around the emperor once more demanding fortresses appropriated from the *kouropalatēs*' bequest. The first episode's central drama is a named bishop going to negotiate with the king, initially successfully, but ending with the bishop's corporal punishment and exile for apparently seeking to intimidate imperial forces. The subsequent episode is another detailed account of a failed attempt to trick imperial forces militarily, before the cycle reaches its conclusion in the chapter's third episode. Giorgi asks the emperor for peace and Basileios responds in another claimed-to-be direct quote, demanding the same fortresses and properties as before, receiving these and appointing officials.[241] Importantly the narrative logic and rhetorical thrust again supports these imperial claims.

[237] AL, 536.9-537.11; see earlier discussion on page 35.
[238] AL, 538.23-25.
[239] AL, 538.
[240] AL, 538.1-540.21.
[241] AL, 538.19.

Although this ends the immediate cycle relating Tao-Tayk‘s imperial conquest, chapter 4 has two further narrative episodes. The first continues logically in the narrative from the previous one, with the emperor still in Caucasia, on the plain of Her considering the ruler of the city’s offer of submission.[242] At this point, however, and with the immediacy of divine judgement, a snowstorm destroys the imperial army. This is another mediating passage, connecting the historiographical sections to the homiletic ones through a punitive theological presentation of events. The writer’s voice comments that this was just recompense for the imperial troops earlier raiding ‘the four corners of the land’, referring back to the earlier instance of the lamenting mode, and adducing several biblical comparisons for such divine judgements. Thus Basileios had to retreat with the troops left to him, and ‘the emperor, having been ridiculed by the looters [of abandoned imperial materials], understood clearly that the hand of the Lord gave the K‘art‘velians (*Virk‘*) into his hands, as is written in the book of Kings: “The mighty does not wax strong by his own might; rather the lord weakens his adversary” (I Kings 2:9).’

This closes the narrative cycle of Tao-Tayk‘s conquest, as well as the *History*’s coverage of Basileios’ reign, with the final narrative episode of chapter 4 a brief passage discussing his death and his brother Kōnstantinos’ accession.[243] This is notable for its detail, claiming that imperial officials did not wish him to succeed Basileios, and so attempted to conceal imperial orders to have him brought from Nicaea. Pulling himself up to ride out, Basileios thwarts the officials’ attempt, and Kōnstantinos is able to succeed without issue, while divine signs accompany his brother’s death. Albeit only a short paragraph-length episode, the level of narrative detail is striking, especially when compared to chapter 2’s cursory account of the Bagratuni polity and Gagik’s succession.

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It is important to recapitulate the *History*’s narrative structure established thus far. Certain episodes notwithstanding and despite the titles of chapters 1 and 2, the first four chapters form a single cycle detailing the Roman conquest of Tao-Tayk‘. The majority of episodes in these chapters focus on this story arc, which stretches from Davit‘ *kouropalatēs*’ death, through Basileios’ campaign to enforce imperial hegemony, up to the conflict and resolution with Giorgi. The cycle is reflected in the sense of narrative time, with two expansive moments around the year 1000/1 after Davit‘s death, and again *c.*1015-1020 with the war between Giorgi and Basileios. Likewise the narrative qualities found across these episodes, such as direct quotation, geographic specification, and a focus on particular actors from an imperial perspective, indicate that a single underlying source should be imagined as providing the historiographical stuff. This is clear in

[242] AL, 540.22-542.30.
[243] AL, 542.31-542.36.

comparison with the other episodes found in these chapters, such as that on the Bulgarian polity in chapter 1, or that on the Bagratuni polity in chapter 2. Yet the titling of the chapters indicates that the writer has chosen to re-situate the underlying source that informs this cycle, emplotting its historiographical stuff in a manner that redirects its aggregation towards Armenianness, albeit somewhat awkwardly. There is therefore an apparent contradiction in the different levels of the *History*'s narrative structure, in particular between underlying historiographical stuff that appears local to Tao-Tayk', primarily though not solely imperial in focus, and the overarching emplotment that connects this to a construction of Armenianness.

The *History*'s second cycle, chapters 5 to 9, do not form a single story arc as chapters 1 to 4, with no explicitly interconnected dramas stretching across several episodes and chapters. Nevertheless they share enough characteristics to warrant discussion as a cycle, particularly in the overwhelming focus on imperial rulers, albeit, as before, from a regional perspective in 'the East'. Moreover, they have a broadly shared narrative function leading up to the pivotal transformation of chapter 10. Of course the first four chapters are narratively and rhetorically focused on Basileios, but in chapters 5 to 9 this is less specific, generally discussing rulers' reigns. This difference is reflected too in the chapter titles, with chapter 5 named 'The Reign of Kostandin',[244] and beginning with the lines:

> Kostandin, who was his brother, ruled after Vasil for four years; and because he was a peace-loving and generous man, for the first year of his reign he remained in silence; and the land rested from that great crisis; and those who were in charge of the provinces, those whom the great Vasil had appointed, he affirmed anew.[245]

Such imperial focus is emblematic of these chapters, which approximate an annalistic series of imperial biographies, technically termed *Kaisergeschichte*.[246] Chapter 5's first episode describes an attempted rebellion of 'a certain Komianos (Nikēphoros Komnēnos)', governor-general of Vaspurakan, thwarted by the Cappadocian army remaining loyal. Notably this description ends on the dating notice 'This happened in the first year of Kostandin's reign, which was the year 475 (1026) according to our calendar.'[247] The chapter thus centres Kōnstantinos, spacing out his actions by the years of his reign, and providing claimed insight. Importantly the historiographical stuff is local to Caucasia and solely imperial, bemoaning Komnēnos' rebellion 'for it was he who had put Arčeš and its estates into the control of the Romans.' Likewise the chapter moves to a recounting of the emperor sending the eunuch Nikētas to be 'overseer of the land', crossing into Virk' – here meaning the theme of Iviria, the annexed lands of Tao-Tayk'– and convincing many

[244] AL, 542.
[245] AL, 542.1.
[246] Shepard (1975–6), 296–311.
[247] AL, 543.2-4.

*azat*s to exchange their patrimonies for imperial titles and properties elsewhere.[248] Finally, it ends with a similar account of another eunuch named Symeōn, 'who held the sovereignty of half of the empire, [and] who in the Greek tongue they named *paṙekimanos* (*parakoimomenos*)', but the news of Kōnstantinos' death followed him.[249]

Chapter 6, 'How Rōmanos Ruled', has many of these same characteristics, as the title indicates.[250] The chapter begins with a brief recounting of how Basileios had failed to take a wife or have children, and so had been succeeded by his brother, but Kōnstantinos likewise failed to have a son.[251] This provides the explanation for Rōmanos' succession, 'someone from among the military officers of the Romans' and husband to the emperor's daughter Zōē. Chapter 6's sole narrative episode is qualitatively different to the presentation in chapter 5, although it retains the imperial focus. It deals with Rōmanos' campaign to Aleppo, but focuses on his claimed visit to the Black Mountain near Antioch, a holy mountain home to several monasteries like Mount Athos in Macedonia and Mount Olympus in Bithynia. The narrative follows Rōmanos as he arrives, encountering 'a multitude of monks and monasteries of anchorites who, while having corporeal bodies, had the appearance of incorporeal beings.'[252] The emperor, however, refers to them as 'a multitude of heretics' and, in response to being told they pray daily for universal peace and his health, comments that 'I have no need for their prayers; instead imprison all the monks as archers for service in my realm.' The writer's voice comments that this was because 'he was a great believer in the Chalcedonian creed, hating bodily all those who believed correctly', ordering the anti-Chalcedonian bishop of Antioch to be led through the city on an ass with his beard shorn, exiled then to Constantinople.

In the narrative logic this brings about immediate divine response, accompanied by illustrative scriptural quotations. Importantly, however, the presentation is not Chalcedonians vs. anti-Chalcedonians:

> The emperor was just such an idiot; he did not think of previous emperors, how they had shown concern to the nations which were in their control; but with a self-proclaimed order he desired to introduce novelties into God's Church, without recalling the Lord's unerring command: 'Anyone who falls upon this stone will be broken into pieces; but when it falls on anyone, it will crush him' (Matthew 21:44). On account of this the righteous judgements of God were shortly brought down upon him.[253]

[248] AL, 543.7.
[249] AL, 543.9.
[250] AL, 544.
[251] AL, 544.1-3.
[252] AL, 544.4-545.19.
[253] AL, 545.13-15

The writer's voice thus implies is that it is not Chalcedonianism as such, but the emperor's bad rulership which brought about divine wrath and defeat. This is therefore another instance of a mediation between the "straightforwardly" historiographical sections, and those defined as homiletic.

Chapter 7, 'The Capture of the City of Edessa', forms a slight departure from the previous two chapters, focusing not on a whole reign but a particular episode still under Rōmanos, although it remains centrally concerned with imperial actors in a regional setting.[254] The chapter forms a self-contained vignette discussing how the previous emir of Edessa had died childless, and so his wife married a servant to rule in his stead. This servant approached the emperor to hand over the city in return for properties elsewhere, sending a letter to 'Manēak (Geōrgios Maniakēs), who at that time held the sovereignty of the borders of the Roman region'. The chapter is thus a detailed account illustrating the urban focus identified by Greenwood. Chapter 8, 'The Death of Rōmanos', is the shortest chapter in the entire work, stretching only a few short lines in a single paragraph.[255] It covers briefly but with specifics the claimed murder of the emperor by his servants, with the empress Zōē supporting the plot. Notably the chapter concludes with a dating mechanism, noting how Rōmanos had ruled for eight years.

Chapter 9, 'The Reign of Mikhaēl', is the last before the narrative's pivotal transformation,[256] as indicated by the mediating passage that begins the chapter. This is perhaps the most explicit mediation in the *History*, an interpretation of Daniel's prophecy about the beast made of four metals so as to explain why the imperial office did not pass by strict patrilineal descent.[257] This function is discussed in detail in part II, here it is important to note that the mediation organises emplotted historiographical stuff, providing an immediate moral-theological situation for Mikhaēl IV's accession. The first narrative episode describes the empress pretending that Rōmanos' death had been accidental, before elevating Mikhaēl.[258] The new emperor subsequently portioned out imperial sovereignty among his brothers, one in the west, another in the east, and a third in Constantinople. Chapter 9's second episode turns to a story that stands out among the rest of the imperial focused information in the *History*, most plausibly imagined as drawing on stories that circulated among lower and non-elite strata of the social system. The basic narrative is that Mikhaēl was afflicted by demonic possession, and so 'they say' he had to regularly visit a witch in Thessalonike. The two subsequent episodes deal with the imperial conquest of the city of Berkri north of Lake Van. Like the other episodes in chapters 5 to 9, these have geographic and personal details around the conflict and imperial actors, and the writer's voice intrudes alongside one

[254] AL, 546.1-10.
[255] AL, 547.1-3.
[256] AL, 547.
[257] AL, 547.1-4.
[258] AL, 548.10-15.

scriptural reference to mediate these episodes' connection to the *History*'s homiletic sections. Notably these episodes rhetorically side with New Rome, even referring to 'our troops'.[259]

Thereafter appears an important mediating passage, beginning with a striking dating notice, 'In the beginning of his reign the eclipse of the sun occurred in the month of Arac', in the year 482 (1033) of our era.'[260] When this was seen 'many from among the wise' considered it a marker of the antichrist's birth, which, the writer's voice notes, 'did occur in our days, that which this narrative is taking us towards and which we saw with our own eyes, the blows of divine wrath, and the unheard punishment which arrived over this land of the Armenians because of our sins.' Events are thus presaged by a mediation that connects them to a celestial event and so to the logic of Providence – an important moment reiterated in the postscript – and the episode compares these events with the final fall of Jerusalem predicted by Christ himself. This point is emphatically made by an extended mediating episode, where the writer's voice notes how Eusebius describes a man named Ananias wailing lamentations in the centre of Jerusalem, predicting the city's fall. Likewise here, it is claimed, a destitute and unknown man wandered from east to west across named regions of a reified Armenia, wailing lamentations for 'the whole country'. The logic of emplotment is therefore clear: chapter 9 forms the calm before the storm, and these apparently innocuous events are intimately related to the impending Providential judgement.

Chapter 9's final episode deals with Mikhaēl IV's successor, his nephew the *kaisar*, who reigned shortly as Mikhaēl V 1041-1042.[261] The story goes that Mikhaēl attempted a coup against the empress to rule by himself, but was thwarted by the empress' sister Theodōra, Constantinopolitan elites, and urban commoners. Civil disturbance followed, with the destruction of some elite houses and the sacking of parts of the palace. This strikingly detailed episode has many notable resonances with the same story as recorded in the contemporary Roman historians Psellos, Attaleiatēs and Skylitzēs, including a remarkably similar claimed-to-be direct quote from the Constantinopolitan crowd.[262] Finally, the episode and chapter conclude with a mediating passage that connects these events to the logic of Providence, illustrated in the example of 'the emperor who yesterday was sitting on a golden throne giving orders to the whole universe, this day, darkened from light (i.e., blinded), sits on a chair of futility and insult'. Such reversals are classic indications of divine judgement, and the writer adduces a scriptural quote before concluding 'Such are the ephemeral histories of the *kaisar*, who reigned for six months.'

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[259] AL, 548.16-550.29.
[260] AL, 550.30-38.
[261] AL, 551.39-51.
[262] *Khronographia* 5.26; *Synopsis* 418.

To recapitulate the narrative structure as developed in chapters 5 to 9: these are a series of vignettes focused on the regional actions of imperial rulers and elites, and to some of their actions elsewhere too. In this they are similar to the cycle on Tao-Tayk‘, but whereas those four chapters more-or-less cover a single story arc for a single emperor, with a handful of less detailed episodes on the Bagratuni polity and imperial actions elsewhere, here the narrative encompasses a more-or-less disparate set of imperial actions. All the information in these chapters is focused on imperial actors, albeit from a regional Caucasian perspective. Much as the first four, these five chapters cover a period of roughly two decades, from 1025 to 1042, but unlike before there are no expanded periods within this, with none of the vignettes explicitly evoking a sense of temporality, except in the occasional use of imperial regnal years to space individual chapters. Similarly nowhere across this span are any Christian Caucasian polities mentioned, whether ethnicised K‘art‘velian/Georgian or Armenian. The only regional polities are urban Muslim emirates, solely as the objects of imperial conquest. There are also episodes that develop the narrative logic towards the pivotal transformation of chapter 10, particularly the handful of mediating passages scattered throughout, especially the two in chapter 9. These frame the more “properly historiographical” sections, but for the most part chapters 5 to 9 appear the *History*’s most historiographically normative sections in terms of *Kaisergeschichte*: the titles refer to imperial rulers, and the contents provide information on their reigns. Finally, in terms of narrative duration, in absolute terms chapters 1 to 9 cover just under a third of the total narrative length, with more than half of this third taken up by the cycle on Tao-Tayk‘. This means that the period 1000 to 1042, more than half the *History*’s chronological stretch, receives less than a third of total narrative space, with the subsequent thirty years up to 1071 taking up two thirds but including large *lacunae* across this span. A tight control of temporality is clearly unimportant for the work’s broader purpose, indicating that comprehensive chronological coverage was not a key intention.

On first sight chapter 10, ‘The Reign of T‘eodos’ son, Kostandin, called Monomakh’, appears in the same mould as chapters 5 to 9.[263] The chapter contains most of the *History*’s coverage of the reign of Kōnstantinos IX Monomakhos (*r.* 1042-1055) and significantly centres imperial actors. However, there are key distinctions that mark this chapter as pivotal in the broader narrative progression, after which the narrative logic is transformed and the ideological structure developed more fully. Firstly it is the longest chapter by some way, longer by itself than either the Tao-Tayk‘ cycle or the cycle of imperial vignettes. Secondly, it begins from a narrative mediation that refers back to the interpretation of Daniel’s vision laid out in chapter 9, explicitly situating Monomakhos in this schema,[264] emphasising the importance of this mediating passage. Thirdly, the writer’s voice is present and intra-diegetic from the outset and becomes increasingly prominent, indicating

[263] AL, 552.
[264] AL, 552.1.

a desire for emphasis that is fully realized in the chapter's central homiletic section. Finally, chapter 10 begins a run of chapters up to the final on Manzikert which are far more difficult to group than the previous two cycles.

Chapter 10 begins with an episode that situates Monomakhos, both in terms of the narrative logic through reference to the vision of Daniel, and in terms of historical progression, describing Zōē's actions marrying for the third time against church canons, with the writer's voice commenting directly.[265] The subsequent episode discusses Geōrgios Maniakēs' attempted 1041 usurpation, but despite the episode's relative length it is comparatively short on narrative detail.[266] The majority is taken up with illustrations from scripture, marking the episode as a mediating passage that takes Maniakēs' revolt as an example for military commanders and rulers trusting in their own strength rather than God's support. Thus the episode's relatively short detail on the development of Maniakēs' revolt is enriched with comparisons to Absolom and David, as well as several quotations. At the end of this historiographical episode the writer's voice goes on to make the homiletic function further explicit. It is emphasised that Monomakhos himself was not a worthy or pious ruler, but that he honoured the imperial office with due reverence and so was saved, but this is different to God choosing Monomakhos personally. Such explicit political theology and homiletic instruction is emblematic of the general shift in the writer's voice within chapter 10, as events are more immediately framed through their homiletic mediations. Importantly the episode also finishes with a dating notice that 'These things occurred at the outset of Kostandin's reign, which was the year 490 (1042) according to our calendar.'

The next episode begins with the ominous discourse marker 'Now in the following three years came the end of the lives of the Armenian houses'.[267] This begins an interlocking set of episodes tracking the end of the Bagratuni polity and Roman annexation, interspersed with the most extended homiletic sections yet. These sections are enormously important for the organisation of the entire composition, revealing the logic of the narrative's transformation and so demonstrating the mediation between the work's ideological structure and its historiographical stuff, transcending the contradiction between the focus on Roman affairs and the overarching instantiation of Armenianness. So, immediately after the sentence quoted above, and with the notice that this happened because 'in one and the same year the two brothers Ašot and Yovhannēs-Smbat, who held the kingship of our land, died', there is an instance of the lamenting mode. This immediately re-instantiates the same imagery as found in the verse preface, in particular the loss of elites into exile, and so signals the pivotal narrative transformation taking place, from the apparently normal state recorded up to this point, to the utterly abnormal state that had been

[265] AL, 552.1-4.
[266] AL, 552.5-555.23.
[267] AL, 555.24-556.34.

presaged all the way from the verse preface – indeed, from the title. Hence the actual historiographical stuff, the story of the Bagratuni polity's fall, is prefaced by a mediating passage that makes this "properly historiographical" material secondary to its own interpretation. Each image presented as a before and after, the first half forming a "before-state" of wondrous imagery, counterposed with an abnormal "after-state" where all this has vanished. This instance of the lamenting mode thus signals clearly the pivotal narrative transformation taking place over chapter 10, disrupting the episode's historiographical flow with demarcating and contrasting imagery so that the audience is left in no doubt of the passage through a narrative transformation.

The narrative then returns to a more "properly historiographical" account. Yet this appears somewhat confused, returning without warning to Kōnstantinos VIII, brother of Basileios II, but only indicating this return by referring to the 'Great' Kōnstantinos.[268] In this episode it is claimed that, when Kōnstantinos was dying some fifteen years before the main events of chapter 10, the emperor sent for 'a man from amongst the Armenians' to give back Yovhannēs-Smbat's will bequeathing Great Armenia to the empire on his death. The man he found was treachorous, however, and kept it to sell back to Mikhaēl IV. This transaction is then emplotted as the key stone in the *History*'s pivotal transformation, the same will earlier referred to in chapter 2 as the 'downfall of the Armenians', and later in chapter 10 claimed to be worse than Judas' sale of Christ. In chapter 2 the transaction's significance is signalled by a single line instance of the lamenting mode, before the discourse marker 'But we will discuss all this in the [right] place, and proceed in the order that we previously began.' The rhetorical impression created is thus a tension between the need to set out events, and the writer's voice barely being able to hold back the full expression of lamentation and homiletic exegesis.

At this marker the narrative turns back to the historiographical episode begun some passages above, the news of the Armenian kings' deaths arriving to the emperor, and the subsequent machinations in the Bagratuni polity.[269] This episode is the sole "properly historiographical" section in the entire *History* to discuss the Bagratuni polity as such, unmediated by focus on either New Rome or Tao-Tayk', nor presented in rhetorical homiletic fashion. So it is notable by its singularity, discussing particular figures in the polity, including a certain Sargis the Sly, who appears the central character scheming for the polity's imperial annexation, as well as the Pahlavuni prince Vahram, who appears driving resistance. Eventually Gagik (II Bagratuni, *r.* 1042-1045), son of Ašot, is crowned by a group of some thirty *azat*s led by the Pahlavuni, and the new king manages to have Sargis captured. Oddly, however, no direct line is drawn between these machinations and the Roman conquest, only that Sargis conceived a plan to give his own lands to the Romans and join the imperial side, but was thwarted. The connection is narratively

[268] AL, 556.35-557.39.
[269] AL, 557.40-558.46.

implicit, of course, with fractiousness a consistent theme emphasised in mediating passages, and the next historiographical episode does return to Sargis, suggesting that he was pivotal in the final annexation, but the connection remains implicit.

Yet this evident absence in itself demonstrates that the historiographical stuff is not what is important about the narrative transformation. What appears far more pivotal is the instance of the lamenting mode immediately thereafter, with its far more expansive rhetorical juxtaposition of the kingdom-as-was and the kingdom-as-became.[270] The impetus for this homiletic section is the notice that the Roman army invaded 'the land of the Armenians' four times 'in these same days', a numerical signification that recalls Basileios raiding the 'four corners of the land'. This homiletic section is returned to in part II for its socially symbolic role, here the key point is that chapter 10 is organised around this homiletic section, *not* the "properly historiographical" episodes. The chapter's earlier instance of the lamenting mode is a short presage of this more expansive later instantiation, with the historiographical episodes woven around these two instances, and little organically connecting them to each other aside from their various thematic intersections with the homiletic "digressions" – for example, the connection between Maniakēs and Sargis as unjust rebels. Hence when the dating notice appears that 'Now in the four-hundredth and ninety-fourth year (1045), Ani was taken',[271] the audience has already seen the full historical development of this event, so that the event itself becomes secondary, overshadowed by its own developed outcomes which are nevertheless only presented in homiletic form.

Yet there is historiographical stuff in the chapter following this notice.[272] The narrative runs that Gagik was deceived into visiting the imperial city, where he was kept until he accepted annexation. This section of the chapter reads closer to the earlier more historiographically normative sections, with claimed-to-be direct quotation from imperial correspondence and notable details around the actions of the 'leaders (*glkhavork'*) of the city who sat in Ani'. Nevertheless this historiographical stuff remains something of an afterthought, details bathing in the glow of the chapter's centrally homiletic thrust, and notably the writer's voice is present throughout the episode, commenting and providing value judgements on events and actors' claimed motivations. So the lead up to Ani's actual annexation appears a bitty run of events, discussing first Gagik's deception into going to Constantinople, then Grigor Pahlavuni *magistros*' decision to exchange his lands for properties and titles elsewhere. Finally the narrative arrives at Ani's urban elites, the *glkhavor*s, discussing which Caucasian ruler to give the city, before the *kat'oɫikos* decided to hand it over to the empire instead. The informational quality of these sections is similar to that of earlier historiographical episodes, but they are unalike in their

[270] AL, 558.47-560.77.
[271] AL, 561.78.
[272] AL, 561.78-89.

centrality to the narrative logic as the chapter develops – whereas earlier historiographical stuff gives way to post-positional framing lamentation, here the pattern is reversed, and the historiographical stuff itself appears far less coherent than the ideological vision of the homiletic episodes given centre stage.

Chapter 10's final episode completes the transformation.[273] It begins by discussing the imperial agents sent to rule over Ani, first a certain Asit before 'a certain Kamenas (Kekaumenos) replaced him in his sovereignty, in the four-hundredth and ninety-third year of our calendar (1045)'. Kekaumenos arrived with an imperial command to take the Armenian patriarch to 'the *avan* of Arcn in the district of Karin'. While there the *kat'oɫikos* participated in the same epiphany celebrations as in the earlier episode at the end of chapter 2, where the Armenians' holy chrism brought about miraculous light when it touched the water. Here, however, the omens are opposite, with a would-be Muslim convert accidentally smashing the bottle and his blood mixing with chrism in the water. Shortly after imperial troops arrived to arrest the *kat'oɫikos*, taking him to Constantinople. This action forms the chapter's close and, referring back to that earlier moment when the same patriarch Petros took the will named 'the destruction of the Armenians' to Basileios, and the same ritual was carried out to entirely opposite effect, completes the pivotal narrative transformation.

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It is important to again recapitulate the narrative structure. Chapters 1 to 4 form a more-or-less unitary cycle and story arc on the imperial conquest of Tao-Tayk'. Chapters 5 to 9 form a cycle of imperial vignettes, approximating to *Kaisergeschichte*, but in chapter 9 two mediating passages indicate the coming narrative transformation. In chapter 10 this pivotal transformation takes place, with homiletic passages central to the narrative thrust, and "properly historiographical" episodes arranged around them. These passages present the image of a kingdom-as-was and a kingdom-as-became, articulating Providence's total inversion of the state of the world, a point driven home by the final episode, which presents the dialectical inversion of that found at the end of chapter 2. This recalling of the earlier episode thus connects the historiographical stuff arranged across the *History* so far, most of which has very little connection to Armenian ethnicisation, and practically none of which to the Bagratuni polity. Finally, the amount of absolute narrative space taken to articulate this transformation is equal to either the Tao-Tayk' or imperial vignette cycles, driving home chapter 10's centrality.

The subsequent chapters do not fit into cycles as those before chapter 10. Instead, coming after the pivotal transformation, they form so many different illustrations of the disastrous outcomes,

[273] AL, 562.90-563.101.

building each time on the hortatory message – with the exception of chapters 22 and 23 on T'ondrakean heresy, returned to below. Thus these chapters are particularly important in revealing the work's ideological structure, and are dealt with in detail in part II. Here, therefore, they are only briefly described with particular focus on the arrangement of "properly historiographical" stuff within these sections. Chapter 11, 'Regarding the Destruction which Took Place in the Basean District and on the Mountain which is Called Smbat's'[274] alongside chapter 12, 'Regarding the Merciless Destruction of Arcn',[275] forms an illustration of the central outcome of chapter 10's pivotal transformation: the beginning of Turkish raids. This duality between the two chapters is indicated in the last lines of chapter 11:

> I call on the wailing women with Jeremiah to compose laments with me; for I do not make histories about mountains and caves and desolate places, where begging fugitives have gone to dwell.[276]

Leading directly on to the first lines of chapter 12:

> Instead [I will write] of a city, and of such a city, which was a wonder and renowned in all lands, like a city that sat above a mountain; and sea and land laboured and multiplied to bring it its strength; as the great Isaiah prophesised regarding Jerusalem.[277]

With the pairing of the two made explicit at the end of this chapter:

> These things were the lamentable histories of two places, that mountain and this city, those things we saw with our own eyes and of which we suffered the experience of evils, that alone we wrote; but as for the disastrous happenings of other regions and cities, whose mind can suffer them? These things require a long discourse and much time; we have abbreviated our account as much as we were able.[278]

Thus chapters 11 and 12 form a pair illustrating the comprehensiveness of Turkish raids, taking in both rural and urban lived situations, with the writer's voice claiming personal experience of the recorded happenings. Notably the narratival importance of this illustration is re-iterated in the postscript, which alludes to the necessity of this pairing in order to provide a suitable account:

> And now we largely consider all the waves of disaster to have been written [sufficiently], those which occurred in our days; and have divided into sections – with each thing progressively in each place, lands and cities – that which we suffered from the pagans.[279]

So chapters 11 and 12 demonstrate the destruction of both 'lands and cities', immediately following the pivotal transformation of chapter 10, and followed by chapter 13's provision of

[274] AL, 563.
[275] AL, 572.66.
[276] AL, 571.66-572.
[277] AL, 572.1.
[278] AL, 578.15.
[279] AL, 632.22.

another imperial vignette illustrating the causes of divine wrath. These post-transformation chapters are immediately homiletic, with the writer's voice consistently connecting emplotted historiographical stuff to what part II defines as the interpretive code of Providence. Importantly this is especially the case with the Turks, who are given no further historiographical or ethnological situation than the first lines of chapter 11:

> In this same year, the gate of Heaven's wrath opened over our land; and many troops came forth out of T'urk'astan, whose horses were swift as eagles, and their hooves like hard rocks; bows taut, and their arrows sharp, bravely girded, and with the laces of their boots ever-tied.[280]

Notably it is not the Turks but 'Heaven's wrath' that takes centre stage here – there is in fact no ethnonym deployed to describe these 'troops', although it is implicit in their originating in 'T'urk'astan'. Their progression across Caucasia is precisely detailed, from Vaspurakan to Basiani to Vałaršavan, covering 'twenty four districts with sword and fire and slaving',[281] with the writer's voice immediately present, full of metaphor and exegetical aside. Thus the ideological structure and the "properly historiographical" narrative progression come increasingly close, with several digressions where the writer's voice intra-diegetically explains events – 'Now, He poured his wrath upon us by the hand of a foreign people, because we had sinned against him'.[282] Hence these chapters, like chapter 10, are built *not* around the "properly historiographical" stuff, but the homiletic "digressions", with that stuff interspersed through these and not *vice versa*. In a passage of chapter 11 describing the raiders' movement across the region, for example, specific dated details marking the Turks' progression in time and space appear inextricable from their narratival and so ideological re-situation. This characterises all of chapter 11 up to the final episode, which forms a more specific recounting of a raid on the chapter's eponymous Mountain of Smbat, where several refugees had apparently fled.[283] This episode is long and full of graphic violence, with detail also on when and where the raiders arrived. The imagery again instantiates and expands on that in chapter 10 as well as the verse preface, and the writer's voice directly addresses the mountain itself as the object of lament. The same is seen in chapter 12, which similarly uses metaphorical language to discuss the historiographical stuff without demarcation, so that both must be discussed together in order to analyse the *History* as speaking to urban conditions.[284]

Chapter 13, 'Regarding the Great Battle which Occurred on the Plain of Basēan, Where the Romans were Defeated', returns to a more "properly historiographical" account, narrating the defeat of a large Roman army in Caucasia led by several prominent imperial and Caucasian elites,

[280] AL, 563.1.
[281] AL, 563.2-563.6.
[282] AL, 564.7-566.19.
[283] AL, 569.44-572.66.
[284] AL, 572.1-576.46.

including Kekaumenos, 'which translates as "fire" [and] who held power over the land of the Armenians, Aharon the Bulgar, who held the region of Vaspurakan, and Grigor [Pahlavuni], the mighty prince of the Armenians, who held the dignity of *magistros*.'[285] But, characteristically for these later chapters, the story of these three commanders – as well as a fourth, Liparit, an Ivirian aristocrat – is presented as a moral-theological example, demonstrating how all victory comes through God, as well as the problems of polyarchy, itself a divine punishment. Hence the chapter demonstrates how those coming post-transformation form a series of illustrations of the logic of Providence, this one beginning with a quote from Isaiah, and with the writer's voice prominent throughout, commenting and making explicit the various divine interventions. Ultimately the battle is presented as opening Roman lands in Caucasia and beyond to Turkish raids.

Chapter 14, 'How Long Patriarch Petros Remained in Constantinople, or How He Returned',[286] sits oddly in the run of the *History*'s chapters. Like the previous chapter it returns to a more "properly historiographical" account, and also like the previous chapter it is relatively short, lasting only two passages. But what makes it sit oddly is the way the narrative begins in the middle of things, to the extent that the first clause of the first sentence has an assumed object – 'When the emperor saw [Petros], he received him with great respect and honour'. This indicates that there is an underlying source that informs the passage in which the narrative flow would make clear that the object here is Petros – the same source that informed the last section on the *kat'ołikos* at the end of chapter 10, where he is taken from Caucasia and brought before the emperor.[287] The chapter describes Petros' movements in detail, also claiming that he was not allowed to return to Caucasia because the emperor feared rebellion, with him settling instead in Sebasteia with Yovhannēs-Senek'erim's son Atom. There Petros died, and his sister's son Khač'ik took his place, with the chapter detailing how he too was brought to the emperor, staying there for three years before being allowed to live in the Taranta district of Caucasia. Oddly, having brought this story to a conclusion, the chapter's second episode returns to why Khač'ik was kept in Constantinople for three years, describing imperial pressure to allow taxation of the Armenian Church, an eventuality avoided with the *kat'ołikos* obtaining a golden bull guaranteeing his properties free from taxation.[288] This passage has different narrative qualities to the previous one, indicating a separate source should be imagined.

Chapter 15, 'Regarding How Terribly the City Called Kars was Struck',[289] returns to the pattern laid out in chapter 11 and particularly chapter 12, forming a homiletic vignette on a city sack of the kind discussed in Greenwood's article. This is the shortest example and has the fewest details

[285] AL, 576.1-578.15.
[286] AL, 578.1-579.9.
[287] AL, 578.1-579.5.
[288] AL, 579.6-9.
[289] AL, 579.1-580.9.

that might be tied to the city as a concrete space, stretching for only one passage, and condensing into this span the same narrative qualities as other instances – a contrast between the city-as-was and the city-as-became, with an evocation of total societal collapse. Chapter 16, 'Regarding the Sultan's Arrival', has no internal connection to the previous chapter, although it begins as if it does, stating 'following this history/narration, the coming new year in our calendar was 503 (1054).'[290] This chapter is more "properly historiographical", as the title indicates, even referring back to the previous year when Arcn 'and other cities and *avan*s' had been sacked, but this appears odd since the last dating notice was in chapter 11, situating the raids in 1047/8. The next subsection returns to the question of dating, suffice to say that they indicate a confused process of fitting undated material around a limited set of dates.

The first episode of the chapter describes the arrival of Sultan Tughril Beg (*r.* 1055-1063), and tracks his movements precisely.[291] As other chapters after 10, this fine-grain information is presented immediately alongside its homiletic re-writing, as the subsequent passages demonstrate, forming long intra-diegetic instances of the lamenting mode. Over these lamenting passages are scattered the names of districts and towns that were taken by this three-pronged raid alongside some indication of what happened there, as, for example, those who had gathered in the uplands of Khorjean and Hanjet'. But for the most part the imagery and claims are the same as those found in previous homiletic sections, producing a cumulative effect. After some passages in this mode, there is another run of more-or-less bitty historiographical episodes. These include one intriguing notice about 'a regiment of the Roman army which are called *Vrangk'* (Varangians)', and another that mentions without context the princes of the Armenian kingdom of Kars.[292] There is then an odd narrative fragment on a certain *azat* of Kars, T'at'ul, captured and taken to the sultan. Finally this run of somewhat bitty historiographical fragments is concluded with a homiletic passage that tends towards but does not fully instantiate the lamenting mode.

At this point the chapter takes a sudden narrative shift, signalled by the discourse marker 'So much for this, but now come and marvel at the Sultan's stupidity and at God's magnificent wisdom.'[293] A richly detailed episode follows, another homiletic example of how only those who trust in God are victorious, only this time a positive example for Christians, with the sultan's hubris bringing about defeat at an attempted siege of Manzikert. This episode is perhaps the most detailed in the entire *History*, excepting the chapters on T'ondrakean heresy, including particular focus on the sultan's character, his thoughts, actions, and movements. There are extended passages on the defenders too, presented as trusting fully in God, with several scriptural

[290] AL, 580.1.
[291] AL, 580.2-583.22.
[292] AL, 583.23-584.33.
[293] AL, 584.34-589.78.

quotations put into the mouth of the Roman governor-general. Narrative time also expands, a narrative feature mostly left vague, with it noted that the sultan besieged the city for a month. Like other episodes after chapter 10, this example is full of homiletic features, not only the scriptural quotes from the mouth of the imperial commander, but also the explicit role of divine agency in the run of detailed actions. Finally there is a long passage noting the destruction of the sultan's siege artillery – 'a machine for warfare which they called *baban*' – by means of a naptha grenade, which gives way to a long sermonising passage explicating how this demonstrated that all victory comes from God, and ending with the statement 'Let this serve as counsel and teaching for us.'

The opening episode to chapter 17, 'The End of Monomakh's reign',[294] is emblematic of the "properly historiographical" sections in the aftermath of chapter 10's transformation. The unrelenting negative judgement of Monomakhos' rulership is immediately both historiographical and political-theological, and so homiletic, indicating the futility of attempting to parse these elements apart from each other. The information is detailed and refers to claims about the reign reflected in other works of Roman and Armenian historiography.[295] Likewise the summation is situated in a historical perspective, comparing Monomakhos to Basileios II, indicating both the *History*'s underlying source material and the writer's situation in intersecting Romano-Armenian lifeworlds.[296] These qualities continue throughout the chapter, which turns to Theodōra's reign, and begins with her attempting to negotiate with the 'Sultan of the Tačiks (Muslims)', including claimed direct quotations from Tughril Beg's response, as well as the dating notice 'This transpired in 504 of our era (1055).'[297]

There is again a run of bitty historiographical passages describing Turkish raids and their passage across reified "Armenia".[298] These include further fine-grained information naming particular actors such as the governor-general of Tarōn 'T'eodoros, son of Aharon whom [the Persians/Turks?] called Awan since [their alphabet] lacks a letter', who received a group of defecting troops 'from T'urk'astan', again with claimed-to-be direct quotation. Finally, following a brief episode on a raid into Hark' district the following winter, again at the time of Epiphany, these "properly historiographical" sections give way to a full instantiation of the lamenting mode – 'Oh how bitter this history is, how worthy of lamentation!'[299] This instance is, however, more political-theological than others, discussing how 'Armenia had four thrones of kingship, to say nothing of the *kiwropałat'*s principality and that in Rome', as well as the Armenian Church's

[294] AL, 589.
[295] *Khronographia* 6; *Historia*, 47-51; MU I.96.
[296] On lifeworlds see subsection II.1.
[297] AL, 590.6-9.
[298] AL, 590.10-591.19.
[299] AL, 591.20-594.43.

pristine previous state and subsequent degeneracy. Nevertheless it ends as ever on a call to turn back to God and repent, hence marking these sections as homiletic in the desire to draw moral-theological example, and encourage the audience to good Christian life.

Chapter 18, 'The Reign of T'eodora which Translates "God-Given"',[300] continues in much the same vein: it begins with a general episode discussing the empress' qualities as sole ruler, before turning to a bitty recounting of various raids, and finally giving way to the lamenting mode. The difference here, however, is in the historiographical particulars – the lamenting mode is aimed not at Turkish raids, but the imperial civil war which followed Theodōra's death with the short reign of Mikhaēl VI (*r.* 1056-1057). The lead up to his assumption of power is described in detail, including Theodōra calling the senators (*glkhavork'*) together, and Mikhaēl's subsequent berating of the military elites to 'go forth in war against the Persians and prevent the land from being ruined, or else I shall pay the Persians your salaries and thus keep the land in peace.'[301] Following this 'Komianos (Isaakios I Komnēnos, *r.* 1057-1059), who later ruled, and Kamenas (Katakalon Kekaumenos)' began the revolt 'in the year 506 of our era (1057), which was the tenth Roman indiction.' It is only at this point that the narrative gives way to the lamenting mode, which thus recalls the pre-chapter 10 focus on internal division as a sinful cause of disaster, and re-instantiates the homiletic structure of the land-as-was and the land-as-became.[302] This is made evident in the lament's political-theological summation, which drives home the homiletic message, mentioning Jeremiah and citing the biblical quotation 'The kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, but is destroyed'. Having established the imperial civil war and fractiousness as central to the Turkish invasions, the chapter turns to an extended section on the actions of Liparit's son Ivane, an Ivirian aristocrat who crossed between the institutional apparatuses of New Rome and the kingdom of Ap'khazet'i-K'art'li. In this episode Ivane takes advantage of the Roman civil war to attempt to seize imperial strongholds and urban centres in Caucasia, arresting a judge, and eventually attempting to deceive his way into Theodosioupolis-Karin. Failing in this Ivane brought Turkish allies from the Seljuqs, and the writer's voice comments 'This was the inception of unbelievable misfortunes which were visited upon us.'[303]

The episode is thus presented as a fine-grain perspective on one particular regional ramification of the 1057 imperial civil war. It emphasises at the ideological level the centrality not of the Turks as such, either as concrete actors or agents of some apocalyptic pattern outside of human agency, but of the Christian actors, Roman and Caucasian, who brought about divine wrath through political-theological sins. So in the subsequent passage the lamenting mode is instantiated not for

[300] AL, 595.-596.11.
[301] AL, 596.12-597.21.
[302] AL, 597.22-599.33.
[303] AL, 599.34-603.68.

general Turkish raids, but for this specific group of raiders who come to assist Ivane. Part of this is taken up with a brief intra-episodic return to the motif of the destroyed city, re-instantiating the same imagery as previous instances, in amongst a general run of historiographical stuff referencing specific villages attacked. The violent imagery is particularly graphic, with detailed descriptions of the bloody deaths apparently suffered, in particular the 'unique tortures' saved especially for priests and clerics. These descriptions end in typical homiletic fashion with an exhortation to penance.

Chapter 19, 'Concerning the Inestimable Ruin Which Happened to Mesopotamia and its Cities, which was a Great Destruction', returns to the three raids earlier described spreading across the land to provide a single-passage chapter on the actions of another of these parties.[304] It is described how they sped on through Mananaḷi, Hanjet' and Khorjean, before reaching the city of Harav, where the same imagery is once more instantiated. One notable difference is the specific mention of inhabitants taking refuge in the vineyards that surrounded the city, with the raiders finding them there, an interesting detail that evokes a more particular urban space. Nevertheless this chapter continues to build the general cumulative effect of total societal collapse, ending with the statement 'They dealt similarly with the surrounding villages and *avans*, destroying all of them with fire, sword and slavery until no one was left alive anywhere to make even some feeble cry.'

Chapter 20, 'The Reign of Komianos', is the last chapter with "properly historiographical" material, despite coming five chapters before the *History*'s end.[305] Chapter 21 forms another urban vignette, as does chapter 24, with chapters 22 and 23 entirely idiosyncratic, and chapter 24 on Manzikert forming one long homiletic example. Of course, these chapters all provide historical information, and are historiographical in a broader sense – as, indeed, is the entire *History* – but in terms of the sections described as "properly historiographical", the two short passages making up chapter 20's single episode are the last. The episode deals not with Komnēnos' reign as such, but the conclusion to the civil war between him and Mikhaēl IV, including the interesting claim that the soon-to-be deposed emperor offered his opponent the title of *kouropalatēs* and command of 'the East, if only, [Mikhaēl] said, [Komnēnos] remain at peace, and together with himself avenge the blood of the Christians.' Unable to reach any agreement, however, the two claimants came to bloody battle. After this, and with the support of the patriarch, Komnēnos became emperor, Mikhaēl a monk, and finally there is a dating notice that 'All this took place in that same world-destroying year.' This must refer back to the last dating notice, when in chapter 18 it is remarked that Komnēnos and Kekaumenos revolted 'in the year 506 of our era, which was the tenth Roman indiction.'

[304] AL, 603.1-604.8.
[305] AL, 604.1-605.7.

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It is important to pause again to recapitulate the narrative structure. As seen, the chapters after 10 do not form broad cycles, but there are clearly articulated logics running throughout. Chapters 11 and 12 form a dual exposition of the raids, whilst chapters 18 to 20 deal with the Roman civil war deepening the crisis. Yet this deepening does not form a transformation on the order of chapter 10, nor do these logics define the narrative structure in the same sense as before. Rather, in the aftermath of chapter 10's pivotal transformation, all chapters have more-or-less similar narrative qualities – as, for example, the almost simultaneous re-writing of emplotted historiographical stuff in homiletic terms, rather than parsing these out into separate narrative moments. Hence the "properly historiographical" and the homiletic come so close as to be inextricable, with several chapters beginning from scriptural quotes in order to clearly illustrate the example. Narrative time also appears vastly expanded, at least in absolute terms if not explicitly, with chapters 11 to 20 taking up just under half the total narrative duration, but covering a period of only around ten years *c.*1047-1057, and moving between dating notices often difficult to reconcile. Ultimately, therefore, this indicates that the *History* is a historiographical work inasmuch as that provides an effective vehicle for the broadly homiletic purpose. Events are explicated in a hortatory manner, with the "properly historiographical" framing abandoned as soon as its narrative purpose is achieved.

Chapter 21, 'The Destruction of the Shahastan City, Melitene', is another homiletic vignette on an urban sack.[306] It begins typically from an already homiletic tone, performing a historiographical exegesis on events, and explicating the hand of Providence, replete with scriptural allusions and quotations. After several passages in this mode, the chapter then turns to a more "properly historiographical" account of the sack.[307] This includes the awkward statement that 'it took ten days, more-or-less, [for the Turks] to accomplish the destruction of other cities and districts', leaving the obvious question of which raid this refers to, and emphasising the lack of disciplined narrative time in these later chapters. Thus this section refers to the 'autumn of that grievous year, while the Romans were occupied with the clamour of kings, when the month of Areg had come', clearly indicating the civil war apparently ended in the previous chapter. In this month another raiding party arrived and one part went towards Melitene, defeating the Roman troops based there, before a twelve day sack. Interestingly this description lacks entirely the graphic images of violence found in previous instances, so that the previous pattern is fully reversed, the chapter begins from an emotive homily, before this gives way to a basically sober historiographical account.[308] This lasts to the end of the chapter, with another run of bitty sections

[306] AL, 605.1-607.17.
[307] AL, 607.18-608.21.
[308] AL, 608.22-610.34.

describing the progression of this raiding party, hemmed in by regional actors organising to block the passes of their retreat, and so forced to winter in Roman Caucasia, causing locals great hardship. Importantly the chapter ends with the dating notice 'This occurred in the year 507 of our era (1058).'

Chapter 22, 'Concerning the Evil Sect of the T'ondrakeans which Appeared in Hark' District and Agitated Many People',[309] and chapter 23, 'How that Fire of Error also Inflamed the Borders of Mananałi, Must [also] be Told',[310] are an obvious pair to discuss together. They are entirely idiosyncratic in practically every way. They break the work's chronological progression, at least in the case of chapter 22 moving without warning to the period of the *kat'ołikos* Sargis I (*r*. 992-1019), with the strong association of chapter 23 indicating a similar temporal situation for that series of events. They have an entirely different narrative tone, providing richly textured episodes full of detail in an almost hagiographic manner. Their narrative perspective is markedly different, focusing on unknown local actors, their particular actions and fates, and mentioning no rulers of New Rome or Caucasian polities at any point. Finally, there are no homiletic sections or instances of the lamenting mode, with both chapters written descriptively and largely without other chapters' rhetorical flourish. There are extended sections discussing events in an exegetical manner, including scriptural quotations, but these are given as "just-so" moral-theological statements rather than the same homiletic structure as elsewhere. Most strikingly, then, this sudden shift in practically every narrative feature is not marked in any way whatsoever. It is clear, for example, that these two chapters have been inserted to demonstrate concrete instances of the generally asserted sins of the Armenians, and particularly the most classic of sins, heresy, but this is nowhere explicated, and no passage connects chapters 22 and 23 to either the narrative progression or the work's overall ideological structure.

Chapters 22 and 23 thus form a significant anomaly within the *History*, demonstrating that a comprehensive historiographical account was not a central purpose. Together they are as long as the cycle on Tao-Tayk's annexation or the pivotal chapter 10, so they cannot be discounted as somehow peripheral, but their practical centrality is only explicable at the ideological level. This is the task of part II, and the subsection below discusses the possible source types reflected, so only a basic description is important for the moment. Chapter 22 describes the fortunes of Bishop Yakobos of Hark', an apparent church reformer whose actions caused a schism in his local congregation, so that a council was called to judge him, but found him innocent. Nevertheless the writer's voice denounces him as a sheep in wolf's clothing and a false prophet, revealed as such by a certain priest named Esayi who reports him to the *kat'ołikos*. Arriving before the Armenian patriarch, Yakobos is punished with the traditional Armenian punishment for heresy, facial

[309] AL, 610.1-615.36.
[310] AL, 615.1-622.49.

branding with the sign of the fox.[311] After this the ex-bishop failed to find support, whether in Constantinople from the Romans, or from the actual T‘ondrakeans and other apparent heretics in Caucasia, dying in obscurity in Muharkin in Upper Mesopotamia (Silvan, Diyarbakir Province).

Chapter 23 begins an entirely new narrative, connected in no way whatsoever to chapter 22, despite sharing its narrative features.[312] It begins with a monk named Kuncik, who converted a prominent elite woman named Hranoysh to his heretical ways, and then in turn her relatives, the sisters Akhni and Kamara. With these followers Kuncik also converted a prince named Vrverh, who abandoned his previously pious conduct, and gave over his lands for the use of Kuncik’s growing sect, which, among other unnamed heresies, rejected the veneration of the cross. This became their downfall, when they destroyed the neighbouring village’s cross stone (*khačk‘ar*), drawing the interests of the local bishop Samvel – notably referred to as ‘patriarch’, although he could only have been the metropolitan – who arrested six claimed *vardapet*s to facially brand, set fire to the heretical villages, and cursed all their goods and properties to forestall looting. Later that year the Roman provincial judge arrives, and Vrverh approached him to denounce Samvel’s actions, saying ‘They robbed my home, and burned down the village.’ The judge immediately arrested the bishops, and took them across the Euphrates leaving a protesting crowd on the other side – who, predictably, then miraculously cross the river on foot. This changes the judge’s perspective, and a compromise is reached where Vrverh is permitted to ‘become a Roman’ – a Chalcedonian of the imperial church – and the adopted son of a Roman bishop. Nevertheless, he still falls subject to divine judgement, receiving terrible bodily pains until the end of his life. Finally the chapter ends with a very short passage in the writer’s voice noting that it would be inappropriate and dangerous to fully record T‘ondrakean beliefs, but in brief they reject the Church, its ritual, and hierarchy, including baptism, the veneration of the cross, and the observance of fasts, so that the writer’s voice ends with the hortatory statement: ‘But let us, the true Believers in the Holy Trinity, firmly keep the doctrine of confirmed light which we learned from the blessed Fathers. Let us, turning away from their atheistic assembly, heap curses upon them.’

As already indicated, chapter 24, ‘How the World Renowned City of Ani was Massacred by the Sword’, has no implied connection to the previous one.[313] Instead it begins in familiar fashion with a homiletic tone denouncing hubris: ‘The human race, subject to many delusions and illusions, because of lust and impropriety, has sought refuge in its deeds.’ The first passage forms a homiletic digression drawing various examples from the mythical giants recorded by

[311] Garsoïan (1967), 83.
[312] AL, 615.1-622.49.
[313] AL, 622.

Khorenac'i, to Jericho, David and Solomon.[314] Then, with the discourse marker 'Now let us return to our former narrative/history',[315] the chapter turns to a homiletic discussion of events, noting how the previous raids, and particularly what had happened in Arcn, should have forewarned Armenians of divine wrath, but the inhabitants of Ani in particular took no notice. Thus the Turks came against the city 'in 513 of our era (1064).' What follows is another instantiation of the urban laments noted by Greenwood, although here with a more concrete sense of the space, including a description of the battle for the city itself. Nonetheless this description eventually gives way to the same imagery as in each previous instance, ending on an emphatic homiletic note.[316]

This then leads to the final twenty-fifth chapter of the *History*, 'Concerning the King of the Greeks Who was Captured by the King of Persia'.[317] Chapter 25 begins with one of two instances where the writer's voice appears to comment on the process of composition, stating:

> Now there is no need to record or narrate in writing incomprehensible or extremely difficult matters since no one has imposed such a task upon us nor demanded it of us. Nor are we capable of such. Therefore, many important accounts included among such categories, we have omitted, leaving them to [writers] more eloquent and intelligent than we. Perhaps someone may request it of them, and [perhaps] I am encouraging the capable to undertake [such a task]. However, since omission of an account of the war between the two monarchs would damage [this history] not a little, we regard it as necessary to dispense with such a great event in an abbreviated fashion.[318]

While it would be positivist to take this statement at face value, in the context of the *History*'s narrative structure, particularly following chapter 20, this does appear a comment on the work's purpose and process of composition. As returned to in the subsection below, the narrative structure implies one "properly historiographical" source providing the basic structure for the entire *History*, with the chapters coming after its chronological end sometime in chapters 20 and 21 forming a series of illustrative examples, some, like chapters 22 and 23, entirely at variance with the rest of the work. So it seems convincing that 'many important accounts' were left out in the process of composition, since their incorporation was unessential to the basic task – providing a historiographical homily. Manzikert, however, formed an event of such apparent significance that it remained essential, and provided another opportunity to develop the work's ideological thrust.

The chapter begins in a different tone to previous ones, with a more narratorial quality describing how 'Emperor [Rōmanos IV] Diogenēs (*r.* 1068-1071) was more-or-less the sixtieth monarch

[314] AL, 622.1-623.3.
[315] AL, 623.4-8.
[316] AL, 623.9-625.19.
[317] AL, 625.
[318] AL, 625.1.

after Constantine the Great, according to the enumeration of emperors.'[319] Diogenēs, observing the loss of 'no small part of his kingdom' to the 'king of Persia', set out to avenge these losses 'in order to not appear unmanly and frightened, nor leave to those after a poor memory of his reign.' Notably this campaign is claimed to take place 'ten years later', presumably than the raids previously recounted, which, taking place in 1057/8, would be ten years prior to Rōmanos' accession and his first campaign to the east. But this remains odd, since this first campaign was to northern Syria, not Upper Mesopotamia or Caucasia, and took place three years prior to the Manzikert campaign. These oddities are referred to below when considering the *History*'s sources, suffice to say that it continues the impressionistic quality of the later chapters' sense of narrative time, with no specific date given for the battle. Already in this first passage the chapter's homiletic thrust is clear: the emperor's hubris caused his downfall, despite his gathering of a vast army and his kingdom yet stretching 'from the valleys of Phoenicia – where the great Antioch stands – as far as the fortress of Van, and the entire land of Ṙštunik' opposite Her'.

Hence chapter 25 forms another homiletic example of victory only coming through God, with all those who arrogantly trust in their own strength failing in the end. Yet this assertion of a general moral-theological principle is connected to the concrete particulars of the Manzikert campaign, seen in Rōmanos' arrogant refusal to wait for all his troops, a reference to various post-battle stories explaining the loss.[320] These concrete particulars are present too in the description of the sultan's actions, who sought to bring the Romans to battle before all their forces had arrived. Finally, it is seen in the claim that, when battle was met, 'suddenly a great brigade devoid of piety rebelled from the Roman emperor'.[321] This is the "properly historiographical" explanation for the Roman retreat, clearly inextricable from the homiletic presentation of hubris, and interestingly the writer's voice emphasises the loyalty and bravado of the Armenian troops at this time. Nevertheless, the emperor's fate was Providentially sealed, and he was captured – but, again through the judgement of Providence, he was shortly after released again, when God 'kindled affection and concern' in the 'beast-minded' sultan.[322] Thus the chapter demonstrates God's endless benevolence in homiletic fashion, as well as, returning to a central theme present throughout the work, the sinfulness of civil war, factionalism and strife.

The chapter ends with a remarkable passage claiming that the sultan was enraged at Rōmanos' blinding and death at Roman hands.[323] This passage is important narratively too, as it attempts to systematise the post-transformation chapters. Hence, it is claimed, that the sultan looked back on his 'great triumphs and the victories of the three conflicts he had waged'. These three campaigns

[319] AL, 625.2-626.10.
[320] *Historia*, 274-275.
[321] AL, 627.11-628.20.
[322] AL, 628.21-24.
[323] AL, 628.25-629.30.

are unclear, perhaps referring to the initial raids of chapters 11 and 12, the sultan's invasion of chapter 16, and the Manzikert campaign, but the first two were the actions of Tughril Beg, not Alp Arslan, so that it may refer to Melitene, Ani and Manzikert instead. Regardless, the third is clearly Manzikert, and looking back the sultan made a pact with God prior to this final battle that 'should he capture [Rōmanos] he would free him to return to his kingdom with affection and honour; confirming this with an oath so that there be peace between the Persian and Roman kingdoms.' Thus his benevolent treatment of his imperial captive, whom he exalted as a faithful friend, making an oath of peace and only keeping what had been taken in battle. But, having learnt that the emperor had been subsequently blinded and died at the hands of Roman elites, the sultan set out to avenge him, only forestalled by his own death, 'following all those fashioned of earth, to [the place] where kings and commoners [dwell] together.'

With this line the *History*'s main narrative comes to a close, so that the final notice can be dated to 1072, providing a broad *terminus post quem* for the work's composition – although this date is not actually given within the work itself. The main narrative is followed by a section ordinarily referred to as a colophon, sometimes qualified as "authorial", here referred to as a postscript and titled in the work 'Memorial Discourse (*yišataki ban*) of the Present Writings (*girk'*)'.[324] Admittedly *yišataki ban* does come to signify 'colophon' and can be translated this way, but is not here on account of the section's internal structuring and broader function in the narrative logic. Considered as a colophon it is entirely *sui generis* compared with other examples – as, indeed, all so-called "authorial" colophons in Armenophone historiography. This is unlike so-called scribal colophons, which do have specific formulae and generic structural features that make it useful to discuss them together in a generalised category.[325] The term postscript, however, helps to make sense of the purpose of this relatively long section, taking up more space in itself than several of the main narrative's chapters. It explicitly performs the function of recapitulating the main narrative, drawing out its overall coherence, and making evident the homiletic thrust.

For this reason the postscript too is detailed in part II, here it is only important to emphasise the narrative function. The entire section is in the writer's voice, beginning from the statement 'I considered it important to write for our beloved brothers a memorial concerning known things and familiar events, just as at the beginning of these writings I discoursed on God's providence and limitlessness with brief words (i.e., verse).'[326] Thus the postscript and verse preface are brought together in the explicitly claimed purpose of discoursing on Providence and the endless potential of the divine. The first passage turns to a recalling of the celestial event recorded in chapter 9, there presented in a mediating passage that presaged the pivotal transformation of

[324] AL, 629.1-633.28.
[325] On Armenian colophons see generally Van Elverdinghe (2017).
[326] AL, 629.1.

chapter 10. This narrative function is explicated in the postscript, with the writer's voice commenting how 'from then onwards, as I said previously, from the time of this in the year 482 (1033) of the Armenian reckoning, until the present time, the covenant of holiness and the order of the Church have decayed and corrupted.'[327] This dating notice also refers back to chapter 9 where the same date is given, and the remainder of this first passage re-instantiates the imagery of societal collapse. This continues through the next two passages, which describe in homiletic fashion the full totality of the destruction brought about by divine judgement, adducing scriptural parallels, before a passage that sums up this punitive theological argument, ending on the line 'For all of this and more than was written in this work (*girk'*) was visited upon us because of our sins.'[328]

The last two passages of the postscript provide some final indications as to the purpose implicit in the structure of the *History*'s narrative logic, including the passage quoted above stating that 'now we consider all the waves of disaster to have been written [sufficiently]'.[329] This indicates a purposive but limited intention in emplotting the "properly historiographical" stuff, an impression made more evident with the somewhat stereotyped but, in the context of the *History*'s clearly idiosyncratic narrative structure, highly suggestive final passage:

> For events such as this we need the history chroniclers of old, who would have marked this book (*gir mateni*) with the stamp of their proper and appropriate words, bringing together without error what transpired in the present and the past, leaving behind themselves a memorial of the events which occurred, as the history of our forebears shows. Yet as for that which we have written in this book, it is not complete, but only the beginning of things that happened and what befell us, for we were unable to write the full account or call to mind everything; but we have set all this down into such an account, in order that you all would read and know, that our sins became the cause for what became of us. For at the sight of us you should become terrified by the face of the Lord, and tremble with dread at His might; in order that you hasten to pre-emptive confession and early atonement, through which you may both forestall and affect the punishment, and avoid its arrival.[330]

This is the second passage to explicitly comment on the process and purpose of composition, after the earlier noted at the outset of chapter 25, and would appear to bear out the description here.

To sum up the *History*'s narrative structure, then, it breaks into two broad halves, which themselves can be further subdivided into two. The first part stretches from chapters 1 to 9, and can be divided into a cycle on Tao-Tayk's annexation in chapters 1 to 4, and a cycle of imperial vignettes in chapters 5 to 9. In this first part the "properly historiographical" and "homiletic"

[327] AL, 630.5.
[328] AL, 630.9-632.21.
[329] AL, 632.22-25.
[330] AL, 632.26-633.28.

sections are narratively demarcated, with the former taking precedence and, in certain specific instances, giving way to the lamenting mode. In terms of the *History*'s overall chronological span chapters 1 to 9 cover the years 1000 to 1042, well over half the total extent, but in terms of absolute narrative space they only constitute about a quarter of the work, roughly an eighth per cycle. Chapter 10 forms the narrative's pivotal transformation, itself taking up another eighth of the absolute narrative space, but only covering the years 1042-1045/6. The emplotted event around which this transformation is structured is the Roman annexation of the Bagratuni polity, but within the chapter this event comes secondary to its own re-writing at the homiletic level, establishing the remainder of the work's general pattern. Thus after chapter 10 there are no broad narrative cycles, although chapters 11 and 12 form a dual illustration of Turkish raids, and chapters 18 to 20 the deepening of the crisis through imperial civil war. Across chapters 11 to 20, however, there are many broadly shared narrative features, particularly the inextricability of the historiographical and homiletic sections, and the eventual predominance of the latter over the former. This pattern holds too for chapters 21 and 24 on the sacks of Melitene and Ani, which come after the last "properly historiographical" chapter, 20, both beginning from homiletic exposition before turning to apparently more concrete accounts. Chapters 22 and 23 are clear outliers in the composition as a whole, entirely idiosyncratic but taking up another eighth of absolute narrative space, so necessarily narratively important. Chapter 25, finally, is explicitly claimed to be included for the sake of completeness, and forms a final homiletic illustration. What this narrative description makes evident, therefore, is that the *History* is a remarkably *sui generis* work when considered as historiography, and is better characterised as a history *inasmuch as* that generic form provides the vehicle for an effective homily.

I.4 Sources

This detailed narrative description lays the essential foundation for this subsection's task: critically imagining the *History*'s underlying sources. This provides content for the so-far unexamined category of 'historiographical stuff', a term used to describe the empirical claims emplotted in the work, articulating the fact that this stuff has no essential meaning outside of its narrative emplotment.[331] The *History*'s peculiar narrative structure is argued to reveal the seams of sources assembled, arranged and framed in the process of its historical composition. Critically imagining these underlying sources is central to the overall process of historically and socially situating the work, since access to one or another source type indicates the social relations in which the writer was embedded. Nonetheless, while such analysis can be done as critical history, there is a danger of implicitly or explicitly reifying an image of the writer, so that "Aristakēs" is said to choose this or that source or narrative framing. To a certain degree this is impossible to

[331] See appendix II.

avoid – and necessary, there was indeed a living human actor who composed a written work in a concrete time and place – but it is to mitigate reification as far as possible, privileging the work over the writer.

Yet such an analysis requires a contradictory double movement, privileging the narrative over the writer at the same time as seeking to see the writer's hand in constituting the narrative – which must simultaneously be seen as a semi-passive receptacle for its own underlying "sources". Adding to this complex of methodological contradictions is the fact that the writer's voice within the narrative – which, needless to say, is not "the" writer's voice passively commenting from outside – often provides clues for the process of composition. Two examples have been seen in the *History*, at the outset to chapter 25 and in the postscript. These statements indicate that the writer did not attempt a complete account, which is apparently borne out by the narrative description already provided in subsection I.3: the *History* does not attempt comprehensive coverage of eleventh-century "Armenia", nor of the Turkish invasions, leaving obvious gaps. Thus a relatively limited number of sources should be imagined. A useful point of comparison is a similar moment of the writer's voice in the *Chronicle* attributed to Matt'ēos, appearing at the beginning of part II just before the years 1053-1054:

> …up to this point, by laborious investigation, we have discovered and written down the materials of the past hundred years (952/3-1053/4), arranged in chronological order; having examined these materials for a very long time…We have used materials from very many observers and hearers who were born in times long past, from those who read the historians of these times and were eyewitnesses of all these happenings and afflictions which the Armenians endured because of their sins…Because of all this, it became necessary for me to investigate this matter always thinking about my plan in terms of a great work. So I collected documents and, collating them, wrote down a narration of events up to the point we have reached here…and for eight years I applied myself to incessant investigation…[332]

This passage is a perfect illustration of the difficulties of deploying apparent authorial claims for narrative analysis, without reifying them as the writer's thoughts. That aside, however, it also indicates the length of time that can be generally imagined in the process of composing a work like the *Chronicle*, which is much more ambitious than the *History*, far longer and incorporating many more source types. For reasons outlined in the previous section, and others dealt with in part II, the *History* should be imagined as written soon after the *terminus post quem* of 1072, far less than the eight years the *Chronicle* writer's voice claims to have taken. Thus this analysis operates on the assumption that the writer did indeed limit themself to only the most apposite sources for the broader purpose.

[332] MU, II.1.

The introduction already noted that this is therefore an empiricist analysis. This means that it operates on the useful epistemological conceit that pre-narrativised stuff can be imagined beneath a narrative which provides the only point of access. All information is always-already narrativised, and, at least in absolute epistemological terms, it is impossible to truly parse "underlying" and "overlaying" levels. Nevertheless this is a useful analytical conceit that, when not part of a positivist project to establish "the past as was", opens potentials in critically imagining the historical relations and dynamics of past social systems. This is this subsection's task, beginning from a critical imagining of the central source around which the narrative structure was elaborated, before turning to other source types that provided other narrative elements.

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The most striking feature of the *History*'s narrative structure is the heavy concentration on Roman affairs. This point is nuanced by the regional quality and the ideological centrality of Armenianness, with much of the absolute narrative space taken up in homiletic sections that expound this nationalist theme. But in terms of empirical claims the predominance of Roman affairs is near total. Only two episodes in chapters 2 and 10 deal with the Bagratuni polity as such, and only chapter 10's without any other mediation, with the kingdoms of Vaspurakan and Kars only referred to obliquely. Indeed, the Caucasian polities dealt with in the most detail are more commonly ethnicised as K'art'velian/Georgian – Tao-Tayk', Ap'khazet'i and K'art'li – and even these are only present in the Tao-Tayk' cycle. Even the Armenian Church is by-and-large notable by its absence, appearing in the same chapters as the Bagratuni polity, returned to briefly in chapter 14, and central but oddly situated in the idiosyncratic T'ondrakean chapters, but otherwise absent in the overall run of "properly historiographical" episodes. In contrast, it has been consistently seen that the most fine-grain and detailed sections are those which make empirical claims about emperors and imperial actors, although the narrative perspective is consistently regional. The qualities and narrative distribution of this historiographical stuff indicates that there was a single source around which the broader narrative structure was elaborated, here named the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle to 1057/8*.[333] While it is possible that there was more than one such work or official archives, the narrative distribution argues against this, as does the apparent claim of the writer's voice to have avoided incorporating 'incomprehensible or extremely difficult matters', with many 'important accounts' left out for this reason.[334] This analysis therefore imagines one source providing the *History*'s narrative spine and the lion's share of historiographical stuff, a conclusion also reached in Greenwood's article.[335]

[333] For general studies of 'lost' Roman histories see: Panagiotakes (1996); & Treadgold (2013).
[334] AL, 625.1.
[335] Greenwood (2017a) argues that 'Aristakes' made use of an originally Greek composition that traced imperial history, concluding in 1057, and providing the vast majority of the underlying historiographical

The *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s presence is particularly discernible in those sections with dating mechanisms, utilising both chronological reckoning in the Armenian era (AE) and imperial regnal years.[336] This is most visible in chapters 1 to 9, the most "normatively historiographical" apparently because these best preserve the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s narrative qualities, and also because, as the longest stretch of chronological time – although not absolute narrative space – this first part has the most dating notices. The *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* has been termed 'Roman' for the heavy focus on imperial affairs, and importantly dating notices almost solely appear alongside such information. There are no dates given for any event relating to the Bagratuni polity, with the notably single exception of the Roman annexation of Ani. The crucial events surrounding Ani's fall are merely placed 'in the following three years [after Geōrgios Maniakēs' 1041 rebellion]'.[337] Similarly there is a single dating notice tied to the Armenian Church, the elevation of Petros I as *kat'ołikos* in 468 AE (1019 CE),[338] with only vague references to the 'three years' he later spent in Constantinople, the 'two years' he spent in Sebasteia before dying, and the post-positional 'three years' after which his successor Khač'ik was allowed to leave Constantinople. These vague and relational dating mechanisms refer back to the last notice associated with Petros, stating that 'in the 493rd year of our calendar (1044 CE)' Kekaumenos was sent as governor-general to Ani, removing the *kat'ołikos* to Arcn, from where he was taken the following Epiphany. Leaving aside the fact that this does not add up to Petros' chronology as it has been constructed from other sources, the Roman dating notice is clearly predominant in organising the other relational mechanisms.

In contrast to the total absence of dating notices for ostensibly important emplotted events focused on the Bagratuni polity and Armenian Church, there are several attached to narratively irrelevant details to do with local imperial administration. For example in chapter 2:

> …in the four hundredth and sixty seventh year of our era (1018), the autocrat emperor sent a certain prince from Nikomitk' (Nikomedeia), who having come placed a poll-tax on the land; and, having assembled a large group of men, made a beginning once more of the building of T'eodosupolis.[339]

Likewise in chapter 5:

> …with the coming of the second year the emperor sent to the east to be overseer of the land Nikit', a certain eunuch, who having come crossed into the region of Virk' (the theme of

stuff re-situated in the *History*. These arguments are self-evidently preliminary, and are developed, nuanced, and in some instances changed here.

[336] On the importance of the Armenian Era see 84 of this thesis.

[337] AL, 555.

[338] AL, 532.

[339] AL, 532.

> Iviria), and with deceiving words to many from amongst the *azat*s of the land he removed them from their patrimonies, sending them to the court of the emperor.[340]

And, later in the same chapter:

> …with the coming of the third year, the eunuch Simovn came to the East with many troops, [for] he held the sovereignty of half of the empire, a man who in the Greek tongue they named *paṙekimanos* (*parakoimomenos*); he came and crossed into the land of Virk'.[341]

Although narratively less important, these dating notices are alike to that on Kekaumenos in one key feature, they describe the arrival of an imperial governor-general, and similar chronological specifications are found for imperial rebellions and military conflicts.[342] Two of the extracts quoted above do not use the Armenian era, instead employing imperial regnal years, but these two systems appear to have been utilised together. Hence the first episode of chapter 1, noting Basileios II's coming to Tao-Tayk', describes him arriving 'in the twenty fifth year of his reign', and, at the end of the episode, states 'This occurred in the year 450 (1001 CE), and the land rested for fourteen years thereafter.' Likewise the entirety of Kōnstantinos VIII's chapter is structured in terms of regnal years: 'for the first year of his reign he remained in silence' but was disturbed by Komnēnos' rebellion, 'which was the year 475 (1026) according to our calendar'; then, 'with the coming of the second year', the emperor sent an executioner to blind Komnēnos, also sending Nikētas to Iviria; and in the third year he did likewise with Symeōn.[343] Similar combinations of chronological reckonings and regnal years are also present in chapters 6, 8, 9, and 17.[344]

So the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* was an annalistic work organised by both imperial regnal years and the Armenian era, hence the categorisation as a chronicle, and the *History*'s chronological structuring is entirely drawn from this composition. Aside from imperial affairs only Turkish raids are regularly dated by year,[345] indicating alongside other factors that the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* was composed locally. Alongside more precise dating the *History*'s information is temporally arranged by relational dating mechanisms, noting that events took place 'in the same year' as previous ones, or that a certain number of years have passed, for instance commenting that 1057 was 'the thirteenth year'[346] since Turkish raids began. There are even a handful of instances in which the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s chronology is used to resonate with the work's ideological structure, such as the notice that 1046/7 was 'the second year of our captivity', and that the events of 1057/8 took place 'in the same world-destroying year'.[347]

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[340] AL, 543.
[341] Ibidem.
[342] E.g. AL, 543; 552; & AL, 532; 544.
[343] AL, 542-544.
[344] See Appendix I: Dating in the *History*.
[345] E.g. AL, 566; 605-610.
[346] AL, 600.
[347] See Appendix I.

In this manner non-*Chronicle* historiographical stuff is organised around that composition's chronological framework, providing a concrete sense of narrative time, though not always successfully. The difficulty of reconciling dates might explain the run of undated "bitty historiographical" episodes. Tellingly in one instance there appears to be confusion between the date when Kekaumenos became *doux* of Iviria (493 AE = 1044 CE) with the date when he took command of Ani,[348] even though this predates the city's annexation (494 AE = 1045 CE).[349] Similarly chapter 21 on Melitene's sack comes after the end of the imperial civil war and Isaakios I Komnēnos' elevation in chapter 20, but chronologically is partially beforehand and narratively is positioned as simultaneous, dated to the 'autumn of that grievous year, while the Romans were occupied with the clamour of kings, when the month of Areg had come (October, 1057)'. Their stay in imperial territory is dated for 'five months of winter, from its inception until the month of Navasard', and they are claimed to burn down a monastery 'During the same year', before the chapter ends by dating the events to 'the year 507 of our era (1058).' This fine-grain dating indicates the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s local composition, and forms the last but one of the *History*'s specific dating notices, the final in chapter 24 for the sack of Ani. Most strikingly, as already noted, the battle of Manzikert is vaguely situated ten years after the events of 1057/8, an entirely erroneous dating that indicates the *History*'s heavy reliance on the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s chronology.[350]

This begs the question of the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s putative length. The composition has already been termed the *to 1057/8,* and so is argued to end with material reflected in the chapter on Melitene's sack, and particularly the fortunes of that raiding party. It is obviously unclear when the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* would have begun, the *History* may have started in 1000/1 for any number of reasons, not least that the *Universal History* ended at this point.[351] Otherwise the year 1000 is an odd starting date for imperial history, falling directly in the middle of Basileios II's reign, and suggesting that the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* could have begun earlier. Yet if the work was composed locally then the year 1000 marks the death of Davit' *kouropalatēs* and western Caucasia coming under direct imperial rule. The *History* begins with this event, and the first four chapters deal with its aftermath in detail, so that it is possible to imagine that the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* was composed as an account of imperial actions in Tao-Tayk', the later theme of Iviria, beginning with the annexation.

Regardless the end date of 1057/8 is fairly secure, supported by the fact that the *History* has no historiographical sections after this point – had the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* covered later years

[348] AL, 562.
[349] AL, 561.
[350] AL, 625.
[351] One hint that the *Chronicle* began earlier is the *History*'s reference to the revolts of Vardas Sklēros and Vardas Phokas, see: AL, 537.

it surely would have been used much as before. The late 1050s and 1060s form a profound gap in the work's chronological sweep. This is especially evident in comparison with contemporary Grecophone and later Armenophone historiographical works, with the *History* nowhere mentioning the vast majority of Isaakios Komnēnos' reign, the entirety of Kōnstantinos X Doukas' (1059-1067), the imperial annexation of Kars (1064), Rōmanos IV's 1068 and 1069 eastern campaigns, Manuel Komnēnos' 1070 campaign, as well as several claimed Turkish raids into imperial territory. Of course there is no reason why the *History* should be assumed to record any or all of these – it is positivism to assume the same empirical claims must be emplotted – but the near total absence of the period 1057/8-1071 remains telling: aside from the sack of Ani there are no empirical claims whatsoever. Given Ani's singularity this account would seem to originate in a different source, and the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* should be imagined as only running to 1057/8. Indeed, this date makes sense given the conditions of this year, with a violent usurpation marking unpredictable sociopolitical shifts – notably Skylitzēs' *Synopsis of Histories* originally ended in 1057 with Komnēnos' accession.[352] Thus, at least in terms of chronology and historiographical stuff, the *History* appears almost entirely structured around the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle to 1057/8.*

While the *History* itself has a markedly uneven distribution of Roman and Armenian historiographical stuff, and the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* would seem to focus almost entirely on imperial affairs, as noted both are self-evidently regional works dealing in particular with the region of western Caucasia around Tao-Tayk', and in general with eastern Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia – so-called "historic Armenia", named both 'Armenia (*Hayk'*)' and 'the East (*Arevelk'*)' in the *History*. Thus the detailed topography seen throughout should be understood as indicating the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s geographical situation. The narrative perspective reflecting this situation is seen in the *History*'s first post-preface lines:

> So when the death of Davit' the *kiwropałat* occurred, who had been a powerful man…the autocrat emperor of the Romans, Vasil, came forth in the twenty-fifth year of his reign with his own large army; and having made up his mind he arrived in the region of Ekełeac', having made a passage avoiding many stops. And the *azatagund* of Tayk' met him,[353] and he honoured each with generous gifts according to their worthiness, receiving sovereignty, honour, and dignity, they left exceedingly happy.[354]

This extract is typical of historiographical sections exhibiting the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s narrative qualities: the information is arranged according to imperial regnal year; the perspective

[352] On the two recensions of the *Synopsis of Histories* attributed to Skylitzēs and so-called *Skylitzēs Continuatus* see: Tsolakis (1968), 23-74.
[353] The *azatagund* is the collective term for the military corps of Tao-Tayk' elite, the *azat*s or 'freemen', a loosely defined elite category beneath the high nobility or *nakharar*s.
[354] AL, 527.

is regional; but the focus is on imperial actors, with the narrative following Basileios as he arrives to meet the *azatagund* of Tao-Tayk‘ rather than *vice versa*. The same is seen at the end of the episode, when:

> …in that same place came the king of the Ap‘khaz, Bagarat, and his father Gurgen, and the autocrat emperor greatly honoured them. And he gave to Bagarat the honour of *kiwropałat* and to his father [he gave the honour of] *magistros*, and dismissed them in peace. And he himself went across Hark‘ and Manazkert and, having halted, turned upon Bagrevand and came to the city of Ukht‘ik‘, and he ruled many regions, fortresses and cities. And he established over them officials, judges, and overseers; and then he made his own road in peace, and reached his own Reigning City of Kostandupolis. This occurred in the year 450 (1001), and the land rested for fourteen years thereafter.[355]

Again the emphasis is on the emperor, with regional actors coming secondary to his narrative action, but the perspective itself is regional, Basileios is precisely situated in the landscape, and the final dating notice is in the Armenian era. The same precise geographical situation is then seen in chapter 2, when it is noted that the emperor came to ‘the East’, arrived on the ‘plain of Karin’, met the Ivirian bishop of Vałašakert, crossed into Basiani (Arm. *Basēan*), commanded the sacking of ‘the great *avan* which is named Okomi’, had prisoners ‘taken to the district of Khałtk‘ (Khaldia)’, and went himself back across Basiani to ‘the province of Vanand, in Karmir P‘orak’, before Giorgi came ‘near to the city of Ukht‘’, ordered his troops to burn the ‘handsome estates’, and then joined battle with the Romans ‘near the small lake named Pałakac‘is’. This fine-grain specification is local to the small part of western and southern Caucasia stretching from the Pontus, through Tao-Tayk‘ to Širak, the southern reaches of Ap‘khazet‘i and K‘art‘li, and the core of the Bagratuni polity. This forms the *History*’s and so the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*’s central landscape, with the majority of historiographical stuff tied to this relatively restricted region, including the intriguing stories told of Varangians rescuing captives from a Turkish raid into Khaldia and Tao-Tayk‘, and Ivane’s machinations during the imperial civil war, as well as the precisely situated Turkish raiding parties.

In comparison Roman-focused episodes situated elsewhere, like the conquest of the Bulgarian polity or Maniakēs’ rebellion, are given impressionistically and so almost solely as unmediated homiletic examples, indicating that the underlying material was thin on detail when compared to regional action. Of course in the process of composing the *History* much of the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*’s historiographical stuff would be left out or changed beyond recognition, and this presumably larger work may have had more detailed accounts of western imperial history – notable exceptions are the accounts of Mikhaēl IV’s fraternal parcelling of imperial sovereignty, and Michael V’s downfall. The historiographical works attributed to Step‘anos and Yaḥyā ibn

[355] AL, 528.

Sa'īd of Antioch also demonstrate the circulation of comparatively detailed accounts of Basileios II's Bulgarian wars and Constantinopolitan politics in the eastern provinces,[356] with both providing sections that have proved essential to the construction of a chronology.[357] Yet the comparative lack of detail in emplotted western action ultimately suggests that the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* had an overwhelmingly local focus. If, for example, the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* recorded Geōrgios Maniakēs' position as *katepan* of Italia prior to the 1041 revolt, this surely would have been noted rather than that he 'held the western parts',[358] a vague assertion compared to the accounts of Phōkas and Komnēnos' eastern revolts in the 1020s.[359]

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Thus, much as the *History* itself, the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* should be imagined as a local historical composition, a work specifically concerned with the interplay between the provincial and the imperial. It is easy to imagine such a work composed in Theodosioupolis-Karin, seat of the Roman *doux* of Iviria, and metropolis of the writer's self-situation in 'the *avan* of Arcn in the district of Karin'.[360] Questions remain, however, over this work's nature and circumstances of composition, not least its original language. Greenwood suggests that it was Greek,[361] but there are no indications of this. [362] Certainly the writer probably had a command of Greek,[363] although to what level is unknowable. Nevertheless, there are no grammatical constructions suggesting an underlying Grecophone composition. The *History* does not passively reproduce its sources, and no doubt *Chronicle* material is often rewritten beyond reconstruction. Yet several sections retain the annalistic format, so the lack of Greek constructions remains important. There is one instance where Ivirians are named *Ivirosk'*, hence using the Greek *Ibēros* rather than Armenian *Vir*. This demonstrates a multi-linguistic situation, but as a single instance does not identify the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s language. It is also recorded that Monomakhos' father held 'the office of *gayiosut'iwn* in the palace, from which all the judges of the land were dispatched.' Here the office

[356] On these historians see above pages 11-12.
[357] For analysis of the crucial evidence provided by these texts see: Holmes (2005), esp. 240-298; & 448-543.
[358] By comparison Maniakēs first appears in the *History* holding 'the sovereignty of the borders of the Roman region' in the east, a much more precise description: AL, 546; the *History* also uses 'Western Parts' to refer to Bulgaria, emphasising its vagueness, see: AL, 529.
[359] This latter event has much more detail, including the involvement of the Cappadocian army: AL, 543; the *History*'s version of Komnēnos' also contrasts interestingly with that of the *Synopsis*, see: *Synopsis*, 371-372.
[360] See section I.2.
[361] Greenwood (2017a).
[362] Catherine Holmes has made the same assumption about similar material in the works attributed to Step'anos and Yaḥyā, see: Holmes (2006). Greenwood has also argued for a Grecophone source underlying Book III of the *Universal History*, and provides examples of Greek terms for imperial offices and titles as proof, but these appear only to confirm the presence of transliterated rather than calqued Greek terms. The conclusion is also nuanced by the suggestion that the *Universal History*'s writer may have had a translation of the Greek work, see: Greenwood (2017), 58.
[363] For example the gloss 'Theodora' as meaning 'God Given': AL, 595.

in charge of justice, *dikaios* in Greek,[364] is given an Armenian rendering, with the initial syllable having dropped. This suggests a spoken term, not a straight transliteration, and this information certainly originated in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*. Importantly, in several other instances official titulature is given in an Armenian rendering, such as *paṙekimanos* (*parakoimomenos*), *demeslikos* (*domestikos*), and *sinklitos* (*synklētikos*).[365]

Nevertheless there is no way to securely identify the original language via terminology or grammatical constructions. However, there is one strong indication that the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* was written in Armenian: the dating system. Although precise years almost solely appear in *Chronicle* material,[366] they are all given according to the Armenian era. If these are the writer's own calculations from a source that used Roman *anni mundi*, then we must imagine a systematic process of calculation only attempted for dates in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*. This is possible, but considering the lack of systematic dates for narratively central events and the often shaky chronology,[367] it seems unlikely. There is one appearance of Roman dating formulae in the *History*, with Isaakios' accession occurring 'in the year 506 of our era (1057 CE), which was the tenth Roman indiction'.[368] Notably, this claim is confirmed in the *Synopsis* attributed to Skylitzēs, which places Isaakios' acclamation 'on Wednesday 31st of August, tenth year of the indiction'.[369] Nevertheless, this single appearance of Roman dating does not confirm an underlying Grecophone source, indeed, the precision in both the *Synopsis* and the *History* probably originates in an imperial edict announcing Isaakios' accession. Therefore it remains highly likely that the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* itself used the Armenian era, and arranged its material according to this reckoning alongside imperial regnal years.

Although perhaps counterintuitive, this dual chronological arrangement is a feature of mid- to late-tenth and eleventh-century Armenian colophons. Of the sixty-four colophons dateable to the period 950-1079, thirteen mention the reigning emperor, and seven include alternative reckonings such as *anni mundi*.[370] Considering the vast majority of surviving colophons provide only the year of the Armenian era, place of copying, and reigning *kat'ołikos*, this is a significant number.[371] One colophon written in Ani in 1046 uses six different chronologies, including *anni mundi* and

[364] ODB, vol. I, 624.
[365] E.g. '*paṙekimanos* (*parakoimomenos*)': AL, 544; '*demeslikos* (*domestikos*)': 551; '*sinklitos* (*synklētikos*)': 548.
[366] The only exceptions, as noted above, are the sack of Ani, a highly significant event which post-dates the *Chronicle*'s end, and the elevation of *kat'ołikos* Petros I, which appears as a single-line notice and could easily have been recorded in the *Chronicle*.
[367] See pages 8-9 above.
[368] AL, 597.
[369] *Synopsis*, 500.
[370] These colophons range in geographical provenance from the theme of Makedonia across to Caucasia, and can all be found in Matevosyan (1988), 55-134.
[371] Indeed, it far outnumbers the mere four colophons from the same period which mention the reigning king of Great Armenia.

the Armenian era, as well as noting that it is the reign of Monomakhos.[372] Likewise, another of 1057 written in 'the great *avan* of Arcn, in the region of Karin' is dated by the Armenian era and placed 'in the reign of Mikhayl, Emperor of the Romans'.[373] By way of comparison, it is notable that in the work attributed to the Christian Arabophone historian Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd of Antioch (*c.*950-*c.*1060), *hijri* reckoning is adopted as the primary mode of chronological organisation.[374] Chronological reckonings are thus not ideological statements, but practices tied to particular regions and linguistic traditions, mediated of course by institutional cultures, but not defined by abstract religious, political or national identifications. A Caucasian writer composing in Armenian could use that era without endorsing the council of Dvin from which it is supposed to derive,[375] much as Christian Arabs could use *hijri* reckoning without endorsing Islam's eschatological vision.[376] Notable in this regard is a colophon of 989 from Noravank' in Vaspurakan that includes both the Armenian and 'Roman' eras, as well as the years of the 'Ismaelite tyranny', that is, the *hijri*.[377]

This begs a basic question: if the *Chronicle to 1057/8* was a locally produced, Armenian-language work that used the Armenian era, why is it 'Armeno'-Roman, rather than 'Romano'-Armenian, or, simply, 'Armenian'? 'Roman' describes the overwhelming focus on imperial actors and affairs, but Armenophone historiography was centrally concerned with the Roman Empire from its late antique inception, and at first sight the *Chronicle* could fall into this tradition. Yet the work had almost no information on Armenian ethnicised polities or the Armenian Church, and is particularly focused on the emperors in the manner of *Kaisergeschichte*. Instructive western *comparanda* are the annalistic sources reflected in the *Synopsis* attributed to Skylitzēs.[378] These sources, particularly prominent in the sections *c.*976-1057, focus on the emperors, political events, natural disasters, and occasionally also fiscal and administrative details.[379] Moreover they are clearly identifiable by a strict annalistic format, using *anni mundi* and the years of the indiction. The perspective is Constantinopolitan, but there are entries on various regions from Italy to Caucasia.[380] It is likely that these annals were composed from official archives,[381] and the

[372] Matevosyan (1988), 91.
[373] Matevosyan (1988), 95.
[374] The principle study of Yaḥyā and his work remains that of Forsyth (1977); the edition and French translation are found in *Patralogia Orientalis*, XVIII.
[375] This took place in 554/555 AD, and is the first time the Armenian Church officially rejected the Chalcedonian Creed.
[376] This reckoning is Yaḥyā's primary mode of chronological arrangement, see: Forsyth (1977), 307-311.
[377] Matevosyan (1988), 72.
[378] A comprehensive study of the *Synopsis*' sources remains an unfortunate *desideratum*, but the use of annals has been identified in several studies, see: Holmes (2005), 91-119; & Shepard (1975), 61–79; *idem*. (1977–9), 145–59; *idem*. (1977), 22–30; *idem.* (1975–6), 296–311; *idem.* (1975), 211–25; *idem*. (1992), 171–81.
[379] E.g. *Synopsis*, 331-332; 347; & 379-380.
[380] E.g. *Synopsis*, 347-348; 366-367; & 368-369.
[381] Holmes (2005), 112.

kind of information is highly reminiscent of the *Chronicle*'s. Indeed, these annalistic compositions appear entirely alike in format and thematic content, only of a different linguistic and regional tradition. Thus the *Chronicle* is clearly 'Roman' in everything *but* its language and chronological reckoning. It should be understood as "provincial" in the literal sense, a local composition, with regional characteristics, and an imperial focus. Characterising the *Chronicle* in this manner expands Roman as a category beyond narrowly Grecophone or Constantinopolitan definitions, thereby including provincial traditions for which there is good evidence.

One important eastern comparison is a source reflected in the work attributed to Yaḥyā of Antioch. This appears to have been a local Antiochene composition, probably written in Arabic but perhaps Syriac,[382] which like the *Chronicle* has an imperial but provincial focus. Notably this source apparently did not contain wide-ranging information on Constantinopolitan affairs, including only the most important political events and the succession of patriarchs and emperors. Excepting these instances, as well as extended coverage of the Bulgarian wars, Roman information associated with this source is focused on the eastern provinces, particularly Antioch and northern Syria. Most importantly, the Antiochene chronicle is identifiable by its use of the Seleukid era.[383] This is demonstrated by the fifty-four dates provided according to this reckoning, each associated with Roman and Christian affairs, again largely in Antioch and northern Syria, often alongside imperial regnal years for Roman material.[384] Analysis of the composition attributed to Yaḥyā and its underlying sources is clearly beyond this thesis' scope, but the Arabophone writer provides a significant parallel. His work demonstrates that there were various historiographical traditions of imperial chronicle writing in eleventh-century New Rome, some of them provincial and non-Grecophone.

Importantly, the *History* is not the only surviving evidence for an Armenophone tradition. In various versions of the work attributed to Samvel Anec'i such sources appear to underlie much of the eleventh-century material, with regnal years noted for Basileios II, Konstantinos VIII, and other emperors, certain entries referring to 'Vasil the king' without qualification, and terminological indications that Roman usages have been adopted over more standard Armenian ones.[385] Even more tellingly, as Holmes and Greenwood have argued, a similar work also underlies much of Book III of the *Universal History* attributed to Step'anos, returned to below. Similarly, although they are woefully understudied, Latin chronicles of southern Italy, such as that spuriously attributed to a certain Lupus *protospatharius*, indicate a similar phenomenon there, with *anni mundi* used alongside imperial regnal years, and information both regional and

[382] Forsyth (1977), 190-193.
[383] *Ibidem.* 190-193; & 307-309.
[384] *Ibidem.* 309.
[385] SA, 186-193.

Roman.[386] There is, therefore, strong evidence across the geographic span of the eleventh-century empire of New Rome for varying but intersecting traditions of imperial chronicle writing in Latin, Greek, Armenian and Arabic.

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With this in mind it is import to explore the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s potential circumstances of composition. Importantly *Chronicle* material is extremely well-informed and accurate about imperial administration. Not only does it note the appointment and actions of local governors, but on several occasions officials' honorifics are also recorded. In one striking instance titles are connected to specific responsibilities in the fraternal division of imperial sovereignty under Mikhaēl IV (*r.* 1034-1041) brothers.[387] One brother is given Thessalonikē and the West with the title *magistros*, another command of Antioch and 'the southern country' as *domestikos,* and a third was named the *synklētikos*, 'senator', and placed in charge of Constantinople, 'putting all the concerns of the rights of the palace also into his hands.' Aspects of this division of responsibilities are recorded in Constantinopolitan sources, though nowhere so carefully or clearly.[388] Another important instance of titular accuracy is the use of 'autocrat emperor' (*ink'nakal t'agavor*).[389] This is an exact Armenian calque of the Greek term for the reigning emperor, *autokratōr basileus*, distinguishing him from co-reigning *basileis*, in Basileios II's case his brother Kōnstantinos VIII. Basileios' early lead seals show a preference for this titulature,[390] and it should be noted that sealed documents are mentioned several times in the *History*.[391] Perhaps for this reason 'autocrat emperor' is applied most commonly to Basileios, only appearing once more in Monomakhos' reign.[392] Likewise, geospatial terms like Virk' (Iviria) and Khałtk' (Khaldia) map not onto traditional Armenian topography, but onto that of imperial administration.

The *Chronicle* even extends into the *minutiae* of local administration. For example, the *History* records how, after having given lands and titles to Bagrat and Gurgen, Basileios:

> …himself went across Hark' and Manazkert and, having halted, turned upon Bagrevand and came to the city of Ukht'ik', and he ruled many regions, fortresses and cities. And he

[386] On Lupus Protospatharius see generally D'Angelo (2002).
[387] AL, 548.
[388] In fact the *History* is our only source for this division as a coherent program, and for one brother being placed in charge of Thessalonikē and the West; the *Synopsis* notes the appointment of Nikētas to Antioch, and Psellos focuses on the Orphanotrophos' role in finding his brothers' posts, see: *Synopsis,* 395; *Khronographia,* IV.15-16; & V.1-6.
[389] E.g. AL, 528; 529; 542.
[390] See the relevant sections in Nesbit & Oikonomides (2009).
[391] One notable example is the document 'written and stamped by a gold seal' granting Grigor *magistros* lands in the theme of Mesopotamia: AL, 561.
[392] AL, 557.

> established over them officials, judges and overseers; and then he made his own road in peace, and reached his own Reigning City of Constantinople.[393]

This is a section of the *History* where the *Chronicle*'s format has been retained, with the emperor as grammatical subject and including specific details about his progression. It is striking, therefore, that Basileios is said to have appointed two types of official in particular, judges (*datavork'*) and overseers (*verakac'uk*). These terms refer to the two offices known to have been central to imperial administration in eleventh-century Caucasia, *kritai* and *kouratores*,[394] notably Skylitzēs mentions that Basileios executed four *kouratores* in the aftermath of Phōkas' 1021-2 rebellion.[395] In another instance the *History* notes the re-introduction of imperial administration to land taken from Giorgi: 'with the appointing of governors over the province by the emperor, they divided [it] house by house, village by village, and field by field, as it had been previously.'

Thus there is the image of a provincial Roman chronicle, written in Armenian and using the Armenian era, but well-informed and accurate about imperial administration. Like the annalistic sources reflected in the *Synopsis*, therefore, the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* should be imagined as composed in networks associated with the imperial administration, drawing on their official archives. Official correspondence with the imperial centre is the most plausible route by which to imagine the circulation of Roman material in Caucasia, and the recording of local imperial actions provides an equally plausible purpose for the *Chronicle*'s composition. The administration had Armenophone capabilities, demonstrated by the survival of Armenian seals, as well as references to the use of Armenian in official military situations, and the Armenian *doux* Gabriēl of Melitēnē was a known patron of literary works.[396]

Moreover, the imperial administration was involved in recording local events around the empire, most notably demonstrated in the work known as the *De Administrando Imperio*, a foreign policy and client management handbook compiled *c*.950.[397] As James Howard-Johnston has noted, the *DAI* is made up of several regional 'dossiers', documents from the imperial archives detailing aspects of recent history and official interactions.[398] Chapters 43-46 form a 'Caucasian dossier', containing careful accounts of late-ninth and early-tenth century imperial dealings with Bagratuni and other Caucasian magnates. It is also important to remember that every single Roman historian

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[393] AL, 528.
[394] Holmes (2005), 299-391.
[395] This information comes in the *Synopsis*' second version of Giorgi's revolt, which comes from a different annalistic source to the first version, placed correctly in 6531 AM (= 1021/2 AD), see: *Synopsis*, 366-367; & below note 119.
[396] On the non-Greek imperial seals see: Cheynet (2015), 107-124; *doux* Gabriēl is mentioned as patron of Mikhaēl Andreopoulos' Greek translation of the *Book of Syntipas*, see: Toth (2014), 88.
[397] For an introduction to the *DAI* and its production see: Moravcsik, & Jenkins (1967), 7-14.
[398] Howard-Johnston (2000), 301–336; a more recent study has demonstrated how the *DAI*'s 'Italian Dossier' is carefully constructed so as to reinterpret local southern Italian historiographical traditions and present them in manner acceptable for Roman diplomatic considerations, see generally Bondioli (2016).

of the eleventh century was a career bureaucrat,[399] amply demonstrating the importance of history writing to imperial administrators, and their access to relevant source material. Postulating the *Chronicle*'s connection to local administrative networks helps to explain the direct quotation of imperial edicts and correspondence. For instance, when recording the empress Zōē's (*r.* 1028-1050) uncanonical fourth marriage, the writer's voice comments that some accused her of being Monomakhos' lover, but they are undecided as to whether this is true or whether 'as she herself had written in her edict [it was] for the benefit of the land: "for the peace of the land I have not spared myself, and because of such things I have dared this unworthy deed."' This notice originates in an imperial edict circulated to explain the empress' actions, thence recorded in the *Chronicle*. Such official correspondence is evidenced by a 1068 letter of Mikhaēl Psellos, who reproaches Eustratios Khoirosphaktēs, *magistros* and *protonotarios tou dromou,*[400] for not celebrating Rōmanos IV Diogenēs recent campaign by sending out letters, as this would fix events in historical memory.[401]

Imagining an administrative situation for the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s composition thus helps to explain the appearance of stories that seem to have been purposefully circulated by the imperial centre. For example, in the *History*'s section dealing with Mikhaēl V's attempted 1040 *coup* against Zōē, the Constantinopolitan mob apparently demand: 'Show us our purple-gloried empress, who has that sovereignty as inheritance from her fathers and grandfathers'.[402] Strikingly, the *Khronographia* attributed to Psellos records the crowd saying 'Where can she be…the rightful heir to the empire, whose father was emperor, whose grandfather was monarch before him – yes and great-grandfather too?',[403] and the *Synopsis* has them cry: 'We don't want [Mikhaēl], but the original and hereditary [ruler]'.[404] The appearance of direct speech is important as such instances are rare in the *History*, indicating that they are only included when present in underlying sources.[405] The close correspondence between these lines cannot be coincidental, it may reflect the actual cries of Constantinopolitans, and the whole story may simply have survived in the East as an aspect of social memory. Yet there is a political objective to the tale, emphasising Zōē's impeccable right to rule. Indeed, the *History*'s version of events gives far more agency than the Constantinopolitan sources to Zōē's sister and future co-ruler Theodōra. The more critical

[399] These bureaucrat historians are Mikhaēl Psellos, Mikhaēl Attaleiatēs and Iōannēs Skylitzēs, cf. Matheou (2016).
[400] This office is in charge of official correspondence, see: ODB, vol. III, 1746.
[401] Probably this letter carries a heavy sense of irony since Rōmanos did not achieve much on the campaign, but it reveals an expectation of imperial correspondence presenting its own version of events, see: Gautier (1986), 175-8.
[402] AL, 551.
[403] *Khronographia,* V.26-27
[404] *Synopsis,* 418.
[405] This is evidenced by the fact that for long stretches of important historical information direct speech is entirely lacking.

Grecophone sources construct a complex series of actions, some mob-driven, some orchestrated by the patriarch Alexios I Stouditēs (*r.* 1025-1043), leaving the imperial sisters more-or-less passive. In stark contrast the *History*'s short and uncritical version places Theodōra at the centre, attributing all relevant decisions to her agency. This suggests a story circulated by the palace, one which sanitised the messy revolt so as to highlight the role of the new co-reigning empress. The *Synopsis* even records Iōannēs Orphanotrophos doing something similar seven years earlier, when, after orchestrating his brother Mikhaēl IV's accession and Rōmanos III's murder, he:

> …sent letters throughout the *oikoumenē* making it known that the emperor Rōmanos had paid the debt of his mortality; [and] also that Mikhaēl, having been proclaimed while Rōmanos was still alive and with his approval, was now married to the empress.[406]

The *Chronicle*'s origin in local administrative networks is demonstrated in one final example. This is the series of letters from Basileios to Giorgi of Ap'khazet'i-K'art'li, which to judge by the manner of their insertion into the narrative are directly quoted.[407] If the letters are genuine then it indicates that the *Chronicle*'s writer(s) had direct access to imperial correspondence. The letters all exhort the king to leave sites from Tao-Tayk', and the second instance of correspondence contains important clues connecting the letters to an imperial bureaucratic situation:

> …the emperor, in the days when he remained at Salk'ora, was demanding his three fortresses with their estates from Georgi, which Gurgēn had unjustly appropriated from the *kiwropałat*'s portion, he sent envoys to him, and with sweet words he wrote to him: 'Leave that which is not of your patrimonial inheritance, and go in peace to your portion and do not be an impediment on my road which is into Persia'.[408]

Basileios' insistence that Giorgi leave lands not part of his 'patrimonial inheritance' is found in all three instances of quoted correspondence, and emphasised by the emperor naming the lands 'my patrimony'. This is important, as the *Synopsis*' condensed coverage of the same events contains this same argument. The context is confusing, and the date associated with the information (6497 AM = 988/9 AD) indicates that three different events have been merged: Basileios' 990 campaign to force Davit' to name him heir; the 1000/1 expedition to claim the principality; and the wars with Giorgi 1021-3.[409] Nevertheless, the entry's wording is telling, the *Synopsis* claims that the emperor 'arrived there and took possession of his inheritance, and prevailed upon Geōrgios…to be satisfied with his own [patrimonies] (οἰκείοις) and not to covet

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[406] *Synopsis*, 392.
[407] This is clearly indicated by the use of թէ before the quotations, a particle indicating direct speech much as quotation marks in modern English.
[408] AL, 538-539.
[409] The situation is complicated even more by the fact that the *Synopsis* records Basileios' war with Giorgi twice, first combining it with the two earlier events mentioned here, and then again as a separate conflict in itself (see note 104 above). The association of dates with both instances suggests that the writer had access to two different annalistic sources with Caucasian information, and failed to recognise that the two wars with Giorgi were one and the same, see: *Synopsis* 339-340; & 367.

those of another.' Likewise, in the first letter quoted in the *History*, Basileios' demands that Giorgi 'Abandon that which I gave your father as a gift…and be prince only over your patrimonial lands'. The *Synopsis*' wording is thus highly reminiscent of the *History*'s, strongly suggesting official dispatches circulated around the empire, thence recorded in Constantinopolitan annals and Caucasian chronicles.

Certain odd features of the excerpt above can be explained by the same route, particularly that 'three fortresses' are demanded, and that Giorgi is called a 'barrier' on the emperor's road into 'Persia'. The first point is particularly strange – the *Life of K'art'li* records Basileios eventually receiving fourteen fortresses along with other lands,[410] and it is unclear from a geostrategic perspective which 'three' are meant. The mention of 'Persia' implies the parts of Davit's principality in the southern regions around Lake Van, but Giorgi had taken lands further north as well, and it is odd that these are left unmentioned. These peculiarities might be explained from an unlikely source, the *DAI*. In chapter 44 there is a detailed history of the urban possessions of various Caucasian magnates, concluded with the entry:

> If these three cities, Khliat and Arzes and Perkri, are in the possession of the emperor, a Persian army cannot come out against Romania, because they are between Romania and Armenia, and serve as a barrier and as military halts for armies.[411]

There is a common vision here, with the Lake Van region playing a blocking role in the empire's defence from powers in Persia, and an emphasis on 'three' sites as key. Although they are not named, Giorgi's 'three fortresses' appear to be in this area, and whilst it is impossible to identify them precisely it should be noted that in 1011 Manzikert was in Gurgen's control.[412] The close correspondence between the *DAI* and the *Chronicle* section suggests that the quoted letter references a genuine product of the imperial bureaucracy. It must be remembered that there is no prior reason to mention only three sites or their specific role as a 'barrier' into 'Persia'. Basileios had the right to claim the entirety of Davit's principality, geostrategic motives were not necessary, and their presence requires explanation. It suggests that the letter writer(s) operated with the same geopolitical assumptions and concerns as those of the *DAI* – in short, that they were members of the Roman bureaucracy employed in official correspondence.[413]

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[410] *Life of K'art'li*, 152-153.
[411] *DAI*, 204-205.
[412] Forsyth (1977), 469.
[413] The wording of the *History*'s letter is probably drawn directly from the *DAI*, and a third eleventh-century composition demonstrates the use of this work in the palace's literary-bureaucratic networks, even referencing the same section. In an episode from Rōmanos IV's 1068 campaign, Attaleiatēs, historian and self-made 'senator and aristocrat', describes himself disagreeing with the emperor over the decision to return to Constantinople rather than continue eastwards. The wording directly evokes the same *DAI* section, positioning 'Khliat and the cities subject to it' as key in providing a 'block' for armies out of Persia. The context for this information is therefore of paramount importance. It is a rare example not only of direct speech, but also a unique moment of Attaleiatēs' own voice within the narrative, addressing Rōmanos

So the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* should be imagined as a single work stretching from 1000 to 1057/8, written in Armenian in circles associated with Caucasia's provincial imperial administration in or around Theodosioupolis-Karin, organised annalistically by both imperial regnal years and the Armenian era. The *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* provided the *History*'s chronological spine and the lion's share of historiographical stuff, with only a single date and hardly any "properly historiographical" episodes for the period 1057/8-1071. Imagining this source thus makes sense of the many oddities noted in the *History*'s narrative structure, and its composition in circles associated with imperial administration is highly suggestive for situating the *History*'s writer as a historical actor.

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Although the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* should be imagined as providing the vast majority of historiographical stuff, the question remains whether other historiographical sources should be imagined in the process of historical composition. In particular is the question of whether those few episodes defined as "Armenian" demonstrate underlying "Armenian" sources. Of course the *History*'s central underlying source is critically imagined as an Armenophone Roman chronicle, problematizing any hard lines between "Armenian" and "Roman" as categories. Here, therefore, "Armenian" is defined not by language but thematic association and origin, particularly the Bagratuni polity and the Armenian Church.

It is fitting to begin with the sole Armenian history explicitly named in the work, the *Universal History* attributed to Step'anos Tarōnec'i – there are other references to 'our chroniclers of old', but none of these are named. The *Universal History* is the other significant work of Armenophone historiography to survive from the eleventh century, but it is more commonly associated with the tenth, and published in those volumes of the *Matenagirk' Hayots'*, since this is the period of the richest historiographical episodes as well as the writer's conjuncture, with the work's main narrative finishing around the year 1000 in all surviving transmissions, and the colophon indicating its completion in 1014.[414] Like the *History*, the *Universal History* is attributed to a writer situated in the interstices of New Rome and Caucasian polities, in the Upper Mesopotamian region of Tarōn annexed in 967,[415] but it constitutes a much more ambitious and "properly

himself. If we accept the speech as referring to the *DAI*, what Attaleiatēs constructs is an instance where he gives imperial advice to an emperor. Attaleiatēs may have accessed the document behind the *DAI*'s chapter, but considering that this is a mid-tenth century finalisation of an early-tenth century compilation of ninth-century documents, it seems more likely he consulted the *DAI* itself. Indeed, the only complete manuscript is from this era, made for the *kaisar* Iōannēs Doukas, someone whom Attaleiatēs knew in the 1070s palace. If Attaleiatēs had access to this work, as an important but not preeminent official, then it is highly probable that the *DAI* and related works were available for the use of bureaucrats involved in official correspondence. See: *Historia*, 114.

[414] On the *Universal History* see generally Greenwood (2017).

[415] On this see: Greenwood (*forthcoming*).

historiographical" project. The *Universal History* and Step'anos are both named in the *History*, although not in a long list of historiographical works in implied succession from each other, as some previous and many later Armenophone historians provide. Rather the work appears at the start of chapter 2 in a passage with the narrative function of illustrating the cultural richness of the Bagratuni polity in the time of Gagik I:

> And there were in those days the *vardapet*s Sargis, Tiranun, and Yenovk'…and Samvel…and Yovsep'…*and Step'annos Tarōnac'i* [*sic*], *who composed a world history with a stunning style, beginning from the first man and going on to conclude his history with the death of Gagik, with whom this history is concerned*…[416]

Particularly notable is the claim that the 'world history' composed by 'Tarōnac'i' went up to the death of Gagik I Bagratuni, rather than ending in 1000 with a notice on the building of the cathedral at Ani and the division of the Haykazean princes' patrimonies between the Bagratuni king and the Shaddadid emir of Ganja, as all surviving manuscripts have it.[417] This apparent claim has occasioned the suggestion that the *History*'s writer had access to a longer version of the *Universal History*, and were this to be the case then much of the historiographical stuff in chapters 1 and 2 may have originated here rather than the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*. This has been the topic of limited debate over the *History*'s sources, with some Armenologists choosing to assume the *Universal Chronicle* existed in a longer version, and others arguing this goes against other indications. Step'anos has the longest associated description in the passage above, but the *Universal History* is not described as a source nor is the *History* claimed to be a continuation of that work, although mention of the style indicates some active engagement.

More important than these narratorial claims, however, is that the *Universal History* has nowhere marked the *History*'s narrative. There are no Armenian focused episodes in chapters 1 and 2 comparable to those at the close of the *Universal History*. Of course Book III of the *Universal History* has an underlying Armeno-Roman source strongly comparable to the *Chronicle*,[418] and it is possible, if odd, that a longer version going up to *c*.1017 almost solely dealt with imperial affairs. For example, chapter 43, 'The Death of the Great *kiwropałat* Davit' and the Coming of Vasil, King of the Greeks, to the Country of the East', presents the same narrative qualities as the same affairs recorded in the *History*, but with entirely different narrative details. Whilst both cover Davit's death, Basileios' rapid march eastwards to claim his lands, and a subsequent clash between the *azatagund* of Tao-Tayk' and the Varangian Rus', the specified places differ: the *Universal History*'s account details the emperor's progression from Cilicia to Tao-Tayk', while the *History* simply notes that 'he arrived in the region of Ekełeac', having made a passage

[416] Emphasis added; AL, 530.
[417] ST, 619-635.
[418] Greenwood (2017), 57-61.

avoiding many stops'.[419] Even more tellingly the specifics of the clash are completely different: the *Universal History* blames the fight on an *azat*'s attempt to steal a Rus (Ռուք) horse, stating that God punished their pride, and naming particular *azat*s who died. The *History*, by contrast, has the writer's voice claiming that he does 'not know' why the *azat*s and the Rus' (Ըռուք) fought, but that thirty *azat*s died on account of 'God's righteous judgement' for their poisoning of Davit'‘s communion wine. This crucial accusation is entirely absent from the *Universal History*, strongly indicating no direct relationship between the accounts. The *History*'s digression on the revolts of Vardas Sklēros and Vardas Phōkas presents the same situation,[420] a brief version of events that appears unrelated to the *Universal History*'s extended coverage, for example stating that Phōkas ruled Anatolia for seven years rather than two.

So the *History*'s Tao-Tayk' cycle should be imagined as drawing on the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*, not the *Universal History*. This is demonstrated by the one passage with striking resonance between the two works, recounting Basileios' granting of titles to Bagrat of Ap'khazet'i and Gurgen of K'art'li. The *Universal History* states:

> He himself travelled and arrived at the mountain of Havčič', at the city [of that name]. There Bagarat king of Ap'khazk' and his father Gurgēn, king of Virk' met him; receiving the king of Ap'khazk' with very honourable respect, [Basileios] honoured him with the *kiwropałatut'iwn*; he made his father *mažistros* and sent them back to their countries.[421]

Similarly we find in the *History*:

> For the emperor having passed into the land of Ałori, near to the fortress which is named Havajičn, passed the night [there]…And in that same place came the king of the Ap'khazk', Bagarat, and his father Gurgēn, and the autocrat emperor greatly honoured them. And he gave to Bagarat the honour of the *kiwropałatut'iwn* and to his father [he gave the honour of the] *magistrosut'iwn*, and dismissed them in peace.[422]

These two passages resonate beyond mere chance, the information contained in both is identical, and the narrative progression is almost exactly the same. Notwithstanding subtle differences in spelling, rendering of Greek terms and grammatical constructions, it is certain that these passages share some common source. But this does not indicate that the *History* is dependent on the *Universal History*, considering this is the sole instance of close correspondence it is difficult to imagine that the *History*'s writer chose only this occasion to copy the work near *verbatim*. Rather than a direct relationship, therefore, it seems that the accounts had a common origin. The most probable explanation is that both accounts are drawn from related Armeno-Roman chronicles,

[419] AL, 527-528; ST, III.43
[420] AL, 536-537; ST, III.14-15, 24, & 25-27.
[421] ST, III.43
[422] AL, 528.

which themselves drew on the same official imperial pronouncement. The passage thus indicates that both the *Universal History* and the *History* draw on an intersecting regional tradition of Armenophone imperial chronicle writing, a tradition now only reflected in the works of Armenian ecclesiastics, but prominent in both Armenophone histories to survive from the eleventh century.

So although the *Universal History* is named in the *History* alongside the attributed writer with a reference to its literary qualities, there is no reason to imagine any direct relationship. The origin of the *History*'s two Bagratuni-focused episodes, in chapters 2 and 10, should be imagined in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*. The first is straightforward, since it is mediated by focus on Giorgi, and later Basileios for his support of Ašot against surrounding magnates. The second on the Bagratuni polity's fall is squarely focused on Armenian actors, but can be imagined as providing the background to Ani's imperial annexation in much the same manner as the earlier cycle on Tao-Tayk'. Particularly telling is the sudden notice on Grigor Pahlavuni's claimed free decision to give his patrimony at Bjni to the empire, recorded neutrally without any negative comment from the writer's voice, and specifying that he was given in return 'the honour of *magistros*, and a place of dwelling in the borderland villages and cities of Mesopotamia, by written document and stamped by golden seal, from generation to generation in perpetuity'.[423] This provides important legal situation for a prominent actor in Roman Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia. The general lack of detail around Ani's fall is also telling, with the exact relation of Sargis' actions to the annexation never fully explicated. Thus, although a number of other routes for supplementary information should be allowed for, the second Bagratuni episode can also be imagined as originating in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*.

Thus despite the apparent focus of these episodes on "Armenian" affairs, at least in terms of the Bagratuni polity these too are drawn from a composition associated with imperial administration, albeit provincial, Armenophone, and using the Armenian era. This explains their vagueness, lack of detail, arrangement around key Roman dates, and the polity's appearance only when it impacted New Rome – features that appear even more pronounced when the *History* is compared to the same period as narrated in the *Chronicle* attributed to Matt'ēos.[424] It also explains why Vaspurakan's annexation is only mentioned in connection with Yovhannēs-Senek'erim's actions as governor-general of Sebasteia, and Kars only for the actions of its *azat*s in attacking a raiding party leaving imperial territory. In short, all the historiographical stuff emplotted as the *History*'s political narrative, for both Roman and Caucasian polities, whether ethnicised K'art'velian/Georgian or Armenian, should be imagined as originating in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*. Nevertheless this apparent historiographical focus does not make Roman affairs

[423] AL, 561.
[424] This has extended and detailed coverage of machinations in the Bagratuni polity and other Armenian ethnicised kingdoms like Kars.

somehow "more important" than Armenianness in the work's broader narrative thrust – it has already been noted that the homiletic sections are narratively central and take up as much if not more of the absolute narrative space than "properly historiographical" episodes, with Armenianness forming their and the *History*'s ultimate ideological horizon. Yet the heavy reliance on a source associated with the imperial administration is striking nonetheless, and critically imagining the practical implications is crucial for historically and socially situating the *History*'s writer.

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Alongside the Bagratuni polity "Armenian" sources are defined as encompassing those episodes dealing with the Armenian Church. Tellingly, unlike for the Bagratuni polity, distinct sources focused on the Armenian ecclesiastical apparatus *are* imaginable from episodes in the *History*'s narrative. In the first instance this encompasses compositions and traditions associated with the *kat'ołikos*, for example the stories about Petros I's two celebrations of Epiphany, the earlier in Khaldia in the presence of Basileios II to miraculous effect, the latter in Arcn after his exile, imprisonment and transportation to Constantinople. The former story is the final episode of chapter two, immediately following the notice that the emperor went to Khaldia to winter, where he was met by Petros. Importantly the *History* is not the only surviving composition to record this story, it also appears in the *Chronicle*.[425] Notably the two accounts share all the basic claims – the *kat'ołikos* came to meet the emperor, was treated with honour, and a miracle came about when the Armenians' holy chrism touched the water – only with the *Chronicle*'s version much more emphatically nationalist. Whereas the *History*'s version notes simply that 'at the moment when the patriarch poured lordly chrism on the water, flickers of light appeared suddenly, rising from the waters…and the horn of our faith was raised up',[426] in the chronicle this light is 'an intensely brilliant fire' that blocked the river so that it would not flow. Thereafter, where the *History* has Petros 'given greater honour by the emperor and the officials', the chronicle claims that the emperor and his troops became terrified, and Basileios poured the miraculous water on his own head under the *kat'ołikos*' guidance. Differences in emphasis notwithstanding, these two accounts clearly recall a single tradition, especially since the two compositions very rarely resonate so closely, traditions best understood as circulating among ecclesiastics in the institutional apparatus of the Armenian Church. The differences can be explained either by the tradition's various developments over time and space, or the varying purposes present in the respective compositions, the *History* seeking to resolve competing Roman and Armenian hegemonic apparatuses, the

[425] MU, I.50.
[426] AL, 535.

Chronicle to assert Armenian primacy. The *Chronicle*'s more emphatically nationalist intention is most evident when later in the same episode it is claimed that:

> After a while Vasil in turn secretly went to Antioch, accompanied by three faithful men. Going up to the Black Mountains to a place called Pałakdziak, he received Christian baptism from the superior and spiritual leader of the place and henceforth became like an adopted father of the Armenian nation (*azg*).[427]

Interestingly, however, the second Epiphany story is absent from the *Chronicle*, and given its role in the *History*'s narrative logic it may have been constructed for this purpose with no prior claim or tradition. Equally, given the fact that this second episode took place in Arcn, the precise geographical situation claimed by the writer's voice, the story may also indicate some narrativised aspect of lived experience.

It is worth imagining further such traditions circulating among actors of the Armenian Church, sometimes more-or-less oral, sometimes (re)produced through different forms of literary composition. This imagining situates the most narratively important "Armenian" episodes, those constituting the story arc on Yovhannēs-Smbat's bequest of the kingdom of Great Armenia to New Rome. This arc is constitutive of the central narrative progression, integrated into the dual Epiphany stories, and taking centre stage in chapter 10's pivotal transformation. The first part appears at the close of chapter 2 immediately after the first Epiphany story, when *c.*1020 the *kat'oɫikos* Petros is sent with the king's will, named 'the destruction of the Armenians'[428] – but with no indication of Yovhannēs-Smbat having been pressured, he simply had no children of his own. Then in chapter 10, immediately following the notice that 'in the following three years the lives of the Armenian houses came to an end' with the deaths of Ašot and Yovhannēs-Smbat, there appears an awkward episode that turns the narrative from *c.*1042 to the end of Kōnstantinos VIII's reign in 1028.[429] Here it is claimed that the emperor, referred to as 'the great Kostandin', decided on his death bed to give 'the letter which concerned the Armenian land' to 'a man from among the Armenians'. Imperial functionaries brought 'one of the elders, named Kiwrakos, who was the chamberlain of the *kat'oɫikos*' apartments', with the emperor giving him the will saying:

> 'Take that writing and give it to the king of the Armenians; and say "Since the invitation for death sent to all mortals has arrived for me, have your letter and give that kingdom to your son, and your son to his sons in perpetuity."'

Kiwrakos, however, does not do this, instead keeping it to himself until the time of Mikhaēl IV's reign, when he sold it back to the emperor 'for much gold'. This re-sale is emplotted as the pivot around which the narrative is fundamentally transformed, marked by a brief lamenting notice.

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[427] MU, I.50.
[428] AL, 535.
[429] AL, 556.35-557.39.

The narrative details here are important for what they indicate about underlying narrative fragments and traditions. One particularly important detail is that Kiwrakos was the *kat'oɫikos*' chamberlain – perhaps indicating that he should be imagined as a re-writing of some actor involved in the Armenian Church's politics concerning the Bagratuni polity's end. The reference to Kōnstantinos VIII as 'great' is also notable, a positive assessment that stands in stark contrast with his presentation in eleventh-century Grecophone historiography.[430] He is earlier named a 'peace-loving and generous man' in the *History*, although at the same time as sending officials using 'deceiving words' to remove *azat*s from patrimonial lands, but this is not connected to the emperor's character.[431]

By way of comparison the *Chronicle* presents Kōnstantinos as a paragon of virtue, a 'kind and pious man, compassionate towards widows and captives' who 'left behind a good memory' after his death, when 'there was great sorrow in the country, which had been deprived of such an emperor.'[432] This unrelentingly positive image provides an important point of comparison for the *History*'s episode – regardless of whatever specific tradition or composition informed the story about Kiwrakos, Kōnstantinos VIII's reified memory among Armenian ecclesiastics was apparently very good, making him a useful narrative foil in circulated political stories. This is particularly pertinent recalling that the catholicate was a central institution in Ani's eventual annexation, and that this *kat'oɫikos* too was a figure of some controversy – as the *History* notes, 'Petros had been a great lover of treasure, and on account of this many despised him.'[433] The only concrete motivation given for Kiwrakos' treason was desire for gold, so that it is possible to imagine some composition or set of stories circulating among Armenian ecclesiastics that blamed Petros' claimed vice for Ani's fall – stories excerpted from and reframed in the process of the *History*'s composition, so that this particular angle became less important than the general way in which it provided a concrete mechanism for the narrative to revolve around. In such manner the story functions in the *History* to make apparently clear that Ani's capture and the kingdom's end was not the emperors' fault, nor that of the *kat'oɫikos* and the Bagratuni kings, but was instead due to this Kiwrakos.

Importantly the story of Yovhannēs-Smbat's will does not only appear in the *History*, but also the *Chronicle* and the *Synopsis*.[434] In the *Chronicle* the story is interestingly vague, only noting that when 'the nation of the Romans heard of [Yovhannēs-Smbat's] death, the emperor Mikhaēl [IV] collected troops', invading because the king had bequeathed Ani with a written will in return for 'gifts from the Romans for fifteen years and also a high rank.' But there is no political explication

[430] See, for example: *Synopsis*, 370.
[431] AL, 542.1-544.10.
[432] MU, I.56.
[433] AL, 579.4.
[434] *Synopsis*, 435; MU, I.74.

of the different interests involved in Yovhannēs-Smbat's decision or subsequent Roman actions, instead Sargis' role is developed more fully than in the *History* and takes centre stage in directly orchestrating Gagik's fall. In the *Synopsis*, conversely, the will is politically situated in Yovhannēs-Smbat's claimed decision to support Giorgi of Apʻkhazetʻi-Kʻartʻli against Basileios II, but, fearing imperial reprisals in the aftermath of his defeat, he went to the emperor, gave him the keys to Ani, and:

> The emperor accepted him for his sagacity, honoured him with the title of *magistros* and appointed him ruler for life of Ani and of the so-called Great Armenia. In return he demanded (and got) a written guarantee that, after his death, all this dominion would pass under the emperor's sway and become a part of the Roman empire.[435]

Interestingly the *Chronicle* claims that when Sargis convinced Gagik to go to Constantinople, he sent ahead 'the forty keys of the city of Ani to the emperor Monomakh and with these a letter stating that the city of Ani and the entire East was his', with the emperor presenting these to Gagik when he arrived. Hence the *Chronicle*, the *History* and the *Synopsis* all refer to letters granting New Rome the city of Ani, with the *Chronicle* briefly mentioning Yovhannēs-Smbat's as well as a claimed one from Sargis, and the *Chronicle* and *Synopsis* both also referring to Ani's keys. The point is not to reconcile the various accounts to arrive at "what happened", but to illustrate the various narratives and narrative fragments that circulated among historical actors, thereby providing practical ways to critically imagine the *History*'s underlying sources. It seems that both the *Chronicle* and the *History* preserve fragments of narratives that circulated among Armenian ecclesiastics providing one or another political perspective on why Ani had fallen and who was to blame, narratives that themselves resonated with elements of stories circulating among Roman officials for the same purpose. In particular, for both the centrality of this institution in general and the role it played here specifically, the catholicate seems to have provided a locus out of which such narratives emerged and were circulated, and against which such narratives were propagated.

Imagining such circulations also explains the apparent disjuncture between two source types knitted together in chapter 14, 'How Long Katʻołikos Petros Remained in Constantinople, or How He Returned'.[436] The first episode, detailing Petros' stay in Constantinople and subsequent move to Sebasteia, appears to originate in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*: it continues on from the last episode of chapter 10, is focused on imperial actors, albeit ex-Armenian royals, refers to Constantinople simply as the 'Reigning City (Arm. *tʻagavoranist kʻałakʻ*, Greek *Basileuousa*)', and completes the discussion of Khačʻik's succession and settlement at Taranta near Melitene in Upper Mesopotamia without necessitating a second episode. There is, however, a second episode

[435] *Synopsis*, 435.
[436] AL, 578.1-879.9.

immediately after which returns to Khač‘ik’s stay in Constantinople, with characteristics that indicate a different source. Particularly notable is the use of the geographic designation ‘Second Armenia’ to situate Taranta, a term originating in imperial administrative divisions of Late Antiquity, and reproduced as the primary form of imagined geography in Armenophone writers into the tenth century.[437] This is, however, the sole such usage in the *History*, with the term ‘the East’ and otherwise solely medieval toponyms employed, a tendency also seen in the *Universal History*.[438] Thus the sole appearance here in an episode concerned with catholical matters is centrally important, indicating the continued use of such an imagined geography among functionaries of the Armenian Church apparatus.

Alongside this important indication, the presence of a separate underlying source is suggested by the different narrative qualities of the second episode,[439] including direct speech from the *kat‘ołikos* himself, as well as an implied broader narrative setting only partially reproduced in the *History*. The claim is that Khač‘ik was kept in Constantinople under imperial pressure to allow taxation of the Armenian Church, the *kat‘ołikos* refusing saying ‘what until my own time did not exist I also will not accept’, and Roman officials continuing to interrogate him, stating ‘You shall not leave here until you do as we command’. The writer’s voice then notes Khač‘ik as a worthy successor to Grigor the Illuminator on account of this, and an oddly truncated story follows:

> After these things two men, the one a prince and the other a monk from the Romans, came forth, whether in order to make him emulate them or in honesty, I don’t know, they requested oversight of the church and to undertake taxation; and after this both died an evil death. Then, coming to repent, he [the emperor] released him without taxation, giving a document sealed with a golden ring that their holdings in Armenia were there, and two monasteries in Taranta.

There must have been more to this story, which appears hagiographic in its demonstration of Armenian sanctity, and has resonances with comparable stories of Caucasian ecclesiastical interaction with imperials from the contemporary Georgiophone *Life of Giorgi Atoneli*.[440] Although the extended narrative is irretrievable, it can be imagined as a story circulated to reinforce the Armenian Church’s tax-free status and confirm his possession of certain sites.

Similar sources, although apparently with less immediately political purposes, should be imagined underlying chapters 22 and 23 on T‘ondrakean heresy. These are highly idiosyncratic, with no chronological relation to their narrative setting, and no explicated connection to any of the other episodes in the *History* – although their function is evidently to illustrate practical instances of heresy. Chapter 22 can be dated to the end of tenth or beginning of the eleventh

[437] See, for example, the *Geography* attributed to Khorenac‘i, Hewson (2000), 30-35.
[438] See, for example: ST, III.36 & III.43.
[439] AL, 579.6-9.
[440] On these compositions see generally Martin-Hisard (2006), & (2011).

century by the presence of the *kat'ołikos* Sargis, but chapter 23 is not dateable from the mention of 'patriarch Samvel',[441] nor does it have any internal connection to the previous chapter, with the narratival centrality of an imperial judge only indicating a date at some point in the eleventh century. These chapters are also idiosyncratic for their narrative qualities, providing self-contained, detailed episodes with precisely named figures, sub plots, and direct speech, and with a localised focus markedly different to the rest of the *History*'s high political perspective. Importantly each chapter tracks the progression of two individual heretics, both aristocratic elites, the one a bishop the other a prince (*iškhan*), marking their rise and fall and concluding with their ignominious ends, accompanied by exhortations to avoid their fate. Both chapters also track the efforts of Armenian ecclesiastics to bring them to heel, with these presented as the heroic adversaries of the heretical protagonists. It is not difficult to imagine, therefore, that these short narratives were composed in order to present the Armenian Church's perspective on particular events, thence circulated for propagation by ecclesiastics to make more general points about heresy and its prosecution. In this regard, it is striking the extent to which Roman actors are not Othered in these stories, with those in Constantinople refusing to accept Yakobos into the imperial church, and the imperial judge a celebrated character in the story concerning Vrverh.

These sections are thus paradigmatic of the Armenian sources imaginable as underlying the *History*'s narrative, more-or-less self-contained narratives functionally excerpted in order to bridge very particular historiographical gaps, or, more commonly, to allow broader moral-theological framings. These narratives are imaginable as traditions and compositions that circulated among Armenian ecclesiastics to make one or another political-theological point. It is important to note the presence of comparable circulated compositions in both the *Universal History* and the *Chronicle*, in particular the long refutation of Chalcedonianism in the *Universal History*, attributed to a letter of *kat'ołikos* Khač'ik I responding to the Roman metropolitan of Sebasteia,[442] another long refutation of Chalcedonianism put in the mouth of Gagik II in the *Chronicle*, as well as the prophecy attributed to Yovhannēs Kozeṙn.[443] All of these are inserted at particular points in the respective narratives to provide extended political-theological discussions that frame the "properly historiographical" sections of those works. Particularly important is the presentation of the composition attributed to Khač'ik I as a letter responding to that of the Roman metropolitan, indicating the concrete movement of these works among the various actors of the imperial and extra-imperial east.[444] This is also suggested by the survival of several letters

[441] The Armenian term *hayrapet* is often used to designate the *kat'ołikos* as 'patriarch', but can also be used for metropolitan bishops or abbots.
[442] ST, III.21.
[443] MU, II.31-41; I.64.
[444] This period in particular is rich in new prophecies and circulating ecclesiastical works seeking to explain events, see: Andrews (2017), 23-43.

attributed to Grigor Pahlavuni *magistros*, one of the figures emplotted in the *History* as demonstrating the Bagratuni polity's good state, who apparently kept correspondence with a wide range of actors.[445] Similarly colophons reveal the movement of large manuscripts, bridging the imagining of circulating works among the highest and lowest Caucasian elites, particularly monastics as Aristakēs is claimed to have been.

So the *History*'s Armenian sources should be imagined as traditions and compositions circulated among ecclesiastics often in the form of correspondence, much as the situation among the monasteries of northern Syria, as evidenced in the works attributed to Nikon of the Black Mountain (*c.*1025-1110).[446] These provide important *comparanda* in general, with Nikon apparently playing the role of a monastic teacher, something like that of a *vardapet*, in a Chalcedonian Armenian monastery. His letters reveal wide ranging correspondence with regional ecclesiastics, as well as national tensions between communities, with one letter to a Roman monk demanding that they stop denying Chalcedonian Armenians entry to their church – insisting that, although they are not of the same *genos* as the Romans, they are of the same faith.[447] The contemporary Georgiophone *Life of Giorgi Atoneli* also reveals tensions between Chalcedonian K'art'velian monks and Grecophone Romans on the Black Mountain in the mid-eleventh century, compositions that indicate underlying polemics circulated between institutions.[448] These provide important points of comparison for the episode in chapter 6 recounting Rōmanos III's persecution of anti-Chalcedonian Syrian monks on the Black Mountain. This has different narrative qualities to the other episodes in the cycle of imperial vignettes, including direct quotes attributed to the emperor, and an "on the ground" narrative perspective. The quotation put into the mouth of an imperial officer, 'All these groups are men who pray, always making requests for the world's peace and your life of health', suggests a story circulated by anti-Chalcedonian ecclesiastics to justify their existence in the empire. Notably several letters attributed to Grigor *magistros* are to Syrian ecclesiastics, with the Armenian Church recognising their communion at this time, and indicating the circulation of correspondence.[449] Needless to say, though, if there is such an underlying source, then it has been stitched into stuff drawn from the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*, as all the other "Armenian" sources imagined here.

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A final group of sources that are important to consider, both expanding our understanding of the term "source" and moving beyond inevitably essentialising categories like "Armenian" and

[445] MH 16, 139-385.
[446] On Nikon see the introduction to Allison (2000).
[447] On Nikon's letters see generally Hannick (2014).
[448] See, for example, the interactions between Giorgi Atoneli and the patriarch of Antioch: Martin-Hisard (2006); Martin-Hisard (2011).
[449] MH 16, 192-204.

"Roman", are circulating experiences that must be situated in the everyday life of social systems – "popular" stories, eyewitnesses, and the apparent lived experience of the writer themself.[450] Indeed, the "sources" examined here stretch the tension between critical history and the necessary but inevitably somewhat reifying empiricist standpoint adopted here. These "sources" are in essence imaginings of social dynamics, the kinds of stories flesh-and-blood people told each other in concrete times and places, and so to approach them from an empiricist standpoint is inevitably positivist to some degree. Most importantly, since these stories cannot be precisely situated in the social system, there is an inevitable tendency to reify characters in the narrative as fully-fledged human actors, but shorn of their socioeconomic, sociopolitical, gendered, and ethnicised lived experience. Nevertheless, although it is important to be mindful of this inevitable tendency, an analysis of these sections is necessary to complete this discussion of the *History*'s underlying sources.

The clearest example is the story of Mikhaēl IV's demonic possession in chapter 9.[451] Here the emperor was apparently 'wickedly afflicted by a dev', which 'they say' was his punishment for illegally taking the empire. Due to this affliction, moreover, Mikhaēl is claimed to have regularly visited a female witch in Thessalonikē, 'as in the ancient days of Barseł they narrate the dealings of a youth at the hand of a witch', and she would assist him with his plight. Most notably, those who tell these stories 'support [their supposition]' by pointing out that 'the emperor used to go often to T'esałonik', them supposing him to be with the witch'. Crucially, in the comparison between the two witch stories there are two distinctly different words, 'they say (*asel*)', and 'they narrate (*patmel*)'. This distinction underlines the actual people who discussed the tale, and who explicitly sought to defend it against detractors. Thus it is indicated as a story which circulated in the east about the emperor, although repositioned in the *History* as an illustrative story on the "demonic" and sinful nature of usurpation, going against divinely appointed authority. But the fact that it is about the emperor does not make it "Roman", this is a reflection – however dim – of human actors discussing aspects – however high political – of their everyday lives, lives that themselves are irreducible to any one category or ethnicisation.

Similar processes can be imagined with more precise social situation for the claim that an unnamed hermit wandered east to west through Caucasia and Upper Mesopotamia in chapter 9.[452] Given this episode's narrative function the point is obviously not to claim that some particular person did in fact wander these lands declaring woe, but rather to draw attention to the *History*'s claim that 'the wise said: 'That "Woe" will be for the whole country.' Of course "the wise" are a literary trope employed in a number of ancient and medieval works in order to rhetorically

[450] Compare with the general study of social memory in Wickham & Fentress (1990).
[451] AL, 548.10-15.
[452] AL, 550.30-38.

juxtapose two points of view while preferring one over the other, but the trope in itself reflects a desire on the part of various writers to indicate the concrete discussions taking place in particular times and places. This is seen in the *Historia* attributed to Attaleiatēs, for example, which mentions how Romans at first put the initial Turkish raids down to punishment for Armenians' non-Chalcedonian, and therefore heretical Christianity, but when Roman Christians began to suffer they were 'at a loss'.[453] Although also internal to the *Historia*'s narrative logic, and not a one-to-one reflection of social realities, this claim still represents concrete people seeing, hearing, doing, and experiencing.

For much of the information on Turkish raids, particularly for the sections termed "bitty historiographical", it is possible to imagine reported action as much as the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*. In chapter 18's recounting of a raid into the Karin district, for example, it is mentioned how 'all the villages and religious foundations on this side of the Euphrates, as well as many people from the Arcn *avan* had assembled [at a village called Blurs]', but were caught there and massacred.[454] A number of details in addition to the specific mention of people from Arcn allow these sections to be imagined as informed to a greater or lesser degree by lived experience. On the other hand, as already noted the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* is argued to be local to Theodosiupolis-Karin, so that it is impossible to parse reported action and local information from this composition. But this in itself demonstrates the concrete affinity and lived experience behind the selection of this source as the *History*'s narrative spine.

One instance where this is not an issue is the chapter on the sack of Ani, appearing after the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* has come to an end. This vignette on an urban sack has slightly different narrative qualities than, for example, that on Melitene, where particular details are more-or-less absent and the story is largely imaginable as a short entry in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*. Here, however, there is a relatively precise description of the sack's progression, from a clash at the outer walls, to breach, and eventually to a siege of the inner citadel, while others unsuccessfully sought refuge in the old royal palace. These details suggest some set of reports informing the account, not all of which must have been written or "formal", as opposed to stories passed from survivors or heard directly. This is particularly imaginable for chapter 19 on the destruction of the theme of Mesopotamia and its cities, with the residents of Havar claimed to flee into the vineyards surrounding the city, where they were found by raiders and slaughtered:

> The clusters of grapes were stained with their blood. Later on the surviving dregs [of the city] came forth, located their dead among the vines, and buried them under the earth. Yet their

[453] *Historia*, 176-177.
[454] AL, 601.53-602.60.

> consciences would not allow them to gather or eat those grapes. For they said that those grapes [were filled with] human blood.[455]

Again there is the specific use of a speaking verb, 'they said (*asel*)', indicating direct reports. There is a danger, of course, in imagining these as direct reports, with the tendency then to assert some greater inherent truth content. That would imply a reification of such raids as constituting the general regional experience of this conjuncture, across all socioeconomic and sociopolitical strata, taking them at face value as "what happened".

This is particularly important for chapters 11 and 12, which the writer's voice explicitly claims as their own lived experience. As such they demonstrate that lived experience, even presumed as "genuine", does not mean these episodes should be assumed to have a stronger claim to "truth". Much of the imagery in these two chapters is re-instantiated from previous homiletic sections, and likewise much of the newly introduced imagery re-emerges in later instances too. Nevertheless the writer's voice is unequivocal: 'We have written the pitiful account of two places, of the mountain and of the city. We have written only about what we saw with our own eyes, and about the wicked things we ourselves experienced.'[456] It is clear, therefore, that an analysis able to comprehend both the formal ideological nature of the representation, and the explicit claim of lived experience, cannot be done from an empiricist standpoint. Such statements may indicate as much about the initial purpose of such compositions as they do about concrete experience in everyday life, imaginable as initially shorter self-contained works circulated about specific raids, prior to the *History*'s further composition. Nevertheless, it is important to keep such lived and experienced "sources" in mind when considering the empirical bases underlying the *History*'s narrative.

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To conclude this critical imagining of the sources reflected in the *History*'s narrative, one in particular should be imagined as central to the process of historical composition: the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle to 1057/8*. This provided almost the entire chronology as well as the lion's share of historiographical stuff, imagined as an originally Armenophone annalistic work, arranged by both the Armenian era and imperial regnal years, and composed in circles associated with regional Roman administration. Beyond this are imagined a number of shorter, more-or-less self-contained narratives and narrative fragments that circulated among actors in the institutional apparatus of the Armenian Church. These sometimes circulated as traditions, as with Petros' celebration of Epiphany before Basileios II, and sometimes as more directed written compositions making one or another political point. Finally, a third group of more nebulous "sources" is imagined, the lived

[455] AL, 604.
[456] AL, 576.

experience of human actors at the time, circulated as stories or told directly to the writer, as well as the writer's own direct experience. This last group, stretching the potential of an empiricist standpoint to its limit, alongside the concrete social dynamics behind the other two groups, begs the question of imagining both writer and work as historical actors.

I.5 Afterlife

In this subsection we turn to why the *History* was transmitted into the modern and contemporary era. The general outline in subsection I.2 set out the work's editing and translation history, as well as critiquing modern and contemporary scholarship, here the issue at stake is the period between the *History*'s original conjuncture and the beginning of capitalist modernity. This is termed the work's "afterlife", meaning when it is no longer in its immediate situation as a historical actor but is rather re-situated in successive conjunctures, and in particular their instantiations of Armenianness. The general question of the work's afterlife encompasses two particular issues: first the initial purpose, and the way in which this played out in immediate and subsequent conjunctures; and second the work's situated use as indicated in the first known manuscript transmission, ms. Yerevan 2865, from which all known later transmissions likely derive, carrying the work from the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries – from the Middle Ages to capitalist modernity.

There are no surviving manuscripts transmitting the *History*, nor earlier colophons copied in later manuscripts, between *c.*1072-1079 when the *History* was composed and, *c.*1236 when Yerevan 2865 was copied. Before the eleventh century but particularly after, there is a tendency in Armenophone historiography toward listing previous writers in chronological order, a practice that mirrors the chronological arrangement of historiographical compositions seen in the *patmagirk'* that transmit the *History*, creating the same vision of a continuous national community and a successive but singular "Armenian voice". But the two Armenophone historiographical works to survive from the period between *c.*1072-79 and *c.*1236, the chronicles attributed to Matt'ēos and Samvel, do not carry such lists, with the first subsequent to the eleventh century appearing in the thirteenth-century *History of the Armenians* attributed to Kirakos Gandzakec'i ('of Ganja' (*Gandzak*)). This work is broadly contemporary to Yerevan 2865, and so returned to below. Here, then, the question is whether the *History*'s narrative presence can be detected in the intervening two works, before turning to its earliest surviving manuscript transmission.

In the case of the chronicle attributed to Samvel, the work's strictly annalistic character, and the complex manuscript tradition with various recensions, makes it difficult to judge any direct relationship with the *History*.[457] There are strong indications that both draw on related traditions

[457] For a full discussion of the chronicle's complex transmission history see: SA, 5-76.

of imperial chronicle writing. But in terms of a more specific resonance, where the tone, language, or representation meet in such a way as to suggest some more direct relationship, only the *Chronicle* attributed to Matt'ēos is relevant here. As Tara Andrews has pointed out in her recent study of the *Chronicle*, although the possibility had been rejected by generations of scholars, there can be little doubt that several sections rely heavily on the *History*, whether directly or indirectly.[458] It has been seen that in several episodes the *Chronicle* and the *History* emplot similar empirical claims, and in fact the later work reproduces almost all the earlier's Roman historiographical stuff, albeit emplotted with varying purpose, style and emphasis. Much as for the chronicle attributed to Samvel, this resonance may be due to what Holmes has termed the 'large webs of subtly interrelated texts' circulating in imperial space at this time, much as the multi-linguistic traditions of imperial chronicle writing.[459]

But the question here is not the empirical claims themselves, which may vary in specifics for any number of reasons, especially since the *Chronicle*'s writer has evidently utilised a large range of sources in the process of composition.[460] Rather the question is whether the *Chronicle* reveals the *History*'s initial purpose as a historiographical homily within its own broader, differently directed narrative, re-situated in this post-Crusade conjuncture. As Andrews has recently argued, and Christopher MacEvitt earlier indicated,[461] the *Chronicle* is structured around an apocalyptic prophecy attributed to Yovhannēs Kozeṙn, one of the figures emplotted in the *History* as signifying the Bagratuni polity's good state. Prophecy dictates a narrative thrust in which events are first presaged, and then appear as so many specific realisations of what is already generally known, presuming a quite different political theology to the *History*'s homiletic call to penance – where a homily emphasises personal agency mediated by Providence, prophecy and apocalypse prioritise the agency of Providence over the ability of earthly actors to choose. As Andrews conclusively demonstrated, the *Chronicle* consistently prioritises Providence in this divine dialectic, and so consistently chooses prophetic and apocalyptic logics of emplotment. That said, it is important to note that the imagery of Kozeṙn's prophecy resonates strongly with the *History*'s homiletic sections, and on the *History*'s part the wandering wailer Ananias is claimed to presage the birth of the antichrist.[462] Both compositions thus reveal a web of circulating Armenophone works in the eleventh century that debated the relative apocalyptic and punitive-theological causes of the crisis.[463]

[458] For a discussion of the empirical resonances between the two works see: Andrews (2017), 17-18.
[459] Holmes (2006).
[460] For an examples of such comparative empirical analyses see: Andrews (2017), 15-22.
[461] MacEvitt (2007).
[462] MU, I.52.
[463] What Andrews (2017) has termed the 'new age of prophecy'.

Nevertheless the *Chronicle* clearly prioritises prophecy, but in several sections on Turkish raids evokes a homiletic rather than prophetic discourse, referring not to the coming apocalypse and total transformation of the world, but to the correct punishment of corporate Armenian sin. The Turks' first appearance is situated in the episode of Vaspurakan's annexation, where the Kurdish Shaddadids are erroneously recast as Turkish raiders and Yovhannēs-Senek'erim reads apocalyptic works explaining their emergence:

> In these books he found written the following: "At that time they will flee from east to the west, from north to the south, and they will not find rest upon the earth, for the plains and the mountains will be covered with blood"[464]

Doustourian notes in his translation that the source of this quote is unknown, and in this exact form that remains the case, but in general it has notable resonance with these lines from the *History*'s verse preface:

> In those days of ours wars awoke from four sides | Sword from the East, murder from the West, | Fire from the North, death from the South;[465]

Although these lines are not identical there is clear resonance, particularly striking since Yovhannēs-Senek'erim is meant to be reading 'the chronicles and utterances of the divinely-inspired prophets, the holy *vardapet*s'. *Vardapet* is a title attributed to the *History*'s claimed writer, with prophecy understood as a central attribute of such actors, so that although the work is not apocalyptic, as the *Chronicle* claims of 'these books', any work by a *vardapet* can be broadly understood in such manner.[466] Thereafter Turks appear in several episodes in part I of the *Chronicle*, both as apocalyptic actors and alongside specific empirical claims. The case is complicated by the dual use of the ethnonyms "Persian" and "Turk", with many empirical claims made using the former better associated with the Shaddadids, but within the *Chronicle*'s narrative logic they are clearly indistinguishable and presented as one. So, given the more-or-less continuous presence of Persians/Turks from *c.*1020 on, it is striking that the sack of Arcn in chapter 92 is claimed to be the first city to be taken.[467] Within the narrative logic this is superficially true, there are no mentions of specific sacks prior to this point, but the broader claim that this was the start to Armenian tribulations appears odd given the some thirty years since Vaspurakan's annexation. It appears, then, that the *Chronicle* has reproduced a claim from some other source that positioned this raiding party as the first incursion and the beginning of disaster, much as the *History*'s dual presentation of the attack on Smbat's Mountain and Arcn. Even more

[464] MU, I.48.
[465] AL, 527.
[466] See subsection II.3.
[467] The sack is dated to the year 498 of the Armenian era (1049/50), unlike in the *History* where the raid is implied to take place in 497 (1048/9), but given the closeness of these dates and the relative lack of chronology in the latter work this is by the by, see; MU I.92.

strikingly, this episode also has an instance of the lamenting mode, which is otherwise incredibly rare in the *Chronicle*:

> How will I, while weeping, at the same time be able to relate the death of the *azat*s and priests, who remaining unburied, became food for the beasts; or the illustrious ladies, who with their sons were led into slavery to Persia in perpetual servitude! This was the beginning of the misfortune of the Armenians. Listen and pay attention to this account of the end and decay of the East – by slow degrees, year by year; for this Arcn was the first town which was captured from the Armenians and put to the sword and enslaved.[468]

The imagery evokes the *History*'s homiletic sections, particularly with the mention of murdered priests and enslaved elite women. Also important is the use of the term 'the East' to refer to the land, a Caucaso-Roman perspective that centres its geographic imaginary in Constantinople. The empirical claims about Arcn's sack vary between the two works, but given the process of composition claimed by the *Chronicle* writer's voice this does not present too much of a difficulty, they could simply have combined claims from different sources while reproducing the *History*'s homiletic thrust. Indeed, in the introductory section to Part II it is said that:

> We have used materials from very many observers and hearers who were born in times long past, from those who read the historians of these times and were eyewitnesses of all these happenings and afflictions which the Armenians endured because of their sins.[469]

These statements are easily applicable to the *History*, especially recalling the claim of the writer's voice to have directly experienced Arcn's sack, and likewise the punitive theology of corporate sin demarcates the *History*'s narrative thrust from that of the *Chronicle*. Nevertheless the argument here is not to assert in positivist manner that the *Chronicle*'s writer must have read the *History* in the form it has been transmitted. Rather, as a historiographical work insofar as that provided the vehicle for an effective homily, it is imaginable that sections of the *History* circulated separately among Armenian ecclesiastics – indeed, in the case of the dual eyewitness presentation of chapters 11 and 12, that these may have been composed and circulated *prior* to the rest of the work's composition.

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So although there is no direct way to explore the *History*'s afterlife between its own conjuncture and the copying of Yerevan 2865, the *Chronicle* provides one route to imagining this, as the work's original situation is lost, and the specific homiletic purpose is increasingly generalised through successive nationalist perspectives. This is seen in the later manuscript's position in its own conjuncture, the mid-thirteenth century, with the logic of arrangement reflected in more-or-

[468] Ibidem.
[469] MU, II.1.

less every pre-Mkhitarist manuscript thereafter. Although this conjuncture is not primary for the *History*'s immediate historical and social situation, it is important for understanding the institutional culture that dictated the national logic of arrangement reflected in Yerevan 2865. Hence the question of why the *History* was copied in this moment is centrally important for historically and socially imagining the work's afterlife, not only for its specific conjunctural conditions.

The mid thirteenth century was a period of rapid transformation between hegemonic cycles in Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia.[470] In the early to mid-thirteenth century most of eastern Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia was held in hegemonic condominium between the Seljuq sultanate and Apʻkhazetʻi-Kʻartʻli. Both claimed the title *shahanshah*, with the Anatolian Seljuq polity predominating over eastern Anatolia and Upper Mesopotamia, and Apʻkhazetʻi-Kʻartʻli over Caucasia, including an Armenian ethnicised Zakarid sub-hegemony around Ani in south-central Caucasia.[471] This conjunctural moment is reflected in early-thirteenth century Armenophone historiography by two translation projects, the Georgiophone chronicle known as the *Life of Kʻartʻli*, and the Syriac *Chronicle* attributed to Michael the Syrian, the latter preserved in manuscripts Ե and Ձ alongside the *History*.[472] Both projects abbreviated the original material and added ethnicised-Armenian specific content to significant works of non-Armenophone historiography: the *Life of Kʻartʻli* forms the major medieval Georgiophone historiographical work, in Armenian simply known as *The History of the Kʻartʻvelians* (*patmutʻiwn Vracʻ*); while the *Chronicle* may be the longest surviving annals from either the east or the west of medieval Christendom. Both projects emerge from a conjunctural moment in which the institutional apparatus of the Armenian Church – the concrete social situation for both – was fully integrated into Christian polities that nevertheless had complex relations to the reproduction of Armenianness, as with Apʻkhazetʻi-Kʻartʻli and its Zakarid sub-hegemony.

From the 1230s, however, as noted in the margins of Yerevan 2865, 'the Tatar' took 'the whole world'. Mongol invasions shattered previous regional hegemonies, and fostered the rapid emergence of a new world system,[473] with Armenian ethnicised elites participating in its rise early on – those of the Cilician polity took part in the conquests of Aleppo and Damascus, and those of Caucasia in the sack of Baghdad. This deep involvement is reflected in the importance of Armenian historiography for the study of the Mongol invasions, notably the Armenophone *History of the Nation of Archers* attributed to Grigor Aknercʻi ('of Akner') written *c.*1273, and the originally Francophone *Flowers of the History of the East* attributed to the Cilician aristocrat

[470] This moment of rising Georgian hegemony is reflected historiographically in the *Chronicle* attributed to Mattʻēos Uṙhayecʻi, see: Andrews (2017), 42.
[471] For an overview of this period see: Bedrosian (1997).
[472] For a full discussion of these translations see: Thomson (1996), xix-li.
[473] On the *long durée* ramifications of this world-systemic shift see: Anievas & Nisancioglu (2015), 64-90.

Het‘um and completed *c.*1307.[474] Likewise, although far broader in scope, the thirteenth century *History* attributed to Kirakos is centrally important, with the writer apparently held in Mongol captivity where they learnt the language and became a secretary, hence the composition’s inclusion of a list of fifty five Mongolian terms alongside Armenian equivalents.[475]

Yerevan 2865 is situated in this conjuncture, copied somewhere in south-central Caucasia in or soon after 1236, by which point the region had experienced nearly two decades of incursions, not only Mongol but also Kipchak and that of the Khwarazm-Shah.[476] As with the earlier Seljuq invasions it is difficult to imagine how these would have been experienced, especially as this differentiated across the stratified positions of the social system below that of the literate elite – and particularly since much of that elite came to an accommodation early on. But the “real” extent of the destruction is unimportant for the question of the manuscript’s copying, as will be seen for the *History* in part II, the point is the extent to which the social system’s transformation was experienced as a crisis by the elitedoms it had previously (re)produced – put simply, an existential crisis for elites need not have been one for commoners, and likewise while some elites’ social positions would be reproduced into the new conjuncture, however transformed, others’ would dissolve and be experienced as total societal collapse. Thus a colophon copied at the Hoṙomos monastery in 1236 writes:

> …This was written in a bitter and difficult time, in the year when the mother of cities Ani was taken and innumerable souls perished in blood. Which mouth or tongue can relate the cruelty of the lawless T‘at‘ars in the year 685 (1236 CE)…Let us recount the God-sent wrath that came upon the land of the Armenians and Georgians and Tajiks (i.e., Turks/Muslims) from human-faced beasts the T‘at‘ars, the bitterness and turmoil of our times, since the mind cannot conceive and the tongue [cannot tell] the shedding of blood and the massacre of all…There is no count to cities and regions that were ruined right up to our [monastery’s] borders…[477]

It is possible to imagine, then, that the *History* was copied and integrated into a longer *durée* vision of Armenian national history at this point because it appeared as testament to a previous Armenian ecclesiastic’s response to societal collapse, and apparently gave answers in the form of a historiographical homily. Central for the logic of deployment and arrangement in Yerevan 2865 is not an abstract idea of ethnic “Armenian” cultural response to the new conjuncture, but the specific *institutional* culture of the Armenian Church. The Armenian Church was a parapolitical (sub-)hegemonic apparatus spread across various political regimes, Christian and Muslim,

[474] See generally Bedrosian (2004).
[475] For the edition see Melik-Ohanjanyan (1961); for the only current see translation Bedrosian (1986).
[476] For a general discussion of the manuscript see: ST, 630-631. On manuscript copying in the region in the period see generally Matevosyan & Baloyan (2015).
[477] Matevosyan & Baloyan (2015), 344.

ethnicised Armenian, Georgian, Kurdish and Roman. Given this politically fractured situation the Armenian Church had an interest in presenting the inherent transhistorical unity of "Armenia", realized historiographically in the emplotted desire for a single Armenian kingdom with a single Armenian king, as well as in forestalling arguments that invasion proved the primacy of either Islam or another Christian denomination. Critical to the concrete processes by which these ideological claims were extended beyond actors in the institutional apparatus of the Armenian Church, was the provision of those actors with knowledge that formed the claims' content. How better to do this, then, than to gather the historiographical compositions of three identified *vardapet*s, arranged to present a singular national whole. The *History of the Armenians* was firmly established as the very first Armenophone historiographical work by the thirteenth century, providing the general framework for a transhistorical Armenianness and ending with a notable lament for Armenia.[478] This lament is thoroughly territorial, framed as Armenia's loss of the Aršakuni kingship and the Armenian patriarchate leaving the family of Grigor the Illuminator, thus representing the inextricable ethnic, political and ecclesiastical logics typical of the nationalist institutional culture of the Armenian Church. The lament concludes:

> The kings are cruel and evil rulers, imposing heavy and onerous burdens and giving intolerable commands. Governors do not correct disorders and are unmerciful. Friends are betrayed and enemies strengthened. Faith is sold for this vain life. Brigands have come in abundance and from all sides. Houses are sacked and possessions ravaged. There is bondage for the foremost and prison for the famous. There is exile abroad for the nobility and innumerable outrages for the common people. Cities are captured and fortresses destroyed; towns are ruined and buildings burned. There are famines without end and every kind of illness and death. Piety has been forgotten and expectation is for hell.[479]

These images recur in the *History*'s lamenting sections, with the thrust aimed at emphasising the need to come to penance for collective sins, hence their framing as *homiletic*. Situated in Yerevan 2865, and read in the conjuncture of south-central Caucasia in the mid-thirteenth century, such words immediately resonate at a level of Armenian generality – this is "our" experience transhistorically. Placed alongside the *History*, itself concluded by a heavily lamenting and homiletic postscript, the implication is a succession of cyclical invasions and devastations that must be weathered and withstood through orthodoxy. Not only orthodoxy, however, as noted the institutional apparatus of the Armenian Church had an interest in presenting the transhistorical unity of Armenia/the Armenians in *political* terms. Thus, while the *History of the Armenians* elaborates this for the ancient Aršakuni kingdom, with the *History* describing in homiletic terms

[478] On this see: Thomson (2006), ix-60.
[479] Thomson (2006), 348-349.

the fall of the Bagratuni polity, the *Universal History* bridges these by providing the story of the first kingdom's fall, and the second's rise. So, in chapter 2 of book III it is noted:

> Now it is clear to everyone that three lines ruled as kings of Armenia/the Armenians across three periods, I mean the Haykazunik',[480] and the Aršakunik', and the Bagratunik'. For this reason we have divided the discourse of our history into three parts. The first begins with the first created being…down to the accession of Trdat as king and the illumination of Armenia. The second [runs] from the same illumination of Armenia and the reign of Trdat down to the second restoration of this kingdom of Armenia/the Armenians by Ašot Bagratuni, which occurred in the days of Basil, king of the Greeks…[481]

This makes clear the nationalist arrangement of the *Universal History* in particular, and how it fits into the nationalist arrangement of Yerevan 2865 in general. So the *History*'s afterlife is particularly situated in this institutional culture, and the way in which it was able to resonate at a level of Armenian generality despite the incredibly sparse empirical claims concretely made. Although these have been the focus of modern and contemporary scholars, who almost without exception have discounted the homiletic sections, either as "mere lamentation" or as artful but distracting emotion, it is precisely these sections that dictated the *History*'s afterlife.

I.6 The *History* in the Tradition of Armenophone Historiography

By way of conclusion the *History* should be situated in the tradition of Armenophone historiography, the usual starting point for such foundational analyses. This pattern is not unique to the *History*, more-or-less every analysis of an Armenophone historiographical composition begins with a reified image of the writer, places this writer in a reified tradition, and only then discusses the empirical base.[482] Hence, as per the introduction's critique of disciplinary history, such studies begin from a reified "context", and analyse the "text" as so many reflections of this external reality. This thesis has reversed this common sense, putting the horse back before the cart and beginning from the work in all its specificity as a historical composition. The section began from a general outline of the *History* as a transmitted text and object of study, moved to a detailed narrative description, a critical imagining of underlying sources, and finally a view of its afterlife between composition and the advent of capitalist modernity. It is now possible, therefore, to situate the work, without erasure, in the Armenophone tradition of historiography, as this has been constructed by historical actors as well as modern and contemporary scholars.

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[480] The legendary founder kings of Armenia and eponymous ancestors of the Armenians, descended from Hayk'.
[481] ST, III.2.
[482] For an indicative study see: Andrews (2017); and for another that marginally steps outside the norms of this presentation see: Greenwood (2017). For an outline of the Armenophone tradition see: Van Lint (2012).

It is rarely asked what defines an "Armenian" tradition of history writing, with scholars homogenising all those writing history in Armenian.[483] Thus even works such as the early-thirteenth century Armenophone translations of the *Life of K'art'li* and the *Chronicle* attributed to Michael the Syrian, in themselves demonstrating the non-discreteness of Armenian history writing, are analysed in terms of their re-writing through a reified national tradition.[484] This is said to start in the fifth century with the beginning of Armenian letters, so that its defining characteristic is not abstract Armenianness but the Armenian language, hence its categorisation as 'Armenophone'. This tradition develops through a succession of writers apparently consciously situating themselves one after the other, each picking up from the previous to generate a unitary national conceptualisation of History – indeed, a national*ist* conceptualisation, in its direct propagation of Armenian nationhood.[485]

Seminal studies by Thomson, Garsoïan, and others have problematized the premises of late antique Armenophone historiography. These had been taken at face value, and in much scholarship from the Republic of Armenia still are, but these scholars have incisively revealed early works' immediately political nature, in particular seeking to sublimate or erase entirely identified Armenians' situation in broader Iranian lifeworlds.[486] This also involved the sublimation or erasure of history 'telling' through history 'writing', as Theo van Lint has noted, 'The national aspect of early Armenian historiography resides in its encompassing character. Through its adoption of the Bible as its predecessor (and literary model) it signals a radical reorientation: a complete break with the heroic oral epics that carried the memory of the nation, and the grafting of a new past upon this memory instead, containing the history of God's redeeming plan for the world.'[487] This generation of scholars thus unmasked both the originally particularist, indeed, Christian *chauvinist* construction of Armenianness presented by late antique works, as well as the nationalism of modern and contemporary scholars who have reproduced these works' particularist chauvinism.

Yet these same scholars explicitly or implicitly claim that the norms of the "Armenian tradition" were more-or-less fixed by Late Antiquity's end, either through the general fixing of 'Armenia's identity' by the end of the so-called 'interregnum',[488] or the stabilisation of the genre in general with the coming of Islam. There is general acceptance that from the seventh century the "Armenian tradition" was more preoccupied with prophecy, apocalypse and lament, emerging in

[483] This tendency is discussed in Greenwood (2006).
[484] See, for example, Thomson (2010).
[485] If one is able to talk of the discourse as 'national', then it follows that a mode of propagating the discourse to mobilise can be described as 'nationalist', see generally van Lint (2012).
[486] See, for example, Garsoïan (1976), (1982), (1989), (1996); & Thomson (1982), (1991), (2006); on lifeworlds see subsection II.1.
[487] Van Lint (2012), 183.
[488] See generally Garsoïan (2012).

response to the caliphate's sudden hegemonic rise, but otherwise the main mode of narrative representation is presumed to remain the Maccabean struggle of the Armenian nation for its faith, usually against an Iranian and now also Islamic enemy. Only Greenwood has problemetised the "Armenian tradition" after Late Antiquity,[489] and particularly after the end of the so-called 'interregnum'. As he has argued, 'The contention that as one Armenian history concluded another picked up the threads of the same story, and told it in the same way, is not substantiated when one examines the compositions individually…They are not instalments in a single grand narrative.'[490] Moreover, whilst there are broadly shared discursive complexes reproduced through different late antique and medieval compositions, the hegemonic vision of a Maccabean Armenian nation was breaking down already in the early-tenth century work attributed to Yovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i, reflecting, as Greenwood notes, 'a process of political and social transformation'.[491]

What unites this tradition is expression through the Armenian language, and projection of a biblical, unitary, and nationalist vision of History, but beyond this the exact mobilising constructs and definitive claims are more-or-less particular to composition and conjuncture. As Van Lint has noted, from its beginning 'Armenian historiography was closely tied to the spread and defence of Christianity',[492] but scholars' image of the tradition as a whole represents a transhistorical essentialising of this purpose as it played out in the Roman-Sassanian and caliphal hegemonic cycles known as Late Antiquity. Hence Thomson, Garsoïan and others' project remains incomplete: there is no point at which the tradition fixes, so that from then on a given composition's claims for Armenianness reflect more-or-less unproblematically the identifications of "Armenian society". Each composition is always-already particularist, chauvinist, and contested, seeking to make hegemonic their conceptualisation of History against now lost alternatives – only occasionally glimpsed in instances like the drastically opposing representations of the *Chronicle* and T'ovma's continuator. Modern and contemporary scholars have been seduced by historical actors' visible construction of a homogenised tradition, which through purposive choice as well as the vagaries of textual transmission, has come down to us as more-or-less singular. Operating on the same methodologically nationalist assumption as the actors they study – that there is a transhistorical, objective and unitary Armenian nation out-there-in-the-world – it has been only too easy to accept the premise that each composition represents a successive but unitary national voice.

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[489] See generally Greenwood (2012).
[490] Greenwood, (2017), 10.
[491] Greenwood (2017), 12.
[492] Van Lint (2012), 180.

For this is, indeed, the projected vision. In the *History*'s postscript the writer's voice states the need for 'the history chroniclers of old' who would use 'proper and appropriate words' to accurately represent 'what transpired in the present and the past, leaving behind themselves a memorial of the events which occurred, as the history of our forebears shows.'[493] Although the implication is that this composition is different to others, 'only the beginning of things that happened' and 'not complete', these statements nevertheless demonstrate the writer's self-situation in a nationalised tradition. Likewise a reified Aristakēs is situated in a continuous tradition by later Armenophone history writers, as seen in the composition attributed to Kirakos:

> Many Armenian historians have produced works. Among them are the venerable and brilliant Agat'angełos (which translates "glad tidings") who, at the order of the mighty, brave king Trdat, put down the details of events which transpired among the Armenians at the hands of Saint Grigor the Parthian…and the circumstances of the illumination of the land of Armenia…After Agat'angełos was Movses Khorenac'i…who composed the history of the Armenians concisely…He concludes with a lament pronounced over the land of Armenia. After Khorenac'i was the blessed Ełiše who narrated…how the Armenian *nakharar*s willingly surrendered to the royal fetters for their conviction for Christ…And then there is the rhetorician, Łazar P'arpec'i…And following him P'awstos Biwzand, who relates what transpired in Armenia between the Iranians and us…And the history of Heraclius was written by bishop Sebeos…And the history of the wonderful Koriwn. And Khosrov. And the history of the priest Łevond which is about what Mahmet and his successors did all over the world and especially among the Armenian people. And the *vardapet* T'ovma, historian of the house of Arcrunik'. And Shapuh Bagratuni. And lord Yovhannēs, *kat'ołikos* of the Armenians. And Movses Kałankatvac'i, historian of Ałvank'. And Ukhtanes, bishop of Uṙha (Edessa), who wrote about the [doctrinal] separation of the K'art'velians from the Armenians by Kiwrion. And the *vardapet* Step'annos, surnamed Asołik. And the *vardapet* Aristakēs called Lastivertc'i. And Samvel, the priest from the cathedral of Ani. And the learned and brilliant *vardapet* called Vanakan.[494]

Written in the same conjuncture as ms. Yerevan 2865, the composition attributed to Kirakos self-evidently constructs a linear national tradition where each writer picks up from the previous. An awareness of this tradition is in evidence from the ninth and tenth centuries at least, with writers reshaping the frameworks and discursive complexes of others – for example, the relationship between the compositions attributed to Movses and T'ovma, or the *History of Tarōn* and Agat'angełos – and the *History*'s writer would seem to fit within this. For example, the mention of Eusebius, the only other named historian aside from 'Tarōnac'i', fits well the Armenophone tradition which drew on late antique translations of the works attributed to him, and the specific paralleling of the wandering prophetic hermit Ananias in chapter 9 with Eusebius' fall of

[493] AL, 632.26-633.28.
[494] Melik-Ohanjanyan (1961); translation Bedrosian (1975).

Jerusalem is a notably purposive resonance. The *Universal History*'s writer also made extensive use of Eusebius, and as Greenwood notes the work may have formed an obvious model for identified Armenians looking to articulate a relationship with the Roman Empire.[495] The *History* also resonates with the formal structure of the *Universal History*, as well as the *History of the Armenians* attributed to Movses, in dividing the composition into named chapters – although there is the possibility that these were not original to any of these compositions, developed instead by the scribe of Yerevan 2865, the earliest transmission of all three works.

Most importantly, this tradition and almost all of its representatives are situated precisely in the institutional apparatus of the Armenian Church, the absolute majority are direct functionaries, and those few others reproduce its hegemonic discursive complexes and so remain broadly locatable within its culture – no doubt because these were the compositions copied by ecclesiastics. History writing is a representative practice of this institutional culture's valorisation of *memory* and *memorialisation*.[496] This appears to have particularly emerged from the conditions of caliphal hegemony, when the Armenian Church was united and settled politically within the caliphate and ecclesiastically outside the imperial church, and could begin to cohere in its institutional practices as a sub-hegemonic and parapolitical institutional apparatus. This oddly contradictory position, with both constituted power and sub-hegemonic status, engendered a particular institutional urge to *memorialise*, creating an apparently objective record of events. This generates, for example, the peculiarly rich Armenophone traditions of epigraphy and colophons,[497] both referred to as 'memorials', and similarly the writer's voice declares their purpose to 'write for our beloved brothers a memorial concerning known things and familiar events'.

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Nevertheless, despite the writer's self-situation in a national tradition produced by this institutional culture, as well as his perception as such by later writers, and certain resonances with other compositions, there remains much more that is 'decidedly atypical' about the *History*. This atypicality can be located in the *History* and its writer's social situation, which reveals them as both specific to their conjuncture as well as fitting the general pattern of the Armenophone tradition. Late antique and medieval Armenophone historiography was written by and for two broad but intersecting elite categories, ecclesiastics and aristocrats. Modern and contemporary scholarship, following the seminal early-twentieth century work of Nicholas Adontz, translated into English in 1970 by Garsoïan, has seen the latter of these two categories, reified as "the *nakharar*s", as particularly definitive of the 'native social structure' of 'Armenia'.[498] In this

[495] Greenwood (2017a).
[496] Compare with the analysis of social memory in Fentress & Wickham (1990), esp. 1-40.
[497] On Armenian epigraphy see generally Greenwood (2014).
[498] Adontz & Garsoïan (1970); compare with the account in Garsoïan (1997c).

understanding of 'the history of the Armenian people' the successive works of Armenophone historiography, almost all written by ecclesiastics in a Christianising nationalist mode, are unproblematic comments on the actions and fortunes of "the *nakharar*s", who incubate Armenian "national identity" alongside the church during periods of statelessness.

Only for late antique compositions is this nuanced, with a more critical image of many *nakharar*s siding with the Iranian *shahanshah* against Christian compatriots, and Armenian ecclesiastical writers discursively excommunicating these apparent national traitors through an image of glorious and unitary resistance.[499] In essence this vision of variable aristocratic elites historiographically reframed, nationalised and harangued through a memorialised past constructed by ecclesiastics for their own particularist ends should, *mutatis mutandis* for specific conjunctural situation, be extended across the Middle Ages.[500] Greenwood has noted how representations of interaction between Armenian Christian aristocrats and Muslim elites shifted over the tenth century, from an image of constant, unequal violent oppression – echoing the Maccabean paradigm – to one of equal footing in culture, learning and kingly virtues.[501] This paradigm shift represents the different positions of Armenian aristocrats in this conjuncture, where they increasingly formed part of a single subhegemonic class alongside the elites of regional Muslim emirates.[502] Yet the shift is not simply functional – Armenian aristocrats had formed a provincial elitedom under the caliphate,[503] but works of Armenophone historiography by-and-large maintained the late antique image of heroic resistance. The double transformation behind the shift is the changed position of the Armenian Church *alongside* the aristocrats, the primary perceived institutional threat no longer elites' potential conversion to Mazdeism or Islam, but imperial expansion and consequent absorption into, or replacement by the Eastern Roman ecclesiastical hierarchy.[504]

The late antique and medieval tradition of Armenophone historiography is thus socially situated not in a reified 'native social structure', but the institutional culture of the Armenian Church as this developed through social systems constituted by successive political-economic configurations. Thus the influence of Caucasia's aristocratic classes on the discursive constructions of Armenophone historiography can be concretised: many if not most ecclesiastics came from these classes, and reflect their interests to some degree, but as actors in the Armenian ecclesiastical apparatus these interests are refracted through this institutional setting. The would-

[499] This is most developed in Ełiše, see the extensive introduction to Thomson (1982).
[500] Such an argument is, in fact, only a shift in emphasis from the recognised importance of an ecclesiastical situation for these writers.
[501] Greenwood (2017), 62-64.
[502] Dadoyan (2011), 81-134.
[503] See generally Vacca (2017).
[504] Greenwood (*forthcoming*).

be unitary nature of this apparatus of (sub)hegemonic and parapolitical institutions generates its actors' could-be unitary vision of the Armenian nation, a vision that had been heavily reified by the time of apparently non-ecclesiastical aristocratic writers such as T'ovma Arcruni, whose narrative framework is transposed entirely from the eighth-century composition attributed to the ecclesiastic Movses Khorenac'i.[505] This framework was particularly developed in the so-called interregnum as Garsoïan reveals,[506] a period of institutional cohering in the Armenian Church under caliphal hegemony, but continued thereafter and is less the formation of "Armenia's identity" and more the (re)production of the church's particular institutional culture. The difference in the new conjuncture of the later tenth century is which particularist interests are necessary to generalise as "national". Some, as in the *Universal History*, chose to fiercely refute Chalcedonianism, others, as in the *History of Tarōn*, chose to accommodate rising Roman hegemony and intentionally blur previously fixed historiographical traditions.[507]

Situating the *History* in the Armenophone tradition, therefore, involves historicising the composition as emerging from a situated actor in the apparatus of the Armenian Church – part II's task. Here it is important to emphasise that the *History* does not share the vast majority of motifs and discursive complexes in the Armenophone tradition as classically understood – that is, late antique historiography. It is often commented that the *History* is relatively unique in the Armenophone tradition for not being dedicated to an aristocratic or ecclesiastical patron, nor celebrating some particular aristocratic clan.[508] But neither does the *Universal History*, although it is dedicated to an ecclesiastical patron, and while the *Chronicle* represents a partial return to valorising particular aristocrats or aristocraticness in general, the prophetic structuring articulates this in a markedly different manner to earlier compositions such as the *History of the Arcrunik'*. Simply, this is because these works do not emerge from a literary tradition bounded off from history, atomised compositions hanging in the air having a transtemporal conversation only with each other, but from historical and social conditions that define their purposes and functions within a given conjuncture and social system. The only more-or-less transhistorical constant is each composition's representation of some fraction of elite interests, as these are refracted through the institutional culture of the Armenian Church.

Thus it is crucial that, despite having an ultimate ideological horizon of Armenianness, and so propagating unitary Armenian nationhood in a typically biblicising manner, the *History* does not reproduce the pronounced chauvinism found elsewhere. There is neither the fierce ethnoreligious combativeness found in late antique compositions and the *Chronicle*, nor the sectarian chauvinism

[505] See the extensive introduction to Thomson (1985).
[506] See generally Garsoïan (2012).
[507] For the former see the ST, III.21; for the latter see the discussion of the *History of Tarōn* in Greenwood (*forthcoming*).
[508] Thomson (2004), 73.

of the *Universal History* and the late-tenth century composition attributed to Ukhtanēs of Sebasteia.[509] Alongside this lack of ethnoreligious or doctrinal chauvinism is a lack of specifically valorised figures, such as the Mamikonean heroes of Late Antiquity, or the kingdom-founding Bagratuni and Arcruni. Indeed, given the general lack of Armenian historiographical stuff, there is very little specific content to the *History*'s construction of Armenianness, and so only a generally implied chauvinism through the ideological structure. This helps to explain why the *History* is so immediately resituated at a level of Armenian generality, relegated to a position of providing colour for the *Chronicle*'s more strident narrative: the parameters of eleventh-century Armenian chauvinism continued to define the horizons of possibility in later conjunctures.

Hence the Armenophone tradition should be socially situated in the institutional culture of the Armenian Church, and particularly the way in which actors of this apparatus attempted to mobilise elites with generalised nationalist representations of their particular interests. This should not be surprising, indeed for much of western Eurasia in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages it would be a truism to say that the vast majority of literary compositions reflect an institutional, ecclesiastical, and elite culture, not "society-at-large". Scholars of seventh-century Ireland, for example, where there is strong evidence for a discourse of coherent nationhood, have revealed ecclesiastical apparatuses' construction of this vision to suit their own ends.[510] But scholars of Armenian studies look through the other end of the telescope: the Armenian Church 'preserved' Armenianness, rather than (re)produced a particular construction they sought to make hegemonic.[511] The same mystification lies behind the framing of a volume in terms of 'the religious roots of nations' in the Late Antique Middle East, which explores the apparently religious genesis of objective groups-out-there-in-the-world, rather than the ideological genesis of such visions through institutional (rather than "ethnic" or "national") cultures, for the particular ends of those hegemonic apparatuses.[512]

It thus makes perfect sense that the *History*'s writer would opt for a historiographical homily to summon the Armenian nation into being, at a time of profound crisis for identified Armenian elites (re)produced under Roman hegemony. Situated in a conjuncture when traditional discursive complexes apparently no longer informed common sense, the work participates in a re-constitution of a chauvinist Armenianness in the crisis and dissolution of the previous social system. Hence the framing of the *History* as a 'historiographical homily' is meant partly metaphorically, partly literally. As Van Lint has noted, the Christian Armenophone understanding of History was to illuminate 'God's redeeming plan for the world', 'considering Scripture as a

[509] On Ukhtanes see generally Aleksidze (2018).
[510] See generally Wadden (2017).
[511] This is the argument across Garsoïan (2012).
[512] See generally Ter Haar Romeny (2009).

book of history relating God's work', and so writers sought to continue this endeavour.[513] Thus the *History*'s homiletic postscript has a general resonance with educational or hortatory framings in other works. Likewise Thomson notes of Armenian homiletics the purpose to explicate the basic tenets of faith, exhort to accept that faith, and explain the new dispensation in terms of Old Testament example and prophecy, focusing on moral-theological issues and designed to be spiritually uplifting – in short, to identify sin, to enumerate scriptural and theological explication of this sin's causes and effects, and to exhort the sinner to penance and better Christian action.[514] This is the *History*'s purpose, and this specific structure is replicated in those sections termed 'homiletic', although, as Thomson has noted elsewhere, the writer 'has no very specific framework into which to fit the Armenian present. He picks and chooses his Old Testament parallels in no apparently consistent manner.'[515] Neverthless the framing as a historiographical homily implies the work's conceptualisation – compared with other works in the Armenophone tradition it is very short, and it is clear that the homiletic sections are prioritised in the narrative logic. The homiletic message was ultimately more important than a historiographical account as canonically understood:

> Yet as for that which we have written in this book, it is not complete, but only the beginning of things that happened and what befell us, for we were unable to write the full account or call to mind everything; but we have set all this down into such an account, in order that you all would read and know, that our sins became the cause for what became of us. For at the sight of us you should become terrified by the face of the Lord, and tremble with dread at His might; in order that you hasten to pre-emptive confession and early atonement, through which you may both forestall and affect the punishment, and avoid its arrival.[516]

[513] Van Lint (2012), 182-183.
[514] Thomson (2006), 177-178.
[515] Thomson (2004), 83.
[516] AL, 632.26-633.28.

Part II

The Writer

II.1 Introduction

The first part of this thesis focused on the work as a historical composition, beginning from the *History* as the actual empirical base, operating as far as possible without any reference to the writer, and entirely without reference to a historical actor called Aristakēs. The writer was assumed to have composed a single work in a single time and place, bringing together narrative elements from other works and re-situating them in a new composition. Beyond this, however, the narrative itself was centred from an empiricist standpoint, with the work itself prioritised and the analysis limited to this "source". Overall, the *History* was characterised as a situated work emerging from specific historical and social conditions, a historiographical homily composed in the crisis of the 1070s. Despite this particular and situated nature, however, the narrative resonated sufficiently at a level of Armenian ethnicised generality – it was successful enough at presenting itself as "our story" – to be transmitted into the modern and contemporary day.

Now we turn from the work as a historical composition to the work as a complex narrative, and so to the writer as a historical actor. This is not an attempt to establish everything empirically demonstrable about Aristakēs as a "real person". Even were there enough material for a robust seeming biography, this would not necessarily situate the writer as a historical actor. Positivist biographical approaches slip too easily into pedantic questions of dating, substituting critical analysis for comparative chronology, and tend to adopt a mode of analysis that posits a single reified "person" judged against an external "context". This section moves beyond such approaches by situating the writer and work within their historical social relations, so that the writer is treated as a concrete historical actor without mystification as a "real person". Instead the writer is critically imagined first through the elaboration of basic social categories into which they fall, and then through the concretisation of these categories through a social-historical reading of the *History*, holistically treating it for the first time as a complex narrative. In this way both writer and work can be critically imagined as tangible actors that associated with other actors in a specific time and place,[517] so that historically and socially situating the *History* attributed to Aristakēs Lastiverc'i reveals vistas of a critical social history of the empire of New Rome's hegemonic cycle in Caucasia.

Critical Framework

The critical framework adopted in this chapter is therefore twofold and complementary: initial analysis establishing the basic categories and chronologies for arranging and making meaning of historiographical stuff, followed by a social-historical reading to move beyond this stuff's immediate limitations. Initial analysis refers to a traditional and partially empiricist historiographical approach, reasoning out details from different sources to arrive at some bases

[517] The principle of non-human actors has been adapted from Latour (2005), esp. 63-86.

for meaning. But such analysis is not understood as creating objective plot points on which to construct a singular vision of The Past, as in disciplinary history. An actor's work cannot provide unmediated access to her historical person, much less can atomistically isolated and counter-posed extracts provide both objective facts about "what happened" while simultaneously demonstrating what she "really thought".

But this is not to arrive at the tired epistemological nihilism that critiques of positivism often imply. Rather, in the spirit of critical history, analysis of historical actors' compositions begins from a distinction between social-historical dynamics and lived experience. This distinction is important since there is a constant tendency to slip between our sources' claims, our own analytical constructions, and a singular Past. Instead unashamedly recognising our constructions as imaginings allows more freedom in posing abstracted social-historical dynamics that make sense of political, economic, and cultural transformations, as well as providing space for the often widely varying worldviews emergent from lived experience. Hence initial analysis is understood as elaborating basic categories through which the process of imagining can begin. These categories are transhistorical terms such as "man" and "elite", as well as culturally- and historically-specific ones like *vardapet*, that provide entry points into critically imagining our objects of study. But as simple categories they require historicising with concrete content, providing temporally- and spatially-specific meaning. In this way historicised categories can be brought into relation with each other so that a dynamic image of the historical actor emerges, not reducible to any single category like "Armenian" or "ecclesiastic", but complicated by the intersection between them all.

These categories are historicised through a social-historical reading of the *History*. In a method primarily drawing on Fredric Jameson's Marxian literary theory, I read the work as a *socially-symbolic act* that attempts to provide ideological resolutions for Aristakēs and other historical actors' lived experience – ideology understood as a system of logics and symbolic representations that naturalise historically specific social relations, particularly those of exploitative domination.[518] The point is not to select key passages as representative of Aristakēs' perspective as such, accounting one with another to arrive at a ledger balance claimed to represent this worldview. Instead the *History* is read with the assumption that all narrative functions to provide meaningful frameworks that structure, symbolise, and provide ideological resolutions for the inevitable antagonisms of everyday life.[519]

Reading narrative as a socially symbolic act begins from the Marxian dictum 'It is not the consciousness of humans that determines their social being, but their social being that determines

[518] Jameson (1981), 1-88.
[519] Cf. Jameson (1981), xi-xii.

their consciousness.'[520] Social being refers to the fact that humans always-already exist in social relations, indeed that each human is nothing more-or-less than the sum of the social relations she has participated in.[521] Hence each historical actor's particular sense of self and worldview is necessarily anchored in the broader common sense and intersecting lifeworlds of her social system and conjuncture – the system of social relations that produced her in a particular time and place. Worldviews are *subjective* (or self) understandings of "who we are", "how we came to be" and "what it means". They are necessarily related dialectically to *intersubjective* (or common) understandings of the lived world – its make-up, mechanics, and value regimes.[522] Lifeworlds are thus what is self-evident or given about the world as perceived by a set of associated human actors in a given time and place, their "common sense", which emerges from the social practices of their everyday lives.[523] Thus to read the individual narratives of particular historical actors like Aristakēs, representative of their personal sense of self and worldview, is to simultaneously glimpse the intersubjective common sense and lifeworlds of their social system and conjuncture.

But narrative has a more specific function than one-to-one representation of a particular worldview. Narrative functions to provide ideological resolutions for social antagonisms, transcending these and bridging gaps in the inevitably contradictory logics and symbolic representations that make up *both* personal senses of self, *and* the common sense these emerge from. The previous section referred to this as the *History*'s 'ideological structure'. In different combinations depending on particular conditions, human actors emplot logics and symbolic values through narrativised events, so as to make sense of their lived experience, and transcend inherent antagonisms. So reading the *History* as a socially-symbolic act is a dynamic method of reading back through the work's ideological resolutions, to the antagonisms inherent in the social relations that produced this common sense. Narrative resolutions are necessary because lifeworlds are internally disjointed and contradictory, unable to cover entirely and consistently the concrete world-out-there. Thus in emplotting logics and symbolisations as events, humans make sense of their lived experience and "close off" or "displace" the disjunctures which permeate their lifeworld, transcending the antagonisms inherent in their social-relational position.

Social relations are inherently antagonistic because, in social systems based on the exploitation of producing commoners through property regimes, social dynamics necessarily operate through various forms of exploitative domination: hierarchies and forms of surplus extraction that always rely on combinations of different forms of violence and coercion, in particular gendered forms,

[520] Marx, (1859/1979), preface.
[521] Marx, (1845), thesis VI. See also Balibar (2017), esp. 13-41 & 123-158; and Graeber (2000), 49-90.
[522] Lifeworld is first described in Husserl (1936/1970), 108-109. See also later developments in Schütz (1997); Habermas (1987); & Kraus (2015).
[523] On 'common sense' and its relation to ideology in Gramsci's theory of hegemony, see: Rehmann (2013), 117-146.

in order to ensure systemic reproduction.[524] Hence antagonism is always-already present in all the practices making up the social system, and so also always-already present in each and every lifeworld. Likewise common lifeworlds and personal worldviews are inherently contradictory because everyday life is objectively *lived* as a continuum, but subjectively *experienced* as so many distinct spaces and objects variously produced, reframed, divided, and unified by the dialectics of the social systems in which human actors exist.[525]

This combination of inherent antagonism in the social system, and inherent contradiction in lived experience, gives dynamism to reading the *History* as a socially-symbolic act. Actors in eleventh-century Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia objectively moved through a lived world without formal breaks at any point, but in their intersubjective experiencing of this world and its antagonisms it became so many different towns, regions, countries, or districts in a city, buildings in a district, and so on. Similarly these actors associated with different forms of institutional apparatus and social organisation – not least those making up hegemonic imperial and royal polities, and the Roman and Armenian churches – that are lived in a world of continuously and antagonistically forming and reforming associations, but experienced in objectified terms. Thus these forms of social organisation and their antagonisms are perceived and narrativised as greater than the sum of their parts. Polities like "Great Armenia" and "New Rome", ethnic categories like "the Georgians", or institutions like "the imperial army" and "the Armenian church", even lands such as "Armenia", become more than just the sum total of the human actors and practices that make them up, but are really fetishized as *the* social agents. This latter point is particularly important, since the structures of meaning, symbolisations, and logics that constitute lifeworlds are not simply emergent from and anchored in social practices, but also and more so in the institutional forms that habituate, pattern, and (re)produce these practices.

So narrativisation is the process that desperately attempts to square the contradictory circle of *lived continuum* versus *fractured experience* in a *symbolic act*, affirming the inevitably open and violently antagonistic social system as a unified and self-contained totality – in terms of writing, self-contained within the apparently closed composition. Thus the fractures of life-as-experienced are reified as truly separate objects, but are brought into narrative relation with each other so as to attempt their reunification through emplotment. Moreover, much as lifeworlds are generated intersubjectively through common social being, narrativisation is always-already an intersubjective phenomenon, anchored in the material practising of social relations through institutions and so on, and incorporating transnarratival and transgenerational elements.

[524] See the definition of class in Wood (1994) as a 'process and relationship' by which the constitutive logic of prevailing relations of exploitation and domination permeate the social system, 76-107.
[525] Jameson (1981), 28-32.

Nevertheless each time narrative is constituted it must necessarily be anchored in a particular time and place. Compositions do not form one discursive formation among others in endless self-referential chains, they are the products of particularly situated historical actors and become actors in their own right. For this reason this analysis prioritises the intra-narratival function of literary tropes, motifs, and scriptural references, not their inter-textual resonances – scriptural references, for example, are important for their function in the *History*'s ideological structure, *not* their Biblical or theological traditions as such. Literary compositions provide a 'libidinal apparatus' – a structured system of desire in which historical actors can recognise and invest themselves – which 'allows the individual subject to conceive or imagine his or her lived relationship to transpersonal realities such as the social structure or the collective logic of History'[526] – in Louis Althusser's terms, to be 'interpellated' by self-recognition as the narrative's addressed subject.[527] In this process particular narrative units are deployed, termed 'ideologemes' by Jameson and defined as the fundamental units of ideological representation, emplotted through the narrative logic to represent both a conceptual antinomy and a social contradiction. These are the units deployed in the narrativising process in order to move from the literal level of the historical referent – the "what happened" – to the allegorical level of the interpretive code at which the given antagonisms are resolved – the "what it means". This then generates a moral level – the psychological projection onto the interpellated audience, "how you should feel" – and finally an anagogical one – the political reading where the interpellated audience finds ideological resolutions shorn of social antagonisms, and so a libidinal apparatus to invest themselves in, "how you should respond as an interpellated member of the narratively-constructed utopian community".[528]

For Aristakēs, then, it can be stated at the outset that his primary concern is to identify the antagonisms and contradictions that caused the collapse of all the hegemonic institutional apparatuses that contradictorily supported his position in social relations, Roman and Caucasian alike. With their collapse and the dissolution of his social system in the 1070s, the support for his position in social relations disappeared in a total crisis of hegemonic space – that is, the space created by a hegemonic political economy in which elites can dominate and exploit, making certain their own social reproduction. The technical definition for crisis is thus tangible destabilisation in the necessary conditions for a class of actors' social positions. This took place across eleventh-century New Rome, engendering ideological as much as political-economic

[526] Jameson (1981), 14-15.
[527] For the classic statement on interpellation see: Althusser (2014), 189-197; cf. Rehmann (2013), 147-178. For an expanded discussion see: subsection II.4.
[528] As Jameson notes, in medieval Christian texts the moral and anagogical are closely linked, with Divine Providence almost always providing the interpretive level's 'master code' see: Jameson (1981), 14-15.

crises, and requiring narrative resolutions for those (re)produced through the previous hegemonic political economy, and who identified with its ideological common sense.

Thus in identifying Aristakēs' resolutions and deployed ideologemes, it becomes possible to identify the antagonisms of his social system, at least as he sought to locate and represent them in his work. This involves tracing their operations through each interpretive level, from the anagogical 'symbolic meditation on the destiny of the community'[529] – the shared Armenian "us" established from the *History*'s title onwards – to the connected moral level of individual penance as a member of this narratively-constructed collective. These levels then rest on the interpretive level of Providence, the *History*'s metanarrative or master code that gives meaning to the otherwise apparently random conditions of the social system – that terrifyingly open and incomplete totality that must be rewritten in order for comprehension to take place, reducing the complexities of concrete everyday life to events and characters as so many effects of Holy Writ, a narrative negation of the now reassuringly closed and complete social system. This finally leads to the literal level of the historical referent, the social system itself composed of tangible historical actors with antagonistic social relations in need of ideological resolutions. Most importantly, these resolutions rely on the intersubjective recognition of specific kinds of actor that can place themselves in the *History*'s libidinal apparatus, that are *interpellated* by it, thereby reflecting the practical integration of particular categories into the social system. These are the categories that can be elaborated through initial analysis, providing a useful dialectical tension between this approach and the subsequent socially symbolic reading.

Chapter Plan

So these are part II's aims and critical framework. In terms of structure, it begins with what can be initially established about Aristakēs' lifespan and locale, elaborating categories into which he falls as an actor. Each of these categories are then historicised through further analysis and reading the *History* as a socially-symbolic act. The next section then, the thesis' conclusion, provides a situated imagining of both writer and work as historical actors, and discusses how this particular situation glimpses vistas of a critical social history of New Rome's hegemonic cycle in Caucasia.

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[529] Jameson (1981), 59: 'We have seen above that in the system of the medieval four levels of scripture, the third, that of the individual soul is designated as the moral level, while it is the fourth or last level-which embraces the whole history of the human race and the last judgement-that is termed the anagogical one. In Frye's appropriation of this system, the terms have been reversed: what Frye calls the Mythical or Archetypal level is that of the community – what the medieval exegetes called the anagogical – and is now positioned as a third level or phase subsumed under the final one, that of the libidinal body (which Frye, however, designates as the Anagogical level). This terminological shift is thus a significant strategic and ideological move, in which political and collective imagery is transformed into a mere relay in some ultimately privatizing celebration of the category of individual experience. The essentially historical interpretive system of the church fathers has here been recontained, and its political elements turned back into the merest figures for the Utopian realities of the individual subject.'

II.2 Lifespan & Locale

Part II departs the limitations of the empiricist standpoint adopted in part I, but initially it is important to return to this standpoint in order to elaborate the basic social categories into which Aristakēs falls as a historical actor. There is a basic problem, though, in that almost no empirical claims survive about his life, locale, or lifespan, aside from manuscripts' claim that the work is 'the *History* of the *vardapet* Aristakēs Lastiverc'i', and a handful of apparently personal remarks in the narrative itself.[530] Even Aristakēs' toponymical surname presents difficulties, referencing a certain 'Lastiver', the same name as a village in the north-east of the contemporary Republic of Armenia, and notably the oldest manuscripts render it 'Lastiverc'i (of Lastiver)' rather than the later 'Lastivertc'i (of Lastivert)'.[531] But the *History*'s scattered personal remarks argue against this identification. In three separate instances the writer's voice, here presumed to be Aristakēs, identifies with 'the *avan* of Arcn in the district of Karin', once naming it 'this vast and governing (*shahastan*) city of ours' when recording the *kat'olikos* Petros I Getadardz's arrival in 1044/5,[532] and twice referring to 'this city of ours' when recounting its 1048 Seljuq sack.[533] Notably he claims to have been present at this traumatic event '[which] we saw with our own eyes and of which evil experiences we suffered',[534] and survivors fled thence to Theodosioupolis-Karin, providing one explanation for the city's modern name "Erzurum" (Arcn ar-Rūm, 'Roman Arcn').[535] Aristakēs also claims to have seen 'with my own eyes'[536] Nikēphoros Phōkas' 1022 rebellion against Basileios II,[537] which took place on the plain of Basiani, extending eastward from the plain of Karin where both Arcn and Theodosioupolis (Arm. *Karin*/*Karnoy kałak*, 'city of Karin') are situated, a region incorporated into Tao-Tayk' in the late-tenth century as 'Hither Tao'. Considering Aristakēs' concern for this polity and its elitedom,[538] he can be more securely situated in the particular vicinity of Arcn and Theodosioupolis-Karin in the broader region of Tao-Tayk', annexed as the Roman theme of Iviria in 1000/1. There remains the possibility that Aristakēs originally hailed from the contemporary village, but he must have left very early in life if so, moving significantly westward to the cities and region that he identified with and which form the *History*'s central landscape.[539]

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[530] Much of what can be said has been noted already, see: Thomson (2003), 73-88.
[531] For a full discussion see: MH 16, 493-495.
[532] AL, 562.
[533] AL, 572-576.
[534] AL, 576.
[535] On Arcn and Theodosioupolis-Karin/Erzurum see: Hewsen (2003); Garsoïan (2003); & ODB, vol. 3, 2054.
[536] AL, 536.
[537] AL, 536.
[538] See, for example: AL, 529.
[539] 'Lastiver' is perhaps derived from the two words *last*, 'boat' or 'ark', and *ver* 'above', thus meaning 'above the boat'. It may simply be the name of a riverside village close to Arcn and Theodosioupolis-Karin.

As well as strongly indicating Aristakēs' locale, the 1022 revolt provides a broad *terminus ante quem* for his birth, with the *terminus post quem* for his death provided by the *History*'s completion *c.*1072-1079. He need only have been in late childhood to remember the revolt, but this would still put him in old age at the time of writing, into his sixties at least. The *History*'s postscript also indicates that he lived long enough to feel the chaotic imposition of Seljuq hegemony,[540] placing its writing in the mid-to-late 1070s, with the tone of chapter 25's defence of Rōmanos IV Diogenes (*r.*1068-1072) suggesting an earlier date.[541] This gives a rough lifespan of *c.*1000/10-*c.*1080, meaning that the writer lived through the vast majority of the period recorded. At some level, therefore, Aristakēs can be said to have experienced all of it as his conjunctural situation, whether directly as in the case of Arcn's sack, or at various levels of remove for other sections. It seems probable, for example, that when he records the *kat'oɫikos* Petros coming to Arcn in 1046, which 'filled with a great joy the souls of the onlookers, who desired him there',[542] this stylized moment reflects his own presence. Similarly when he refers to circulated stories about contemporary emperors, although this is not directly constituted experience of specific historical actors, it remains lived experience of the conjuncture they represent through symbolic valorisation in a meaningful narrative framework (re)produced by social practices in the everyday. Of course, having lived experience of his recorded past, whether directly or indirectly constituted, does not mean that Aristakēs is more "reliable", or should be preferred in the construction of "facts". It does, however, help to situate him as a historical actor, and gives his perspectives a certain weight in constructing the lifeworlds of contemporary actors whose particular worldviews are now lost.

So this is as much as can be more-or-less concretely said of Aristakēs' origins and lifespan: he lived *c.*1000-*c.*1080 as a *vardapet* in the immediate vicinity of Arcn and Theodosioupolis-Karin and the broader region of Tao-Tayk', the Roman theme of Iviria. This therefore provides the basis for elaborating the social categories into which Aristakēs falls as a historical actor. He is identified as a *vardapet* by manuscripts and the *History*'s genre, form and purpose, an office unique to the independent Armenian Church. His imagined geography is significantly one of a constellation of cities, into which fits his own centre at Arcn, but this urban constellation intersects with polities like New Rome, Tao-Tayk', and Great Armenia, and the provincial geographies these generate.[543] He strongly self-identifies as an Armenian Christian, but his concern for other Caucasian polities than Great Armenia, and lived experience of Roman rule, mean this is not straightforward political subjecthood. Finally he can be comfortably categorised as an elite man, though not one of the high aristocrats, either the *nakharar* clans or the more nebulous *azat*s.[544] These are therefore the

[540] AL, 629-633.
[541] AL, 625-629.
[542] AL, 562.
[543] Greenwood (2017a).
[544] *Nakharar* as a term has been extended in Armenian studies to mean essentially all Armenian aristocrats, even the very definition of ancient and medieval 'Armenian social structure', but the term itself never

categories – *vardapet*, citizen of Arcn, identified Armenian, Roman subject, and elite man – that the following sections historicise with concrete content, combining initial social-historical analysis with reading the *History* as a socially-symbolic act. In the conclusion to the thesis these categories are brought together in a situated critical imagining of Aristakēs as an actor in his own time and place, and the *History* as his composition-come-actor in its own right.

II.3 Aristakēs as *vardapet*

The most secure claim about Aristakēs as a historical actor, beyond his gendering, ethnicisation, and social position, is that he held the office of *vardapet*. This title appears in every manuscript as well as the *History* attributed to Kirakos,[545] and the existence of two homilies transmitted under his name provides further corroboration, with preaching a *vardapet*'s central occupation.[546] These homilies provide no specific historical material, indeed nothing specifically indicates that they must have been written by Aristakēs, but the language is broadly dateable to the eleventh century, the structure is typical of Armenian homiletics, and the attribution even if erroneous indicates a memorialised actor who lived as a *vardapet*. There is even one moment of direct homiletic interpellation, at the conclusion to chapter 17 where the writer states: 'Brothers, be fearful and heedful of the heavenly messengers. Be not unknown to Him, that He not say "I do not know you". Rather, let us be among the ranks of His friends, that He say to us "Come, O blessed of My Father, inherit the Life Everlasting" (Matthew 25:34).'[547] Similarly in his postscript Aristakēs states that he 'considered it important to write for our beloved brothers', further suggesting a teaching role in a monastic situation.[548] Insofar as possible, therefore, it is more-or-less certain that he held this title.

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Since this category is so central to situating Aristakēs and the *History* it is worth detailing its historical development. *Vardapet* is a rank and office unique to the Armenian Church dating back to its earliest days in the fourth and fifth centuries.[549] The role became increasingly formalised over the fifth century, and by the sixth ranks second after bishops in matters of teaching and doctrine. From these earliest days such figures gathered students around themselves, took monastic vows, and were ordained as priests. But it was not necessary or perhaps even usual for *vardapet*s to be based in monasteries, instead they could function as peripatetic monastic teachers

appears in Aristakēs' history, with the only equivalents, *azat* and *iškhan*, signifying much broader senses of 'freeman' and 'prince'.

[545] See the discussion in: MH 16, 493-525.

[546] On these homilies see: MH 16, 635-651.

[547] AL, 594.16.

[548] AL, 629. Indeed, in the central middle ages *ełbayroc'*, 'place of the brothers', was synonymous with *vank'* or 'monastery'

[549] For a fuller discussion of all these points see generally Thomson (1962).

and preachers moving from region to region. Monastic enclosure did become more usual in the seventh to twelfth centuries, but throughout the period under consideration peripatetic *vardapets* were common across Caucasia. In addition to their teaching functions *vardapets* held disciplinary authority from the earliest period, with the power to readmit excommunicates. By the seventh century a school system had been established with *vardapets* at the centre, primarily intended for those in holy orders. There are few indications for these schools' organisation or programme of studies aside from being based in monasteries, and wide variation should probably be assumed. The schools were intended as the sole site of learning for both ecclesiastical and secular children, for both spiritual and secular learning, with more advanced education taking place in obscure *vardapetaran*s – "places of the *vardapets*". All in all, as Thomson notes, 'The history of the term *vardapet* in its fully developed form is practically synonymous with the history of Armenian learning.'[550]

The rank's early history is necessary for considering its later medieval developments. In the period between the seventh and eleventh centuries, no source allows a deep view of the *vardapet*'s role, though their description in historical compositions and the lives of individual figures provide crucial details. The eighth-century *History* attributed to Łevond refers to 'the [monastery of St. Grigor's] arrangements of the angelic orders of priests, the goodly discipline of *vardapets* and worshippers',[551] and in the contemporary *History of Ałvank'* attributed to Movses Daskhurantc'i the term regularly signifies not only monastic teachers but also a given region's preeminent spiritual guide.[552] Most interestingly, the *Universal History* describes how in the time of King Abas of Great Armenia (*r*. 928-953):

> There were also *vardapet*s instructed in the doctrine of the Lord and teachers of the truth. The elderly Basilios, very forthright in speaking and a bold proclaimer in describing the religion of the Lord; and Grigor a priest of the married ones, eloquent and loquacious on the parables of the Lord; and Step'anos, the pupil of Barsił, who was called 'Spiritual', with apostle-like gifts in word and deed; with this man also the one renowned in knowledge and virtue, Movsēs, who could last without food for forty days; and Davit', looking like a beggar and an abject lover of filth, [yet] wise, who was known as 'Leather-foot'; and Petros, true commentator of the Holy Scriptures; and Anania, a great scholar, who was a monk of Narek. His book was directed against the sect of T'ondrakac'ik' and other heresies.[553]

The *Universal History* thus foregrounds *vardapet*s as symbolic figures to be valorised by interpellated Armenian Christians: the best among them are practically living saints, their abundance signifies the kingdom's goodly state, and named and unnamed examples resurface

[550] Thomson (1962), 384.
[551] Łevond, chapter 7, 19.
[552] See, for example: MD, II.2; II.3; II.42; & II.45.
[553] ST, III.7.

continually as spiritual authorities worthy of remembrance.[554] All these writers, therefore, conceive of *vardapet*s as central to the correct ordering of Christian Armenian society, vital actors functioning to representationally symbolise as well as practically delineate the Armenian nation, even more so than bishops and secular elites. Importantly the overwhelming majority of late antique and medieval Christian Armenian history writers were *vardapet*s, formalising the chaotic indeterminacy of the past into heroic tales of the Christian Armenian nation, thereby informing interpellated members of what they are, how they came to be, and what historiographical and cultural stuff should be valorised.

One figure worth describing in detail is the famous and influential Grigor Narekac'i (*l. c.*945-1003).[555] Grigor spent almost his entire life at the monastery of Narek in the district of Ṙštunik', on the shore of Yemişlik Köyü in the Republic of Turkey. He was the son of Khosrov, an aristocrat and scholar who after his wife's death became the bishop of Andzevac'ik' district in Vaspurakan, related to the local princely family like most medieval Caucasian bishops. After being deprived of this office in 954 Khosrov went to Narek with his young sons Yovhannēs and Grigor, where his cousin-by-marriage Anania was abbot, the same figure mentioned by Step'anos above. This constitutes the only empirical claims for Grigor's life, hagiographical embellishments notwithstanding, but it is more plentiful than for most actors and so worth detailing to demonstrate *vardapet*s' positions within the broader social system.

Grigor's example also demonstrates the kind of education a *vardapet* might expect to receive, including grammar, rhetoric, logic and some philosophy through translations such as that of Philo of Alexandria, as well as theology, Scripture, patristics and hagiography. Singing was also practised daily through the liturgy, and it is no coincidence that verse alongside musical metaphors figure widely in their literary works. This is revealed in biblical commentaries such as Grigor's on the *Song of Songs*,[556] with commentaries perhaps *vardapet*s' most common compositions, so that, as Abraham Terian has noted, 'Every versed *vardapet*…thrived on allegorisation.'[557] Some of Narek's specific curriculum is revealed through Anania's works, which include hortatory discourses on the priesthood, humility, transience (in verse), and careful administration of the sacraments; treatises on penitence with tears (in prosaic verse), *moralia*, and number mysticism or arithmology; polemical diatribes against Chalcedonians and other Christological variations; a panegyric in praise of the universal church; and a denunciation of the T'ondrakean heresy as mentioned by Step'anos. Similarly Grigor's own literary works are exemplars of those produced

[554] See, for example: ST, III.2; III.8; III.9; III.20; & especially the different valences of the term in III.21.
[555] See the introduction to Cowe (1991); also see generally Ervine (2007) & Terian (2015).
[556] On this see generally Thomson (1983).
[557] Terian (2015).

by *vardapet*s, including odes and litanies, a history, biblical commentaries, *encomia*, exhortations, theological tracts, and, of course, mystical verse.

A tenth- and eleventh-century *vardapet*'s education can therefore be expected to be rich, broad, and thorough, and consequently their compositions were similarly wide-reaching. In a well-stocked monastery like Narek, renowned for its education, there would have been many translated and original works in Armenian, and possibly also compositions in Greek and Syriac, particularly in Grigor and Aristakēs' western regions of Caucasia. The works of both Grigor and Anania can be understood in the same manner as Aristakēs and his *History*: human actors composing works that function as non-human actors discursively delineating associated actors interpellated as Christian Armenian. This is seen, for example, in Anania's denunciation of the T'ondrakeans, used by Grigor in his own letter to the abbot of Kčav monastery who was accused of harbouring heretics.[558] It is telling that Aristakēs chose to dedicate a significant amount of absolute narrative space to this same topic, revealing similar concerns to police not external communities, but those identifying *as* Armenian Christian. The immediately political potential of *vardapet*s' compositions is also seen in Grigor's panegyric on a relic of the True Cross sent by the emperors Basileios II and Kōnstantinos VIII to the monastery of Aparan in the district of Mokk', returned to in the section on Aristakēs as Roman subject.[559]

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There is therefore a significant amount that can be inferred about the education, literary production, and social functioning of *vardapet*s in the conjuncture preceding that of Aristakēs, and Grigor provides a particularly useful parallel as a near contemporary during the period of rising Roman hegemony. Nevertheless, there is no single source that allows an in-depth view of the micro levels of the social system, and which would thereby crystallise *vardapet*s' positions not only as symbolic representations of a flourishing Armenian society, but also practically powerful actors. In the century after Aristakēs' lifetime, however, two works allow such an analysis, Davit' Gandzakec'i's *Penitential* (*l. c.*1070-*c.*1140) and Mkhit'ar Goš' *Lawcode* (*l.* 1130-1213, *wr. c.*1184). Both written by *vardapet*s, the *Penitential* is the first extant Armenian penitential composition, discussing the required periods of excommunication for a variety of specified sins, whilst the *Lawcode* is the first extant Armenian legal codification, incorporating parts of the *Penitential* into a broader juridical scheme. Both these works have much to say about the role of *vardapet*s, indeed, both display purposes and discourses that provide revealing

[558] Terian (2015).
[559] See the work and similar political sentiments in his colophon: Grigor Narekac'i, *Discourses*, Avetikyan (ed.), 11; *Book of Lamentations*, Mahé & Mahé (trans.), 777-8.

comparisons for the *History*. Despite post-dating Aristakēs' conjuncture, therefore, it is worth analysing them in detail for what they reveal about the micro-level functioning of *vardapet*s.

Although dating to a later period, around a hundred years after Aristakēs' death, the *Lawcode* provides a better starting point since it is the first known work to explicitly describe *vardapet*s' training, appointment, status, and functions. It begins with a long introduction where Mkhit'ar explains why he felt compelled to write the first Armenian legal codification – and the fact that he even felt the authority to do so is indicative of *vardapet*s' status in this conjuncture.[560] The central reason is that, lacking both a written legal code as well as secular authorities of their own, Armenian Christians had taken to using Islamic (*aylazgi*) courts for the settlement of internal disputes. In general principle, therefore, the *Lawcode* is more concerned with everyday life's legal-communal regulation, than politico-juridical organisation as such. It combines a descriptive and prescriptive approach, often making it difficult to discern where more-or-less shared traditions have been recorded, where one particular tradition is privileged, and where Mkhit'ar has prescriptively responded to an issue *ex novo*. After a long introduction the work begins with five chapters intended to establish those offices which, in Mkhit'ar's worldview, are most important for legal-communal regulation. Apparently appearing in descending order of importance, these are judges, kings and princes, abbots, *vardapet*s, and priests.[561]

The chapter begins with specifications for the appointing of *vardapet*s.[562] Firstly they must be properly trained in the Old and New Testaments and canon law. Next, they are to be granted their office by two or three other *vardapet*s, even if only one of these had been their teacher. It is beneficial if they are proposed for the title by a bishop, even more so a patriarch or prince, but the authority of two or three *vardapet*s suffices for the honour to be conferred. Importantly, the *Lawcode* stipulates the stripping of the title from those appointed by only one *vardapet*, as well as any who have appointed it to themselves. Having laid out these precepts, Mkhit'ar comments:

> But those legally appointed are to be honoured, in that [a *vardapet*] is second in prophetic grace, since by his labour he joins the apostles and by grace, the prophets; hence he is elected and called through [his] *logos* (Arm. '*ban*').[563]

Thereafter the chapter turns to *vardapet*s' prerogatives and the delineation of their spheres of authority. Unsurprisingly a key concern was to forestall animosity and rivalry between these practically and symbolically powerful actors. *Vardapet*s are to respect each other's sovereignty,

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[560] See the introduction to Thomson (2000).
[561] As Thomson notes, Mkhit'ar begins at this general social level and then turns afterwards to more specific matters.
[562] Thomson (2000), ch.5.
[563] Thomson translates *ban* as 'preaching ability', noting that it can thus mean 'reason' or 'discourse', but saying that later in the section it clearly refers to the *vardapet*'s exposition of scripture. For this reason I have translated it as the more commonly understood Greek equivalent, *logos*.

with each having total control over their pupils and banned from receiving another's. Equally if a *vardapet* has excommunicated someone then only he can decide whether and when to readmit them. If a monastery has two or more *vardapet*s then the most proficient should be appointed senior, and if the more proficient cannot be established then age comes first. *Vardapet*s are also to be examined before admission to a monastery, asked about their teachers, and would-be senior *vardapet*s require approval from their bishop and should liaise 'so that the bishops in unison with the *vardapet* carry out each one's responsibility.' Finally, Mkhit'ar notes that if a *vardapet* wishes to travel 'in their own province or in another' then they should do so with the goodwill of the bishop of that region, and if they wish to stay as a guest at another monastery then they must give priority to that monastery's *vardapet* and not publicly shame him.

Aside from these specific regulations concerning *vardapet*s' training and status, Mkhit'ar accords them a broader juridical-communal role in other sections of the work.[564] First place is accorded to bishops, reasonably conceived as the primary figures able to act as judges, but they are to co-ordinate with colleagues, 'laymen, or priests, and experienced *vardapet*s.'[565] They are given the specific task of assessing each case's particulars, through which they will develop a certain expertise like Mkhit'ar himself. *Vardapet*s are also key in the application of punishment, which, being ecclesiastical authorities, only consists of fines and spiritual sanctions. The specific role of *vardapet*s in excommunication and the apportioning of penance had been long established, and will be explored further below through the *Penitential*. *Vardapet*s are also given a central role in the approval of marriages, particularly those of close relatives and second marriages. Finally, in accordance with previous Armenian canons, *vardapet*s are the main adjudicators in the deposition of priests, and the inheritance and taxation of church property.

Thus the *Lawcode* provides significant information that helps to situate Aristakēs in his role as *vardapet*. It is, of course, a normative work that prescribes the functioning of a significantly novel legal-communal system, not a descriptive window onto actually-existing realities, which in any case always vary widely across time and place. It is difficult to exactly delineate where Mkhit'ar establishes a completely new ideal and set of ordinances, and where his precepts are based on past precedent. An even greater problem is judging how much of what he says holds true for Aristakēs' conjuncture, although there are previous canons and precedents for *vardapet*s' roles in the deposition of priests, church inheritance and taxation, and functions around learning, teaching, and penance. Nevertheless, composed around a hundred years after Aristakēs' death in completely different conditions, many of the specifics in Mkhit'ar's vision are doubtless inapplicable. In particular, the legal-communal role of eleventh-century *vardapet*s living under the rule of Christian Caucasian princes, let alone the empire of New Rome, is likely to have been very

[564] Ibidem.
[565] See appendix to 'On Vardapets' in Thomson (2000).

different – although some role is certain, particularly on an ad-hoc, more-or-less informal basis, with the possibility of "reviewed" actions such as Prince Vrverh's initial excommunication and loss of property for heresy, and subsequent suit to the provincial imperial judge. Despite these caveats, however, Mkhit'ar's vision remains crucial, not least because it reveals some of the office's development in the century after Aristakēs' death, when the ramifications of the Turkish invasions had unfolded more completely. It therefore provides important situation for the position in which Aristakēs found himself in the crisis of the 1070s. In particular, it is notable that *vardapet*s became one of, if not the key actors (re)producing an interpellated Christian Armenian "community", deployed to enforce national boundaries. Moreover, *vardapet*s' spiritual and monastic functions did not change radically in the years separating Aristakēs and Mkhit'ar, making the *Lawcode* an important comparison for the socially-symbolic role that Aristakēs' narrative performs.

Turning to the *Penitential*, this work and its writer are much closer to Aristakēs' conjuncture, with Davit' born in the 1070s and writing perhaps within fifty years of the writer's death.[566] Even more so than Mkhit'ar's, therefore, Davit's work deals with the aftermath of the transformation Aristakēs experienced, the writer having lived his whole life under Muslim rule in the region of Gandzak in Alvania, more-or-less modern Azerbaijan, conquered by the Seljuqs around 1075. These conditions are reflected in his work, which is significantly concerned with the problems of 'infidels' specifically ethnicised as Kurds. These problems stretch from the contamination of food, vessels, and religious sites, to the issue of Christian Armenian fathers selling their daughters to Muslims, and Christian Armenian women marrying them, sometimes with conversion sometimes without, living with them out of wedlock, and wet-nursing their children, whilst thereafter seeking to marry Christians, use religious spaces, and participate in holy rites.[567] Thus the work provides strong evidence for the regular crossing of ethnoreligious boundaries, to the extent that for many actors such boundaries may simply have not existed in everyday life.[568] Further instances are the strong censures for priests who baptise children to be raised as Muslims, whether in a restricted version to ward off evil spirits (*dev*s) or the full rite as laid out in church canons, and the specification that Muslims cannot stand as godfathers. Beyond these particular issues, Davit' notes the general problem of living under Muslim rule, with chapter 37 titled 'Concerning hopeless tyrants who may come. I too of necessity have flattered them'.[569]

[566] For a full discussion see: Dowsett (1961), I-XVII.
[567] See the list of contents: DG, 1-4.
[568] 'Ethno' since these Muslims are regularly identified specifically as Kurds, in addition to the normal terms for infidel or Muslim being *aylazg*/*aylaser*, 'other-nation'/'other-genus', the boundary therefore being conceived in explicitly ethnic terms.
[569] DG, 30.

The *Penitential* therefore contains much vitally important information for imagining some of the everyday practices of post-Seljuq Caucasian social systems, and, like the *Lawcode*, can be used with caveats to situate Aristakēs and the *History*. It demonstrates *vardapet*s functioning as the primary micro-level boundary enforcers, with Davit‘ seeking to delineate a Christian Armenian ethnoreligious boundary that must have been only occasionally present in the lives of many interpellated actors. For example, a woman born to Christian Armenians, sold to a Muslim Kurd, who converted to Islam for marriage, and raised circumcised though also baptised Muslim children, but still regularly used Christian religious sites and rituals, and married a Christian Armenian man after widowhood, is not reasonably reducible to “Armenian” and “Christian” categories alone.[570]

The work also assumes wide powers for *vardapet*s in dispensing penance, a crucial relational-strategy for the (re)production and regulation of communal boundaries. The *Penitential* is the first known Armenian work to systematically lay out specific penances for specific sins, although previous canons had dealt with some similar topics. But even in these cases it is nowhere demonstrable that Davit‘ has used them as the basis for his rulings, in many instances the prescribed penance is entirely different. Canons’ prescription of periods of penance and excommunication may have served as models, but it seems likely that Davit‘ sought to create a more formalised basis for the ad-hoc, case-by-case penances and judgements for which *vardapet*s had long been responsible. Hence the *Penitential* consists of a series of entries elaborating the degree of penance for each specified sin, varied according to its gravity and the sinner’s age, social-relational position, and intention. These details reveal the extent to which Davit‘, and so presumably other *vardapet*s, attempted to enforce cohesive groupness among associated actors interpellated as Armenian Christian. In addition to (re)producing ethnoreligious boundaries between “Christian Armenians” and “Muslim Kurds”, this included censuring vernacular ritual practices, as in chapter 23 dealing with baptism which heavily condemns popular variations.[571] These are claimed to take place inside houses under the auspices of priests, but including dances and games condemned in ‘the canons laid down by holy *vardapet*s’. Elsewhere Davit‘ accords *vardapet*s wide remit to re-evaluate even his stipulated penances, reflecting the ad-hoc and case-by-case basis on which *vardapet*s operated in general.[572]

Thus *vardapet*s are given literal extra-ordinary powers, and it can be assumed that they would often re-shape penances to circumstances through much the same logics as Davit‘s, a process notably resonant with the legal-juridical role accorded by the *Lawcode*. The *Penitential* also in two instances places *vardapet*s alongside the highest Christian authorities: chapter 61 refers to

[570] On such cases see generally Eastmond (2017).
[571] DG, 19-20.
[572] DG, 24, 32, 47, 49, 50, 54, 56, 63, 66 and 95.

'prophets and apostles and the *vardapet*s of the church' when dealing with those who build churches against those already established, presumably considered in some sense heretical;[573] whilst chapter 67 on menstruation states that the 'the laws and the prophets and apostles and *vardapet*s forbid men to approach their wives at such times.'[574] In sum, the *Penitential* constructs *vardapet*s as the most powerful micro-level ecclesiastical actors – as in the *Lawcode*, they are the tangible symbols and realisations of biblical prophets and the apostles – more proactive in their communities than most bishops, and assumed to have the authority to decide on states of exception. Of course the *Penitential*, much as the *Lawcode*, is a normative work, but the exact nature and purpose is different, giving its testimony a different valence for situating Aristakēs and the *History*. Though formalised, selective, and presented in normative language, the *Penitential* nevertheless responds to material practices in everyday life.

The *Lawcode* and *Penitential* come from times and places significantly removed from Aristakēs' conjuncture, but they provide important concrete content for the category of *vardapet*, not least because they are evidence of later actors grappling with the full ramifications of the transformations of his time. Although Aristakēs had lived almost his whole life under Christian rule, he wrote in the knowledge that this had come to an end, and attempted to resolve how this had happened. Thereafter first Davit' and then Mkhit'ar take up the broader problem of enforcing rules and regulations in the new social system, their works seeking to police the boundaries of the Christian Armenian community – indeed, to (re)produce this claimed community. Hence the *Penitential*, *Lawcode* and *History* are all attempts to mobilise interpellated Armenian actors, at least elites and ecclesiastics, either by providing a libidinal apparatus and narrative resolutions to situate their lived experience, or by providing practical instruction on policing everyday practices and social relations. The *History* also has boundary-policing purposes, with the two chapters on the T'ondrakeans particularly striking in this regard. Moreover, interpreting canons, scripture, and prophecy, and the apportioning of blame and penance for sin, are a *vardapet*'s central responsibilities, and this is exactly what the *History* constitutes. It is likely that *vardapet*s became more central to the policing of communal boundaries after the end of Christian rule – that is, central from the perspective of Armenian elites who held such concerns – but their potential to become such actors is important in itself. Thus Aristakēs is writing in a moment of transition, historiographically foreshadowing the social role that *vardapet*s would later come to occupy.

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To sum up the concrete content established for the category of *vardapet*, its early history reveals the office's deep roots as an organising and disciplinary role in ecclesiastical institutions, crucial

[573] DG, 44-45.
[574] DG, 47-49.

to the (re)production of a specifically Armenian Christianity. Early and central medieval historians demonstrate the office's prestige, and individual *vardapet*s' composing libidinal apparatuses and narrative resolutions through which both contemporaries and later identified Armenians situated themselves. Grigor Narekac'i helps us to imagine the education of a tenth- and eleventh-century *vardapet* in the Roman-Caucasian borderlands, as well as the works that one could compose. The *Lawcode* and *Penitential* provide glimpses of a *vardapet*'s micro-level power and regulation of associated actors interpellated as Armenian. Undoubtedly in the period after the 1070s this became more central to the (re)production of Christian Armenian ethnoreligious boundaries as a whole, but it was not a completely new role. Rather, it was a radically expanded one for which Aristakēs provides the first extant evidence. *Vardapet*s in the everyday, and their compositions, are thus central to processes of interpellating identified Armenians with a nationalist meaning of History, valorising particular actors and associations, and creating socially-symbolic acts through which interpellated actors could situate themselves. But of course *vardapet*s' functions did not remain stable across a large region and over more than half a millennium. Rather this initial analysis reveals the office's potentials, which must then be judged against the specifics of a given social system's conditions in a given conjuncture.

The route to Aristakēs' own conjuncture is through a socially-symbolic reading of the *History* as a complex narrative. As discussed in part I, the writer employs the same device as found in the *Universal History* when describing the kingdom of Great Armenia under Gagik I Bagratuni (*r.* 989-1017/20):

> And there were in those days the *vardapet*s Sargis, Tiranun, and Yenovk', who were *vardapet*s of the catholicate; and Samvel, who through abbothood shepherded the monastery of Kamurjats' Čor; and Yovsep', who was primate of the monastery of Hndzc'k'; and Step'annos of Tarōn, who composed a world history with a stunning style, beginning from the first man and going on to conclude his history with the death of Gagik, with whom this history is concerned; and Yovhannēs from the same region, whom they nicknamed Kozeṙn, who wrote books of faith; and Grigor, a man extremely learned in literature; and many others [there were], in whose days the horn of the Church was elevated by their orthodox confession. And those who view us with distrust, [they are] humiliated by their doctrinal works and crawl into holes in the walls like mice.[575]

Here Aristakēs, in exact same fashion as Step'anos and referencing his work, emplots the Bagratuni polity's flourishing through the general image of *vardapet*s in the specific figures of named persons. In fact not all were *vardapet*s, Grigor *magistros* was not even an ecclesiastic, but the office's general association with learning allowed the category to be used in this generalising manner. The passage appears in the beginning of chapter 2, 'Regarding the Kingdom of Armenia',

[575] AL, 530.

and is integrated into a rhetorical description emphasising the polity's idyllic state at that time, ruled by 'a man powerful and victorious in war…[who] held this land of the Armenians in peace…tilled the kingdom into old age, and was well-worthy of remembrance'.[576] But although the passage ostensibly speaks to the kingdom's good political-economic situation, all the particular signifiers are ecclesiastical: 'In his era the orders of the Church shone brightly, and the children of the Holy Covenant were illuminated: for in his day "The earth was full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah, 11.9)'.[577] Gagik's royal bearing is complemented by the ecclesiastical governance of the *kat'ołikos* Sargis I (*r.* 992-1019), celebrated for his monastic virtues and ascetic training, and discussion of the patriarch leads then to the above passage on *vardapet*s – notably mirroring the descending order of social stations Mkhit'ar employs in the *Lawcode*.

This section is thus the first moment in the *History* where Aristakēs employs an ideological figure that features in several ideologemes: the Armenian Church as a fetish for the writer's alienated projection of the social system – that is, the perception of social relations between humans in the fantastical form of relations between reified things, as *fetishes*.[578] Although Aristakēs seeks to celebrate Great Armenia's political-economic conditions at that time, and so Gagik's ability to maintain a hegemonic space in which Armenian elites can dominate and exploit, this aim is displaced into the figure of the Church. Rather than address the actual social relations making up the Bagratuni polity, these are alienated into a religious projection of human (=Armenian Christian) commonality, 'the children of the Holy Covenant', and thereby reduced to and fetishized in ecclesiastical institutions, 'the orders of the Church'. This ideological figure thus provides the crucial narrative mediation between the literal historical referent and the interpretive level of Divine Providence: society equals the Church, and the Church is effectively governed and regulated, and therefore treated kindly by God, so society flourishes.

Hence in this ideological figure Aristakēs indicates the social functions of *vardapet*s, at least in ideal terms for his socially-symbolic act: they are the essential struts on which society-as-the-Church rests, supporting secular and ecclesiastical elites with their 'doctrinal works' that drive heretics 'into holes in the walls like mice.' This framework is made more explicit in chapter 17, where in an instance of the lamenting mode Aristakēs states:

> Armenia had four thrones of kingship (*t'agavorut'iwn*), to say nothing of the *kiwrapałat*'s principality (*iškhanut'iwn*) and that under [the rule] of the Romans. [It once had] a patriarchate, great and envied by all peoples, as well as *vardapet*s of the first order, truthful and sagacious, at whose words all the legions of heretics were humiliated and cast down,

[576] Ibidem.
[577] Ibidem.
[578] On 'alienation' see Appendix II.

> unable to enter the fold of the Believers. For the gate-keeper would not accept them, since he recognized his own and was recognized by his own. Our churches resembled a new bride, adorned with all comeliness to satisfy the desire of the immortal Bridegroom. The clerics, newly born from the immaculate womb of our mother Sarah, resembled dove chicks clustering together, singing angelic songs with open mouths.[579]

This passage is clear: the most important elements of the social system are centralising apparatuses of hegemonic institutions – polities or, more simply, *states* – not only the Bagratuni kingdom but all of Caucasia's Christian royal polities as well as the curopalatate of Tao-Tayk' and New Rome.[580] Next comes the catholicate, that unifying principle marking identified Armenian Christians from other "envious" peoples, and with that the *vardapet*s, functioning precisely as communal policemen gate-keeping the 'fold of the believers' against heretics. In Aristakēs' vision the *vardapet*s were so effective that the Church flourished in its pure state, represented by both church buildings and the regular clergy, with the writer employing the gendered ideological figure of the new bride to denote this purified society-as-the-Church and its pleasing nature to Providence-as-the-Bridegroom. This gendered figure recurs in different ideologemes and will be returned to below in the section on Aristakēs as an elite man, as will the general assertion of stateness over any particular polity in the section on Armenianness. For the moment what is important is that here as before the figure of the Church stands in for the whole ensemble of social relations, with *vardapet*s then taking a central role in this scheme to enforce the boundaries of Christian Armenianness. This is re-emphasised in the lament's second part, presenting the same image's negative inversion:

> Come now and see the wicked inconsolable replacement which we received. Where are those thrones of the kingdoms? They appear not…Where is the great and wondrous patriarchal throne which that venerable man of God, Grigorios,[581] established upon an apostolic throne, after descending into the deep pit and being tested by fatiguing labour for fifteen years? Today it is vacant, without an occupant, stripped of adornments…The voices and sermons of *vardapet*s have ceased. The ranks of heretics which previously resembled mice running for cover into this or that hole, chased away by [the *vardapet*s'] theological words and orthodox confession, presently resemble lions which fearlessly, mightily, sally forth from their dens

[579] AL, 592.
[580] 'The four thrones of kingship' are unclear, it is possible to count them as Vaspurakan, Great Armenia, Kars, and Loṙi, but the latter two kingdoms are only obliquely mentioned by Aristakēs, unlike the "Georgian" kingdoms of Ap'khazet'i and K'art'li – and since Tao-Tayk' is specifically mentioned, the Georgianness of these polities should be no barrier to their identification here. The problem, however, is that neither of these kingdoms fell in the eleventh century, and Aristakēs explicitly says that all four thrones had gone by the time of writing – but then Tashir-Dzoraget also survived until 1118. An alternative is to count chronologically rather than synchronically, so that it represents the 'three lines' of the *Universal History* (ST, III.2), the Haykazunik', Aršakunik' and Bagratunik', plus the Arcrunik' in Vaspurakan, but this then reads oddly alongside the clearly synchronic Tao-Tayk' and 'what existed in Rome'. The best solution is simply to avoid asserting exact identifications.
[581] Grigor the Illuminator.

> open-mouthed to wolf down innocent people. What shall I say about the Church, which formerly was so embellished, comely, fruitful and sanctified that it would have astonished a prophet? Today it sits ingloriously, unadorned, stripped of all beauty, resembling a childless widow…Those clerics who could be seen at the [church] doors, books in hand, singing Davidic psalms, dance before the doors of those *dev*-infested lairs called mosques learning the tenets of Islam (*mahmetavand*). Modest, prudent women who had been legally married, taking large dowries from their men, today have learned dissolute, licentious adultery.[582]

Employing a rhetorical homiletic structure that recurs throughout the *History*, Aristakēs contrasts the perfection of previous conditions with their inversion at the time of writing, reiterating the exact same imagery but in negative. Indeed, much of the imagery in this section refers back not to the immediately preceding passage, but to the pivotal narrative transformation of chapter 10, and resonates with comparable formulations in the vignette laments for sacked cities. Most importantly, Aristakēs entirely reiterates his scheme: polities are most important, and they have gone; the catholicate comes next, and that too has gone; then come the *vardapet*s, defenders of society-as-the-Church through their 'voices and sermons' driving away the heretics, now unable to resist them. All this culminates to produce a traumatic situation of societal dissolution, with church buildings collapsing in an obvious metaphor for the collapse of the social system, and notable hints at *realia* – especially recalling the *Penitential*'s strictures against priests and women fraternising with Muslim Kurds – in the mention of priests at mosque and dowried women committing adultery.

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Aristakēs thus constructs *vardapet*s as essential to the good state of the Armenian nation, purifying its state by gate-keeping against the heretics. Moreover, by fetishizing the whole social system in the figure of the independent Armenian Church the writer accomplishes this in narrative form, erasing non-Armenian and non-Christian participation in the ensemble of social relations – this despite the fact that the postscript states that Muslims had 'long lived among us'.[583] Yet the imperative to regulate, discipline, and purify in a *vardapet*'s social function is not merely to externalise actors identified as non-Armenian, but also to do so with those previously interpellated as Armenian Christian. This is clear in the two chapters on the T'ondrakean "heresy".[584] These are of crucial importance in understanding the *History*'s purposes, two chronologically non-sequential and stylistically idiosyncratic chapters that take up a significant amount of absolute narrative space in a work with profound gaps. They indicate that comprehensive coverage, continuous linear narrative, and internal consistency are not the most important factors for

[582] AL, 592-593.
[583] AL, 629-633.
[584] AL, 610-622.

Aristakēs' socially-symbolic act. Rather these traditional historiographical elements are useful insofar as they bolster the *History*'s ability to act as an effective historiographically-structured homily. In the T'ondrakean chapters, then, the writer as *vardapet* departs from his basic model to provide two in-depth examples of heresy disturbing the proper social order, as demonstrations of social sins that brought about divine wrath.

The first, chapter 22 'Concerning the evil sect of the T'ondrakeans which appeared in Hark' district and agitated many people',[585] concerns a bishop named Yakobos, who apparently hid his heresy behind an appearance of sanctimonious piety: going barefoot, wearing unadorned coarse clothing and hair shirts, fasting regularly and abstaining from all rich foods, as well as selecting favoured ecclesiastics for their high standards of piety. There is actually very little that indicates heterodoxy or heteropraxy as such, with Yakobos instead appearing an overzealous reformer who disturbed ecclesiastical relations with his assertion of salvation by penitence above all else, censuring of priests who did not meet his high standards, prescription that mass should only be taken three times a year, and open ridicule of animal sacrifice – a practice still tolerated in the Armenian Church. But it is precisely Yakobos' disturbing of ecclesiastical relations that Aristakēs is addressing, his actions functioning to fracture the Christian Armenian nation from within: 'Indeed of them our Lord spoke in His vivifying evangelisation: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, and underneath they are ravaging wolves (Matthew 7:15)."'[586] The chapter's thrust is therefore a perfect example of the *vardapet*'s social function as conjuncturally constructed within Aristakēs' socially-symbolic act: to regulate and externalise actors that threaten the proper (=Armenian Christian) social order, in this case actors explicitly recognised as Armenians:

> For it is easy to beware of external enemies, but it is difficult to escape the wars of one's own clan, as Abel and Joseph learnt. Now, should these [people] be speakers of another language, from whichever one it was, it would be easy for us to be wary; but as the blessed John writes, 'They went out from us, but they were not all of us' (John 2:19); and thus it is difficult to be aware of it (i.e., their heresy). Speaking the same language and being of the same clan, from the same fountain may flow both bitter and sweet water – although Saint James said that this was impossible, but nonetheless this was the case for our times: from the same sweet fountain, that which our glorious leader (Grigor the Illuminator) after fifteen years with fatiguing labour lying in the ground at Khor Virap and from the depth of the cavity made flow forth for us a copiously flowing fountain, alike to Ezekial's vision, crystalline and clear, into which diseased, heretical streams had not been able to make an entrance. For the bulwark of truth had been firmly secured on the rock of faith until recent times, this also indeed our

[585] AL, 610-615.
[586] AL, 611.

> Illuminator saw by the prophetic spirit, so that lambs became wolves and brought about a carnage of bloodshed.[587]

Thus T‘ondrakeans are visibly not an external ‘sect’, a community apart easy to identify and exclude. They are instead indistinguishable from Christian Armenians, indeed, they emerge from the self-same stream flowing back from Grigor the Illuminator himself, and are found among the highest echelons of the Armenian nation, among its very supporting struts like Bishop Yakobos in this chapter, or the princely aristocrat Vrverh in the next – note the pairing of an ecclesiastical elite actor with a secular one, thus implying the whole of (elite) identified Armenian society. However, although this was a time of ‘multiplying human iniquity upon the land’,[588] with the devil sowing ‘weeds among the grain’, this was ‘quickly exposed by the *vardapet*s of the Church’. These actors, performing their idealised role of gate-keeping the Christian Armenian nation:

> …rooted the harmful weed from the meadow of our faith, and the dregs of bitterness having been filtered out brought health to the waters with the salt of truth, according to the prophetic disposition of Holy Elijah (2 Kings 2:19-22).[589]

Thus, despite all the aristocrats of Hark‘ siding with Yakobos, as well as at least half of the broader populace – ‘including those who were ever doing God’s will in retreats and caves (i.e. hermits and monks)’[590] – a priest from the Karin district who had joined him informed the *kat‘ołikos*, and the bishop was branded a heretic and excommunicated.[591] The role of secular elite actors in the story is instructive as to *vardapet*s’ social-relational position in Aristakēs’ conjuncture, with first the aristocrats of Hark‘ protecting Yakobos, and then the excommunicate seeking rebaptism and protection from the Romans – who ‘in their wisdom’[592] turned him down – hinting at very different social dynamics to those of Davit‘ and Mkhit‘ar. Unlike in the twelfth century, where the majority of secular elites were Muslim and *vardapet*s positioned themselves as crucial interfaces between identified Armenians and hegemonic apparatuses, before the 1070s such actors had direct access to identified Armenian and/or Christian elites. But nevertheless the basic function of gate-keeping, purifying, and so (re)producing the claimed Armenian community remains, even against the designs of particular secular and ecclesiastical elite actors. Indeed, Aristakēs comments how Yakobos, believing himself to have a firm foundation, planned to ‘overthrow the blessed Church’, to ‘shear the Church of its glories’, and thereby to ‘betray the holy Church into the hands of the sowers of discord’, a deployment of the ideological figure of

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[587] Ibidem.
[588] Dateable *c.* 992-1019 by the fact that Sargis I excommunicates Yakobos.
[589] AL, 612.
[590] Ibidem.
[591] That is, literally branded on his face with the sign of the fox, a punishment specific to the Armenian Church and dating back to the mid-fifth century at least, see Garsoïan (1967), 83.
[592] AL, 614.

society-as-the-Church so as to emphasise that Yakobos entailed an existential threat to the whole nation.[593]

The second chapter on T‘ondrakeans, chapter 23, ‘How that Fire of Error also Inflamed the Borders of Mananałi’,[594] presents a different lens through which to view Aristakēs’ integration of *vardapet*s into his socially-symbolic act: their negative inversion as purveyors of heresy. One of the *Lawcode*’s most striking stipulations about *vardapet*s is to strip the title from those who have claimed it without any bestowing authority. Given Caucasia’s often disjointed and difficult topographies and ecologies, it was relatively easy for wandering monastic educators to assume the authoritative office, moving across regions and spreading technical heterodoxy and heteropraxy without detection – though in all likelihood they saw themselves as spreading orthodox Armenian Christianity, perhaps in a more self-consciously vernacular form.[595] Nevertheless for more institutionalised ecclesiastics like Aristakēs these actors were literal wolves in sheep’s clothing, actively subverting the proper social order through perverse mimicry. Such would seem to be the case with the initial heretical instigator of chapter 23, a monk named Kuncik who had studied with a monk from Alvania and converted three elite women into his followers, transforming them by sorcery into ‘Satan’s *vardapet*s’. Their role is returned to below in the section on Aristakēs as an elite man, for the moment what is clear is that the title signifies their central function in spreading Kuncik’s teachings. Likewise when Bishop Samvel moves against the apparently heretical community, the only actors to receive the full punishment of facial branding are ‘six of them who were styled the *vardapet*s of that wicked and foul religion’.

The T‘ondrakean chapters provide further important testimony for how Aristakēs as *vardapet* intersected with his position in the social system of Roman Caucasia, but for the moment it is necessary to sum up the conjunctural content provided for the category of *vardapet*. Judging by the manner of their integration into Aristakēs’ socially-symbolic act, in his conjuncture *vardapet*s were powerful actors at a micro level, endowed with the responsibility of gate-keeping and purifying (a claimed-to-be specifically) Armenian society. But these functions existed in the interstices of more robust political and ecclesiastical power, and negated instances of *vardapet* authority in the form of (claimed-to-be) heretical teachers reveal dangerous ambiguities in their position – at least in the lifeworlds of institutionalised elite actors like Aristakēs. Nevertheless they remained symbolically valorised, their number and education standing in for the good state of whole kingdoms, and they were, as ever, central actors for the (re)production of a specifically

[593] AL, 610-611.
[594] AL, 615-622.
[595] See Garsoïan’s (1967) description of Paulicians and T‘ondrakeans as Armenian ‘old believers’.

Armenian Christian identification, interpellating members with what they have been, what they are, and what historiographical and cultural stuff is to be valorised.

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To finish this exposition of Aristakēs as *vardapet,* therefore, it is important to address the *History* as a *vardapet*'s composition intended to perform just such a valorisation, interpellating and regulating in turn. The writer claims to explain his purposes in the postscript, opening with the sentence:

> I considered it important to write for our beloved brothers a memorial concerning known things and familiar events, just as [at] the beginning of these writings I discoursed on God's providence and limitlessness in measured words (i.e. verse).[596]

This statement places Aristakēs in a monastic situation, and establishes the work's educational conceptualisation. It also connects the postscript to the verse lament which prefaces the *History*. Stretching for thirty-seven lines, the first four read:

> Days of torment hastened to us, | And impossibly narrow straits found us; | For the measure of our sins, having filled, overflowed, | And our cry went before God.[597]

These two statements set the bounds to the narrative. The *vardapet* invites his 'beloved brothers' to consider the entire work between these two poles as a historiographical tract 'on God's providence and limitlessness', and the verse preface begins the whole work with a statement on the reason for these events: the 'measure of our sins'. The resonance with exhortatory homilies is evident, and the use of verse to begin the work is notable considering both Anania and Grigor Narekac'i's utilisation of metre in their compositions, as well as resonating with vernacular forms of storytelling in the *gusan-ašuł* tradition.[598] Thus Aristakēs sets up the *History* as both a popular tale to draw in listeners, and a homily that instructs them to penance, constructing his historical narrative between these two poles as a single coherent vehicle regardless of the apparent gaps and discontinuities in the chronological sweep. This coherence is manifest in the postscript's extended discussion of a heavenly body visible 'in the month of Arac', in the year 482 of our era (perhaps 29th July, 1033)'.[599] As he describes:

> Thus [it was] with the fast-moving, beautiful, luminous and earthbound comet that, while it was entirely luminous, and had the middle course, with quick movement down its course

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[596] The phrase translated here as 'postcript', *ban yishatakaran*, is commonly translated as 'colophon' and is indeed one of the technical terms for this. However Aristakēs' piece functions as a postscript, and since the phrase can actually apply to a number of different kinds of text like epigraphy, rather than adopt unhelpful terms like 'writer's colophon', 'postscript' has been preferred. AL, 629-633.
[597] AL, 526-527.
[598] For more on these traditions and their intersection with written history see: Van Lint (2012), 180-200.
[599] It is unclear exactly given the two different descriptions of the same solar event, but this is likely to have been Halley's Comet.

> shadowlessly hurried into the atmosphere towards earth, bearing a vast cloak of long-committed sins wrapped around itself. And so greatly was [this cloak] enveloped around itself that it gave off unbelievably bright rays; and it was not possible to view in plain sight [being] dimly-coloured as the rising stars, [with] only [its] outline appearing. By its own demonstration it showed the darkening obscurity of the shadowless and illuminating orders of the Church, as well as the brilliance of souls and the bright rays of the path of virtue becoming invisible and dark. For from then onwards, as I said previously, from the time of this [happening] in the year 482 of the Armenian reckoning, until the present time the covenant of holiness and the order of the Church have decayed and corrupted. And we did not hear talk of peace or tidings of good things; and nor was one monument to victory erected, neither by kings or princes. And not only that, but also the clerics were not able to resist the war-loving *dev*; instead, weakened and become powerless, impatient and crooked they fell into the enemy's hand, the land became filled by anger and tumult. So step by step the prophecy of eclipse became true; for from that point [and] afterwards our enemies attacked, and made us wear the costume of mourning and despair, and happiness departed from the land.

Here Aristakēs, through his role as exegete, penitential expert, and possessor of prophetic grace, provides an interpretation of divine signs, exactly the general role of *vardapet*s from Late Antiquity to the twelfth century. The comet is taken to indicate the darkening of the Church under 'long-committed sins', as well as the dimming of each individual soul, appearing both a sudden point of transformation in 1033, and a long linear development of accumulated sins. Obviously the figure of the Church stands once again for society as a whole, in a conceptual antinomy with the shared community of "us" that implies not a universal humanity but specifically Armenian Christians. Furthermore the same metaphor is brought to the level of the soul's own journey, with conceptualisations of light bearing similarities to the theology of Grigor Narekac'i.[600] In such manner, at the *History*'s culmination the writer re-emphasises the moral level – how the audience should feel as an individually interpellated subject – and its inextricability from the anagogical level – the corporate political subject fetishized in the figure of the Armenian Church. Moreover, this parallel between identified Armenians' current situation and the condition of their souls resonates with Aristakēs' preface:

> Those established in the world in their exile (Genesis 3) | Left a second time and became vagabonds | By the hand of rebellious emigrants;

Here the *vardapet* evokes both the concept of human souls trapped in bodily exile and humanity's exile from Paradise, to artfully parallel the experience of each individual Armenian soul with the general fate of their society. This literary tactic is analogous to the postscript's use of the comet's decay to represent each individual Armenian's soul, as well as that of their entire church. Hence

[600] See Russell (2004), 172-191.

from the opening lines of the preface to the last of the postscript the audience able to recognise themselves in the *History*'s libidinal apparatus are interpellated with its view of "our" society, and so also "our" past and the proposed solutions to "our" predicament. This society is made up of several implied classes of elite, with kings and princes in addition to clerics who also 'were not able to resist the war-loving *dev*'. It is also a society situated in a very particular space, 'the land', a unitary Armenian territory. This is Aristakēs, as Thomson notes, talking 'in the manner of a *vardapet* addressing his people'. [601]

Thus Aristakēs is able to formalise the chaotic indeterminacy of the past into a coherent and meaningful narrative framework, at least for those actors who recognise the interpellation. The postscript refers back to a mediating passage in chapter 9, coming just before the pivotal narrative transformation, where the celestial happening is described as 'an eclipse of the sun', which 'many from among the wise' considered to presage the Antichrist's birth and 'the greatest of evils'.[602] Whatever the apparent discrepancies in the description of this event, comet or eclipse, its narrative function is evident: to mediate the moment of pivotal transformation in a punitive theology wherein which the 'long-committed sins' of the Armenian people brought about their near destruction through Turkish invasions. As the *vardapet* notes:

> This also indeed did occur in our day, the thing to which this history, having advanced, takes us, which we saw with our own eyes, the blows of divine wrath, and the unheard of punishment which arrived over this land of the Armenians because of our sins.[603]

Here Aristakēs' own lived experience, '[that] which we saw with our own eyes', is explicitly tied to the *History*'s linear narrative progression towards the divine judgement 'which arrived over this land of the Armenians because of our sins', again territorialising the utopian community of "us". The writer connects his own lived experience – implicitly generalised as that of all identified Armenian Christians – not only to the constructed logic of immediate history, but also to the interpretive code of Divine Providence, by explicitly drawing comparison with the fall of Jerusalem. Not only were the signs for Armenia's fall similar to those of Jerusalem's, but also the Armenians were visited by a strange man prophesying their downfall, just as 'the great Eusebius signified in his *Ecclesiastical History*':

> …a man, unknown to anyone, destitute, homeless, came and crossed from the east, through Apahounik', and having crossed through the region of Hark', he descended into Mananaɬi and Ekełeac', wailing in such a loud voice, day and night without cease, 'Woe is me, woe is me!', with a loud voice, and without saying anything else. If someone asked him: 'From which region are you?' or 'Why are you saying that?' he would give no response; but

[601] Thomson (2003), 77.
[602] AL, 550.
[603] Ibidem.

> endlessly say the same thing and would not stop saying it. Witless men thought him to have gone out of his mind, but the wise said: 'That "Woe" will be for the whole country.'[604]

This mediating passage, in combination with the verse preface and postscript, is key for the *History*'s homiletic narrative structure. It formalises out any apparent inconsistencies and gaps in coverage, asserting that the whole work is to be read as a coherent vehicle that can address the lived experience of interpellated Armenians. Indeed, the composition interpellates self-identified Armenians into existence by territorialising and ethnicising their lived experience through the narrative's ideological structure. Hence the comet/eclipse's double appearance as pivotal *moment* of transition in the main narrative, and signifier of transformative *duration* in the postscript, complement each other by drawing the interpellated audience to the work's narrative logic. The historical subject is the whole complex of Armenianness, with the Church, elites, and land all standing in for this at different points, manifested in the doomsayer's progression across the ethnicised territory. Territorialisation is present too in the preface:

> In those days of ours wars awoke from four sides | Sword from the East, murder from the West, | Fire from the North, death from the South; | The joys were lifted from the land,[605]

And is developed more fully in the postscript:

> Now when such catastrophic trials and earth-shattering disasters spread throughout the entire land, and the southern fire came and burnt those lofty strongholds, and consumed impregnable towers as though made from wax, the kings and princes, having weakened, declined, and hope of expected refuge left us.[606]

Hence the land is separated from political structures themselves, which Aristakēs constructs as the defining protection of both land and "us". But accumulated sins had brought about the end of these political structures, and:

> Instead, the Lord's wrathful anger came upon us all alike; for the houses of prayer were demolished, and the foundation stones anointed with holy oil were now laid in the palaces of those of foreign race (*aylazg*); and the blessed sacrament left us, and we became the object of ridicule even of pagan insults; we were abused and lost, and we were brought to the ground; and we became as though dried bones, without any hope of breath or life; and the impieties of our fathers came upon us, repayment was demanded from us for the wickedness of our forebears.[607]

This section lays out the entire scheme: the accumulation of previous debts of sin meant that Holy Writ brought about a general judgement on Armenian society, with the result that each element

[604] Ibidem.
[605] AL, 527.
[606] AL, 630.
[607] Ibidem.

of the (elite, patriarchal) social structure dissolved. This gives concrete content to the more elusive words of the preface:

> All people perverted their courses, | And the land was filled with impiety; | Justice diminished, and wantonness proliferated, | The people and priesthood gave false witness to God; | On account of which the nations of foreign lands | They estranged us from our home, | And turned our glories to ruin.[608]

Where the preface refers to a unitary 'people' or binary 'people and priesthood', the postscript refers more specifically to kings, princes, and clerics, presumably the key figures that allowed justice to diminish, wantonness to proliferate, and 'rights and the law'[609] to depart. Importantly therefore, unlike Davit' and more especially Mkhit'ar, Aristakēs does not see the *vardapet* providing justice as such, but rather ensuring its carrying out through an Armenian Christian lens, critiquing other classes of elite who failed in their responsibilities. In this conjuncture, therefore, the *vardapet*'s responsibility is to admonish such elites to proper action, and to connect "bad happenings" to "bad actions" through the interpretive code of Divine Providence. Hence Aristakēs states bluntly that 'if You put our sins in a balance-scale, they will weigh more than the punishments which we have received from You, and Your torments are lighter than our guilt' – although he nonetheless goes on to beg God to be merciful and not turn away from 'us', despite the fact that 'all of this and more than was written in this book was visited upon us because of our sins.'

Yet there is some sense in which the writer seems to recognise that his utopian community is on the cusp of a new conjuncture from which there is no easy return. Expanding on the comparison with Jerusalem, the *vardapet* notes how:

> …they in any case, still had a ray of hope, the supervision of kings and princes and – what is more important – they had the gracious enlivening words of prophets by which they were fortified and were able to withstand the straitening trials visited upon them by the Lord. Our situation is more difficult and serious than anyone else's, for we are without king, prince, lord or overseer, spiritually and physically, and we were unable to find a single place of refuge. Rather we are weakened and obedient under pagan kings and bear severe blows from their sceptres every day. For since we did not serve the Lord, we must serve Muslims (*aylazgi*); and since we disdained fear of the Lord we are now daily consumed with fear.[610]

The crux then of Aristakēs' purpose is to explain how this situation came about through a punitive theology that is simultaneously an exhortation to penance. Thus severe dislocation is reframed as an admonitory message: divine banishment is harsh, but will eventually come to an end, as long as both 'people and priesthood' turn their faces back to God. The *History* is therefore the epitome

[608] AL, 526.
[609] AL, 630.
[610] AL, 629-630.

of a *vardapet*'s composition in this conjuncture, formalising the chaotic indeterminacy of the past through prophetic grace, so as to admonish interpellated actors – in the case of literature primarily elite men – to penance and perceived better conduct, thereby receiving God's grace once more.

II.4 Aristakēs as Citizen of Arcn

Thus historicising the category of *vardapet* with concrete content for Aristakēs' conjuncture reveals glimpses of his social being. In doing so, moreover, we glimpse brief vistas of his particular worldview's intersection with broader societal lifeworlds. After *vardapet* the next more-or-less secure assertion about Aristakēs as a historical actor, again gendering, ethnicisation, and class position aside, is his situation in 'the *avan* of Arcn in the district of Karin'. But historicising the category of "citizen of Arcn" is complicated by the fact that this urban centre's origins are a mystery, complicating initial analysis. Arcn is absent from pre-eleventh century sources bar one late-tenth century colophon,[611] with no Armenian composition mentioning it prior to the *History*,[612] and the sole subsequent works to do so, the twelfth-century chronicles attributed to Matt'ēos and Samvel, only referring to the 1048 attack.[613] Most strikingly Arcn is entirely unmentioned in Arabic and Georgian sources, and only appears in Greek sources of the mid-to-late eleventh century that likewise deal with its destruction. Aram Ter-Ghevondyan and Garsoïan intimate that it is a new centre,[614] but without explication – the same is said of Ani, for example, but the fortress there dates back to the seventh century even if the city is late tenth. Although eleventh-century Arcn is celebrated as the preeminent regional centre for commercial exchange, it appears *ex nihilo* in sources that only record it for its destruction.

This is all the stranger considering that Theodosioupolis-Karin, from which Arcn is inextricable, as close as twenty miles away to the north-east across the Euphrates,[615] was a hugely prominent centre from its fourth-century foundation onwards,[616] controlling the northern east-west route from Anatolia through Caucasia to Mesopotamia and Iran, as well as the north-south route from Syria, Upper Mesopotamia and eastern Anatolia to the Pontus and Black Sea. It changed hands

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[611] Matevosyan n.111, 95.

[612] Hewsen (24, 2003) has tentatively followed Herzfeld (1948) in associating of Arcn with ancient Arzaniba, attested in an Assyrian inscription of Tiglath-Pilesar *c.*1114-1077 BCE, but there is no reason aside from loose onomastics for this identification, especially as the name is unattested for over a millennium and a half. He has also (24, 2003) connected it with the certain Autisparate recorded on the *Tabula Peuteringia*, proposing an original of 'Arcnaberd', but again this is spurious, not least for the fact that Arcn was entirely unfortified. Hewsen also situates Arcn in the 'royal land of Karin' from the late-fourth century, but provides no reference for this early attestation.

[613] SA, 188: '499: The Tačiks took the city (*k'ałak'*) of Arcn and by the sword they killed 140,000 residents and took those remaining into captivity, burning the city down by fire.' See also MU, I.92.

[614] Ter-Ghevondyan (1976), 115, 128, 131-4; Garsoïan (1997), 181-183.

[615] The exact site has never been identified, and may lie underneath part of modern Erzurum or the agricultural fields surrounding. Cf. Thomson (2003), 73.

[616] Garsoïan has noted of the Karin region in the late-fourth century, 'Despite the importance of the region, no city seems, however, to have existed there at the time', (2003), 64-65.

several times between the Caliphate and New Rome, Muslim forces first seizing it in 653, Romans in 686, Muslims again in 700, another brief Roman occupation 751-2, before two centuries of Islamic rule was ended by Roman conquest in 949. Between the mid-eighth and mid-tenth centuries the city was the centre of the emirate of Qālīqalā on the north-eastern extremity of the so-called *al-thughūr*,[617] the border region maintained to protect the Caliphate from Roman attacks and provide bases for raids into Anatolia.[618] The city and region are therefore comparatively well covered in Armenian, Arabic, Georgian and Greek sources. The eighth-century *History* attributed to Łevond, for example, claims that Kōnstantinos V in 752-3 resettled prominent Armenians elsewhere at their own request, with the reconquering Abbasid general, Yazīd b. Usayd al-Sulamī, settling Muslim elites to administer the city:

> Assembling an innumerable host, he designated officials over the work which included swiftly rebuilding the city's demolished walls. He led the sons of Ishmael and their families there and settled them to hold and protect the city from [their] foes. And he stipulated that the provisions for their food should come from the land of the Armenians.[619]

Qālīqalā is even designated a 'bulwark of Islam' by ninth- and tenth-century Muslim geographers, with the tenth-century Persophone *Ḥudūd al-'Ālam* describing 'a town inside which there is a strong fortress where there are always fighters for the faith, by turn from each place. Merchants too are numerous in it.'[620] Finally Qālīqalā is one of the few Muslim emirates in south Caucasia that remains well-attested across the tenth century.[621]

It is odd, therefore, that in all the sources dealing with Qālīqalā, none mention Arcn or suggest any other regional centre. It may have been overlooked as a commercial rather than military centre, but Theodosioupolis-Karin's own mercantile nature is emphasised, suggesting that it was both militarily and commercially predominant, and apparently precluding another significant centre less than a day away. Indeed, Arcn's absence from one source in particular suggests that in the early-to-mid tenth century it was not prominent enough to mention, if it even existed at all. This is chapter 45 of the *DAI* titled 'on the Ivirians'. Despite the broad title, however, the chapter overwhelmingly deals with events around Theodosioupolis-Karin and Basiani (Gr. *Phasianē*), the various Roman machinations to intervene in the close relations between the Bagrationi of Tao-Tayk' and K'art'li and the Muslim elites of Qālīqalā, and the river Aras' (Gr. *Araxēs*) role as the boundary between the Caucasian polities and New Rome.[622] As a result the chapter notes in detail

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[617] This Arabic name for the city is drawn from the Armenian *Karnoy k'ałak'*, 'city of [the] Karin [region]', much as the contemporary Georgian name, *Karnuk'alak'i*, see: 'Qālīqalā' in the Encyclopedia of Islam**;** *Life of K'art'li*, 122.
[618] On the *al-thughūr* see generally Eger (2014); and for Theodosioupolis-Karin's role see: Ter-Ghevondyan (1976), 22-24.
[619] Ter-Ghevondyan (1976), 30; Łevond, 135-136.
[620] *Ḥudūd*, 143.
[621] Ter-Ghevondyan (1976), 63 & 79.
[622] *DAI*, 204-215.

the territory around Theodosioupolis-Karin, the plain of Basiani, and the various cities nearby, but not once does it refer to any centre associable with Arcn. Instead the drama focuses entirely on the attempt to take Theodosioupolis-Karin itself, with mention of its strong fortifications, 'the caravans entering the city' day and night, and the surrounding environs – including 'villages of the Theodosioupolitans', among which can be imagined an embryonic but insignificant Arcn.

So what changed between Theodosioupolis-Karin's 949 conquest and Arcn's 1048 sack? It seems that the urban space around the citadel of Theodosioupolis-Karin was de-fortified in the aftermath of Roman conquest, with consequent shifts in settlement patterns. The *Universal History* claims that the conquering Armeno-Roman general Kourkouas 'tore down the *khandak* of the city and demolished its high towers', using the Arabic and Persian word for outer limit, here referring to city walls and possibly a moat.[623] Likewise Yaḥyā of Antioch describes how 'the Rum took the city of Qālīqalā, submitted it, demolished the walls, [and] gave a quarter to its inhabitants'.[624] Hence these sources indicate that Roman conquest entailed the destruction of the outer city's defences, with Yaḥyā also implying the urban population's resettlement in a particular location. The destruction of the city walls explains why on campaign against Davit' *kouropalatēs* in 998 the emir of Azerbaijan, Mamlān, intended 'to rebuild the city of Karin'.[625] It is also clear from Aristakēs' note that in 1018 'the autocrat emperor sent a certain prince from Nikomitk', who…assembled a large group of men, [and] made a beginning once more of the building of T'eodosupolis',[626] as well as Attaleiatēs' claim that 'a few years before [Rōmanos IV's campaign of 1071] [Theodosioupolis] had been rebuilt and refortified…with a moat and walls'.[627] Thus Theodosioupolis-Karin ceased to be a populous urban centre after 949, and was only refortified in the eleventh century. The citadel certainly remained, becoming a thematic centre in 949-979 and again in 1000/1-1045, but the wider city seems to have largely disappeared.

These are the conditions for the appearance of Arcn, and a closer analysis of this name provides further important clues. In an article analysing another *DAI* chapter on a different urban centre in Tao-Tayk', Artanuji, Nicholas Evans has demonstrated how the composition delineates three distinct spaces: the fortified *kastron*/*madīna*; the main urban space in the walled *rabaḍ* where production and exchange took place; and the exterior agricultural *arḍūn* – meaning 'lands' in

[623] Theophanes Continuatus also highlights the military installation in a brief notice on the subjection of the 'most brave and amazing *kastron* of Theodosioupolis', see: *Theophanes Continuatus*, 428; *khandaq* would normally mean a trench or a moat, but here clearly refers to walls, that perhaps accompanied some kind of ditch.
[624] Yaḥyā, 728.
[625] Davit' was then in possession of the city and region as an imperial gift for the duration of his lifetime, see: Ter-Ghevondyan, 113; & ST, III.15. This would also infer a late-tenth century date for the anonymous story-teller's tale of Herakleios coming to 'the East', and finding a destroyed Theodosioupolis-Karin, see Thomson (1988-1989), 186.
[626] AL, 532.20.
[627] *Historia*, 270-271.

Arabic and rendered *arzyn* in Greek – from which the city's tax base was drawn.[628] These distinctions are resonant in the case of Theodosioupolis-Karin: the central *kastron*/*madīna* maintained continuously from Muslim into Roman rule; the walled *rabaḍ* a thriving commercial centre under Muslim rule but seemingly destroyed after the Roman conquest; and the nearby agricultural *arḍūn*, 'Arcn',[629] providing the city's tax base under the Caliphate, with the central collection point at a nearby river crossing providing the basis for a new production and commercial centre, sufficiently distant-yet-close to the theme's military-administrative centre in the citadel at Theodosioupolis-Karin. Łevond's reference to Yazīd rebuilding Qālīqalā's walls, settling Muslim administrators and establishing the city's provision from 'the land of the Armenians', may even describe the initial foundation of these *arḍūn*. Variations on *arḍ* and *arḍūn* have been proposed as Arcn's etymological root for some time,[630] deduced from Theodosioupolis-Karin's immediate and uniform designation as *Arz ar-Rum* in Arabic and Persian sources postdating the 1080 Saltuqid conquest, and this analysis provides firm grounding for the argument.

In addition to historical conditions and etymological plausibility, this hypothesis is bolstered by the fact that Arcn is rarely referred to as a city (*k'ałak'*) in Armenian sources, with *avan* predominating instead, as in a colophon written 988/9 in 'the *giwłak'ałak'* ('village-city') of Ačnavan (=Arcn-*avan*)' – the first extant source to mention Arcn – and another written 1048/9 'in the great *avan* of Arcn in the region of Karin'.[631] The exact dividing lines between *k'ałak'*, *avan*, and *giwł* (village) are difficult to gauge, at one end of the scale are unmistakable *k'ałak'*s like Ani and Constantinople, with small villages that can be comfortably labelled *giwł* at the other, but in between there is considerable variation and complication.[632] Large 'governing (*shahastan*)' and 'great (*mec*)' *avan*s like Arcn sit on the boundary line, they can be paired together as the '*k'ałak'*s and *avan*s' destroyed by Tughril Beg in 1054,[633] and are sometimes simply referred to as *k'ałak'* as in the beginning of the chapter on Arcn's sack: 'But [now I will write] of a city, and of such a city'.[634] Other *avan*s, however, seem very small in scale, perhaps only agricultural townships moderately larger than villages,[635] like the '*giwł*s and *avan*s' given 'with signed and

[628] Evans (2016), 356-359.
[629] There are a number of other cities in the Middle East with names etymologically rooted in *arḍūn*, including a village in Isfahan province known as both Ardun and Havan.
[630] See Joseph Laurent's (1919/1980) extensive note at 886/87-88, n. 83.
[631] Matevosyan n.111, 95.
[632] These distinctions had been used as such at least from the late-ninth century, as revealed by several analogous uses in the *History* of Yovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i, see: YD, 128, 130, 158, & 185.
[633] Aristakēs also laments the 'great and populous *avan*s' that became uninhabited because of raids, see: AL, 557.37.
[634] There is other Armenian terminology for urban or semi-urban centres and estates, like *berdak'ałak'* (citadel) and *dastakert* (estate), that complicate this issue further. Ukhtk' is also referred to as both a city and an *avan* by Aristakēs, as well as appearing to have estates specifically subordinated to it: AL, 528.14.
[635] This would be the indication of the 'Cultivated *avan*s' that Aristakēs laments becoming 'the dwelling of wild beasts, and their fields pasture for deer', see: AL, 555.26.

sealed documents' to Caucasian elites that signed over their patrimonies to the governor-general of Iviria in 1026.[636] A key distinction might be located in the principle that *kʻałakʻ*s are administratively autonomous from each other, largely outside of aristocratic control, and politically connected only at the royal or imperial level, whereas *avan*s, *giwł*s and *dastakert*s (estates) are in principle administratively subordinate to an aristocrat or regional city – hence 'the [great] *avan* of Arcn in the district of Karin'.[637]

Aristakēs' unequivocal use of *shahastan* to describe Arcn would repudiate this principle, but this seems precisely the exception that proves the rule, with a previously dependant *avan* coming to predominate over the local *kʻałakʻ* in contingent historical conditions. The image he provides is of an urban population moving from Theodosioupolis-Karin to an *avan* that had been the *arḍūn*'s central collection point, with Arcn taking over Qālīqalā's civic and commercial functions and growing rapidly 949-1048. Indeed, by the time of its sack the *avan* was so predominant that when Theodosioupolis-Karin became once more the main urban centre its populace simply referred to it as Arcn. Robert Hewsen has suggested that the 'al-Rum' qualification may be intended to distinguish Arcn from Arz(a)n to the south, and the more common argument is that this distinguished "Roman" Arcn from its sacked predecessor. But this seems odd since for the previous century Arcn had been just as "Roman" as Theodosioupolis-Karin – the 988/9 colophon is dated by 'the reign of Vasil and Kostandin, who at the their becoming sovereign divided the kingdom of the Greeks into two and many very serious misfortunes, persecutions, and terrors and much turbulence occurred in the land of the Romans'. Considering the hypothesis developed here it may instead refer to the Roman role in Arcn's foundation – the centre's entire existence was under imperial hegemony – or alternatively it may have always had this qualification in Arabic, referring to its situation as commercial gateway to the 'land of the Romans', the *arḍ al-Rum*.

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But how does this analysis of Arcn's emergence provide concrete content for Aristakēs' category, "citizen of Arcn"? In the first instance it situates Arcn in the broader urban development of Caucasia in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and particularly in the transformations between caliphal and Roman hegemonic cycles. As commented in the *Universal History*, this was a period when 'estates (*dastakertkʻ*) became towns (*avankʻ*) and towns became cities (*kʻałakkʻ*), through an increase in population and wealth, to the extent that shepherds and herders wore silk

[636] AL, 543.8.

[637] This is a phrase complicated by the fact that Karin was a region long before there was a city there, so that initially Theodosioupolis was simply referred to as '[the region of] Karin's city', but certainly by the tenth and eleventh centuries this would have been understood as referring both to the region and the city, see generally Garsoïan (2003). It is certain that estates were understood as tied to particular cities, as Aristakēs consistently implies by pairing both in general and in particular 'cities with their estates', see: AL, 532.18; 538.1; 543.6; 548.16; 549.28; 599.34; 608.20.

garments.'[638] Arcn thus fits the pattern perfectly, with urban remains, coin finds and ceramics indicating urban growth elsewhere – notably at Ani, another dramatic example from exactly the same period.[639] Such urban development reflects Caucasia's conjunctural political economy, in the interstices of two large imperial systems during western Eurasia's political-economic expansion, providing a conduit to broader transregional circulation, thereby empowering urban elites against the more traditional aristocratic lords, although these too drew wealth from cities in addition to agricultural lands.

Equally importantly to this broader situation, however, is the specific background to Arcn's sudden growth in the late-tenth and early-eleventh centuries, emphasising the historical contingency of its appearance during Roman hegemony. This is not an ancient "Armenian" city that can be connected to roots in the depths of time, but a conjunctural happenstance engendered by micro- and macro-regional dynamics of imperial intervention, from the initial Roman foundation of Theodosioupolis in the region of Karin, to the subsequent development of Islamic Qālīqalā with its *madīna*, *rabaḍ*, and *arḍūn*, and finally to the emergence of Arcn. This is the general tendency for urbanisation in south Caucasia, with centres like Dvin, Tbilisi, Manzikert and the northern Lake Van cities, Ganja, Barda'a, and so on, founded by hegemons on major routes ever-dominated by imperial systems. But this is not to say that these centres are somehow extrinsic to the mainstream of "Armenian history", an 'alien element' founded by non-Armenians and eschewed by traditional aristocratic and ecclesiastical elites.[640] As Greenwood has noted, regardless of the cities' origins or aristocratic elites' apparent exclusion from urban power, these centres were an *intrinsic* part of early and central medieval Caucasian elite actors' lived experience, whether Christian or Muslim, "Armenian/Georgian" or "Persian/Arab" – all such actors increasingly formed a single class, albeit divided into various fractions.[641] Hence interpellated Armenian worldviews' marked increase in 'urban consciousness' from the late-ninth to eleventh centuries, defined as 'a clear sense of group identity, of collective responsibility which could be expressed in action, or community and relationship based upon living or working in a city as opposed to a village or district.'[642] Far from being 'by their very concept and institutions incompatible with, or at best peripheral to, Armenia's essentially aristocratic society',[643] urban life became essential to the self-representation of interpellated Armenian elites, not least kings for whom representation in a civic situation became the idealised norm.[644]

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[638] ST, III.3.
[639] Greenwood (2011), 43-64; & see generally Hakobyan (1982).
[640] Garsoïan (1999), 67.
[641] See subsection II.7.
[642] See generally Greenwood (2017a).
[643] Garsoïan (1999), 83.
[644] See, for example, the story recorded in the Anonymous Story-Teller, Thomson (1988-1989), 186-187, & 202-210.

Yet the point is not that cities and urban consciousness were central to medieval "Armenian history", but that this nationalist mode of narrativising the past rests on social processes irreducible to even a broad category of "Armenianness". Contrary to Garsoïan's claim that 'No important group of city-dwellers can be identified within the ruling class until the end of the Middle Ages', interpellated Armenian elite actors existed as social beings in urban lifeworlds and *necessarily* developed civic worldviews, even constructing ideological representations of "Armenian society" in such terms. This is certainly the case for Aristakēs,[645] whose narrative imagines the Turkish invasions through a series of homiletic vignettes on urban sacks, conceptualised as divine punishment for the corporate sin of urban populations, as indicated by the chapter titles alone: chapter 12 'On the Merciless Destruction of Arcn'; chapter 15 'How Terribly the City called Kars was Struck'; chapter 19 'The Destruction and Inestimable Ruin of Mesopotamia and its Cities'; chapter 21 'The Destruction of the Shahastan City Melitene'; and chapter 24 'How the World Renowned City of Ani was Massacred by the Sword'. These five chapters make up one third of those following the Turks' appearance and one fifth of the work overall, so that a significant amount of the *History*'s absolute narrative space forms an exposition of the raids within an explicitly urban, even civic imaginary. But to an even greater degree than most of eleventh-century Caucasia urban spaces can only be *narratively* constructed as uniquely Armenian, since the very fact of their existence speaks to the overlapping intersections of actors and hegemonic apparatuses identified and interpellating in multiple ways.

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Thus the interpretive key for analysing Aristakēs as citizen of Arcn, and the integration of urban consciousness into his socially-symbolic act, is to show that his everyday life in the urban space is always-already beyond reduction to Armenianness, but that his narrativised experience nevertheless transforms it into an emphatically Armenian story. The rapid growth of Arcn speaks to the vibrancy of social dynamics there, in particular commercial exchange, with a large population developing over less than a century.[646] Notably the 988/9 colophon is written in the voice of a merchant named Kirakos, who feared for his soul and so paid for the copying of a gospel,[647] and that of 1048/9 implies that the sponsor Davit' had paid for many such gospels, a wealthy secular elite actor, again likely a merchant.

An urban conscious populace is also constructed in the accounts of Arcn's sack in the works attributed to Attaleiatēs, Skylitzēs, and Matt'ēos. Attaleiatēs' discussion forms a brief notice in the description of Rōmanos IV's 1071 campaign, in which the historian participated as judge of

[645] See generally Greenwood (2017a).
[646] The spurious but evocative figures Skylitzēs, Matt'ēos and Samvel provide for those killed in the sack is 140-150,000.
[647] Matevosyan n.111, 95

the army camp.[648] He describes their arrival in Theodosioupolis, 'which had previously been neglected and was now deserted because the inhabitants had moved to the city of Artzē, which was close by and perceived to be better situated.' This is a crucial indication of an initial movement from Theodosioupolis-Karin to Arcn, a distance of twenty or so miles to the north-west on the opposite bank of the Euphrates, and so perhaps indeed a better situation for making use of the river – although this does not preclude initial forced movement as a result of Roman conquest. As Attaleiatēs continues, 'they had established a great regional centre (*khōropolis*) there which abounded in all sorts of products from Persia, India, and the rest of Asia', but because of Turkish raids 'the city of Artzē had suffered the slaughter of its entire population and capture.' This brief notice indicates important assumptions about the urban space: firstly Arcn is conceived as inextricably connected to Theodosioupolis-Karin, secondly its populace had some kind of civic unity, and thirdly both centre and populace are defined by their role in commercial exchange, drawing in goods from fabulously distant lands.

Skylitzēs' coverage focuses directly on Arcn's sack, drawing on material from the personal memoirs of Katakalon Kekaumenos, the Roman governor-general.[649] The sack itself appears in the midst of a broader narrative around his actions and those of other Roman commanders, with the central plot points functioning to defend Kekaumenos and displace potential blame.[650] Nevertheless there is much incidental information that proves evocative for situating Aristakēs. Notably, Skylitzēs designates Arcn a *kōmopolis* ("village-city"), which alongside Attaleiatēs' categorisation of the space as a *khōropolis* ("a countryside-city"), has notable resonance with the above discussion on *avan* and Kirakos' colphon's specific use of *giwłak'ałak'*. This *kōmopolis* is described as 'having a large population and much wealth, for there are many native merchants (*ithageneis emporoi*), Syrians, Armenians, and not a few other nations (*allōn ethnōn*).' Putting their trust in this large population, Skylitzēs claims that the inhabitants refused to be enclosed by a wall or retreat to Theodosioupolis-Karin, which 'lay close by, a great city (*polis*) with strong, impregnable walls' – presumably those (re)built three decades earlier, recorded in the *History*. This statement resonates with the image of Arcn as an unfortified *kōmopolis*/*khōropolis*/*giwłak'ałak'*/*avan* of Theodosioupolis-Karin. Collective agency among the citizens is also of crucial importance to Skylitzēs' image, with 'the Artzēnoi' self-organising their defence, blocking access points to the city, climbing on roofs to gain vantage over the attackers, and holding out for six days. Indeed, Arcn's defence was so fierce that the Turkish commander ordered his troops to burn the city, 'disregarding its wealth and booty', a move that finally defeated the populace, many of whom defiantly killed their families and committed suicide rather

[648] *Historia*, 270-271; on Attaleiatēs as a historical actor see generally Krallis (2012).
[649] See generally Shepard (1975-6).
[650] *Synopsis*, 449-452.

than submit. Skylitzēs' narrative is subjugated to a main plot around Kekaumenos and the other Roman commanders, but it again rests on the same assumptions as Attaleiatēs': inextricability from Theodosioupolis-Karin; an urban-conscious populace, this time emphasised as profoundly multi-ethnic; and deep involvement in trade – he even claims that the Turkish commander was able to entirely equip his army with gold, iron, and supplies untouched by the fire.

The final testimony on Arcn outside of the *History* is found in Matt'ēos' account of the sack.[651] The framing differs somewhat from Attaleiatēs' and Skylitzēs'. But there are nevertheless some notable points of resonance, and as discussed in part I it appears this section is influenced directly or indirectly by the *History*. Arcn is named a 'renowned and populous *avan* of Armenia/the Armenians…unfortified and filled with a countless multitude of men and women and also an innumerable quantity of gold and silver.' When the raiders appear the inhabitants fight back fiercely, spending a day resisting the onslaught, but are ultimately overpowered and put to sword and fire. This occasions further discussion of Arcn's wealth:

> It is of no avail to say much about the gold, silver, and silken brocades [plundered], for the quantity of these cannot be put in writing. However, we have often heard the following related by many in reference to the *khorepiskopos* Dawtuk': when Ibrahim seized his treasury, forty camels departed from his treasure house and eight hundred oxen [yoked] in sixes went forth from his household.

This mention of the local bishop is a notable indication of Armenian ecclesiastics fully integrated into Arcn's life as a commercial centre, and the episcopate may have been the particular focus of identified Armenian institutions in the urban space – as indicated by the 1048/9 colophon dated 'in the [Armenian] patriarchate of lord Petros, and the episcopate of Yovhannēs [of Arcn], and [the reign over] the Romans of Mikhayl.'[652] Similarly Matt'ēos, like Aristakēs, emphasises the churches that had existed in Arcn, some 800 'where the divine liturgy was celebrated.' But, as is often the case in direct comparisons between Aristakēs' and Matt'ēos' framings, although they have common thrusts the later writer is much more emphatically nationalist. Thus Arcn becomes an '*avan* of Armenia/the Armenians', 'the first *avan* which was captured from the Armenians and put to the sword and enslaved.' Aristakēs does create an Armenian image, but this remains largely implicit through the shared "us" constructed within the *History*'s narrative, Arcn is nowhere labelled 'of the Armenians'.

These three accounts therefore provide important initial analysis against which to read Aristakēs' elaboration of the urban space, his professions of urban consciousness, and the manner of civicness' integration into his socially-symbolic act. They evoke a rich, unfortified urban space with a mixed constitution, both from material goods drawn through a wide network of commercial

[651] MU, I.92.
[652] Matevosyan, n.111, 95.

exchange, and the settling of diverse actors with varying ethnic identifications. They also evoke a sense of urban consciousness among this diverse populace, whether in collectively choosing to move from Theodosioupolis-Karin in the first place, or in giving fierce resistance to the raiders. This evocation of an urban-conscious populace is of central importance when reading Aristakēs' own narrativisation of Arcn, proving central to critically imagining him as a situated historical actor in the urban space.

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The previous subsections thus provided initial analysis for Aristakēs' situation as citizen of Arcn, both in the urban centre's origins and lifespan in the Roman hegemonic cycle, and other compositions' construction of an urban conscious populace. We now turn to a socially-symbolic reading of Aristakēs' elaboration of the urban space, which appears at the beginning of chapter 12, 'Regarding the Merciless Destruction of Arcn'.[653] It takes the rhetorical and homiletic form of a juxtaposition between the city as was in a previously good state and its sinful inversion, developing a critical comparison with Jerusalem's Babylonian destruction, and ending with an admonition to penance before moving to the main account of the sack as proof of the previous exposition. The biblicising description evokes the *avan*'s central position in commercial exchange: 'a wonder and renowned in all lands, as a city that sat above a mountain, and sea and land laboured and multiplied to bring it its strength; as the great Isaiah prophesised regarding Jerusalem…crowned with a plenitude of good things (Cf. Isaiah 60)'. As returned to below in the analysis of Aristakēs as an elite man, the writer employs the gendered figure of the city as a newly-wedded woman, desirable to all for her beauty and adornments. These beautifying features are, however, situated not in Arcn's physicality or as an abstract imagined place, but in the everyday practices of its elitedom:

> …her princes (*iškhank'*) were philanthropists (*mardaserk'*, 'lovers of humankind'), and judges were dispensers of justice, impossible to bribe. Merchants were builders and adorners of the Church, hosts and carers for the clergy, and merciful and almsgivers for the poor…The desire for piety was shared by all alike, her priests had the lives of saints and loved to pray, and were subservient and obedient to church service…So this city of ours was like a praiseworthy jewel glimmering with bright-shining beauty among all other cities, stunning in all ways, adorned with everything.[654]

Hence the 'brilliance of her jewellery' consists in each category of Arcn's elitedom carrying out their social practices with the correct ethics: the vaguely defined *iškhank'*, dominant citizens who were perhaps landowners or aristocrats resident in the city; the judges, a notable category suggesting civic institutions irreducible to Armenianness; the priesthood, implicitly to be read as

[653] AL, 572-576.
[654] AL, 572.3-9.

the independent Armenian hierarchy rather than ecclesiastics as a whole; and, most expansively, the merchants. Indeed, Aristakēs emphasises that 'There existed no deception in merchants' trade, and no deceit in commercial exchanges. Ill-famed were profits made by high interest and usury, and gifts given as bribes were despised and dishonoured…On account of which its traders were famed, and merchants were like the kings of peoples.' Merchants and commercial practices are thus presented as the most important element of the class composition of Arcn's elite. And all of this appears in unmistakeably urban-conscious terms, it is 'this city of ours' that stands resplendent 'among all other cities', without Matt'ēos' nationalist qualification 'of Armenia/the Armenians'. Armenianness is implicitly assumed and emphasised in both the particular mention of the priesthood and the general framing, but the fact that it is not foregrounded provides an important clue to Aristakēs' own lived experience of Arcn, which cannot be reduced to his Armenian identification.

Aristakēs is therefore not sceptical of urban life or trade *per se* in stereotyped clerical fashion,[655] but instead integrates an idealised form of such social organisation and practices into his socially-symbolic act. The city is not an inevitably corrupting den of sin, but a potentially perfect microcosm of a properly functioning social system, as long as each category of its elite composition behaves in the proper manner. This, however, was not to be. Employing the ideologeme of the Church's internal corruption, Aristakēs denounces how:

> …after the Sextists and Pyrrhonists entered our churches, the law of justice transformed into injustice, the love of money was held in higher esteem than the love of God, and Mammon more than Christ: all modesty among the orders was perverted and became disorder. [656]

This ideologeme thus employs Aristakēs' alienated projection of the social system in the figure of the Church,[657] a fetishisation of the whole ensemble of social relations that erases the multi-ethnic make up of Arcn's elitedom, and reframes it as solely Armenian Christian – also implied by the positioning of Arcn as Jerusalem, and so its citizens as ethnically homogenous Israelites. But the 'Sextists and Pyrrhonists' who enter the Church are condemned not for their religious practices, but for introducing unethical social practices that disturbed the proper order. The ideologeme therefore represents a conceptual antinomy: the social system's irreducibility to one particular institutional apparatus like the Armenian Church. At the same time it represents a social contradiction: specifically identified Armenian institutions' integration into hegemonic apparatuses necessarily beyond Armenianness. This ecclesiastical ideologeme therefore refers to the concrete conditions of Arcn's elitedom, here constructed as perverted from their previous idealised state by a sudden growth in venality and rapacious exploitative domination. This is

[655] This is the conclusion in Thomson (2003).
[656] AL, 572.10.
[657] On this 'alienated projection' see above, **X**, and appendix II.

specified for each category of elite, the 'princes were thieving companions of thieves, revenge seekers and servants of silver', 'judges were bribers and robbed the lawful for bribes', priests took silver for the saying of mass, and in general 'the powerful (*mecatunk'*) ravished the homes of neighbouring poor people, and expropriated their fields'.

The emphasis on land expropriation is particularly notable, with Aristakēs marshalling three biblical references against the practice:

> …they did not consider the divinely-ordained curses written by the hand of the Lord's servant, Moses: 'Accursed is he who takes the field of his neighbour (Deuteronomy 27:17)'. Or that by which the august Isaiah rebuked and condemned in angry protest such people: 'Woe to those who take house upon house, adding field to field, appropriating all for themselves, in order to appropriate that which is their companion's. This reaches the ear of the Lord in all its power (Isaiah 5:8-9)'. They did not recall Naboth's vineyard (Kings 1:21), that which Jezebel robbed…[658]

Land expropriation thus appears one of the central sinful practices that Aristakēs presents as having been introduced by the 'Sextists and Pyrrhonists', so that 'all modesty among the orders was perverted and became disorder'. Moreover, in his comment that 'The laws were given to usury and speculation' the writer indicates that much of this expropriation was driven by high-interest debts, with princely 'revenge seekers and servants of silver' seizing debtors' lands assisted by corrupt judges that allowed the transgressing of orphans' and widows' rights – concrete content for Aristakēs general assertion that divine wrath was brought about by miscarriages of justice, so that 'rights and the law left us'. Important, too, is the specific mention of Naboth, a story not just about land expropriation in general, but specifically the alienation of patrimonial inheritance, thus intersecting with a central ideologeme returned to below.

Yet Arcn need not have actually experienced the social degeneration envisioned by Aristakēs, or have had any more venal exploitative domination by 1048 than was always-already inherent in elite monopolisation of commercial exchange and agricultural production – nor is there any reason to credit Aristakēs with greater social conscience for the exploitatively dominated than is always-already latent in scripture. Rather, as outlined above, these elements are brought together into an explanatory schema because of the writer's anxiety over the removal of the preconditions for his elite social position, and the desire to locate and represent the apparent causes of this crisis. The ideologeme of the Church's internal corruption allows Aristakēs to do this in the case of Arcn. It allows movement from the literal historical referent replete with social antagonisms – Arcn as a concrete urban space in which elite practices constantly produced tension and struggle in the everyday – to the allegorical level of the interpretive code – Arcn as two distinct space-times, the

[658] AL, 573.14-17.

one a perfectly functioning microcosm of society, the other its sinful inversion. By separating a single, concrete, and complex urban space always-already run through with social antagonisms into two distinct space-times – a "good" Arcn of ethical princes, merchants, judges and priests, and a "bad" Arcn of venality and rapacious exploitative domination – the ideologeme provides an interpretive resolution for the very real effects of those social antagonisms: what separates the "good" Arcn from the "bad" is the moment when 'Sextists and Pyrrhonists' entered the Church and 'all modesty among the orders became disorder'. At this interpretive level Providence can therefore enter the schema, and events take on an explicable moral logic, as Aristakēs writes in his final assertion: 'Not causelessly did I relate all this, but rather in order to demonstrate how our transgressions are according to their order, just as it was necessary for [the Israelites of Jerusalem] we also must accept the admonition'.[659]

Hence Aristakēs' apprehensions over exploitative and dominating elements of the social system, like land expropriation, are of the same origin as his insistence that Caucasian elites retain their ancestral patrimonies – thus the comparison with Naboth. They represent his elite worldview, and the assumptions of the lifeworlds it dialectically emerged from, that certain limitations to elite practices are necessary in order to maintain the basis for their exploitative domination, and guarantee the long-term survival of hegemonic systems of social production and reproduction that support them. This is stated visibly in Aristakēs' implication that land expropriation multiplied the wheat grown solely for exchange, and so 'because of this the land was ruined and the womb [of the earth] was prevented from giving forth fruit for the nourishment of humankind' – expropriation literally endangered social reproduction through unsustainable ecological relations. But ultimately Aristakēs' critique remains of, by, and for elites, one that, in the words of Henri Lefebvre, 'criticised the life of the dominant class in the name of a transcendental philosophy or dogma, which nevertheless still belonged to that class.'[660] Thus Aristakēs' lengthy condemnation of the women of Arcn – integrated into his homiletic elaboration and comparison with Jerusalem, and appearing straight after his condemnation of usury and land expropriation – is a stereotyped misogynistic diatribe against sinful immodesty, representing an entirely normative patriarchal elite worldview.

Thus Aristakēs saw in Arcn not evidence of the eternally sinful nature of cities and commerce,[661] but a possible microcosm of a properly functioning social system that required critiquing so that its (elite, male) citizens would come to penance before God – a social order with which he identified as an urban conscious actor, and a purpose resonant of his social function as *vardapet*. This social order was composed of varied elite fractions, from powerful landowners through civic

[659] AL, 574.24.
[660] Lefebvre (2014), 51.
[661] Compare with the conclusions in Thomson (2003).

judges and officials to merchants and priests, and sublimated in Aristakēs' narrative is the fact that these elites were drawn from a wide variety of places and identified in multiple ways – only briefly alluded to in the comment 'but as for those who happened to be there, and those who came from all other lands, who is able to count their number?' This picture of urban elites is reflected elsewhere in the *History* too, notably in the use of the term *glkhavor* ('headman/leader') to denote city-based elite actors, signalling the writer's desire for another term than *iškhan* or *azat* that was specific to elites defined by their civicness.[662] Nevertheless, as Greenwood has rightly cautioned, there is unlikely to have been any one-to-one correlation between Aristakēs' descriptions and social composition in particular cities – for example, the apparent prominence of merchants in Kars and Melitene has suspicious resonance with the description of Arcn. But much more important than accurate reflection of "facts" is that Aristakēs chose to represent the raids in urban settings complete with commerce. The echoed fates of several Old Testament cities is an important factor no doubt, but it nevertheless represents 'a very radical step outside conventional Armenian historiography. [Aristakēs] is imagining Armenia not in terms of its kings or princely families, nor even in terms of the Armenian Church, but in terms of its urban communities and their surrounding districts.'[663]

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Of course, as has been shown and will be returned to, the distinction between Church, kingdom, and city as represented spaces is often purposefully blurred, but Greenwood is still right to assert a civic imaginary's overdetermination of these other elements.[664] Thus in the account of Kars' sack, notable for presenting a purely "good" urban space-time, the populace is raided at the time of a civic festival:

> For it was a custom of the cities that at the dominical festivals men and women, elderly and young, would adorn themselves with many ornaments according to strength and ability, in the likeness of blooming gardens. So when they were found thus, suddenly the city was full of cries and lamentations. The priests were silenced from the liturgy, and the psalmists from singing psalms; the song of blessing stopped on the lips of the deacons and boys. There was to be seen a sight most pitiable that moved to sighing lamentations even stones and inanimate objects; let alone the rational and the living. Wealthy (*mecaharki*) and honourable merchants were wickedly killed; the young and sprightly were cut down in the streets; and the honourable grey hair of the elderly blood-drenched fell beside them; and by such deeds the

[662] This is seen in the story about Edessa's capture (546.2); the use of the term to refer to Constantinopolitan senators in chapters 9 (547.2; 551.41; 551.48), 18 (595.1; 596.13-14) and 20 (604.4); the identification in chapter 10 of 'the civic leaders who sat in Ani', 561.85; and chapter 18's reference to the *glkhavor*s of the Roman *iškhan* in Ani, 599.39. It is also once used to mean elite more broadly, and *iškhan* is also applied to the elites of Arcn, but the usage nevertheless reflects a desire to talk about a particular kind of urban elite. Cf. Canard & Berberian (1973), 52, n.1.
[663] Greenwood (2017a).
[664] On overdetermination see generally Althusser (1962); cf. Rehman (2013), 150-151.

> city was deprived of its men; and if someone had time to go to the stronghold above the city, they alone lived.[665]

The writer evokes the population's urban consciousness through their collective participation in a religious ritual, hinting at the figure of society-as-the-Church but practically locating this within a broader civic imaginary. 'Wealthy and honourable merchants' are again presented in a positive light, appearing first in the list of slain citizens, and the use of *mecaharki* is particularly interesting, referring to multi-storeyed buildings – 'great (*mec*) floors (*hark*)' – and so situated in an urban physical space. There is nothing to connect this account to Kars as such, and the figures employed are repeated from the original lament for the kingdom of Great Armenia in chapter 10's pivotal transformation, but the chapter illustrates the prominence of civicness in contemporary lifeworlds, and so also their position in Aristakēs' social system as a historical actor.

Unlike for Kars, chapter 21 on 'The Destruction of the Shahastan City Melitene' provides a much longer homiletic lament in similar manner to Arcn's.[666] It begins with a theological exposition of why the Armenians had incurred divine wrath, drawing comparison with the Egyptians' punishments for enslaving the Israelites, and heavily instantiating the utopian community of "us", the Armenian nation. It then proceeds to a lengthy critique of the citizens of Melitene, again particularly the merchants, for allowing the decline of their city. Once more two space-times are presented, the first a "good" one in which 'the city…was still flourishing, [and] it resembled a three-year-old heifer in the strength of its vigour and bravery', and 'Its merchants were the most glorious inhabitants of the land, and its purchasers the kings of peoples, who rested on ivory couches always drinking purified wine, and anointing [themselves] with fragrant oils.' This latter detail provides the point of transition to the second "bad" space-time, as 'All evils commence with this [conduct]'. This begins a relatively stereotyped critique of how fine living engenders lax spiritual lives, 'Such is our nature: when growing poor, we grumble and blame God, while when growing rich we become insolent and like immortals subjugate the land.' Because of this fickle human nature God must punish us so that we know our limits, sometimes 'sweetly and with paternal counsel', while at other times 'He torments us with His lordly authority'. Similarly some are tried in this world, and others 'such as the powerful (*mecatunk'*) are punished in the next solely.' Again, therefore, the chapter on Melitene does not pretend to describe the city itself, but rather encases Aristakēs' punitive theology in a civic imaginary – notably the term for 'powerful' in both Arcn and Melitene, *mecatun*, like *mecaharki*, refers to large houses (*mec* 'great', *tun* 'house').

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[665] AL, 579.4-8.
[666] AL, 605-610.

The last chapter on a city sack, chapter 24 'How the World-Renowned City of Ani was Massacred by the Sword', is another lengthy homiletic lament.[667] Much as for Melitene, and unlike for Kars and Arcn, this chapter begins with the negative, pointing out the human causes of divine wrath in the 'many delusions and illusions' of humankind seeking 'refuge in its deeds'. This is specifically encased in a civic imaginary and urban space, with the writer deriding those who, trusting in the height and impregnability of their fortified towers, forget God. Such people, implicitly those of Ani in particular, are like 'the residents of Jericho, who, because of the fortification of towers, did not consider themselves Canaanites and did not think that the right hand of the Lord ruled them too'. This implication of civic arrogance is given more specific content in Aristakēs' discussion of how the citizens of Ani should have seen the example of Arcn and changed their ways. Bluntly he states:

> [This was] especially so for the fortress of Ani and her daughters surrounding, which had learned arrogance even more, and clapped their hands against Heaven; while God moved the king of Persia to come in His place and to see what was going on there.[668]

Hence 'the residents of Jericho, who…did not consider themselves Canaanites' are to be read as "the residents of Ani, who did not consider themselves Armenians", an important moment of intersection between Aristakēs as citizen of Arcn, and as identified Armenian. The writer visibly states that each urban conscious population should be aware of others, seeing their own conditions reflected, and understanding the punishment as brought on all alike – an important element of the *History*'s libidinal apparatus, framed for investment by specifically urban elites, or at least able to operate within an urban imaginary. This allows the otherwise apparently disjointed sacks, separated in time and place, to be brought into one explanatory scheme that can be translated into a critique of the more-or-less differentiated (interpellated Armenian) urban elites. The point is not whether Arcn truly experienced a growing debt and land expropriation crisis over Aristakēs' lifetime, or if it did whether or not these conditions existed elsewhere. The point is that Aristakēs constructs across these chapters a moral logic in a civic imaginary that interpellated elites could recognise, and thereby move with the writer from the literal historical referent – "what happened" – to the interpretive code of Divine Providence – "why it happened". Thus the chapter on Ani's sack ends with the statement:

> This is the fate of unjust cities which are built with the blood of others, are made luxurious by the sweat of the bankrupt, and which fortify their homes with usury and injustice, having no pity for the poor and indigent. They expect only pleasure and comfort and do not desist from foul activities. Rather, they are drunk from the desire which has seized hold of them. What becomes of such when the anger of the Lord strikes? They wither and are destroyed

[667] AL, 622-625.
[668] AL, 623.7-8.

> like wax in fire, be they kings or be they princes, as we have seen from what has been narrated.[669]

Across these chapters then a general narrative logic can be seen emerging. Each city lament should be read as a continuation of the previous one, and in direct dialogue with the first expansive lament of chapter 10's pivotal transformation, analysed below. Arcn begins with the city in its "good" space-time before presenting the negative inversion, Kars has a solely positive presentation evoking strong urban consciousness, Melitene has a long didactic preface on the justness of Holy Writ before "good" and "bad" space-times are evoked, and Ani finally has a brief recap of the human causes for divine wrath, before a primarily negative representation that links explicitly back to Arcn's destruction. Together they create a single punitive theology for elite critique in a civic imaginary, albeit also connected to other intersecting lifeworld elements, not least Armenianness. In the comparison of Arcn with Jerusalem Aristakēs presents the implicit image of a homogenous people in a bounded city with a particular relationship to the divine, just as the ancient Israelites. Hence the critical comparison is predicated on the assumption that elite (male) citizens are identified Armenians, a national community of shared "us" that can be shamed by Aristakēs' castigations:

> Not causelessly did I relate all this, but so as to demonstrate how our transgressions are according to their order: just as it was necessary for them [to accept their punishment] we also must accept the admonition, and all the more so. For if they suffered such things, lacking an example, how much more worthy of punishment are we, having them as an example, and having the admonition of Christ Who cried out and said: 'Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:20)'? And we not only did not [exceed them] in righteousness, but find ourselves in even greater sin, and how shall we therefore be forgiven?[670]

The equivalence of sin and punishment is therefore predicated on a total equivalence between the kinds of community represented by the Israelites of Jerusalem and the citizens of Arcn:

> Now see the similarity and fittingness of the punishments. The Persians came against Jerusalem, they came also against us; Jerusalem was laid waste, our cities were also laid waste. Pagans entered the Holy Temple, and took its adornments as booty, and defiled the Holy Temple; they also entered our churches, and dared to enter the sanctuaries, and they sullied the holy places with their filthy soles, and took their adornments as plunder. The Holy Temple was burnt, they were burnt also for us except instead of only one house there were many churches; and countless numbers of priests felled by the sword; and who shall bring the number of us? It is now time for me to follow David's words, and by his voice to order our laments: 'Why do You stand far off, oh Lord, and neglect us in our time of trouble?'

[669] AL, 625.18-20.
[670] AL, 574.25-27.

> (Psalms 10:1), when the unjust are impious in Your sanctuaries, and when those who despise You boast during Your feast days; for behold pagans have entered Your inheritance, and defiled Your Holy Temple, have burned Your holy things, and levelled to the ground the glory of Your Church. They made the blood of Your servants flow like water, not as at was in the past, around the city of Jerusalem alone, but [here] the entire country was filled with the blood of the slain…[671]

This final notice is a crucial link between the figure of the single city that so predominates Aristakēs' homiletic imagery and narrative structure, and the shared national community of Armenian "us" with which this imagery and structure is intended to resonate – the city stands in for the whole of society, and its citizenry for all identified Armenians, but its story is a tale for 'the entire country'. It is therefore the stepping stone between Aristakēs' particular 'urban consciousness', and a more broadly constructed Armenian sense of self.

II.5 Aristakēs as Identified Armenian

The previous two sections provide concrete content for the two most secure categories that situate Aristakēs as a historical actor beyond his ethnicisation, gendering or class position, *vardapet* and citizen of Arcn. Now we turn to his ethnicisation and identification as Armenian, which, due to methodological nationalism, has been more-or-less the only category to have guided previous analyses. The framing of 'identified' as opposed to simply 'Armenian' may seem unnecessary, but it is purposive. In line with the critique of methodological nationalism and critical framework adopted, it is argued that there is no simple 'being Armenian' to which historical actors' existence can be reduced. There is only 'social being' and the concrete conditions and situations in which ethnicised, gendered, and classed social categories become practically relevant in everyday life. Everyday relevance is generated by the dialectic between interpellation through apparatuses of hegemonic institutions – those constituting Caucasian and imperial polities, the Roman and Armenian churches, or Arcn's urban governance – and the identification of associated humans. Through interpellation hegemonic apparatuses summon groupness into being by naming associated actors with the ethnic category, and speaking for this claimed group: justifying its existence; defining what it is and what it has been; endowing it with qualities and valorising particular human/non-human actors; and constructing Others against which claimed groupness can be thrown into sharp relief. In the words of Bruno Latour, 'Groups are not silent things, but rather the provisional product of a constant uproar made by the millions of contradictory voices about what is a group and who pertains to what.'[672] And in the final instance, the loudest voices are those apparatuses of hegemonic institutions that function to habituate, pattern, and (re)produce

[671] AL, 574.28-33.
[672] Latour (2005), 27-42.

exploitative domination in everyday life, especially for elite actors who rely on hegemonic exploitative domination to (re)produce their own social positions.[673]

But interpellation moves dialectically, not unilaterally. Historical actors' identification with social categories forms the antithesis to institutional interpellation, as they dynamically shape this according to their own often counterpolitical – that is, relatively autonomous, bottom-up and counter-hegemonic – social forms. Hence Aristakēs' anxiety over claimed heretics' use of Armenian Christian as their identifier, a potentially counterpolitical usage that destabilises ecclesiastical hegemony. Aristakēs as *vardapet* had a particular institutional role in the dialectical movement between interpellation and identification, his own identification functioning to interpellate other actors through his position in the Armenian ecclesiastical apparatus. Aristakēs as *vardapet* seeks to police the boundaries of the imagined national community, indeed to (re)produce this claimed group by gate-keeping the category and Othering excluded actors, many of whom would have self-identified as Armenian Christian. This was seen in chapter 17 where Aristakēs presents a vision of the idealised social system, beginning from secular hegemonic apparatuses and moving to ecclesiastical ones. Despite forming a general affirmation of all stateness, this vision is encased in the ideologeme of society-as-the-Church, a fetishising figure that erases non-Armenianness from the ensemble of social relations. Importantly, however, the social totality's territorialisation as 'Armenia' forms both predicate and endpoint for this ecclesiastical vision – as the passage begins, 'Armenia (*Hayk'*) had four thrones of kingship'.[674]

Ethnicised territoriality, briefly explored in the section on Aristakēs as *vardapet*, thus forms the ideological structuring for the *History*'s Armenian interpellation. This make sense, since only utopian territoriality can bestow fictitious unity on the hegemonic apparatuses which contradictorily supported Aristakēs' position in social relations. By situating the utopian national community of "us" in "our land", the *vardapet* is able to erase the sharp differences in lived experience between identified Armenians from different parts of "Armenia", and thereby interpellate all alike with one specific meaning of History generalised as "national experience" – the same process which, playing out after Aristakēs' own conjuncture successively into our own, has constantly erased the *History*'s specificity through a nationalising generality. This ethnoterritorial ideological structure is elaborated from the title's 'foreign nations that surround us', throughout the narrative's subsequent development, and is emphasised in the verse preface and postscript's joint establishment of the work's unitary conceptualisation.

[673] Rehmann (2013), 174-178.
[674] Although the proper name for 'Armenia', *Hayk'*, can also be translated as 'Armenians', in this instance it is the land since the verb is given in the singular.

So this section begins by detailing the *History*'s ethnoterritorial ideological structure, following its progressive elaboration through the narrative structure described in part I. Previous analyses of the *History* have been so overdetermined by nationalist imaginaries, so guided by assumptions about transhistorical Armenianness, that here it is necessary to begin from a socially-symbolic reading. Understanding the *History*'s specifically ethno*territorial* interpellation reveals its internal gaps and inconsistencies, and so unmasks its situated contingency. Unable to cover wholly and consistently the world-out-there, Aristakēs' interpellation inevitably leaves in its wake the traces of now-Othered or sublimated alternative associations that historical actors participated in, associations irreducible to Armenianness.

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The first four chapters of the *History* form a narrative cycle on the imperial annexation of Tao-Tayk', with only two episodes in chapter 2 dealing with "Armenian affairs" in the form of the Bagratuni polity and the *kat'oɫikos*. Despite this, however, the first chapter is named 'Events in the Lands of the Armenians', and the second 'Regarding the Kingdom of Armenia/the Armenians'. These framings establish an ethnoterritorial structure that is "merely" territorial in the first instance but emphatically political in the second, allowing an initially de-politicised Armenian interpellation to end "logically" at spontaneous identification with the Bagratuni kingdom of Great Armenia. Hence, despite the narrative not only focusing on New Rome and Tao-Tayk', but even subordinating "Armenian" actors like Ašot and Yovhannēs-Smbat to the action of non-Armenians like Basileios II and Giorgi of Ap'khazet'i-K'art'li, this becomes a necessarily "Armenian" story. On the basis of all these narrative elements existing as structuring features of "Armenia" it becomes possible to move from the literal historical referent – diverse hegemonic apparatuses interpellating and identified in multiple ways – to the interpretive level of Providence.

Thus Davit' *kouropalatēs* is 'a powerful man who had *brought the country to bloom*…for in his days all men were at peace, according to the prophecy, under his own vine and fig tree.'[675] Nowhere is his ethnicisation as K'art'velian implied, nor his Chalcedonianism, unlike in the *Universal History*, although there too he is celebrated as someone who 'loved peace and acted justly'.[676] Notably the '*kiwropałat*'s principality' is listed among the *History*'s polities of "Armenia", and an Armenophone colophon written in the district of Basiani is dated to 'the reckoning of the Armenians 450 (1000/1 CE), in the patriarchate of Sargis in the reign of Davit' *kouropalatēs* king of Virk''[677] – all pointing to the corporate nature of medieval Caucasian

[675] Emphasis added, AL, 527.2.
[676] ST, III.11.
[677] Matevosyan, n.90, 77.

kingship, irreducible to ethnicisation or doctrinal affiliation, with Davit‘ regional subhegemon of his conjuncture.

His poisoning by *azat*s from the house of Tao-Tayk‘, moreover, forms a prefigurative caution on the sinfulness of political disunity and disloyalty, encased in the ideologeme of the kingdom divided. This ideologeme represents the social contradiction of each hegemonic apparatuses’ ultimate irreconcilability, and the conceptual antinomy of the fractured unity in division this implies. It represents Aristakēs’ situated desire for a unified hegemony able to support the Armenian Church, and is a common theme therefore in Armenophone historiographical compositions. For example, chapter 52 of the *History of the Armenians* attributed to Yovhannēs Darskhanakertc‘i is titled ‘The Aggression of Foreign Nations Upon Our Land, and the Disunity Among Our *Nakharar*s’, deploying similar imagery to Aristakēs to attack Armenian elites for not uniting ‘in a common brotherhood with one spirit’.[678] The kingdom divided ideologeme is progressively elaborated over the whole *History*’s narrative structure, taking centre stage across the Tao-Tayk‘ cycle; developed in chapter 1’s comparison with Bulgaria; expanded to the kingdom of Great Armenia in Chapter 2; given transformative narrative function in Chapter 10 with the Bagratuni polity’s end; generalised across Aristakēs’ geospatial imaginary with Roman civil war in Chapter 18; and finally at the narrative’s close the sinfulness of division plays a central ideologemic role in the battle of Manzikert. But, crucially, the kingdom divided’s progressive elaboration is only possible within Aristakēs’ socially-symbolic act, by its encasing within an Armenian territorial ideological structure.

Aristakēs’ comments on Davit‘ *kouropalatēs* form the *History*’s opening prose, coming immediately after the verse preface where the collective sin of the ‘people and priesthood’ brought invasions of ‘nations of foreign lands’ who ‘estranged us from our home’.[679] Thus the verse preface begins the work with a “digression” that is immediately situated at the level of Providence and the moral and anagogic levels generated by this interpretive code, moving down from there to the literal historical referent, so that this is always-already narrativised in an Armenian territorial frame. The opening statements, emphasising how ‘the land’ flourished under Davit‘, herald the cycle on Tao-Tayk‘s annexation. The subject of this narrative cycle is the *tun* of Tao-Tayk‘, a word that can mean both ‘house’ in the sense of associated elites making up a dominant hierarchy as well as a given territory, so that ‘house(s) of the Armenians’ is found signifying ‘Armenia’. The first chapter implicitly compares the house of Tao-Tayk‘ to the ‘land of the Bulgars’, brought under Roman control contemporaneously because of the disunity and disloyalty of the ruler’s sons – as the writer notes ‘for “Any kingdom divided against itself cannot stand”

[678] YD, LII.
[679] AL, 526-527.

(Mark 3:14)'.[680] Thus they are taken away from 'their own inheritance' and given 'places in the land of the Romans'. Not only does this prefigure the fate of Armenian elites, but the Bulgarian royals are given commands in the eastern provinces:

> …and they turned the land into ruin (Isaiah 5:9). Alas that they came to the East, and woe to where they passed and romped about! Lo that evil and unpitying nation, a cruel and warlike people; it is possible to speak of this prophetic lament with regard to them: 'The land was like the garden of Eden before them, but after them, a desolate wilderness' (Joel II:3).[681]

Hence not only does the fate of Bulgarian magnates prefigure that of Armenian ones, but the coming of the Bulgars prefigures the coming of the Turks and their effect on 'the land'. It is important to note, however, that this emphasis on Armenian territoriality is not without profound contradictions, the sequence on Tao-Tayk's annexation unequivocally emplots New Rome's right to Davit's bequeathed patrimony. Likewise there are traces of alternative associations even in this passage, with territoriality framed as 'the land of the East', implying a sublimated Roman subjecthood.

One notable way in which the general Armenian interpellation is led "logically" to spontaneous identification with Great Armenia, is the parallel emplotment of Davit' and Gagik I Bagratuni:

> And it happened that at that time the king of the land of the Armenians was Gagik son of Ašot, brother of Smbat and Gurgen, from the house (*tun*) of the Bagratuni, a man powerful and victorious in war; *this man held this land of the Armenians in peace*.[682] In his era the orders of the Church shone brightly, and children of the Holy Oath were illuminated; in his day 'The earth was full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea' (Isaiah 11:9) according to the prophet's foretelling. For holding the patriarchal throne was Lord Sargis, who had been nourished by holiness in the bosom of the Church and instructed in monastic asceticism in the monastery which is named Sevan island; which they rightly called graced by God; and they sat him on the throne of our illuminator; following whose regulations he led the church in body, he finished his life in good deeds.[683]

Again the subject is the land, clearly separated this time from the Bagratuni house. It is even noted that 'King Gagik tilled the kingdom into old age', an agricultural metaphor that resonates with chapter 1's description of Davit' as bringing the country to bloom – and likewise the description of Gagik as 'powerful and victorious in war' is found applied to the Bulgarian king in chapter 1. This indicates a general affirmation of stateness over any single polity: as long as they take good care of 'the land', any one of these kings can be ideologically positioned as good governance pleasing to Providence.

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[680] AL, 529.17-20.
[681] AL. 529.21-23.
[682] Emphasis added.
[683] AL, 530.1-3.

But there are discernible distinctions between kings/polities. They are emphatically evident in the expansive description that follows the brief notice on Gagik himself. As noted in the section on Aristakēs as *vardapet*, this is the first moment in the *History* where Aristakēs employs the ideologeme of society-as-the-(Armenian)Church. This ideologeme is a fetish of social relations, mystifying the writer's celebration of the Bagratuni polity's (re)production of hegemonic space in a celebration of the Armenian Church's proper standing, from patriarch through to gate-keeping *vardapet*s. The fetishization of society-as-the-(Armenian)-Church is thus the crucial narrative mediation between the literal historical referent and the level of Providence. It organises historiographical stuff's rewriting at the moral and anagogic levels generated by this Divine interpretive code: the surety of elite social reproduction becomes a unitary Armenian kingdom and church experiencing good governance that pleases God, allowing the society situated in that land to flourish. Similarly, as in the vision in Chapter 17 of a pure-Armenia-lost, Aristakēs presents a progression from secular to ecclesiastical hegemonic apparatuses, expanding far more on the latter. This ecclesiastical progression, marking out the kingdom of Armenia from the others discussed, makes evident why this forms the first instantiation of society-as-the-Church: this is the Bagratuni kingdom's first appearance in the narrative, the polity that forms the closest literal historical referent to its rewritten version through interpretive, moral and anagogic levels, arriving at the *vardapet*'s utopian homiletic vision of a single Armenian kingdom and church satisfyingly contained in a single city. As a kingdom with unitary pretensions, housing the Armenian patriarchate and a prestigious royal city in Ani, the Bagratuni polity approximates this utopian vision, and so is the sole place where it can be concretised.

The remainder of Chapter 2, however, demonstrates how far from this vision the Bagratuni polity remains, becoming another kingdom divided with the civil war between Gagik's sons, ended by an agreement arbitrated by Giorgi of Apʻkhazetʻi-Kʻartʻli – whose arbitration is actually central to the narrative progression, rather than the civil war as such. This arbitrated agreement demonstrates the subhegemonic condominium of Caucasian polities, irreducible to Armenian or Kʻartʻvelian identifications. After the initial arbitration breaks down Giorgi attacks Yovhannēs-Smbat, with the result that Ašot attained the greater part of the kingdom through a mixture of conquest, Giorgi's arbitration, and elites' voluntary submission, while Yovhannēs-Smbat's rule was essentially limited to Ani and its environs – an ironic inversion of the single kingdom contained in a single city. Nevertheless the writer's voice intervenes after Ašot's conquests to note:

> And he prospered through God, ruling many regions and fortresses; and he grew stronger than all those who had come before him; so that many of the magnates left their patrimonial

> lands to him, they voluntarily gave allegiance. Until this point our narrative has been pleasing.[684]

The primary subject here, semantically if not grammatically, is territory: Ašot rules many regions and fortresses, a tiller of such quality that magnates leave their patrimonial lands to him. This last detail is particularly notable, forming a miraculous inversion of the normal functioning of patrimonial inheritance. Patrimonial inheritance is an ideologeme that represents the social contradiction between the hegemonic political-economic configurations of New Rome and the Caucasian polities, returned to below. Despite its title, however, the remainder of Chapter 2 is about Giorgi of Apʻkhazetʻi-Kʻartʻli and his wars with New Rome, not the Bagratuni polity. The section below details this narrative sequence for its relevance to Aristakēs' Roman subjecthood, for the moment what is important is that the ethnoterritorial ideological structure subordinates it to an Armenian interpellation. Despite the narrative literally referring to Roman attempts to enforce imperial hegemony over Apʻkhazetʻi-Kʻartʻli and obtain lands in Tao-Taykʻ, at the level of Providence this is rewritten as varying treatments of Armenia. Thus it is emphasised that Giorgi did not kill a single person in his raids into Roman territory, but that:

> …the emperor sent troops to the four corners of the land, loosening marauders, he gave a wrathful order not to spare old or young, neither adult nor child, neither man nor woman, nor any person of any age; and invading with such an approach, he ruined twelve regions.[685]

This heralds the first instance of the lamenting mode in the main narrative, resurfacing at key moments throughout the work thereafter. Lamentation is the central mode by which Aristakēs actualises Armenian interpellation, evoking the audience's emotion, and so mobilising them to spontaneously recognise themselves in the *History*'s presumed national "us" – to invest themselves in its libidinal apparatus, a process seen in contemporary Armenian specialists as much as historical actors. The same figures are seen repeated over and over: wondrous churches built with great art but now in ruin, their patrons and worshippers murdered before them; massacre of both elderly and young; disgrace of noble women, and suckling babes torn from their mothers' breasts to be killed. In general the lamentations represent the total dissolution of the social system that (re)produced Aristakēs' elite social position. In later instantiations these figures are situated in a royal-civic imaginary, but here the setting is more broadly territorial: 'in such a manner they made the prosperous land depopulated, a deserted wasteland, until the coming of winter.'[686]

Previous scholarship has at best taken the *History*'s laments as useful literary colour and emotional force, at worst as marring distractions. But lamentation is the central narrative mechanism by which the *vardapet* reframes his source material in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*,

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[684] AL, 532.19.
[685] AL, 532.34.
[686] AL, 535.34.

which provided only a basic narrative of conflict between New Rome and the kingdom of Apʻkhazetʻi-Kʻartʻli, nothing on Armenianness as such. Through the lamenting mode, however, this historiographical stuff is reframed as an emphatically Armenian story, a tale all about 'us'. Thus the *vardapet* writes:

> Alas this history, alas the evil deed! How can I, with my poor knowledge and my ignorance greater than that of any other, put into writing the manner of things in that moment, and how am I to lament suitably our calamity? Such things are for the spirit of Jeremiah, who knew how to create laments appropriate to the disaster. But we are recording these lengthy matters into a history with concise literary style for the illumination of those various listeners who will come; so that the children who will be begotten and grow up will tell this history to their own children, so that they won't forget the acts of God, Who with just balance requites all those who wander from his laws, as Job said: 'He shall requite those who hate Him, and not delay' (Deuteronomy, 7.10).[687]

Hence the narrative purpose is posited *precisely* as the interpellation of identified Armenians with the Providential meaning of a nationalist History, with laments providing the proper moment to expand on this. This is made evident at the end of this initial lament with the comment that Aristakēs does not know why this befell them, 'whether as a suitable admonition on account of the increased impiety of the inhabitants of the land,' or because of the barbarity of imperial troops drawn from the Bulgars and the Rus. This is a rhetorical juxtaposition that implies the former by means of the latter, uniting the literal historical referent with the interpretive code of Providence.

Hence at Chapter 2's close, coming immediately after the lament and so narratively associated with it, Aristakēs relates an episode dealing with the co-celebration of Epiphany by Armenian and Roman ecclesiastics in the presence of the emperor, discussed in the part I.[688] The episode is situated in the Pontus, the Roman theme of Khaldia (Arm. *Khaltkʻ*), and represents an ideological resolution of the contradictory hegemonic apparatuses in this region of "Armenia" – the Roman and Armenian churches, and the imperial administration. Yet it is also here that 'the destruction of the Armenians happened', when Yovhannēs-Smbat sends the Armenian patriarch with a will to give to the emperor 'so that after my death he can take my cities and lands in inheritance.' Even here, therefore, in an episode that explicitly demonstrates the non-reducibility of "Armenia" to the Bagratuni kingdom, the ethnoterritorial ideological structure implies this self-same claim, interpellating identified Armenians with the understanding of this polity as particularly "theirs" and so particularly relevant in the unfolding of "their" land's Providential destiny.

Despite this interpellation, however, as noted in the previous chapter the Bagratuni kingdom then disappears from the narrative for seven chapters, right up until its fall in Chapter 10, marking a

[687] AL, 533.36-534.37.
[688] AL, 535.48-536.53.

twenty-year gap in chronological coverage. Alongside this gap is a relative lack of emphasis on the Armenianness of Aristakēs' territorial ideological structure, albeit not the structure itself. It explicitly continues throughout the rest of the Tao-Tayk' cycle, with chapter 3, 'How the Emperor Returned a Second Time to the Land of Tayk', where the Georgian (*Virk'*) Troops were Defeated', detailing an abortive Roman rebellion near to Theodosioupolis-Karin. This instantiates the kingdom divided ideologeme in the comment:

> But I do not know whether these laws are from God, that it is not meet for servants to revolt against their lords, or whether the emperor indeed had an especial infusion of grace; what I know for sure, and saw with my own eyes, is that those who arose against him by laughable deaths they exchanged their lives.[689]

Again the *vardapet* presents a rhetorical juxtaposition wherein the former claim – that Providence has ordained things in a certain manner – is achieved by means of a falsely counter-posed latter – that Basileios II had a special infusion of grace – uniting literal referent with interpretive code. Oddly situated in this instantiation of the kingdom divided is the Roman annexation of Vaspurakan, which forms a one-line aside in the narrative sequence on the abortive Roman rebellion, and is itself an instantiation of the patrimonial inheritance ideologeme discussed in the next section.[690] For the moment it is striking that Aristakēs does not frame this episode as a transformative moment in the downfall of "Armenia". This is in stark contrast to Matt'ēos' narrative of the eleventh century, where Vaspurakan's fate foreshadows that of the nation, a framing carried over into modern and contemporary nationalist narratives.[691] There is some hint of transformation in the comment that 'from then onwards the Romans ruled the East', but this represents an alternative territorial frame that implies sublimated Roman subjecthood. The remainder of this chapter then, as Chapter 4, is concerned with territoriality insofar as this is reflected in the ideologeme of patrimonial inheritance, with strikingly little that references Armenianness in any form.

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The cycle of imperial vignettes over chapters 5 to 9 continue this pattern, lacking specifically Armenian significations and centrally concerned with Romans. Hence to the extent that territoriality is present, it is found in references to 'the land of the East' contrasted with 'the land of the Romans', and the specific geospatial orientations that Aristakēs provides in the form of geographic plot points and names – nothing about "Armenia" as such. The significant exception to this rule is chapter 9, 'The Reign of [Emperor] Mikhayl [IV]', with its mediating passages on

[689] AL, 536.8.
[690] AL, 537.15.
[691] MU, I.48-49.

the solar eclipse and wandering hermit of woe.[692] These mediating passages are unequivocally ethnoterritorial: the *vardapet* notes how 'the wise' considered the eclipse to presage divine judgement, 'which we saw with our own eyes, the blows of divine wrath, and the unheard of punishment which arrived over this land of the Armenians because of our sins.' Likewise the prophetic wonderer travels east to west wailing woe – 'through Apahounik', and having crossed through the region of Hark', he descended into Mananałi and Ekełeac' – to which again 'the wise' responded 'That "woe" will be for the whole country.' Notably the writer's voice intervenes at this point to signal the coming narrative transformation, with the discourse marker 'Let us leave this digression as it is; and let us return to the narrative thread with the aforementioned emperor.' As all such discourse markers, this functions to draw the interpellated audience's attention more closely, and so to reframe basically Roman historiographical stuff within the *History*'s ethnoterritorial ideological structure, that is, to make it all about "us" and "our land".

In terms of the narrative logic, these mediating ethnoterritorial digressions prepare the interpellated audience for the pivotal transformation of Chapter 10, 'The Reign of T'eodos' Son, Kostandin [IX], Called Monomakh'. The chapter begins with Georgios Maniakēs' rebellion, which forms another instantiation of the kingdom divided ideologeme. Then, immediately following this episode, comes the pivotal transformation:

> Now in the following three years came the end of the lives of the houses (*tunk'*) of the Armenians; for in one and the same year the two brothers Ašot and Yovhannēs[-Smbat] died, who held the kingship of our land. Thereupon their throne of stability was moved, and it did not come to rest; thereupon the princes left their patrimonial inheritance, and became wanderers in a foreign land; thereupon provinces were destroyed and taken for loot by the Greeks. Cultivated *avan*s became the dwelling of wild beasts, and their fields pasture for deer. Walled houses, many-storied and vast, became dwellings for harpies and centaurs, as the holy prophets lamented the desolation of Israel: 'The hedgehog shall bear her young there and raise them without fear' (Isaiah 34:15).[693]

The ethnoterritorial structuring is self-evident, as is the anchoring in elite anxiety over social production resting on the control of producing commoners through fixed-field cultivation. The tripartite hierarchical distinction is particularly notable: the 'throne of stability' represented by the 'kingship of our land', the princes leaving their 'patrimonial inheritance' to wander in 'a foreign land', and finally the now destroyed provinces and uncultivated *avan*s representing the ultimate dissolution of the social system after the kingship and princes' departure – re-instantiating imagery found in the verse preface.

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[692] AL, 550.30-38.
[693] AL, 555.24-28.

It is important to remember how incongruously this sudden assertion sits alongside the *History*'s literal historical referents up to this point: aside from the first half of Chapter 2, the Bagratuni kingdom, claimed to be so Providentially central, has been entirely absent, with Tao-Tayk', Ap'khazet'i-K'art'li, and especially New Rome easily predominating in terms of coverage. Yet the point is not the actual historiographical stuff, but how this stuff is re-directed towards interpellating identified Armenians with the meaning of History. Thus the latter part of this lament forms a rhetorical contrast between society as-was and society-as-it-became, but as an instantiation of the ideologeme of society-as-the-Church.[694] First the *vardapet* describes how churches had been beautifully built, with stunning decoration and housing inextinguishable fires and lanterns, describing the interplay of these flickering lights with waves of incense smoke moving through the air to the accompaniment of worship in song – resonant metaphors recalling the earlier discussion of *vardapet*s' compositions. Now, however, these scenes are gone, the choirs replaced by screeching owls, natural imagery that again emphasises the broader territorial, even terrestrial anchoring of Aristakēs' elite anxiety over social production – it is important to remember that identified Armenians were not eradicated from raided regions, nor will they have stopped producing stuff in order to reproduce themselves, the central difference was that these processes were no longer systemically disciplined towards the (re)production of elite actors like Aristakēs.

Within chapter 10 this rhetorical contrast forms a brief initial instance of the lamenting mode that signals the broader pivotal narrative transformation, marked by a discourse marker at the end expanding on how God's grace is necessary for a full description, and that the writer must return to the main story. This main story focuses on Yovhannēs-Smbat's bequest of the kingdom to New Rome, which is notably never disputed in itself. Instead there is the claim that Kōnstantinos VIII gave the will back to 'one from among the Armenians', meaning Kiwrakos, only for him to sell it again to Mikhaēl IV after Kōnstantinos dies. This contradictory balancing of blame hints at the extent to which the *vardapet* felt compelled to ideologically resolve Armenian identification and Roman subjecthood. Importantly the will is referred to as 'the letter which concerned the Armenian land', and having related its resale Aristakēs inserts a lamenting discourse marker:

> Woe to such a bitter sale! How many people's blood paid the price; how many churches were destroyed so by a bitter hand; how many provinces depopulated, became destroyed; how many great and populous *avan*s became uninhabited? But we will discuss all this in the [right] place, and we proceed in the order that we previously commenced.[695]

[694] AL, 555.24-556.34.
[695] AL, 557.38-39.

The narrative then turns to Monomakhos' attempts to 'take the city of Ani and the land', 'as though his own especial inheritance', another instance of the patrimonial inheritance ideologeme, notably paired with 'the city' and 'the land'.[696]

At this point, amidst punitive Roman raids, the *vardapet* embarks on an expansive lament for the Bagratuni polity, specifically focused on how imperial invasions ruined 'the land of the Armenians, until they made the whole land uninhabited by sword, fire, and captive-taking.'[697] Much as the previous instances this is structured as a rhetorical contrast between Armenia-as-was and Armenia fallen, but in this instance through an ethnoterritorial and royal-civic representation rather than society-as-the-Church. The digression begins from territory: 'A land that once had been as a paradise, previously lush with its leafiness, dense vegetation, fertility, beautiful fruits and appearing blessed to travellers', again heavily deploying agricultural metaphors that indicate the terrestrial anchoring of elite social-reproductive anxiety. Thus it moves from agrarian imagery to the aristocrats, 'the princes [who] sat enthroned in the land' assuring the continued vitality of this lush space. At this point, however, the *vardapet* moves seamlessly into a royal-civic imaginary from the previously ethnoterritorial frame, blurring the distinction between the two – indeed, sublimating the inherent fictitiousness of Armenia's unity through the satisfyingly contained urban representation. Thus soldiers gathered before the princes arrayed 'in the likeness of a blooming spring,' full of colour with music and celebratory speeches, while the elderly sat in the squares, young mothers carry babes in arms, and newlyweds indulge their love in nuptial beds. This civic imaginary represents a vital social system, as full of life-just-begun as of life-fully-lived.

This vital system is explicitly held in place by its highest points, the 'patriarchal throne' and the 'royal dignity'. Again employing agricultural metaphor the patriarchate is described as a cloud thickened by the Holy Spirit and divine instruction, ready to rain 'the waters of life; by means of which the Church's fruitful garden was fertilised, and they set up wakeful guards over its ramparts, establishing those whom it had consecrated.' Paired with this ripened cloud of grace is the king, who rises from the city at dawn 'as a bride-groom who comes from his nuptial couch, or as the evening star of the daytime which, arising over the heads of the creatures, draws the gaze of all to itself'. The king is thus the sun-like brilliance that brings to fruit ripened ecclesiastical clouds, shining with glittering garments and a pearl crown atop a white stallion garbed in gold, 'reflecting the sun-beams that surrounded it, dazzling the sight of onlookers.' Beneath this royal sun and patriarchal clouds, then, roll a multitude of troops 'as the waves of the sea that pile one on the other', while not only far-off places but also 'the villages and fields' were made dwellings for clerics. In sum, therefore, each representative of each secular and ecclesiastical hegemonic

[696] AL, 557.
[697] AL, 558.49-560.72.

apparatus is presented hierarchically in a royal-civic imaginary that heavily employs agricultural and natural metaphor. The royal city is the represented space, but at the same time forms a concretisation of Armenia as a whole, with the *vardapet* moving seamlessly between the two significations. Nevertheless, ultimately it is Armenia that must be foregrounded for the sake of ethnoterritorial interpellation, as he writes:

> Such things and others alike to them, these our land used to have in abundance. And I have written thus, so that when I narrate the opposite things, all shall be moved to tears.[698]

This interpellating statement signals the turn from Armenia-as-was to Armenia fallen, with the same movement from a general ethnoterritorial to a specific royal-civic imaginary.[699] The king has 'fallen from honour', and sits a despised captive in a 'foreign place', while 'likewise the patriarchal throne, lacking occupants, displays a sad face, as a wife newly having entered into widowhood.' Descending from these two highest points, Aristakēs describes how the cavalry now 'wanders lordless, some in Persia, some in Greece, some in K'art'li (*Virk'*)' – emphasising the ethnoterritorial imaginary – while the *sepouh* brigade of *azat*s 'has left its patrimonial lands'. With these structuring elements of Armenia gone, the scene is one of total devastation and loss:

> The royal palaces are ruined and uninhabited. The populous land is devoid of inhabitants. The sound of joy with the harvesting of the vines is not heard, nor praise for the treaders of the winepress. No children play before their parents, and the elderly don't sit in chairs in the squares. The sound of weddings is not heard, and no bridal chambers are adorned. All of this has diminished and been lost and 'It shall not return' (Psalms 40:9), as the psalm proclaims. Now everything has turned into lamentations for us, and the robe of gladness has now become a melancholy sack-cloth.[700]

The lament's final section therefore completes the pivotal transformation of the chapter, signalling to the interpellated audience that it is here that "our" fate was completed, with each specific image of Armenia-as-was repeated in fallen form. As noted above in reference to the lament for Arcn, the comparison with Jerusalem has evident nationalist significations through the positing of the single people in their single city-kingdom in their single land – a royal, civic and territorial people, moreover, with their own transcendent relationship to the divine. Hence it is possible for the *vardapet* to claim that the Armenians' fate is the completion of Jeremiah's laments over Jerusalem, thereby explicitly connecting the interpretive code of Providence with the literal historical referent, and so actualising the Armenian interpellation. Thus immediately following the end of the lament the *vardapet* reiterates this mediation between the literal and the interpretative, reminding the audience of how 'all of this was visited on the Armenians' because

[698] AL, 559.57.
[699] AL, 559.59-560.72.
[700] AL, 559.62-560.68.

of the re-sale of Yovhannēs-Smbat's will to Mikhaēl IV.[701] He claims to consider this sale an act of betrayal 'more inhuman than that of Judas', since Judas' betrayal and selling of Christ saved the whole world, but here the seller destroyed 'the vineyard which the Lord had planted [in Armenia], and our Illuminator [Saint Grigor] had tended for fifteen years of tiring labour' by depriving it 'of its wall and destroying its towers'. Hence Aristakēs returns to agricultural metaphor in order to describe the establishment of a specifically Armenian Christianity in Armenia, instantiating in nationalist manner society-as-the-Church while simultaneously connecting this to the image of the royal tiller, now re-situated as Grigor – who, of course, was from the royal Aršakuni house.

Thus, despite the apparent absence of the Bagratuni kingdom as a literal historical referent, the *History*'s ethnoterritorial structure establishes an emphatically Armenian story that is Providentially tied to this kingdom. In such manner identified Armenians reading the work can be interpellated regardless of their particular lived experience, which in a large number of situations would have been constituted without any direct or indirect Bagratuni rule. Thereby, moreover, a peculiarly "Armenian History" of the eleventh century begins to be forged – one that has been adopted and adapted by political and methodological nationalists today – claiming that the general "national experience" of this conjuncture can be reduced to the narrow political fortunes of one polity. And, of course, both for identified Armenian elites then and nationalists today, this is not simply about the Bagratuni polity as such, but its position as the secular hegemonic apparatus that can support the Armenian Church – implicitly or explicitly posited as the special vessel carrying authentic Armenianness over time and place. Hence the remainder of Chapter 10 details the conquest of Ani, which tellingly stands for the conquest of the entire 'Armenian land', before ending with another episode on the celebration of Epiphany after the patriarch has been moved to Arcn. This episode signifies the dialectical inversion of the proper balancing of hegemonic apparatuses posited in Chapter 2's section on the Epiphany celebration twenty years earlier.

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With this dialectical inversion the *History*'s pivotal transformation is complete. As established by the detailed description, there are no cycles thereafter comparable to that on Tao-Tayk's annexation or the imperial vignettes of chapters 5 to 9. Instead chapters 11 and 12 form a dual representation of the Turkish invasions, notably of 'lands and cities', and those after form a sequence of either homiletic vignettes on city sacks, or else brief returns to the more "properly historiographical" presentation of the chapters before the pivotal transformation. Nevertheless, even these "properly historiographical" chapters have been transformed, so that the homiletic

[701] AL, 560.73-561.77.

representation comes prior to the empirical claims in a reversal of the previous pattern. This is central to understanding the instantiation of Armenianness within the work's narrative and ideological structures, with the homilies forming the central points at which the (elite, patriarchal) audience is interpellated with the (specific, nationalist) meaning of History. Although the majority of these homiletic vignettes are on cities, the broader ethnoterritorial framing continues to blur the distinction between represented spaces, as the pairing of chapters 11 and 12, or 19 encompassing both 'Mesopotamia and its Cities'. This indicates how ethnoterritorial ideological structuring is essential to actualise Armenian interpellation, despite a civic imaginary forming the central concretisation of Aristakēs' worldview, revealing his lifeworld situation as citizen of Arcn. Before turning to a broader consideration of eleventh-century Armenianness, therefore, it is important to further explore instantiations of this ethnoterritorial structuring in the post-transformation chapters.

Chapter 11 forms the 'lands' paired with the subsequent chapter's 'cities', beginning with the sentence 'In this same year [as Ani fell to the Romans], the gate of heaven's wrath opened over our land, and many troops came forth out of T'urk'astan', going on to specify the regions they pass through – Vaspurakan, Basiani, and on 'to the great estate which is called Vałaršavan, and, having demolished it, they polluted twenty-four districts with sword and fire and captive-taking.'[702] This is the first appearance of the Turks in the *History*, and notably they appear in a secondary order of significance in and of themselves, subordinated to their narrative role in the Armenians' Providential story. There is a cryptic statement in Chapter 4 that 'the whole land of Persia' in the 1020s and 1030s was beset by fear and troubles – presumably because of Turkish invasions, but this is not specified.[703] Otherwise there is no attempt to situate or name the Turks – in fact the ethnonym 'Turk' never appears in the *History*, with raiders and enemy troops named variously Persian, Tajik (Muslim), or infidel/barbarian. This is in strong contrast to Matt'ēos, who re-interprets other 'Persians', like the Kurdish Shaddadid emirs of Ganja, in order to generate a coherent narrative figure, 'the savage nation of infidels called Turks', including ethnological details around hair, dress, sound and so on.[704] Aristakēs, conversely, despite referring to 'T'urk'estan' on four occasions and using indicative ethnological signifiers like horse riding and archery, never makes any specific attempt to construct a coherent narrative figure. Only at the very end of the work, in the conclusion to chapter 25 on Manzikert, is there some more specific description, when God, in his anger at Rōmanos IV's blinding and death, brings forth 'from the Mountains of the Moon and from the great river crossing northern India, wicked peoples speaking

[702] AL, 563.1-564.6.
[703] AL, 540.22; this may refer to the struggle between Seljuqs and Ghaznavids for hegemony over the Iranian plateau.
[704] MU, I.47-48.

foreign tongues to flood like gushing water over our lands'.[705] Earlier in the narrative, however, the Turks appear *dei ex machina*, emerging as secondary phenomena to Providential judgement, rather than apocalyptic and so agentive actors in an eschatological schema. This implies a different kind of political theology, prioritising earthly agency in the divine dialectic, as opposed to prophecy's pre-determinative privileging of Holy Writ. It also, however, allows the *vardapet* to move immediately upon the Turks' deployment as literal historical referents, straight to their position within the interpretive code – instruments of Divine Wrath – and from then on to the moral level of corporate Armenian sin – they will vanish with God's forgiveness – and so finally to the anagogic level, at which a pure Armenia shorn of social antagonism is restored through penance.

Thus the language is homiletic and expansive right from chapter 11's outset, moving quickly to the lamenting mode replete with biblical quotation. Providence is therefore explicitly present even at the Turks' introduction as historiographical stuff, as in the chapter's first paragraph:

> …they desired to go with the same intentions [to raid and loot] the city of Karin. But He who placed a limit on the oceans…stopped them from their advance. He does this according to his unfathomable wisdom, so that by fear of them we might be disciplined, and they might learn that it is not by their own strength that they did this; but the hand that mightily held them back, is the self-same hand that had made a route for their invasion.[706]

Hence the Turks are instantly secondary phenomena to their own narrative action, which is immediately re-situated at the interpretative level of Providence, as the *vardapet* uses the moment to digress into the nationalist meaning of History and call the interpellated audience to penance. Thus the second paragraph of the chapter notes how 'He poured his wrath upon us by the hand of a foreign people, since we had sinned against him',[707] but similarly pulled these forces back in mercy so as to demonstrate His compassion. Rather than immediately come to penance, however, the *vardapet* claims that the Armenians refused to recognise this judgement and compassion, and so brought further judgement on themselves, spreading across the whole of Armenia. And, just as with those of Ani 'who did not consider themselves Canaanites', the implication is that a significant part of this nationalised sinfulness was lack of ethnic solidarity, alike to Joseph's family who did not weep over the shedding of their own blood.[708] The Turks are thus denied any narrative agency: within the *History*'s homiletic structure they are simply the mediation between corporate Armenian agency, and the judgements of Providence. This stands in stark contrast to Matt'ēos, who situates the Turks as harbingers of apocalypse, and therefore agentive actors in their own right alongside Romans, Armenians and Franks. For Aristakēs, however, the different

[705] AL, 628.24.
[706] AL, 564.4-5.
[707] AL, 564.7.
[708] AL, 566.18.

punitive theology requires different kinds of actor: simple instruments of Providence to be introduced through Armenian sin and to vanish through Armenian penance, rather than eschatological figures that substantively transform the world's cosmological structure.

It is therefore claimed to be on account of Armenian hubris that the Turks return the next year, named 'the second year of our captivity', in both clear indication of the previous chapter's pivotal transformation, as well as forming a nationalist interpellation in itself.[709] In this year 'the dregs of bitterness full of rage moved forth from the land of the Persians once more,' surging over the plains of Basiani and Karin in 'streams of flood that took the four corners of the land': as far as the theme of Khaldia in the west; Sper, Tao-Tayk' and Aršarunik' in the north; and Tarōn, Haštenic', and the forest of Khorjean in the south. Repeating the figure of the compass-oriented 'four corners of the land' from previous passages, the ethnoterritorial ideological structuring is self-evident, as is the simultaneous movement from the deployed literal historical referent to the interpretive code of Providence. Moreover, rather than before, where historiographical stuff was presented prior to its re-writing through lamentation at the level of the interpretive code, here the movement is within the same sentence:

> And having made a rest of fourteen days, they flooded out and covered the mountains and bushland, and seized the whole land; this thing appears to be the self-same unmixed wine, that which the young Jeremiah in his vision (Jeremiah, 25) gave in a golden goblet as a drink to kings, nations, cities, princes and their troops, and last of all to the House of Sheshak to drink; behold before you the fulfilment of that prophecy occurred. For this *tun* of the Armenians drank from that pure wine and became evilly drunk. It drank, and having become stupefied, lost its senses; it drank until it received everything upon itself, and now it lies at the crossings of all roads naked and disgraced, and all passers-by trample upon it with insults. It left its home (*tun*), alienated from acquaintances, removed from family and relatives, the slave and captive of all nations.[710]

In this passage the ideological structuring of Aristakēs' Armenian interpellation becomes crystal clear. Material from the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*, signalled by the mention of a specific year (497 [1048]) and detailing movements over time and place, is presented inextricably from the homiletic digression. The historiographical stuff is important *inasmuch as* it allows the *vardapet* to construct his historiographical homily. This homily, an exhortation to penance, is based on the assumption that the audience (potentially) identifies as Armenian, and so can be (potentially) interpellated within a specific meaning of History generalised as national experience. Nationalist interpellation must necessarily be based in a fictitious territorial and cross-class unity, which Aristakēs achieves through a combination of the church as the sole unifying institutional

[709] AL, 566.20.
[710] AL, 566.21-23.

apparatus, and the Bagratuni kingdom rewritten as Armenia-as-such, with both necessarily encased in an ethnoterritorial ideological structure. In this process various social relations are objectified, fetishized, and reified as the social agent in itself. This passage, therefore, presents Armenia not simply as a single ethnoterritorial space, but a fully substantivized agent: a personalised "country" that can act in analogous manner to the country fetishes of our own contemporary world, where "France" angers "Turkey", "Russia" and "Syria" are friends, and so on. Importantly this is not a function of the *vardapet*'s scriptural discourse. Aristakēs draws on Chapter 25 of the book of Jeremiah, in which nations are given a cup of divine wrath from which to drink and so bring themselves to ruin and waste. In scripture, although the cup is for 'nations', those described as drinking from it are 'Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, its kings and officials', as well as the kings and officials of a number of other polities and places. In the *History* it is 'this house of the Armenians' that drank from the cup of wrath. This fully personalised figure, blurring the distinctions between *tun* as home, land, and aristocratic structure, remains the subject of Divine Wrath even up to its own dissolution and abandoning of itself.

A fully fetishized and personalised Armenia allows Aristakēs to situate anxiety over control of agrarian production, and so the reproduction of his own elite position, within a nationalist frame that traverses socioeconomic strata. In such manner the *vardapet* is able to interpellate elites and commoners alike with a particular meaning of History, a meaning that generalises dominators' lifeworlds as *the* Armenian worldview. This is important since, although it is safe to assume that the *History* as a written work was rarely if ever read by subaltern actors, Aristakēs as *vardapet* was both a preacher himself as well as a "teacher of teachers": giving monks and priests material for preaching and instruction – not least the *History* – and so for maintaining ideological hegemony over commoners. Although this process is oblique for eleventh-century Caucasia, comparison with other times and places suggests that agrarian commoners are particularly resilient to ideological hegemony, on account of their relatively autonomous means of reproducing themselves.[711] Nevertheless ideological hegemony is necessary to maintain any hegemonic apparatus, secular or ecclesiastical, even if agrarian commoners often subvert hegemony through what James Scott terms 'hidden transcripts'[712] – often then resulting in potentially counterpolitical forms of hegemonic ideology, not least so-called heresy.[713] Regardless of this potentiality however, which is perceptible in the chapters on the T'ondrakeans, systemic violence and coercion combined with nationalist interpellation and transcendent religiosity must have maintained a relatively stable ideological hegemony. The objectification of Christian Armenianness functioned to erase the social antagonisms that cut across this fictitious national

[711] On this dynamic see: Scott (1977), 267-296.
[712] See generally Scott (1990).
[713] Graeber (2010), 308-309; Federici (1997), 21-60.

unity, so that commoners appear to spontaneously assent to the rule of "our" elites protecting "our" interests.

This is important for a socially-symbolic reading of the *History*, since the narrative of exile from patrimonial lands is not one that agrarian commoners can be assumed to have identified with – they, after all, continued to reproduce themselves from more-or-less the same lands and commons, and many may have found the anarchic crisis far less onerous than the previously embedded systems of exploitative domination reproduced by New Rome and the Caucasian polities. Of course commoners *were* also affected by the raids in particular times and places, but the representation of generalised disaster is a function of the total social system's ideological representation. So when Aristakēs employs the imagery of plagues of locusts in the immediately subsequent paragraph to the passage quoted above, this implies total destruction of the land and the basis for all identified Armenians' reproduction, when actually only particular regions for particular periods would have experienced such totalising violence. What *had* been destroyed as a totality, however, was the social system which (re)produced elite actors like Aristakēs, and locust imagery functions to generalise this elite experience across the whole nation.

Thus it is the whole nation that must come to penance, 'beginning from the king down even to he who runs the mill',[714] dressed in black sack cloth and singing laments with professional mourning women. And, again, this is because the whole nation has suffered the disaster:

> For cities were ruined, homes burned, palaces transformed into furnaces, regally built chambers reduced to ashes. Men were killed in the squares, women taken from their homes into slavery, suckling babes hurled against rocks, and the beautiful faces of little children withered away. Women were disgraced in the squares, youths were stabbed to death in view of elders, the respect-worthy white hair of the elderly became blood-stained, and their corpses rolled upon the ground.[715]

As with other instantiations of this civic imaginary the repeated imagery generates concrete content for Aristakēs' utopian national community of 'us', actualising ethnic interpellation for those who recognise themselves in the represented worldview. Hence the interpellating lament immediately following the passage quoted above:

> Oh God, Your mercy, You who so tolerated the insolence of the impious against Your flock! Remember Your congregation whom You received from the beginning with the arrival of your Only-Begotten, and saved with the blood of the anointed one. Why did you entirely reject [us], God, become wrathful with your rage and betray us into the hands of infidel, severe and tumultuous men? Remember not our sins, and because of our sins turn not Your face from us; remember rather Your mighty hand and powerful lofty arm, by which You rule

[714] AL, 567.28.
[715] AL, 568.31-33.

> us, and Your name had been placed over us. And now behold: You became angry, and we sinned; because of these things we wandered in bondage among many nations, and became as though unclean to all. The winds scattered us, and there remained none that would call out Your name, nor is anyone there to remember to take refuge in You; for You turned Your face away from us and gave us up because of our sins. Remain not eternally angry at us, and in time remember not our sins.[716]

This instance of the lamenting mode makes clear the portioning of agency in the *History*'s narrative, with the Armenian nation, the signification that lies behind the utopian community of "us", able to drive events one way or another through proper penance. The remainder of the chapter then forms an illustration of how events develop should the Armenians not do this, with Turkish raiders spreading out 'over the face of the earth', so that 'the land before them was like the Garden of Delight (i.e., Eden)', thereby re-emphasising the territorial framing. This leads to the recounting of the raid 'in the Mananałi district, on the mountain named Smbat's Fortress' where refugees had assembled with animals. Once more the same violent and gendered imagery is instantiated, although here not explicitly situated in a civic imaginary, ending with a long lament addressed directly to the mountain, 'a pit of mud for the loss of all the land's inhabitants, for wild beasts dwell on you, both kites and vultures have made you their dwelling; on you packs of foxes frolic about, filled with prey.'[717] Hence, much as for the city laments, the primary imagery is one of total societal collapse, here as symbolic representation of the loss of agrarian production with only wilderness left behind.

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Throughout subsequent chapters there are indications of the centrality of territoriality, for example in chapter 14 describing how the *kat'ołikos* was kept from returning to either Ani or Armenia – again pairing land and city. After chapter 11, however, the next instance of the lamenting mode addressed specifically to the land does not appear until chapter 16, 'Regarding the Sultan's Arrival'. The opening passages are dense with ethnoterritorial framing, referring to the time 'when they first took the country prisoner', and raiding parties spread out across specifically named points in the landscape – Arčeš, Berkri, Manzikert and Apahunik' – and 'seized entirely all the [agricultural] fields and the plains [for pasturing]', moving up to 'the north until the stronghold of the Abkhaz and until the mountain which is called Parkhar and to the foothills of the Caucasus; and west until the forests of Čanet'i, and to the south up to the mountain called Sim; and they seized the whole land like reapers working a field.'[718] Such geographic specifications indicate the underlying sources to the *History*'s narrative, but their narrative function is more than leaving

[716] AL, 568.35-41.
[717] AL, 568.42-569.45.
[718] AL, 580.1-581.4.

such empirical clues – the writer could easily have chosen to describe the raids impressionistically. Their inclusion should be understood as internal to the broader narrative purpose, functioning to actualise a territorialised Armenian sense of self. Thus immediately after there is a striking instance of the lamenting mode:

> Now of the evils at that time which they visited upon the land, who is able to record them? Or whose mind is able to enumerate them? For this whole land was full of corpses, the cultivated and uncultivated, the roads and the desolate places, the caves and the crags, the dense pine forests, and the high places and all the built up places they burnt and polluted, both houses and churches, so that the flame of that fire rose higher than the ovens of Babylon; and by such handiwork they ruined the whole land, not only once, but three times one after the other having returned until the country was totally despoiled of inhabitants, and the baying of animals ceased.[719]

This section, along with the ironic description of Turkish raiders as agrarian producers, indicates the concrete anchoring of Aristakēs-as-elite's anxiety over the reproduction of the social system, with not the end of agrarian production as such, but the end of those systems of it directed towards his own socioeconomic position. Hence the inclusion of specifically named places allows near immediate movement from the literal historical referent, through its ideological rewriting. This territorial framing then gives way in the subsequent passage to the same civic imaginary as previously, but this time with interwoven agrarian imagery:

> Nowhere is heard the sound of weddings, nor the good news of new-born children; the elders do not sit on chairs in the square, and the children do not play before them; herds do not go to pasture, and lambs do not frolic in the meadows. The reaper does not gather sheaves in his arms, and does not hear the blessing of passers-by; the stores are not filled with grain; and the cisterns are empty of wine; the sounds of happiness are not heard at the vineyards' harvesting and the pantries are empty of vessels. All this has been taken, and it does not appear.[720]

This passage re-instantiates a framing of 'lands and cities' through the imagining of the total social system's loss, with the subsequent lines turning to a full lament as the writer's voice calls for some Jeremiah to take his place, decrying how he must tell such news 'not only to one village or city, but to all the lands, from nation to nation'.[721] The narrative then turns to do just this, in immediately lamenting descriptions of 'the unbelievable evils that befell the main places one after another', an explicitly territorial instance of the lamenting mode that progresses from Khorjean and Hanjet' to Derjan and Ekełeac', on to Tao-Tayk' and the river Čoruh, and finally to Khaldia.[722] There is also further blurring between territorial and civic imaginings, noting how 'the land that

[719] AL, 581.5.
[720] AL, 581.7-10.
[721] AL, 581.11-582.13.
[722] AL, 582.14-584.28.

had been crammed with many people like a populous city, became an uninhabited wasteland, divided in two, either slain by the sword or captive.'

The remainder of chapter 16 forms an illustrative example of how even the sultan is subject to Providence, and so able to be defeated through truly pious conduct. The next instances of the lamenting mode appear in chapter 17, 'The End of Monomakh's Reign'. These sections are dense with political theology, the chapter beginning by quoting Solomon from Proverbs (29.4) saying 'a just king holds up his land, while the lawless one ruins it', and going on to outline how, unlike Basileios II, Monomakhos had not done this. Of course this passage is more resonant for Aristakēs as Roman subject, but it is important to note here how the figure of 'the land' bridges these two significations, unmasking how the real point is not whether the ruler is "Roman" or "Armenian", but the extent to which they assure elite social reproduction through the maintenance of hegemonic space. Hence this line recalls the earlier claims for how Davit' and Gagik I had each taken care of 'the land', so that all three "Georgian", "Armenian", and "Roman" rulers *c.*1000 are contradictorily celebrated for their shared abilities.

More central for an Armenian interpellation, though, is the later full instantiation of the lamenting mode. This appears in the aftermath of a recounting of raiding parties' precisely plotted progression across various districts, apparently killing all in both the cities and 'the surrounding villages and fields', before the writer's voice interjects to pronounce 'Oh how bitter this history is, how worthy of lamentation!'[723] Another passage follows in which the apparent function of the lamenting mode is explicated, noting how it is intended to move 'all listeners to tears', for 'woe are we that must pay the debts (i.e., sins) of our fathers.' As all instantiations of lament, therefore, this provides a general interpellation through a narratively constructed shared community of "us", but here this is notably inter-generational: the continuous Armenian nation that has long accumulated sins, which the current generation must repay through penance. The subsequent passage, then, is that quoted above on the 'four thrones of kingship' held by "Armenia", along with 'the *kiwropałat*'s principality and what there was in Rome.'[724]

This passage has already been explored for the way in which, although ostensibly beginning from the political as such, it quickly moves into a vision of Armenia as the Armenian Church. Here this point can be further developed: what is in fact presented is an encapsulated version of the *History*'s territorial fetish of "Armenia". There is a broad land that is able to "have" within itself a number of different polities, but what really gives concrete institutional form to this territorial fetish is the Armenian Church, and this single ecclesiastical apparatus ideologically requires a single polity – Great Armenia. Nevertheless this does not need to be too specific a signification,

[723] AL, 591.20-594.44.
[724] AL, 592.27-593.35.

since the land itself – standing ideologically for the surety of elite reproduction through the exploitative domination of agrarian commoners – is the necessary terrestrial underpinning. Hence the terrestrial anchoring of the ideological structure in a fetishized "Armenia" leads logically, through the interpretive code of Providence, to the moral level – this is all "our" and so "your" story – to the anagogic – this has its final resolution in the penitent unity of the Armenian nation, satisfyingly contained in a single polity and city. In actual fact, however, the Armenian Church was as potentially fractious and fragmented as the "Armenian" polities. Hence the ethnoterritorial framing both underpins and bridges the gaps in both a political and an ecclesiastical Armenianness, an essential function that makes the interpellation (potentially) operative for a practically diverse set of elites and commoners. The lamenting mode thus allows the reification of this specific land:

> If everything which I have related was visited upon us because of our wickedness, inform Heaven and those who are in it and over it; inform the earth, and the animals living on it; inform the mountains and hills, trees and dense forests, let them mourn and lament our destruction. Prophets did so in their joy. For they would command the mountains and hills to leap for joy; the rivers to applaud; the sea to make merry; and the forests to rejoice. They are all our comrades, and since they share in our joy, they should partake of our sorrows, as it was in times past, when they bowed down with us in our day of humiliation and tribulation, because they were created for us.[725]

The same reification of the land as an object of lament then resurfaces later in chapter 18, this time however for the effect which the Roman civil war had. Once more it is an ethnoterritorial framing that allows variously contradictory identifications and significations to meet in the same ideological structure, resolving the directly conflicting aims of Roman and Caucasian polities through common care for 'the land'. This is re-written away from its literal historical referent, through the mediating territorial fetish of "Armenia", so that the audience can recognise themselves as Armenians in the *History*'s libidinal apparatus, thereby spontaneously identifying with the Bagratuni polity regardless of particular situation, and coming to see the *History*'s story as "theirs".

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In addition to the *History*'s territorial ideological structure there are more specifically ethnicising claims – tying the Armenian interpellation to biological descent and other apparently "objective" factors like language – that are important to consider as part of a broader view of constructions of Armenianness in the eleventh century. These have already been seen in the chapters on the T'ondrakeans, discussed in reference to their evocation of the *vardapet*'s role of gate-keeping

[725] AL, 593.36-38.

Armenian Christianity. This, obviously, is a nationalist role as much as, if not more than, a religious one, albeit one defined in religious terms. Yet the central reason why heretics are claimed to form such a formidable problem is that they emerge from the self-same stream as Armenian Christians – that is, they *are* Armenian Christians, but ones that ecclesiastics desired to exclude from their national community. Hence, by being Armenian – speaking the same language and 'coming from us' – and yet being heterodox and heteroprax, they pollute the nation's purity and must be exorcised. This is what happens to Vrverh's people in the narrative – they may disappear subsequently, but it is clearly stated that their homes and properties had been immolated and cursed. Notably, Grigor *magistros* claims to carry out the same punishment in one of his letters, describing himself leading an anti-heretical raid on a community named T'ulayli, related by Grigor and contemporary scholars to the T'ondrakeans, arresting their *vardapet*s and burning their village to the ground – although he claims not to have killed any.[726] Whilst likely ad-hoc and not an everyday fact of life for those judged to be heretical, and therefore found unfit to be Armenian Christians, it is important to note that nationalist interpellations, in the desire for concrete purification of the imagined community, always contain, however latent, the logic of ethnic cleansing and genocide. Medieval writers found imagining genocide very easy,[727] and the *Universal History*, the *History*, and the *Historia* all record claimed instances where Muslim communities flee or are driven from Caucasian cities, purposefully replaced by identified Armenians and K'art'velians.[728]

Grigor *magistros* turns us to a broader view of eleventh-century constructions of Armenianness.[729] Critically imagined as a historical actor Grigor forms an interesting case: he comes from an august aristocratic lineage, claiming on the basis of their surname – 'son of the Parthian' – to be descendants of the ancient royal Aršakuni, related to Grigor the Illuminator.[730] This claim became central after his death, when one of Grigor's sons became *kat'ołikos*, and the Pahlavuni monopolised this central Armenian office for the next hundred and fifty years. In the eleventh century family members built a remarkable number of churches, both at Ani and at the large monastic complex at Marmašen in Širak, and several were prominent in the Bagratuni polity. Not least was Grigor's uncle, Vahram, claimed by both Matt'ēos and Aristakēs to be the driving force behind aristocratic resistance to Monomakhos' initial invasion *c*.1042, including having Gagik II crowned. Yet Vahram is claimed to die leading an imperial attack on Dvin following Ani's annexation, and the *History* presents Grigor voluntarily giving his patrimonial inheritance without comment, remarkable when considering how identical situations are usually emplotted.

[726] MH, 61.
[727] Scales (2007), 284-300.
[728] ST, III.38; History; *Historia*, 210-213.
[729] On Grigor and his 'Byzantinophilia' see generally Weller (2017).
[730] See Toumanoff's entry on 'Kamsarakan' in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.

Subsequently Grigor is claimed by several sources to have a celebrated imperial career, and in another letter against heretics he talks of them leaving 'the borders of the holy kingdom of the Romans', even lauding Monomakhos. Of course other letters use a discourse of exile, and heavily instantiate in many ways a traditional *nakharar* sense of self – even his Roman seals proudly display the claimed surname Arsakidēs, so this is not to erase Grigor's identified Armenianness. It does, however, point to the concrete conditions in which identified Armenians found themselves under Roman hegemony, functionaries and elite actors of hegemonic apparatuses irreducible to Armenianness, their social positions supported by imperial institutions. In these concrete conditions, constructions of Armenianness inevitably became more diffuse and fragmented as they are summoned to support imperial hegemony, especially in discourses attempting to mobilise this on a political rather than ecclesiastical level.

Thus an ethnoterritorial framing is fundamentally important for the *History*'s Armenian interpellation of its audience. Through this framing basically non-Armenian literal historical referents, those found in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*, are entirely rewritten as a story all about an explicitly Armenian "us". Notably missing from the *History*'s construction, in contrast to the emphatic polemics reproduced in the *Universal History* and the *Chronicle*, is any allusion whatsoever to anti-Chalcedonianism. Rōmanos is declared a 'great lover of Chalcedon' and attacked for his persecution of anti-Chalcedonian ecclesiastics, but otherwise there is no explicit indication that the Roman and Armenian churches have this (potentially) fundamental fissure – particularly striking in chapter 14's recounting of imperial attempts to place the Armenian Church under taxation. Not all identified Armenians of Aristakēs' conjuncture would have presented a similar blurring, their worldviews looking cross-eyed at the imperial church and ignoring this element. Grigor Bakurian, a Roman commander during Ani's Seljuq sack, provides an example in negative, an Armenophone elite actor from Tao-Tayk', identified as Armenian in certain circumstances, but presenting himself emphatically as an Ivirian since 'the Ivirian *genos* had always doctrinally aligned with the most holy Roman *genos* in every way.'[731] Nevertheless it was – and remains – possible to push past the apparent doctrinal fissure through the Armenian Church's unique position as neither Dyophysite, nor truly Miaphysite.[732] In a moment of crisis and attempting ideological resolutions for his lived experience, the writer did just that, choosing to more-or-less erase this distinction, broadening thereby the Armenian interpellation to include those that did not associate this identification with strict anti-Chalcedonianism.

This makes sense of an apparent paradox in the *History*. A socially symbolic reading has uncovered its ethnoterritorial ideological structure, through which an Armenian interpellation was

[731] Jordan (2000).
[732] Seen today in the close relations to the Catholic Church but pronounced distance from Orthodoxy, a position defined by politics not dogma.

made operative. This was successful enough for even modern and contemporary identified Armenians to perceive the narrative as "their story", to recognise themselves in the *History*'s libidinal apparatus, despite the almost total lack of concrete empirical claims about Armenian polities – hence the modern and contemporary scholars' use of the *History* as emotive colour, and the *Chronicle* as "what happened". Yet it was seen in part I that the *History* forms a marked departure from almost every norm in the Armenophone tradition of historiography, a tradition entirely rooted in a nationalist conceptualisation of History. Why, then, if the point was to interpellate identified Armenians with a nationalist History, did the writer not draw on this rich stock of discourse? The answer lies in the specifics of this conjuncture. The nationalist discourses developed in late antique and medieval Armenian historiography apparently no longer had the same purchase by the late tenth and eleventh century. Where earlier writers had constructed a simple dichotomy between an impious external aggressor – usually Persian, eventually Islamic – and the pious Christian Armenian nation, already in the *Universal History* and even earlier in the tenth century this framing apparently no longer made sense in elite lifeworlds.[733] Thus it made no "common sense" for Aristakēs to deploy such framings, which otherwise would seem to be obvious ways of situating these eleventh-century "Persians" and their apparently murderous raids. By Matt'ēos' conjuncture some such framings have been re-introduced, of course inevitably transformed in the new conditions, but Aristakēs' work appears a moment of reconstitution, where the primary goal of a nationalist vision of History was to establish its own fundamental basis – a thing out-there-in-the-world called "the Armenian nation" – which, for many elites as much as commoners, was apparently not so obvious.

II.6 Aristakēs as Roman Subject

Much has been intimated already about Aristakēs as Roman subject: his social position has been argued to rest contradictorily on New Rome's ability to maintain hegemonic space; the *History*'s narrative spine has been critically imagined as an Armenophone Roman chronicle composed in circles associated with provincial administration; and imperial actors have been shown to be an organic and concrete part of his everyday life, with stories about them circulating in 'the East' – a geographic situation that itself implies Roman subjecthood. At the same time, in terms of the *History* as a complex narrative, while broadly "Roman" historiographical stuff has been shown to predominate, Armenianness is both immediate interpellation and ultimate ideological horizon, with Aristakēs' socially symbolic act attempting to resolve this inherent contradiction. Central to these arguments is the claim that Aristakēs' social position rested on the imperial system's (re)production of hegemonic space, necessitating his socially symbolic attempt to resolve the contradiction between these concrete conditions, and the ideological desire for a unitary Armenian

[733] Greenwood (2017), 62-64.

kingdom. An initial analysis of political economy and provincial administration in Roman Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia is therefore necessary, prior to a socially symbolic reading that uncovers the narrative rewriting of these dynamics through the ideologeme of patrimonial inheritance.

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Hegemonic space has been defined as the space created by an apparatus of hegemonic institutions in which elites can dominate and exploit, making certain their own social reproduction.[734] This is a generalised definition in need of elaboration, with concrete forms of hegemonic space varying between different political-economic configurations. Hegemonic space should be understood as a continuous process of producing and reproducing *territory*: hegemonic institutions enclose and violently assimilate mixed human and non-human social systems, recalibrating them into landed properties subordinated to the rhythmical motions of the appropriation, circulation and consumption of surplus labour and labour surpluses. Falling in the interstices of competing imperial systems, but with regional polities and aristocratic elitedoms, two broadly contradictory forms of territorial production interacted across eastern Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia, and particularly Caucasia, *lordly* and *tributary*.[735] In lordly political economies, reified as "feudalism" in modern and contemporary common sense, hegemonic space in the form of exploitable and dominatable territories are (re)produced as *lordships*: patrimonies controlled and intervened in by lordly elites for their own ends, with these actors directly mediating these territories' relations to broader institutional apparatuses like imperial and royal polities. In tributary political economies, conversely, hegemonic space is territorially (re)produced in the form of taxable districts.

In New Rome these taxable districts formed the *theme system*, here understood as a general system of territorial production, rather than a specific mechanism of settling soldier-farmers on military lands.[736] The fundamental mechanism of exploitation under the themes was land tax, the *demosion* or 'public [tax]', its value calculated by the extent and quality of exploited land, with other valorising factors then added on, such as humans and other animals involved, or fixed production installations like mills.[737] Thus the land tax necessitated regularly updated land registers in co-ordinated efforts between the hegemonic centre and provincial administration in the themes, intersecting with broader but more occasional censuses, and organised geographically by *chorion*, generally translated as 'village' but really signifying a spatial fiscal unit more than any specific

[734] The concept of hegemonic space has been adapted from Scott's (2009) concept of 'state space'. On the production of space and its relation to state power see also generally Lefebvre (1990) & (2009), 210-253; & Jessop (2015).
[735] For a full discussion, there discussed as 'modes of production' with 'lordly' termed 'feudal', see: Banaji (2011), 45-101; compare with Haldon (1994), 1-90.
[736] On this see generally Haldon (1999) & (2002).
[737] For this characterisation of Roman political economy see generally Oikonomides (2002).

size or quality of settlement. This tax system, entirely collected in gold coin, formed the basis for the remuneration of the imperial class, entirely paid in gold coin. Hence anyone who relied on imperial salaries to reproduce their social position, or who needed access to gold coin via the imperial class for one reason or another – not least to pay tax – had a greater or lesser interest in the theme system's generalised reproduction. So the crucial position of the land tax-imperial salary circuit in New Rome's political-economic configuration implies a total process of territorial production, necessitating (re)produced tax districts that allow the introduction of further taxes like the *kapnikon*, a poll tax by the eleventh century, as well as a host of other more-or-less occasional levies, additions, exceptional fines, and a wide range of potential corvée demands, made commutable to coin payments according to centrally determined equivalences.

Yet hegemonic space was (re)produced not merely for exploitation through taxation as an end in itself, but for the much broader purpose of asserting general domination: the right of particular elite actors to exercise social control over surplus labour and labour surpluses, and the ability to expend of such surplus as they wished, primarily in the reproduction of their own social position – not least through the maintenance of means of violence and coercion. In this broader purpose, while the imperial class relied on the hegemonic mechanisms of exploitation represented by the tax-salary circuit, the socioeconomic and sociopolitical positions of a much wider set of intersecting elite fractions relied on the imperial system's generalised domination. Among these are merchants, whose need for regular coin flows are better met by tributary taxation than fragmented and aristocrat dominated lordships. The same goes for merchants' need for cities as centres of commercial exchange and production, the *History* talks consistently of cities with 'their estates (*dastakertk'*)',[738] sites potentially dominatable through mercantile monopolisation of civic offices like the judiciary, excluding the aristocratic elites or converting these into more specifically urban actors. This reversal of assumed aristocratic dominance in "Armenia" is not straightforward, the Pahlavuni were prominent within Ani, building and endowing religious institutions, and many aristocrats appropriated wealth from renting out shop space, so that particular actors could occupy contradictory positions.[739] Nevertheless intra-elite class antagonisms loom behind Ani's imperial annexation, with a group of aristocrats led by Vahram Pahlavuni leading a faction in favour of preserving the Bagratuni polity, while the ill-defined '*glkhavor*s (headmen) of the city who sat in Ani' debated which ruler to grant the city to preserve its good governance. Thus they cared for the city rather than the land, 'and did not consider themselves Canaanites'. The claimed role of Sargis the Sly, an aristocrat, complicates this picture, as well as Vahram's death leading an imperial army, and the *glkhavor*s apparently did not choose

[738] See note 646.
[739] On the Pahlavuni and their churches see generally Tumanyan (2012); on aristocrats in the city see: Greenwood (2011), 61-62.

New Rome as hegemon, preferring another Caucasian polity. But two inscriptions from the period of Ani's imperial rule – both dealing with urban taxation, naming several actors endowed with civil office and interceding with the imperial hegemon – indicate that urban elites attained greater local power through the annexation, named in one inscription the *iškhanavor*s, a term interestingly resonant with *glkhavor*.[740]

Importantly, however, the *History* claims that it was neither a group of aristocrats, nor the urban *glkhavor*s, but the *kat'ołikos* who handed Ani to New Rome. Regional ecclesiastical elite actors would be presumably more aligned with regional aristocrats – indeed, most *were* aristocrats, related to the locally dominant family like Grigor Narekac'i's father Khosrov. As discussed for the Armenophone tradition of historiography, much of Armenian ecclesiastical discourse can be understood as an attempt to maintain ideological hegemony over aristocratic elites. Similarly Armenian Church institutions both relied on identified Armenian aristocrats to grant them more properties, and functioned themselves as lords exploiting and dominating their lordships, revealed by the rich tradition of medieval Armenophone epigraphy – and it is important to recall that as *vardapet* Aristakēs had a direct role in the regulation of church property and taxation. Yet the Armenian Church also relied on the guarantee of hegemonic space given by imperial systems, earlier the Islamic Caliphate,[741] and in this conjuncture New Rome. In concrete conditions of varying, intersecting and competing regional polities and aristocratic elitedoms, the centralising imperative of the Armenian Church was often contradictorily better served by imperial hegemons than any of the "Armenian" kingdoms – although the ideological ideal remained a single unitary polity geospatially aligned with Armenian Church institutions.

But the Armenian ecclesiastical apparatus in Vaspurakan apparently followed Yovhannēs-Senek'erim to Sebasteia, and the *History* claims that Petros preferred imperial hegemony to either the Bagrationi Bagrat of Ap'khazet'i-K'art'li, or a certain Davit' 'the one who sat in Dvin' – likely Davit' Anhoghin ('the landless'), brother-in-law of the Shaddadid emir and Bagratuni king of Loŕi.[742] Having no recourse in themselves to means of violence and coercion, ecclesiastical institutions require the most effective hegemonic force rather than the most ideologically suitable. This therefore nuances Greenwood's convincing arguments for the collapse or absorption of the independent Armenian episcopate with Roman annexation. This may have happened in much of Upper Mesopotamia, as Tarōn and Vaspurakan, but in Arcn at least an independent episcopate was functioning, and the T'ondrakean chapters imply the same for Mananałi and Hark'. Moreover, at the ideological level it was possible to incorporate New Rome, as in Grigor

[740] Matevosyan, n.107.
[741] See, for example, the complex relation to caliphal hegemony reflected in the composition attributed to Łevond: Greenwood (2012), 99-161.
[742] AL, 561.85; cf. Canard & Berberian (1973), 52, n.2.

Narekac'i's discourse on the translation of the holy cross of Aparank', given by Basileios II and Kōnstantinos VIII as a gift in 983:

> …the divine will is clear: it is that the empire of the Romans, spread out like the sky across the vast surface of the whole world, will gather in its ample bosom innumerable multitudes, as a single flock in a single place, a single synod and a single church, the one bride in the bridal chamber, the one beloved in the single dwelling place…the one spouse under the one tent of the Covenant.[743]

Such statements are at an extreme pro-Roman end of Armenian political theology, but they are espoused by the most beloved medieval Armenian religious writer, and visibly articulate the desire of ecclesiastical institutions for a singular hegemony assuring their position. No such unabashed pro-imperial statement can be found in the *History*, but the two works originate in different conjunctures, the one when New Rome was rising as regional hegemon, the other when it had been eclipsed. Similarly, where Grigor saw the potential for imperial hegemony, Aristakēs had lived experience of it realised in concrete terms, and so also of the contradictions. These are evident in the *History*, in particular chapter 14 on the attempt to tax the Armenian Church, an episode notably ending with their tax-exempt status guaranteed by an imperial golden bull, contradictorily internalising this separate status within imperial hegemony. But the flipside to this antagonistic situation is seen in the chapter on Vrverh's heresy, where an imperial judge is claimed to be central in the enforcing of an Armenian bishop's religious hegemony over an aristocratic elite who had taken questions of piety into his own hands.

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The question then is the extent to which the theme system was present in Upper Mesopotamia and particularly Caucasia as a total process of territorial production, or whether these provinces had a more transient system. The answer defines the extent to which the reproduction of Aristakēs' social position as a historical actor was dependent on imperial hegemonic space, and therefore in need of ideological resolution. There has been debate over whether the new themes in Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia – Tarōn, Mesopotamia, Vaspurakan, Iviria and others known as the 'small Armenian themes'[744] – operated with the same theme system as in western and central Anatolia, or if they had a stripped down military and civil administration. Arguments for a stripped down administration have been advanced by, among others, Catherine Holmes, importantly noting that this does not necessarily mean it was "unsuccessful" – success may explain the light touch, keeping peace between a Chalcedonian Constantinople and a heterodox frontier, but proving insufficient under Turkish raids.[745] Central to the argument is Holmes' claim

[743] Narekac'i, 11; Greenwood (2009), 359.
[744] On these see: Dennis (1985), 138.
[745] Holmes (2001), 40.

that taxation in particular was different to provinces further west, constituting a much looser tribute collection left largely in the hands of local actors. This argument is based on a rigorous analysis of the seal record, revealing fewer civil officials covering larger areas than in central and western Anatolian themes. In addition many officials appear those of the previous polity, often Muslim emirates, so that Holmes argues that 'Local administration, above all the collection of taxes, largely remained in indigenous hands and was articulated according to indigenous practices', with the centrally appointed official 'more like a guarantor of tribute than the collector of fiscal dues or the manager of imperial assets.'[746]

While such arrangements may have been essential to the conquest of certain areas, and may have continued for some time in others, the generalisation across Upper Mesopotamian and Caucasian themes is unsustainable. The *History* claims that when Tao-Tayk' was annexed as the theme of Iviria, 'with the appointing of judges and officials over the province, they divided it house by house, field by field, and village by village, as it had been previously'.[747] This statement, originating in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*, should be understood as referring to the re-imposition of tax boundaries as per the requirements of the theme system – 're' imposed because this region had been the theme of Theodosioupolis prior to its granting to Davit' *kouropalatēs*. This argument is complicated somewhat by the eleventh-century advice book attributed to a certain Kekaumenos, which claims that 'in the days of the most pious Emperor Monomakhos' an imperial agent 'went out to Iviria and Mesopotamia with orders from [the emperor] to take a census and impose taxes, which the men there had never seen in their region'.[748] This may indicate that the full tax system was only introduced at this point, but the story comes in the context of advising elites to alleviate abuses by tax-collectors and the imperial treasury, cancelling debts where possible to avoid local defections, particularly on the frontier. The case of Iviria and Mesopotamia is then illustrative, this imperial agent having 'made [the locals] go over en masse to the King of the Persians', a difficult claim to believe. But the apparent problem may be resolved by imagining that Iviria and Mesopotamia *did* pay taxes, but had never had a centrally ordered census, with previous or ad-hoc property valuations carried over into locally recorded censuses and updated therefrom.

Yet even this is contradicted by the *History*'s explicit statement that 'in the four hundredth and sixty seventh year of our era (1018), the autocrat emperor sent a certain prince from Nikomitk', who having come placed a poll-tax on the land'.[749] Referring to Karin in the same passage as T'eodosupolis, this is an evident section of the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*, and would seem to

[746] Holmes (2005), 372.
[747] AL, 540.19.
[748] Kekaumenos, 'The Story of the Army of Iviria'.
[749] AL, 532.20.

suggest the introduction of the *kapnikon* at this time. If this is accepted, then it appears that at least around Theodosioupolis-Karin the full imperial tax system was functioning early in the eleventh century, during Basileios' reign, and so likely elsewhere in the Upper Mesopotamian and Caucasian themes. This allows for the conclusive proof of the theme system's presence found in an Armenian colophon from Tarōn, recording monks as late as 1067/8 anxiously arranging the disposition of their estates, including a mill, in order to update the land registry for the *demosion* – as Greenwood notes, 'The contention that the Byzantine fiscal system never extended across the eastern themes, or that it had collapsed in the face of Seljuk raiding long before this date, can no longer be maintained.'[750] Local administration may have remained in largely regional hands, and these regional functionaries responsible to a thin tier of centrally appointed officials, but the tax system they operated would seem to be largely the same as other imperial provinces.

In terms of the maintenance of a military apparatus, the usual understanding of the theme system's purpose, it is not necessary to go into the deep debates over the transformation of this function through particular mechanisms, or specific issues in the development of the army's military composition.[751] It is important, however, to show that this crucial function of maintaining means of violence and coercion was also present in Upper Mesopotamian and Caucasian themes. This is strikingly demonstrated in a remarkable section of the *History of Tarōn*, written *c.*967-982 in the immediate aftermath of the region's annexation. This section records the lands of the monastery of Glak explicitly in terms of townships, their households, and their military obligations:

> Among these, the first is Kuaṙs and Mełti and Parekh, which is Brekh, and Khortum, which is Tum, and Khorni and Kitełk', which is Kełs, and Bazrum, which is Bazum, because these are the greatest townships (*avank'*) which exist in the record of the Mamikonean princes. Because Kuaṙs had 3012 houses (*erdahamark'*), 1500 cavalry (*heceloc'*) and 2200 infantry (*hetewakk'*). And Mełti had 2080 houses (*erdk'*) and 800 cavalry and 1030 infantry. And Khrtum 900 hearths [*cukhk'*] and 400 cavalry. And Khrtni, 1906 houses, and 700 cavalry and 1007 infantry. Then Parekh, 1680 houses and 1030 cavalry and 400 infantry. Then Ketełk' 1600 houses and 800 cavalry and 600 infantry. Then Bazrum, which is translated the home of Bazmac', 3200 houses and 1040 cavalry, 840 archers (*ałełnavork'*) and 680 javelin-throwers (*tigavork'*) and 280 stone-throwers (*parsavork'*). And these had stretched out as pasture for their flocks of sheep the district of Haštēank'.[752]

The numbers are impossibly large, but they indicate the annexed territories' direct subjection to tributary demands, here realised as military service with the lands apparently designated *stratiotika ktēmata*. Interestingly, though, the monastery's properties are termed *dastakert*s, a term also found prominently in the *History*'s references to estates owned by elites as well as others

[750] Greenwood (*forthcoming*).
[751] On this see generally Haldon (1999) & (2002).
[752] Greenwood (*forthcoming*); *Patmut'iwn Tarōnoy*, 88-89.

subordinated to particular cities. As Greenwood suggests, this term may indicate the preservation of regional property systems under imperial hegemony, only re-directed towards the reproduction of the theme system.[753] This makes sense given the many instances, not least those recorded in the *History*, where Caucasian aristocrats gave their patrimonies to the empire in return for properties elsewhere. These patrimonies were directly administered and exploited by the imperial administration, assuring a certain level of continuity. Indeed, these induced exchanges are in themselves proof of the imperial centre's desire to transform territories previously (re)produced as lordships into taxable districts.

So the theme system did exist as a total process of territorial production in Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia, albeit with regional characteristics that may have permitted significant variations and gradations. Thus the hegemonic space (re)produced by the imperial system can be understood as assuring, however contradictorily, Aristakēs' social position – importantly both the section above on military service and the colophon on updating the registers refer to monastic obligations. As *vardapet* and citizen of Arcn, his existence rested on New Rome's political-economic configuration (re)producing the conditions for commerce, coercion, and defence of church property. This dependence was constitutive of his lived experience as a historical actor. The themes form a significant part of the *History*'s imagined geography, places such as Khaldia (*Khałtk'*), Mesopotamia (*Mijagetk'*) and Iviria (*Virk'*), and these provinces are grouped together in 'the East', an alternative imaginary to a reified Armenia with its geospatial centre squarely in Constantinople. Underpinning this imagined geography is imperial political economy and provincial administration's support for Aristakēs as an elite Roman subject. It is the collapse of New Rome after 1071, not the collapse of the Bagratuni polity in 1045, that caused his existential crisis, and it is the road to this disaster that his socially symbolic act attempts to ideologically resolve. Nevertheless, as an identified Armenian he identifies too with the social order represented by the *azat*s, ideologically in terms of an idealised Armenian kingdom – although aristocraticness as such is not valorised – and practically, as the class fraction which provided essential support and manpower for the Armenian Church. This contradiction must be resolved in the *History* as a socially symbolic act.

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This contradiction is narratively mediated by the ideologeme of *patrimonial inheritance*. Judging by inscriptions and documents surviving from medieval Caucasia, *hayrenk'* ('patrimonies') or *hayreni žaṙangut'iwn* ('patrimonial inheritance) are legal terms referring to aristocratic and institutional lordly properties. As ideologemes they represent the fundamental antagonism between the centralising, tributary political-economic configuration of New Rome, and the

[753] Greenwood (*forthcoming*).

fragmented, lordly political-economic configurations of the Caucasian polities, which are antagonistically sub-hegemonic within broader imperial hegemony. The most explicit laying out of the ideologeme's narrative role is at the beginning of chapter 9 on Michael IV's reign, where in a mediating passage the writer provides an exegesis of the four kingdoms prophecy from Daniel chapter 2. Here, as elsewhere, the Roman Empire is the fourth kingdom, made of a mixture of iron and clay, and so strong as the iron, but weak and divided through the clay. But in an apparent innovation Aristakēs locates this weakness not in a general lack of unity, but in the specific fact that the imperial title does not necessarily pass through patrilineal inheritance:

> …the thing with legs and feet of iron mixed with clay, that is the Empire of the Romans: for they are not like any other nation, such as any of the nations where the ruler is also the [previous] ruler's son. He who holds sovereignty from his fathers and grandfathers, this man is iron; however, the outsider who is not from the royal house, such a man is clay. And this practice occurs commonly among [the Romans], as indeed we see in this newly appointed emperor (Michael IV)…a man not from the imperial house, nor the son of an emperor, who did not ascend by the authority of eminent military officers, but instead was an insignificant man from the palace officials.[754]

Likewise at the outset to chapter 10 Monomakhos is situated through this political theology with the statement 'This man, according to the prophet's vision, is made from clay; for his father held the office of *gayiosut'iwn* (*dikaios*) in the palace, from which all the judges of the land were dispatched'.[755] So by deploying the ideologeme of patrimonial inheritance, the writer emplots an ideological resolution for the social contradiction between Roman and Caucasian political economies, as well as the conceptual antinomy of the militarily robust Roman state's practical weakness. This emplotment generates an interpretive level in the narrative that makes evident the workings of the interpretive code of Providence, operating as a political theology by which the fortunes of the Roman state can be explicated.

This ideologeme is consistently present in the *History*'s key political episodes, rhetorically positioned in contradictory manner for both New Rome and various Caucasian polities and elites. The entire Tao-Tayk' cycle forms an extended elaboration of patrimonial inheritance, going from the death of Davit' *kouropalatēs* in 1000 to the death of Basileios II in 1025, and essentially dealing with the various ways in which Davit's principality was parcelled among the emperor, Bagrat of Ap'khazet'i, and his son Giorgi of K'art'li. The central drama begins when Bagrat dies, and Giorgi claimed his whole kingdom, including regions given by Basileios for Bagrat's lifetime only. So the emperor writes demanding his 'patrimony', telling Giorgi to 'be prince only over your patrimonial lands.' In violently refusing Giorgi upsets the logical order of things, offending

[754] AL, 547.1-4.
[755] AL, 552.1.

Providence and bringing about judgement, despite his troops' noted good conduct. Hence in this instance the ideologeme is deployed to emplot the logical order of things apparently in favour of Roman rule in Caucasia – but this is because *in this instance* it is the Roman emperor who represents the proper functioning of the social system, legal patrilineal inheritance, the underlying principle perceived and represented as supporting the social order with which Aristakēs identifies as an Armenian, itself a rewriting of contradictory dependence on imperial hegemony.

Thus patrimonial inheritance ideologically resolves the contradictory expansionisms of conflictual hegemonic apparatuses with different political-economic configurations, each of which at different times in the narrative represents the social order the *vardapet* perceives as necessary for his social (re)production – all as a resolution of the antagonisms congealed in his own social position. Hence he presents Basileios II in a positive light having defeated Giorgi, noting how:

> …he pitied him, and wrote to him a decree: 'Don't think', he said, 'that having vanquished you, I am demanding something more than before; but give me my patrimony, the very same thing which the *kiwropałat'* has given [me]…and there will be peace between you and me.' [Giorgi consented and gave the lands] and with the appointing of princes over the province by the emperor, they divided [it] house by house, village by village, and field by field, as it had been previously.[756]

Here the restoration of Roman hegemony is represented as a restoration of proper social order, with Basileios regaining his patrimony and imperial administration's return, concretised in the immediate imposition of the theme system. Notably, however, only a few passages later he implies the exact opposite, when recounting how, in the second year of Kōnstantinos VIII's reign (1027):

> …the emperor sent to the east as overseer of the land Nikit', a certain eunuch, who having come crossed into the province of Virk', and with deceiving words to many of the *azat*s of the land he removed them from their patrimonies, sending them to the court of the emperor…[who] gave them great honour and princely gifts, and gave unto each according to his station villages and *avan*s with signed and sealed [documents] as inheritance in perpetuity.[757]

Here, the exact same region – Tao-Tayk', now the theme of Iviria – and the exact same process – the imposition of the theme system through the (re)production of hegemonic space – are represented as the *improper* running of the social order, since in this instance it is the *azat*s who represent patrimonial inheritance's proper functioning. As a literal historical referent, this is an unresolvable contradiction, with the writer both presenting as positive Basileios' regaining of his

[756] AL, 540.1-19.
[757] AL, 543.7-8.

patrimony, but as negative the attendant political-economic configuration that inevitably accompanied this, with the imperial centre bringing local elites into a centralising circuit, integrating them into the imperial class, and territorially (re)producing their patrimonies as taxable districts. Through ideological representation, however, Aristakēs can deploy the ideologeme of patrimonial inheritance to move from this literal level of lived antagonism, to the allegorical level at which it is resolved – as long as patrimonial inheritance properly functions, social reproduction is assured – generating then the moral level – actions against this principle offend Providence, regardless of the particular actor's doctrinal affiliation, and such actions are generationally inherited as a long-accumulated debt of sin. Reversing the usual valorisation of patrimonial inheritance, this represents the negated dialectical inversion of that ideologeme. This negation generates therefore the final anagogical level – properly satiated, Providence will gift the utopian Armenian community the homiletic vision of a single polity without ethnic complication or social antagonism. But, crucially, aside from forming a utopian vision entirely against the fact of any actually existing eleventh-century Caucasian polity, this vision retains through the allegorical level and moral re-writing an explicit place for Roman hegemony, and particularly the hegemonic position of the emperor.

This is made explicit in chapter 2 when, after the Bagratuni civil war ended with Yovhannēs-Smbat's control of Ani and Ašot's control of the rest, thus dividing the kingdom, the latter is hard pressed by 'the powerful men who surrounded his portion' who 'took many of his places from him unjustly'. On account of this Ašot 'arrived at the door of the emperor of the Romans', and, 'having pleased him', received soldiers to take back to 'his own land'. With these troops:

> …he prospered through God, ruling many regions and fortresses; and he grew stronger than all those who had come before him; so that many of the magnates left their patrimonial lands to him, they voluntarily gave allegiance. Until this point our history has been pleasing.[758]

This short but revealing section, with a uniquely positive discourse marker as well as explicit reference to the hand of God, sets out the ideal of patrimonial inheritance in the *History*'s socially symbolic act: Ašot is pressed not by Muslims or Roman invasion, but the sinful disunity of his own magnates appropriating his lands, but this intra-Caucasian fractiousness can be solved through the broader hegemony of the Roman emperor, able to assist the regional ruler in maintaining his own subhegemony, respecting his patrimonial autonomy. The result of this is a miraculous inversion of the ideologeme, with this resolution between the conflictual Roman and Bagratuni hegemonic apparatuses resulting in Ašot's fractious magnates voluntarily granting him their patrimonies – asserting the general principle of stateness through an inversion of the "bad"

[758] AL, 532.18-19.

operation of patrimonial inheritance, where Caucasian elites leave their lands to New Rome, as well as the kingdom divided, where fractious aristocrats violate statehood's unity.

Hence patrimonial inheritance, even as it seems to ideologically favour a sense of Armenianness identified with royal polities and aristocrats, is an ideologeme deployed to resolve and still allow for imperial hegemony in 'the East'. A final example reveals this ideologeme generating not only the interpretive code of Providence, but also the moral level of inherited sin, and the anagogical level of utopian symbolic unity. This example has been discussed several times already, the twin celebrations of Epiphany by *kat'ołikos* Petros, the first before Basileios II *c.*1018, the second in Arcn *c.*1045/6. The first comes in chapter 2, in the midst of the struggle between Giorgi and Basileios, and notes how the emperor met Petros on the 'day when it is custom for pious Christian rulers and princes to equal themselves to the directors of the Church' and 'go down to the water on foot, and there perform the sacrament of the Lord's baptism'.[759] Basileios has the Armenian ecclesiastics celebrate according to their canons, the Romans to theirs, and all are amazed as miraculous light emerges the moment Petros' holy chrism touches the water. This represents a clear levelling of all antagonisms in an implicit deployment of patrimonial inheritance, as each contradictory institutional apparatus – both political and ecclesiastical – are presented in perfect concord and equality through their respect for separate patrimonies, with divine light emerging as proof of this miraculous resolution. At this point the ideologeme is deployed explicitly, as Yovhannēs-Smbat instructs Petros to 'Write a written will and give it to the emperor, so that after my death he can take my cities and lands in inheritance', a moment named 'the destruction of the Armenians'.

This then sets up chapter 10's dialectical inversion, when with the 1045 annexation of the Bagratuni kingdom, and Petros' relocation to Arcn, Epiphany is celebrated there and a Muslim requests baptism. But he accidentally knocks the chrism from the patriarch's hand, cutting himself and mixing his blood with the oil in the water. As the writer notes, 'this is not a sign of good things', and Roman captors come later that day to take Petros to Constantinople. Thus in the dialectic between these two sections the ideologeme of patrimonial inheritance generates the interpretive level of Providence, linking the conflicts of the 1010s with those of the 1040s. This in turn generates the moral level of penitence, with the *vardapet* explicitly stating in several places that the Armenians were suffering from a long accumulated debt of inherited sins, one of which is explicitly this will. The dialectical inversion of this ideologeme thus generates the narrative's transformed state after chapter 10. Finally, then, the anagogical level of symbolic unity is generated shorn of social antagonisms, the homiletic vision of an idealised Armenian Church and kingdom satisfyingly contained within a single city with a single ruler in perfect harmony.

[759] AL, 532.48-52.

Importantly, however, the ideological route to this utopian meditation is almost entirely emplotted with Roman historiographical stuff, and is achieved by means of ideologically resolving the concrete conditions of Roman hegemony.

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Thus the writer's nationalist ideological resolution hides the practical ways in which imperial hegemony supported his social position, sublimating this to an Armenian interpellation. This is most visible in the political-theological exegesis of Daniel's prophecy, indicating that if the *vardapet* had an "imperial" worldview as a historical actor, then this is not visible in his socially symbolic act. The *History*'s construction of New Rome is from an Armenian ecclesiastical perspective, without the pro-imperial hyperbole of Grigor Narekac'i, the continuator to T'ovma or, to a lesser degree, Grigor *magistros*. This is even more marked when the *History* is compared with works by identified Romans, such as the senatorial worldview of the *Historia* attributed to Attaleiatēs,[760] or the more provincial perspective of Kekaumenos' advice book, both Greek compositions written in the same conjuncture.[761] Most telling is the exegetic explication of why the imperial office did not pass through strict patrilineal descent, a definitive feature of imperial politics and ideology, treated as an oddity unlike the practices of all other nations – although an important counterpoint is the apparent acceptance of emperors raised 'by the authority of eminent military officers'.[762] Of course the writer could have had such an imperial worldview, and was situated in lifeworlds that intersected with these, but they are functionally erased or transformed at the *History*'s ideological level.

But this should be situated in conjunctural conditions: in the midst of the crisis of the 1070s the writer's apparent ideological solution was to re-constitute an Armenianness grounded in the vision of a single Armenian kingdom with a single church and ruler, a vision that had little resonance with his literal historical referents, and appeared novel enough to preclude re-instantiating the discourses of previous Armenophone historiography. It is of course perfectly imaginable that other identified Armenians composed works that instantiated a fierce Romanness, compositions reflected in the narrative of T'ovma's continuator, but these were not transmitted into the modern and contemporary era for both contingent reasons and their lack of subsequent resonance for Armenian ecclesiastics – the actual actors copying works. Nevertheless, much of Aristakēs' audience were identified Armenian elites who had lived their lives as functionaries of imperial institutions – not least the writers of the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*, with whom the *vardapet* must have associated to access the work. Hence New Rome is not Othered but

[760] See generally Krallis (2012).
[761] Matheou (2016), 50-63.
[762] As both Dagron (2003) & Kaldellis (2015) have noted, there is a lack of the so-called 'dynastic principle' in New Rome.

sublimated by nationalist interpellation, allowing these elites to identify more strongly with Armenianness even as they need not reject simultaneous identification with the empire – a concern that can be imagined as far less relevant for Matt'ēos a generation later. The sole instances where Romans are explicitly Othered are situations of conversion, so that in the T'ondrakean chapters Vrverh is able to 'become a Roman', while Yakobos attempts to do the same but is rejected:

> …at night [Yakobos] broke out of jail, and fled across the land of the Romans until he reached the royal city of Constantinople. There he slandered our faith and requested baptism according to their rites. [The Romans] in their wisdom became knowledgeable about the matter and comprehended what it was. They refused saying instead: "Whomever the Armenians have refused and dishonoured regarding the faith, we also do not accept."[763]

Thus even the construction of this Othering leaves traces of an identification with Romanness, attempting to transcend ecclesiastical differences. The remainder of this subsection details this sublimation, and the more-or-less implicit Roman identification, as traces of alternative associations discussed above, an identification not explicitly Othered in the *History* but nevertheless readable in this manner – hence the anti-Roman readings of modern and contemporary Armenian nationalists.

The most visible episodes that leave traces of a Roman identification are those focused on the emperors. The mere fact that so much of the *History*'s "properly historiographical" narrative forms *Kaisergeschichte* indicates the traces of an identification with this political office, even if this is rarely explicitly articulated. One instance in which it is more visible is the beginning to chapter 10, the pivotal transformation, in the episode on Maniakēs' rebellion. This is an instantiation of the kingdom divided ideologeme, but one rich in broader political theology. It begins by situating Monomakhos in the exegesis of Daniel's prophecy: he is made of brick, since his father was a palace bureaucrat holding 'the office of *gayiosut'iwn* (i.e., *dikaios*)…from which all the judges of the land were dispatched.'[764] It then discusses how the empress Theodōra came to choose Monomakhos, in a section that notably centres her as a highly gendered figure. The writer comments that he did not know whether she chose him for love, or, as 'she herself had written in her edict, for the benefit of the land: "for the benefit of the land I have not spared myself, and because of such things I have dared this unworthy deed."' It has already been seen in the previous section how the figure of 'the land' is used to realise an Armenian interpellation, and here it is revealed to have a purposive double valence, able to refer not only to a reified "Armenia" but also to the whole of imperial space. Here, then, including an apparently directly quoted imperial edict, is a trace of identification with Romanness *as such* – a broad 'land of the Romans'

[763] AL, 617.32-615.33.
[764] AL, 552.1.

with Upper Mesopotamia in 'the East', watched over by the benevolent 'autocrat emperor' that puts the needs of the land before themself.

This political-theological articulation of the imperial office separate to the ruler's person is deepened over the episode, as the writer explicates why Monomakhos had divine support against Maniakēs despite his personal qualities. Firstly, Maniakēs is hubristic, believing that victory was assured and assuming God's favour, so he was judged and an angel came to take him in the midst of the battle. Then the writer expounds on this theme in homiletic fashion, utilising scriptural quotation and illustrations to demonstrate that the great should not glory in their greatness, for as the Lord said to the prophets and kings of Israel 'Woe to them that wish to rule without me'. In the process of elaborating this principle the *vardapet* emphasises the importance of not harming one anointed by God to rule, which he claims Maniakēs intended. This is elaborated in the next passage into a more explicit political theology:

> Now it was not that this emperor was someone worthy of praise, and on account of these things that God pitied him, but that he honoured the throne, and stopped the source of impiety; just as the Saviour preached to the Hebrews: 'Scribes and Pharisees have sat on the throne of Moses' (Matthew, 23.2); although they themselves were hypocrites, but because of the throne he ordered them to be obeyed. Indeed, also the great Paul counselled with blessed hand thus when writing to the Romans: 'Let every person who is under authority, be obedient. For there is no authority except from God' (Romans, 13.1). He was not speaking about the sovereign, but about sovereignty, that is to say about the throne; for it is not that God establishes every prince. And he added to this: 'He who resists the authority, opposes God's command, and those who resist God's command incur judgement over themselves (Romans, 13.2-3)', as indeed also happened to this man.[765]

This passage is crystal clear in its framing of the interaction between the divine and the earthly in the judgement of authority and power, in particular its assertion of the office over the person – God establishes all offices of power, but does not choose each and every person that fills them. This allows for the privileging of earthly agency in the divine dialectic, which in itself allows for judgements of Roman emperors that reveal the writer's identification with the office and their actions and legacies as holders. This is seen for Monomakhos at the beginning of chapter 17, which begins with the line 'The blessed and divine Solomon wrote that 'a just king holds up his land, while the lawless one ruins it (Proverbs 29.4)', going on to state:

> …for it is the rule for kings to care for land's peace and prosperity, as God provides for all from among his creation, now this man did not do thus; instead he was always busy with eating and drinking, he promoted dirty people, and the treasures, those he gathered in taxes from all the lands, which he had for the need of the cavalry to distribute and grow them

[765] AL, 554.15-19.

> against the enemy, who by defeating the enemies could keep the land in peace, as the blessed Vasil in his fifty-year reign had done, when no one from among the enemies dared to enter his land. But this man the treasures that he had gathered, he spent on the expenses for prostitutes and the destruction of the land didn't pain him at all; for so much was he a lover of prostitutes and harlots that he wasn't satisfied with the women of Constantinople, but brought women from faraway lands, and was busy with them all day long.[766]

These accusations reference stories that circulated about the emperor, referencing his mistresses Maria Sklēraina and Guarandukht of Apʻkhazetʻi-Kʻartʻli. As the stories on Rōmanos III, these indicate the discussion of imperial rulers in the writer's social being as a historical actor. Most important, however, is the unflattering comparison of Monomakhos with Basileios II, so that the former is not merely situated in political-theological terms but historical too, and the latter is elevated as a model ruler able to defend 'the land'. Most crucially for the understanding of Aristakēs' social position as contradictorily supported by New Rome, he emphasises how Monomakhos wasted the taxes he collected, which should have gone towards expanding the army – a precise articulation of this exploitative mechanism's broader purpose in asserting generalised domination. In the process of driving this point home, moreover, Aristakēs indicates the general unity of Armenians and Romans, and so the traces of a sublimated Roman identification, as he notes how in Monomakhos' reign 'the general destruction of the Christians came from the West and from the East',[767] referring also to Pecheneg invasions in the Balkans. The Christian identifier evidently is intended to group all subjects of the emperor, used in this sense also at the beginning of chapter 20 when Mikhaēl VI offers Isaakios I the office of '*kiwropałatʻ* of the East, if only, he said, he remain at peace and together with himself avenge the blood of the Christians.'[768]

This implicitly blames Isaakios for bringing about the further destruction through sinful fractiousness, an instantiation of the kingdom divided ideologeme found earlier in chapter 18. Here an extended instance of the lamenting mode – brought about by the instantiation of the kingdom divided, marking the move from New Rome as literal historical referent, to New Rome as an affirmation of the unity of all stateness – is aimed precisely at the figure of 'the land' understood as the whole of imperial space. The imagery is the same as that discussed in the previous section, but appears particularly agrarian in its description of 'the land': 'For when it was still cultivated and full of people, the agriculturalists filled up their fields with plentiful seeds which, sprouting, dyed all the plains with rich green hues, and growing higher until ears appeared at their tips.' As before this indicates the anchoring of Aristakēs' sense of crisis in the loss of the

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[766] AL, 589.2-3.
[767] This refers to contemporaneous Pecheneg and Seljuq invasions, and is a paired framing common in eleventh-century Grecophone historiography, including Attaleiates (e.g. *Historia* 83) and Skylitzes, see: Shepard (1992), 171–81.
[768] AL, 604.2.

territorial conditions for his social position, now concretised in the way in which the Roman political-economic configuration contradictorily supported this. Then, having once more presented two before-and-after states focused on the land as a place of cultivation and herding, the *vardapet* moves to explicate the lament's political theology:

> When the Greek kingdom was divided in two, the iron sceptre became a broken reed – just as the Assyrians insultingly styled the kingdom of Egypt – and the cauldron which was shown to Jeremiah, boiling and spilling over [afflicting] from north to south, now with its ferocious rolling boil spilled over, burning and destroying the Christian peoples from south to north. For, as is said in the Lord's command, "The kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, but is destroyed," so, truly, did it occur. Because as soon as the Persians realized that [the Romans] were fighting and opposing one another, they boldly arose and came against us, ceaselessly raiding, destructively ravaging.[769]

The use of the term 'Greek kingdom' should not cause too much issue here, it does not have the pejorative sense in Armenian writing that it would have in a contemporary Latin work. Indeed, the passage speaks to the writer's identification with this kingdom, protector of 'the Christians peoples from south to north'. This makes explicit the implication of several framings, such as in chapter 9 when 'a great destruction of the Roman armies happened in the city which is called Berkri', where 'the Persians' – here visibly the Shaddadids – were able to rout them. But, the *vardapet* emphasises, 'this did not occur because of the righteousness of the Persians, but because of the impiety of *our troops*', noting how their licentious conduct had brought about the disaster. This is a striking identification with the Roman army as such, all the more so coming in the chapter immediately preceding chapter 10's pivotal transformation, where the same army's raiding of the 'four corners of the land' heralds the full development of the lamenting mode. Similarly earlier the *vardapet* visibly celebrates the rebel Nikēphoros Komnēnos for his imperial conquests, and bemoans his eventual disloyalty:

> Then, with the coming of the second year (1026/7), he sent an executioner, who having come removed [Komnēnos] eyes and the some eight men who were with him; this is very worth of repentance, that such an honourable man and one worthy of good remembrances having been led astray, fell into such reproachable deeds; for it was he who had put Ardzeš and its estates into the control of the Romans.[770]

The ideological contradiction, emerging from the concrete contradiction between the need for imperially assured hegemonic space and the nationalist desire to mobilise Armenianness, is most visible in the final chapter on Manzikert. This forms an extended illustration of the ideologeme of the hubristic ruler, unwilling to rule through God but trusting in their own strength. This ideologeme mediates between the literal historical referent and the interpretive code of

[769] AL, 598.30-31.
[770] AL, 543.6.

Providence by representing any loss as ultimately only about the Christian in question, denying any agency to the adversary. Hence at the ideological level only Christians need be dealt with, a point made particularly evident in chapter 25. Here it is emphasised how Rōmanos IV 'assembled a countless host, for yet did he possess a broad and extensive kingdom whose borders stretched from the valleys of Phoenicia (where great Antioch stands) as far as the fortress of Van, and the entire Ṙštunik' country opposite Her'.[771] Seeing this force he grew in arrogance and pride, not recalling that rulers triumph through 'the right hand and arm of the Omnipotent' rather than the numbers of their troops. Interestingly even amongst this political-theological account there are hints of more concrete explanations, particularly the accusation present in a number of works and refuted by Attaleiatēs that Rōmanos' mistake was to divide his army along different routes, rushing into battle without waiting for this second force. Such apparently concrete explanations are, however, secondary in the narrative to their ideological rewriting through the hubristic ruler, which is the "real" explanation that organises such actions.

The battle, too, has an interesting mixture between apparent empirical claims – for example, that a brigade 'devoid of piety' defected – and assertions that, regardless of particular action in this battle, the emperor did not seek and so did not have God's favour. Particularly notable is the way in which the specifically Armenian role is emphasised and aligned with the Romans. Not knowing which troops defected, Rōmanos at first apparently thought it was the Armenians, and so he:

> …filled up with rage against the Armenian troops and people and looked upon them with hatred. Yet, when he saw them fighting with dedication, when he saw the boldness of those braves who did not fear the able Persian archers, but rather were stoutly resisting and not turning tail and did not abandon the king as many had – no, instead they risked death so that after death they would leave a good name of loyal bravery – then did he display great affection for them and promise them unheard of rewards.[772]

There is little sublimated about the traces of a Roman identification here, rather it is self-evident in its interaction with a narratively privileged Armenian one – "we" are emphatically Armenian, but "we" are also more loyal than the "Romans". These latter had both perverted the course of the battle by defecting, and brought about final disaster by killing Rōmanos upon his miraculous release by the sultan – intended by God as a pardon following an illustration of the emperor's dependence on divine favour. Here, then, is the final evidence of Aristakēs as Roman subject, a historical actor for whom this aspect of his sense of self only became contradictory in lived experience as a result of the existential crisis of the 1070s. In the last instance, this crisis is blamed not on the Turks themselves, nor even the emperors in their hubris and desire to upset the logical order of patrimonial inheritance, but the fractious elites that had undermined a series of polities,

[771] AL, 526.4.
[772] AL, 627.14-15.

from Tao-Tayk‘, through the Bagratuni polity, and now to New Rome. These elites, represented by the kingdom divided ideologeme, undermine the unity of all stateness – the basic principle asserted by the *History*’s ideological structure – and so remove the conditions for their own reproduction. As the *vardapet* rails:

> But the one whom God had freed from the hands of Muslims (‘foreigners’, *aylazg*) was blinded by his own folk, treacherously, shamefully and then killed. And indelible blood rained upon that kingdom. Thereafter the power of princes and soldiers ended, and triumph was no more given to that kingdom. And the princes dealt treacherously and spitefully with one another, and justice of the court was ended. They achieved only the land’s destruction, not its salvation. Meanwhile the Lord became filled with rage and sent many [foreign] peoples for vengeance. [He brought] from the Mountains of the Moon and from the great river crossing northern India (the Ganges), wicked peoples speaking foreign tongues to flood like gushing water over our lands; to establish their headquarters by the shores of Ocean Sea (the Mediterranean) and to pitch their tents opposite the great city (Constantinople), filling up our entire land with blood and corpses and eliminating the orders and religion of Christianity.[773]

II.7 Aristakēs as Elite Man

This final subsection focuses on Aristakēs as an elite man, a combination of two categories that have come up repeatedly over the previous analyses and readings. “Elite” and “man” are on a different order to the other categories discussed, since they are transhistorical rather than specific. Of course, both identifying as Armenian and functioning as a *vardapet* vary profoundly across time and place. Nevertheless “*vardapet*”, “citizen of Arcn”, “identified Armenian” and “Roman subject” are always-already more limited in time and space than eliteness or male gendering. Even the insistent generalisation of a transhistorical Armenianness is not as reified as “being a man”, nor as naturalised as human hierarchy.[774]

Only in the last three decades has the gender turn – the academic echo of the queer liberation movement – broken down assumptions that biological sex is a useful category more-or-less equating to gender.[775] There is no sexual being that exists prior to, or as predicate for, gendered social construction – all being is social being. Before the gender turn, however, and even now in conservative parts of disciplinary history,[776] it continues to be assumed that “man” and “woman” are biological essences that stand outside of historical dynamics. Positivist historical enquiry then presents itself as progressive, searching for “women” without asking *how* these actors are

[773] AL, 628.22-24.
[774] See, for example, the popularity of Jordan Peterson’s pseudoscience, predicated on naturalised hierarchy and patriarchy.
[775] For the classic statement see generally Butler (1990 & 1999).
[776] Perhaps surprisingly Byzantine studies forms a partial exception to this rule, particularly in the work of Leslie Brubaker, Liz James and others, see generally James (1997).

gendered, discussing the few visible high elites and rulers and generalising from there. Likewise the category of "elite" is asserted transhistorically, naturalising fixed hierarchies in human sociality through common sense social Darwinism.[777] All complex human social systems are assumed to have more-or-less fixed hierarchies, and so some form of elite, because humans inevitably act on self-interest. Simultaneously, however, eliteness is discounted: either the sharpness of social stratification is minimised, or else the obviousness of social hierarchy is assumed and uninterrogated. In this latter case, for example, meaningful national identifications are asserted as an "elite phenomenon" irrelevant to "non-elites", but rather than analysing this claim further it is simply declared that "non-elites" only identified with religion and their locale.[778] Thus the argument for elite difference becomes itself elitist, basically claiming that it was impossible for "non-elites" to have complex senses of self.

This section, therefore, situates Aristakēs by historicising the combined category of elite man in his conjuncture. They are discussed together because there is no gendering without mediation through socioeconomic and sociopolitical relations – nor, importantly, are their relations of exploitative domination unmediated by gendering. Such questions demand an *intersectional* analysis, refusing gender and class as different essences somehow comparable or measurable against each other.[779] This intersectional analysis thus comes first, initially elaborating on elite categories in the *History* and Aristakēs as an elite actor, bringing out his highly gendered situation. Then we turn to the socially symbolic reading, and the way in which this elite gendering fits into the *History*'s ideological structure.

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To build up to this intersectional analysis it is important to recapitulate elite categories thus far seen in the *History*. The first subsection of this chapter stated that Aristakēs can be comfortably categorised as an elite man, with the qualification that he does not appear to be one of the high aristocrats, either from a *nakharar* family or one of the more nebulous *azat*s. The term *nakharar* is totally absent from the writer's deployment of elite categories, with the word *azat*, literally 'free', predominating as an identifier for aristocrats. The same is true of Book III of the *Universal History*, marking a break from the earlier tenth-century composition attributed to Yovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i, which looks to 'our kings, as well as the princes (*iškhank'*), lords (*terk'*) and *nakharar*s of our land' to maintain the social order, and attacks 'our kings, lords and princes' who 'tried to break up and take away the homes of each one of the original *nakharardom*s'.[780] This apparently 'native social structure' is entirely missing in the *History*, however, where, alongside

[777] On this now see generally Scott (2017).
[778] As an indicative statement see: Wimmer (2012), 1.
[779] On intersectionality in the sense understood here see generally Bohrer (2018).
[780] YD, LII.

azat, *iškhan* specifically denotes those invested with authority of command, and *glkhavor* is almost always found denoting urban-based elites.[781] The single exception is in chapter 23 on the T‘ondrakeans, where the heretical monk Kuncik’s first convert, Hranoyš, is described as ‘from a *glkhavor* and exquisite line, mistress of an [agricultural] field’.[782] There is no mention of any urban situation for these elite actors, either Hranoyš or Akhni and Kamara, who ‘possessed two villages from their patrimonial inheritance’[783] and thus are part of a land-owning class with inherited hierarchical status. In general, though, aristocraticness as such is not valorised, at least in the sense of nobility or particular practices and values, only insofar as it supports the principle of patrimonial inheritance. There is consistent concern for the survival of an aristocratic class, but this is often implicit or vaguely asserted, as in the postscript’s declared need for some ‘king, prince, lord or overseer’.[784] An aristocratic class is thus constructed as essential to a projected image of idealised “Armenian” society, mediating and supporting royal and patriarchal authority, and Roman emperors are denigrated for humble background, but aristocratic values are strikingly absent – *azat*s most often appear as fractious agents of the kingdom divided. This absence is particularly marked when the *History* is compared to previous works such as that attributed to T‘ovma Arcruni, or later ones like the *Chronicle* – as with other discursive complexes in the tradition of Armenophone historiography, the valorisation of both particular aristocratic lines and aristocraticness in general is entirely missing.

Yet the *History* has a generally aligned purpose with those other works, namely to interpellate and mobilise identified Armenian elites on the basis of a nationalist meaning of History. This therefore indicates that the *History* is intending to mobilise different kinds of elite to previous compositions. Where modern and contemporary scholars have situated the end of the *nakharar* age in the eleventh century, it appears that many of the defining features of this elitedom and the cultural complex it reproduced had already fundamentally transformed.[785] While Aristakēs ideologically constructs the need for an aristocratic class, the social system this class fit into was no longer defined by them – this class was no longer hegemonic, ideologically or practically. Rather, as seen for Aristakēs as citizen of Arcn, the writer’s alienated projection of the social system is one of civic governance encased in the ideologeme of society-as-the-Church: philanthropic ‘princes’, a term used for governing Roman elites as well as regional Caucasian ones; just and incorruptible judges, another category that encompasses both imperial and regional actors; and, most expansively, honest and pious merchants, actors eschewing usurious or exploitative practices as well as ‘builders and adorners of the church, host and carers for the

[781] See note 646; cf. Canard & Berberian (1973), 52, n.1. The rise of the *glkhavor*s was noted in Garsoïan (1997), 182.
[782] AL, 615.2.
[783] AL, 615.4.
[784] AL, 631.15.
[785] Greenwood (*forthcoming*).

clergy, and merciful and almsgivers for the poor.'[786] This reveals Aristakēs' urban lifeworld situation and civic worldview, with the ideologeme projecting each of these categories in their functional reproduction of a system that supported the position of *ecclesiastical* elites, figures like the *vardapet* himself. This is the class structure which Aristakēs both projects and identifies with, one that encompasses aristocratic elites, but is in no way reducible to them.

But Aristakēs' elite social position does not sit in an abstract 'native social structure' made up of reified images like "the *nakharar*s", nor is it revealed by the way in which the *History* reflects societal and/or subjective categorisations of different elite. Aristakēs' social position rests on a historical system of exploitative domination, albeit one sublimated in his socially symbolic act. This is the theme system and the generalised domination it ensured, which existed in contradiction with a subhegemonic regional aristocratic elitedom – the political-economic configuration grappled with in the ideologeme of patrimonial inheritance. The themes' generalised domination provided the conditions for the Armenian ecclesiastical apparatus, as well as mercantile urban elites, while maintaining imperial hegemony and transforming the regional aristocratic class, (re)producing their patrimonies as tax districts and magnates as imperial officials. Seen thus Aristakēs' position as an elite actor is differently situated to the categorical usages above: where those ideological projections reference particular societal institutions and the way these influenced subjective use of identifiers, this perspective centres Aristakēs' position as an elite *as such*, an actor privileged by the distribution of already exploited labour surpluses, as well as potentially exploitable surplus labour-power within a total system of domination. Each category of elite – aristocratic, mercantile, ecclesiastical and so on – is objectively defined by their differential relation to surplus distribution, and so their position in the reproduction of the system of exploitative domination as a whole. But the most fundamental differentiation, indeed, the foundational *cleavage* across the social system, is whether you produce surpluses for someone else, with your labour-power made systemically available for further exploitation, or you are a beneficiary of systemic distribution and able to dispose of surpluses, even if mostly towards the reproduction of your own social position.

This foundational cleavage unites every category of elite, so that even as the particulars of surplus distribution differentiates fractions among them – the hegemonic imperial class, for example, are the primary beneficiaries of surplus appropriated through taxation – at a higher level of abstraction all are united as a single class in the fact that they neither produce labour surplus, nor are socially produced as actors with potentially exploitable labour-power. Such subaltern actors, those exploited or made potentially exploitable, are termed *commoners*, or, where necessary, 'agrarian' or 'producing' commoners. This overwhelming majority of the population are barely represented

[786] AL, 572.4.

in the *History*, only occasionally referenced as 'the poor' usually in stereotyped fashion, such as the *vardapet*'s attack on land expropriation, or when Theodōra and later Alp Arslan die and follow 'all those fashioned of earth, to [the place] where kings and paupers [dwell] together.' 'Commoner' defines this broad mass not by their functional role from an elite perspective, the "producers" of formalist Marxism, nor as a reified image like "peasants" or the "serfs" of feudal common sense, but from an invariant subaltern perspective by their ability to autonomously reproduce themselves through systems of *commons*.[787] Before the rise of mass wage slavery – capitalist modernity where propertyless subalterns must sell their labour-power for access to means of self-reproduction – the challenge for elites was precisely to reproduce commoners *as* producers. But the option to refuse and leave was ever present and, especially in difficult landscapes like eastern Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia, and Caucasia, often taken.[788] This generates social antagonism – class struggle – over how much of commoners' activity functions as labour internal to the system's overall reproduction, for example, how much agrarian production is appropriated as surplus, and how much is commoned in relatively autonomous subaltern social systems.[789] In the crisis of the 1070s commoners' agrarian activity was no longer labour from Aristakēs' perspective – it no longer functioned to generate a surplus that he participated in the distribution of – so he depicts an agrarian wasteland. For regional commoners, however, the 1070s may have been experienced as a sudden liberating expansion of autonomous control over their own social activity.

Thus the key problematic for any class analysis is not the immediate process of *production*, but the dynamics of systemic *reproduction* – and it is here that class necessarily intersects with gendering. Foundational to the reproduction of any system of exploitative domination is the need to control female-gendered bodies – bodies that, because they are sexed in a certain way and exist within a determinate social system, are gendered as female. The difference between the female-gendering of particularly sexed bodies and "biological sex" is that, where the latter sees reproductive organs as determining two objective and binary "sexes", sexing is an open term that encompasses the empirical variation in human biology,[790] and the fact that no reproductive organ is socially significant in itself – it requires the determinate social process of gendering. Thus, over time and space, a gender binary can be socially (re)produced, and encompass the gendering of reproductive organs in a certain way, but this is a historical process, not an inevitable one caused by pre-existent "biology". Nevertheless, in all known historical systems of exploitative domination over the last five thousand years, so-called "civilisations", such gender binaries have

[787] On the notion of commons see generally De Angelis (2017); on commoners see generally Hardt & Negri (2012).
[788] In this understanding eastern Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia can be understood as a 'Zomia', see: Scott (2009), 1-43.
[789] On 'commoning' see generally Ruivenkamp & Hilton (2017).
[790] Compare with Fausto-Sterling (2000).

come about.[791] Indeed, rigid binaries appear intrinsically related to social hierarchies and the need to control female-gendered bodies for their reproductive capacity, assuring in turn systemic reproduction. But the implications of this gendering vary widely between time and place, as the need to control female-gendered bodies plays out differently depending on given class position within each given political-economic configuration – and it is important to note that third genders are common historically, including the eunuchs of New Rome's imperial class.[792] The absolute gender binary is a historical product of capitalism's attempt to absolutely gender roles of social *production*, the labour that goes into producing appropriated surplus, and social *reproduction*, the labour that goes into producing the human labour-power that is itself exploited.[793]

Before capitalist modernity, however, it seems that for agrarian commoners in most times and places the gender binary was less rigid, since there was less gendered differentiation between production and reproduction, as well as far broader transgenerational networks involved in both processes.[794] For elites, however, things were quite different. At higher social strata gender differentiation was much more pronounced, with systemic exclusion of female-gendered bodies from the vast majority of roles directly involved in exploitative domination, more-or-less limiting their function to reproducing the elite class. Obviously the exact character of this exclusion and limitation varied between class fractions, with different outcomes imaginable depending on aristocratic, mercantile, urban or imperial situation – it seems, for example, that wives of imperial senators retained both a hierarchical status and a salary after their husbands' deaths,[795] continuing to receive part of the surplus, and Hranoyš, Akhni and Kamara received autonomous means of reproducing lordly status through patrimonial inheritance. In these capacities some female-gendered elites were direct recipients of distributed surplus as members of a hegemonic class, and others were directly involved in exploitative domination through property. Nevertheless, in general terms female-gendered elites were subject to a much more rigid disciplining for the needs of social reproduction – which makes sense, as a tiny minority of the total population, assuring their own reproduction was an intense imperative.

So Aristakēs as an elite in general was anxious over the reproduction of the entire class, and as an elite of the Armenian Church in particular he was anxious for the reproduction of this fraction. Obviously the reproduction of the Armenian ecclesiastical apparatus requires not merely elite female-gendered bodies, but ones that specifically identify as Armenian Christian, providing male-gendered bodies able to operate as its actors, reproducing it over time and space. This is thus

[791] Graeber (2010), 177-182; compare with Ocalan (2015).
[792] James (1997), 168-184.
[793] Bhattacharya (2018), 1-20; Federici (1998), 1-20.
[794] Federici (1998), 61-132; the exception seems to be when there is intense raiding for female-gendered captives over a long period, see Graeber (2010), 176-182.
[795] Oikonomides (2002), 951-1036.

a highly gendered elite situation, with ecclesiastical actors very explicitly enforcing gender binaries at different levels of the social system. An intersectional analysis therefore demonstrates why it makes perfect sense that in the crisis of the 1070s Aristakēs' classed and gendered anxiety would be located in agrarian production on the one hand, and elite women on the other, with both encased in an ethnicised territorial frame. If he is anxious as an elite over the fact that agrarian commoner activity is no longer producing a surplus he receives part of, then he is simultaneously anxious as an elite man that female-gendered bodies' reproductive capacity is no longer directed towards the reproduction of *his* class fraction. Female-gendered bodies continued to reproduce an elite class, but without Armenian interpellation this process potentially no longer functioned to provide personnel for the Armenian Church. The *Penitential*, in its attempts to censure and discipline female-gendered bodies transgressing Armenian Christian boundaries, including typical patriarchal domination of reproductive functions with specific regulations around menstruation, demonstrates struggle over this dynamic a generation later, in conditions of a Muslim and ethnicised Kurdish hegemonic elite.

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This intersectional analysis establishes Aristakēs' highly gendered class position, making it possible to analyse this position's reflection in the *History* as a socially symbolic act. Gendered imagery has been noted repeatedly, particularly prevalent in homiletic sections and instances of the lamenting mode. The gendered imagery of homiletic sections revolves around two ideological figures, each fetishized projections of female-gendered reproductive capacities, the new bride and the mother with her newborn, both occasionally paired with a new bride-groom and a father with his son. Both figures draw attention to the problematic of personal and systemic reproduction, standing in for the loss of surety amid crisis. The focus on newness is particularly important, emphasising both figures' gendered potential for creating social being, the bride in beginning a new mature life with an open future, the mother secondary to the semi-realised potential she holds in her arms. Importantly these figures can stand as represented persons in themselves, projecting a reified fetish of concrete conditions, as well as functioning as metaphors emphasising the problematic of reproduction in other societal elements. For example, in chapter 10's initial proleptic instance of the lamenting mode, it is said that an abstract image of the church altar, standing for society-as-the-Church, 'once in a previous time had been like to a newly veiled bride, beautifully adorned with jewellery, having a crown of glories on her head'.[796] Likewise in the political-theological digression on Armenia's four thrones of kingship, the *vardapet* writes:

[796] AL, 556.32.

> Our churches resembled a new bride, adorned with all comeliness to satisfy the desire of the immortal Bridegroom. The clerics, newly born from the immaculate womb of our mother Sarah, resembled dove chicks clustering together, singing angelic songs with open mouths.[797]

This is both sexual and maternal reproductive imagery, the Church a beautiful new bride – a metaphor with a long history – and the clerics themselves the newborns, evoking the intersection of Aristakēs' anxiety over his own class fraction's reproduction, with generalised patriarchal anxiety over systemic reproduction. In these metaphorical deployments, much as when deployed as representations in themselves, the new bride and mother with newborn represent the lost material conditions of reproduction, concretised in the dual gendered function of reproduction through sexual desire and maternal care. The figures are thus central to the homiletic sections' transitions from a "before" to an "after" state. In chapter 10's full instantiation of the lamenting mode, for example, in a list demonstrating the kingdom-as-was, the *vardapet* writes 'What shall I say then of the brides in the chamber, and of the grooms on the nuptial bed with the burning love of their desires, the fieriness and violence of their nature and disposition?'[798] Much as in the quote above, this image is unabashed about where reproductive capacity comes from, explicitly valorising sexual desire. Such imagery might seem odd from an ecclesiastic, but as a patriarchal elite it points to the virile state of the social system as was, opposed to Aristakēs' current emasculated inability to reproduce his own social position. This point is driven home a few lines later, when the king is described rising 'at dawn when he came forth from the city, as a bride-groom who comes from his nuptial couch,' the perfect dominant male assuring systemic reproduction through sexual prowess. Mothers also appear in chapter 10's homiletic "before", 'carrying their babes in arms, and full of compassion with maternal kindness, on account of their great joys having forgotten the sad times of child bearing, as though doves fluttering near newly-feathered chicks.' Much as the emphatically sexual imagery of the new bride, this imagery is emphatically maternal and caring – notably the same ideological naturalisation of motherhood through the figure of dove chicks as in the later metaphorical section on the Church and Armenia's four thrones. Thus the two central gendered ideological figures deployed in homiletic sections are visibly concerned with representing the role of female-gendered bodies in systemic reproduction, as well as the particular process of reproducing the *vardapet*'s class fraction.

Mirroring this "before" state is the catastrophic "after", where valorised gendered imagery meets its dialectical inversion. In chapter 11's account of the raid on Smbat's mountain, it is lamented how 'the newly-wed woman could not recall her love for her bridegroom, and the man did not bring to mind the beauty of his desirable spouse', an image paired with 'hymns of the mass ceased

[797] AL, 592.29.
[798] AL, 559.51.

from the mouths of the priests, and the recital of psalms stopped on the lips of the psalmists'.[799] Likewise in chapter 16's set of three Turkish raiding parties 'Virgins fell in dishonour, new brides were separated from their husbands and led into captivity,' the predicate for the line 'the land that had been crammed with many people like a populous city became an uninhabited wasteland.'[800] Thus, much as the previous deployment of the new bride and new mother emphasised reproductive capacity, now it draws attention to the loss of this, a fetish for the dissolution of the social system as a whole anchored in patriarchal anxiety – importantly gendered imagery is presented inextricable from the evocation of 'the land', itself metaphorically compared to a perfect urban centre, but now an unproductive wasteland. Such was seen earlier in reference to how rapacious financial practices made Arcn's estates barren:

> The laws were given to usury and speculation, and there was multiplication of wheat, because of which the land was ruined and prevented the womb [of the earth] from giving forth fruit for the nourishment of mankind.[801]

In a gendered ethnoterritorial conceit common across time and place, images of women raped and enslaved, and the land raided, are blurred into each other, as earlier noted where 'this *tun* of the Armenians' is described as having become drunk on wine until it 'received everything upon itself, and now it lies at the crossings of all roads naked and disgraced, and all passers-by trample upon it with insults…the slave and captive of all nations.'[802]

Rape imagery is the ultimate demonstration of patriarchal emasculation, the inversion of "just" sexploitation, representing the inability to ensure this dominant position's reproduction through the control of female-gendered bodies. So it is important that almost all such imagery in the *History* is specifically tied to elite women. In chapter 2's lament for Basileios raiding the 'four corners of the land', for example, it is claimed that '*azat* women' had their veils taken from their heads, were 'shamelessly disgraced in the open sunlight', and taken into slavery.[803] Likewise in chapter 12's account of Arcn's sack, listed among the various categories of person killed or enslaved, alongside male youths and 'respectable and glorious elders', are the 'well-bread and virtuous maidens and women fallen into disgrace',[804] while chapter 21 on Melitene's sack notes how 'the attractive women and girls who had been reared in comfort were disgraced.'[805] The prevalence of rape imagery in the "after" sections, specifically tied to elite women and generally associated with new brides, thus serves to articulate the writer's patriarchal emasculation – indeed, the almost total castration of his elite position from its societal reproductive organs. This is

[799] AL, 569.49.
[800] AL, 583.21.
[801] AL, 573.11.
[802] AL, 566.23.
[803] AL, 534.40.
[804] AL, 576.42.
[805] AL, 608.24.

eloquently explicated in the "after" section to the political-theological discussion of Armenia's four thrones:

> What shall I say about the Church, which formerly was so embellished, comely, fruitful and sanctified that it would have astonished a prophet? Today it sits ingloriously, unadorned, stripped of all beauty, resembling a childless widow…Those clerics who could be seen at the [church] doors, books in hand, singing Davidic psalms, dance before the doors of those *dev*-infested lairs called mosques learning the tenets of Islam (*mahmetavand*). Modest, prudent women who had been legally married, taking large dowries from their men, today have learned dissolute, licentious adultery.[806]

This section clearly articulates the problematic of reproduction as a concrete phenomenon: it is *not* that everyone has been massacred, but that those male- and female-gendered elites meant to reproduce the Armenian ecclesiastical apparatus are now functioning to reproduce a different hegemonic class – taking their dowries, distribution of appropriated surplus, with them. This section is the "after" to the "before" where Armenia had had four thrones of kingship, and strikingly where the Church previously was like to an attractive new bride, now it is a 'childless widow', demonstrating the inextricability of these two ideological figures. The comparison of the Church in this section indicates the gendered barrenness associated with 'the land' in its after state, but most "after" sections with mothers and newborns are, predictably, graphically violent. In chapter 2's lament for Basileios' raiding, newborns are torn from their mothers' embrace and hurled against rocks, while others are stabbed in their mothers' arms, 'such that the mothers' milk was mixed with the babies' blood', and still more were left by the roadside, trampled under horse and foot, 'and they died, every one.' In chapter 11 this image of new life cut is taken even further, with the claim that, stranded on Smbat's mountain and unable to escape the raiders, 'because of this dire situation many pregnant women miscarried',[807] a stark claim that drives home the broader reproductive focus.

There are many instances of such extreme, even traumatic imagery, and though it is important to remember that similar images are present across time and place, indicating generally shared discursive representations of conflict, this in itself points to the concrete violence and all-too common nature of such atrocities – not least in this same region over the last century.[808] Yet the visceral imagery also has a strictly narratival purpose, serving to communicate the intensity of the social transformation, localised in the helpless figures of would-be actors through which the

[806] AL, 593.35.
[807] AL, 569.50-570.
[808] Including but not limited too, in chronological order, the Armenian and Assyrian genocides; the Greek-Turkish 'population exchange'; the Turkish state's massacres of Alevi, Zaza and Kurds in Ararat and Dersim; the Soviet ethnic cleansings and genocides of North Caucasia; the Baathist genocide of Kurds; the massacres and ethnic cleansing carried out by all sides in Abkhazia, Ossetia, Nakhichevan, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Baku; the Turkish state's mass ethnic cleansing of Kurdish villages; and Daesh's Yezidi genocide.

system could be reproduced. The intensity of emotion resulting from lived experience of a crisis both immediately and latently violent is evident in the extended section on stranded and murdered children in chapter 11's sack of Smbat's mountain:

> …they took the children from the embraces of their parents and threw them to the ground, their place of encampment was swarming from the multitude of them. Some of those thrown died upon hitting the rocks, and their sides had split in half, and their intestines poured on the ground; whilst those who remained alive, who could bear to hear what they heard? For those able to stand on their feet, sought here and there for their mothers, and the mountains reverberated after them with the loudness of their crying, whilst those who were not able to be steady on their feet, were crying as they crawled on their knees, while those who were in more innocent age than even them, thumped the ground with their feet; and having lost their voice by crawling, they were not able to bring breath; and with such pitiable utterances and unceasing cries they bore resemblance to lambs, which had been newly separated from their mothers…they offended the very air with their bleating and weighed heavily on the ears of the listeners.

There are other instances of violent maternal imagery in the *History*, referencing the seizure and murder of children from their enslaved parents, but this suffices to demonstrate that the ideological structure is permeated with patriarchal anxiety over the control of female-gendered bodies.

In addition to this generalised patriarchal anxiety the figures of the new bride and new mother have a specific gendered role for Aristakēs' class fraction. This is seen in the homiletic vignettes on city sacks, and particularly the *vardapet*'s description of the women of Arcn. This is a stereotyped misogynistic diatribe against sinful immodesty, but as such it is an instance where the homiletic form of the *vardapet*'s lamenting mode is more fully developed, as he writes:

> What shall I say in condemnation of the women? Those words spoken by Isaiah are sufficient, there is no need for my own composition. For he reproached thus the women of Jerusalem for their gold-loving immodesty: 'Rather than', he said, 'that the daughters of Sion were proud, and went with outstretched necks' (Isaiah 3:16). The origin and root of all evil I consider to be arrogance: for it fashions *dev*s out of human beings, and makes them subject to their torments. Now this disease is evil for all, but it is especially so for womankind; because of this above all He judges them, and then having put in order He remembers the train dragging along the ground, the earrings, bracelets, the veils, necklaces, and everything else. Behold, listener, their punishment: 'Instead', he said, 'of gold ornaments, they will be bald of head', for the head stripped of ornament, they cut their hair to make a mockery of them, 'In place of a golden belt there will be one of rope; and instead of a rich robe, a girdling

> of sackcloth, he said' (Isaiah 3:24); for when they were dressed for slavery, their captors shall grace them with this.[809]

This passage is classically homiletic, linking a particular sin, arrogance, the root of all sin, through a scriptural reference to a specific target, represented generally as womankind but visibly female-gendered elites. Sinful arrogance is also central to the ideologeme of the hubristic ruler who did not trust in God, as well as those of Ani who did not look to the example of Arcn. It is thus one of the few specified sins claimed in the Christian Armenian nation's long-accumulated debt, so it is striking that it is both named the 'origin and root of all evil' and especially claimed in elite women. They are derided for their attire and conduct, a demonstration of the double bind in which female-gendered elites must both prioritise their reproductive capacity, but also represent the constituted power of the ruling classes, and so must be simultaneously aloof and humble, sexual and maternal, rich and modest. This impossible bind is revealed in crisis, when Aristakēs, from the standpoint of his class fraction, focuses overwhelmingly on reproductive gendering, since in the final instance it is this that (re)produces the class. Thus, in a perverse logic of inversion, these disciplined bodies are blamed for their own enslavement, having failed to negotiate an always-already impossible bind.

The same bind is seen in the representation of Theodōra as empress. It has been seen that Theodōra apparently circulated an edict proclaiming that she had not married Monomakhos for love, but for the good of the land. Yet a few lines above the writer describes how 'the lioness was roaring in her den for a companion', following Mikhaēl V's abortive usurpation. This is a gendered figure, and implies sexual desire governing the empress, but it is in immediate tension with the *vardapet*'s subsequent claim that she had 'not a few troubles', since 'none from among her people were worthy of sovereignty'. The narrative thus reveals an apparent contradiction between Theodōra's position as empress, a mother ensuring the fertility of the land, and as a sexually dangerous woman, a contradiction never resolved in the narrative, with the writer simply claiming that 'I don't know' whether they had been lovers or not. The earlier elevation of Mikhaēl IV, however, is more explicit, with the *vardapet* openly stating that the empress Zōē had supported the conspiracy to murder Rōmanos III, and that she desired him as a lover:

> This man was not from the imperial house, and was not the son of an emperor, and did not [ascend] by the authority of eminent military officers; instead he was an insignificant man from the palace officials, whom the empress lusted for with a whorish, diseased passion, because of these reasons they drowned her husband, he [Rōmanos] also was said to have been one of the murderers. So after this satanic act had been brought to a head, the empress ordered the leaders (*glkhavork'*) of the city to be called to her. And she showed the dead emperor, announcing it was accidental; and then by and by she brought forth this Mikhaēl,

[809] AL, 573.19-574.24.

> and acclaimed him emperor by making him her husband – upon this occurrence all became clear to everyone.[810]

This passage is visibly gendered in its attribution of the empress' decision to her sexualised being, with typical misogyny in the diagnosis of a 'whorish, diseased passion', but it also reveals classed content in the derision of Mikhaēl IV for his background as 'an insignificant man from among the palace officials'. Hence his elevation offends the proper operation of patrimonial inheritance, a happening itself brought about by the empress' sin of arrogant lust. Such stories circulated beyond the imagination of this particular *vardapet*, they refer to things said in the everyday about the imperial rulers, and are reflected in contemporary Grecophone historiography.[811] Thus the episode of Mikhaēl V's attempted usurpation has no trace of misogynistic gendering, indeed, the key decisions are attributed to Zōē, and the narrative is unequivocal about the sisters' right to rule – this is, after all, the proper operation of patrimonial inheritance, with the crowd proclaiming 'Show us our purple-gloried empress, who has that sovereignty as inheritance from her fathers and grandfathers'. Likewise, when Monomakhos died, Aristakēs writes 'Theodōra, the daughter of King Constantine seized the throne as her own patrimonial inheritance, which none could resist', unequivocally supporting her right to rule, while at the beginning of the immediately subsequent chapter the *vardapet* describes how:

> After the death of Monomakh (1055 CE), that lioness with a lion's frenzy was roaring in her lair [resembling] what Daniel had seen in his vision, in bygone times. Calling together the principals of the city and the very great princes, she said to them: 'If any of you is brave enough to take troops to the East, to end the turmoil [caused by] the Persians, and to pacify the land, then let him come boldly and sit as king. By God's laws such a one is deserving of the realm. But if none of you dares do as I said, I am sufficient as a substitute.' When the princes heard this, without replying each went to his palace.[812]

This episode is self-evidently gendered, implying the Roman ruling class' emasculation – alongside Aristakēs' sublimated identification – with none strong enough to merit ruling in the empress' place. It thus sits awkwardly with the previous two statements, and there is no attempt to resolve the contradiction. Female-gendered rulers thus sit in schizophrenic position within the *History*'s narrative, caught in an impossible bind and entirely valorised one moment, but entirely denigrated the next. Thus Theodōra's final act is to assure the good governance of the empire through the appointing of Mikhaēl VI, on the advice of the Constantinopolitan *glkhavor*s, establishing 'him as emperor with the approval of the city.' Yet female-gendered rulers are an exception to the *History*'s generally misogynistic rule, unique in their intersection with other ideological necessities that require their valorisation. More typical of the *vardapet*'s attitude to

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[810] AL, 547.4-6.
[811] *Khronographia* 4.
[812] AL, 595.1-2.

women close to power is the passage on Monomakhos' spending of tax revenue on 'the expenses for prostitutes…for so much was he a lover of prostitutes and harlots that he wasn't satisfied with the women of Constantinople, but brought women from faraway lands, and was busy with them all day long.' This is a typical construction which positions the downfall of male-gendered elites through female-gendered weaknesses and machinations.

The clearest such construction in the *History* is chapter 23 on Vrverh's T'ondrakean heresy. Named 'a certain prince', Vrverh is said to be Akhni and Kamara's brother, the sisters memorably termed 'satan's *vardapet*s, 'infected with that outrageous dissolute disease which is typical of their type' – presumably women's inherent and sexualised arrogant sinfulness. The two sisters first orchestrate the heretical community, granting the heterodox monk Kuncik residence in the two villages they possessed, 'which they turned into dwellings and dens for that crafty snake', and thereafter they corrupt their brother. Vrverh himself is said to have previously been 'correct in the faith, and foremost in pious deeds', even constructing a monastery on his patrimonial lands and gathering ascetics – pointing to a more concrete social phenomenon of heresy, where particularly intense piety is judged dangerous and excluded by the mainstream ecclesiastical apparatus. This, however, is entirely erased from the narrative, with Vrverh's downfall instead positioned as the result of the same typical misogynistic construction seen above:

> The Evil One ensnared him by means of those women, who indiscriminately copulated with him, those diseased prostitutes, thinking nothing about consanguinity; for such are their dens of perdition. This is the leech's fourth daughter that Solomon spoke of and about which the divine Apostle commanded: '[Fall not] into the passion of lust like heathen who do not know God' (I Thessalonians 4:5). Do you see that this disease is pagan? See how the divinely blessed Solomon set this forth: 'My son, keep yourself from adultery with foreign women for whomever they find among foolish youths, they shall convince to remain with them through their honeyed words. For the lips of a prostitute drip honey, that for a while makes sweet the palate of those whom she seeks to convince and in the end is found to be more bitter than gall. For she will take her lovers, bound like dogs, and drag them off like a calf for slaughter, and she will [kill you] just as a goat shot by an arrow in the liver. There is no cure for it until in death you reach Hell, because her home is the abyss of Hell' (Proverbs 5:3).[813]

This is strident language, but the key point is that the passage has no organic connection to the narrative's practical progression. The line of agency runs that the monk Kuncik converted Hranoyš, who in turn converted her relatives Akhni and Kamara. These two gave over properties for Kuncik's use, and he promptly vanishes from the narrative, to be replaced as heretical protagonist by Vrverh. Yet Vrverh's downfall comes about not through any reference to the

[813] AL, 616.9-11.

monk's teachings, but his sisters' sinful sexuality, so that the line of any heretical progression is broken, and simple female depravity is centred. Thus the real function of the passage is to deny ultimate agency to either male-gendered heretic, so that it is located entirely in the three women's mediations, particularly Akhni and Kamara, constituting a denunciation of their action as autonomous female-gendered elites, exercising exploitative domination over property, and treating it as they wish. Although the latter part to the chapter forms a caution to male-gendered elites to act within the bounds set by the Armenian Church, Vrverh's initial conversion is entirely a function of the misogynistic narrative conceit of Akhni and Kamara's intervention:

> Trapped by them, that lamentable Vrverh lost his prudence and fell from the faith, becoming the enemy of God and His saints; he forsook the Lord, whose blessed font birthed him; he forgot God, who had nourished him with His body and blood. Having left the house, he fell from honour; he forgot the divine covenant, and withdrew from communion with the ascetic orders; and the site which had been an assembly-place for clerics, which he had constructed with very great expense and labour, where ranks of psalm-sayers and clerics with divine accompaniment sang sweet songs glorifying God, is now silent, ruined and desolate. What do you suppose happened next? The wretched man went and joined up with those diabolical women, and the villages, which were their own natural places (i.e. their patrimonies) and which we spoke of a little earlier, namely, Kaše and Ałiws, united the inhabitants of the places all to themselves and then frenzied with diabolical rage, they turned those churches which long before had been constructed in their now snake-infested places into wasteland.

This passage reveals the concrete anxiety of Aristakēs' class fraction: that the (sub)hegemonic elites that they already rely on for political-economic support will operate autonomously in religious terms, negating the role of the Armenian Church and endangering ecclesiastical reproduction. This anxiety is all the more acute in conditions of Turkish invasions, when the new hegemonic class is no longer Christian or ethnicised Armenian, and elite women are crossing dangerous ethnoreligious boundaries as a matter of course. The T'ondrakean chapters most closely represent the everyday conditions of Aristakēs' lived experience prior to the Turkish invasions, at least beyond his lifeworld situation in Arcn, with a complex social system of aristocratic elites, the Armenian Church, and imperial hegemony. The dissolution of this system in the 1070s is then localised in the loss of surety of reproduction through female-gendered bodies, engendering the need to sermonise against women's sinful, sexualised arrogance. Ultimately, however, 'All this has been taken, and no longer appears', Roman hegemony has collapsed, crisis ensued, and the *vardapet* seeks to re-constitute a chauvinist Armenianness from which the new conjuncture can be faced, a re-constitution that requires a fresh interpellation – and thus 'I call on the wailing women along with Jeremiah to compose laments with me'.[814]

[814] Wailing women are those who officially lament the dead at funerals, a still common practice in the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. AL, 571.66-572.

Conclusion

Towards a Critical Social History of New Rome & Caucasia

This thesis has situated the *History* attributed to Aristakēs Lastiverc'i. Situation is a critical historical response to disciplinary history's dominant mode of analysis, "placing" "facts" into "contexts", so that the "facts" are objectified and immobile, and the "contexts" pre-given and external. Instead situation locates a given phenomenon in its historical system of social relations, grasping it in its movement. The *History* attributed to Aristakēs has been situated in the historical dynamics of its own conjuncture, as well as within, against and beyond the totalising narratives that would co-opt the work. Rather than see the *History* and Aristakēs as reified images, the eleventh century's "Armenian Jeremiah" in the singular "Armenian tradition of historiography", this work and its writer have been revealed as actors participating in their own time and place. Thus vistas have been glimpsed of a critical social history of the empire of New Rome and Caucasia in the eleventh century.

In conclusion, therefore, it is important to recapitulate what has been established, and bring these vistas into focus. In part I the work was analysed as a historical composition from an empiricist standpoint: critiquing previous scholarship and its assumptions, outlining its textual transmission and afterlife between its own conjuncture and capitalist modernity, and socially situating these in the Armenophone tradition of historiography, itself located in the institutional culture of the Armenian Church. Most crucially, part I described the *History*'s narrative in detail, establishing its structure and so revealing the seams of underlying sources brought together in the process of composition. Central among these was the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle to 1057/8,* a work critically imagined as an originally Armenophone set of annals arranged by imperial regnal years and the Armenian era, and composed in circles associated with imperial administration in Caucasia – representing a provincial Armenophone tradition of imperial history writing. The *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* was seen to be absolutely crucial in the process of historical composition, providing the *History*'s chronological framework and the lion's share of its empirical claims, thereby defining to a great extent the work's overall narrative structure. Yet this structure is highly idiosyncratic, the writer evidently did not intend a composition that pretended to comprehensive coverage of events, choosing the most coherent continuous narrative source and avoiding supplementing this as far as possible, leaving profound gaps in the chronological sweep. The *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*'s historiographical stuff was found to be important in the narrative structure insofar as it provided the basis for the homiletic sections, which define the narrative's pivotal transformation and come to predominate overall. Thus part I arrived at the argument that the *History* was conceived as a historiographical composition insofar as that provided an effective vehicle for a homily.

Part I therefore established the technical foundation for part II, a critical imagining of the writer as a historical actor. This involved a shift from part I's empiricist standpoint, to a critical framework that combines social-historical analysis with a socially symbolic reading of the *History* as a complex narrative. It began from an overview of the empirical claims about Aristakēs as a "real person", establishing his lifespan as *c.*1000/10-*c.*1080, his locale as 'the *avan* of Arcn in the district of Karin', and, most importantly, the categories into which he falls as a historical actor: *vardapet* of the Armenian Church, citizen of Arcn, identified Armenian, Roman subject, and elite man. Rather than attempt any kind of biography, however, each of these categories was analysed in turn, and historicised with concrete content for Aristakēs' conjuncture. This involved initial social-historical analysis, establishing, for example, the social function of *vardapet*s both in general and in specific conjunctures, the dynamics of imperial political economy in Caucasia, and the historical conditions of Arcn's emergence. Each was then combined with a socially symbolic reading, revealing the given category's content in the work's ideological structure. A socially symbolic reading is predicated on an understanding of narrative as providing ideological resolutions for the inevitable antagonisms of lived experience. Rather than begin from a reified "political context", where the writer is claimed to have actually supported one or another polity or political actor as a "real person", it begins from their imagined social being as a historical actor, assumes that they have a complex sense of self which emerges from their everyday lives, and so also their potential self-identification in several contradictory ways, viewing their narrative in turn as an attempt to ideologically resolve these contradictions. Thus it becomes possible to read back through the narrative to the social system that produced the writer as a historical actor. In such manner we glimpse the intersections of their individual sense of self and subjective worldview, with the common sense and intersubjective lifeworlds of their social system and conjuncture.

Now, therefore, it is possible to bring these categories into relation with each other in a situated imagining of Aristakēs as a historical actor, and the *History* as his historical composition. This composition is precisely situated in the crisis of the 1070s, when the conditions for Aristakēs' social position were removed, and he experienced deep de-stabilisation in the surety of his own social reproduction, alongside the elite class fraction he belonged to – ecclesiastics of the independent Armenian Church. In composing the *History* as a historiographical homily, he intended to "teach the teachers", providing the monks of his monastery and other Armenian ecclesiastics with political-theological resolutions. The work thus provides a could-be hegemonic nationalist meaning of History, with which "the teachers" could subsequently interpellate a broader set of elite and subaltern actors, organising, emplotting and explaining events in terms of "their" corporate national sin. This vision represents Armenian ecclesiastics' particular interests generalised – most evidently through the ideologeme of society-as-the-Church – arguing that crisis did not emerge because of Islam's superiority to Armenian Christianity, nor the coming

apocalypse, but because of the Armenian nation's own sinfulness, with the Turks' action entirely secondary to this agency chauvinistically prioritised in the earthly-divine dialectic. Thus the Armenian nation must come to penance, and Armenians submit to the cultural hegemony of the Armenian Church, remaining normative Armenian Christians even in a crisis apparently proving its impotence.

This vision, however, is more specific still, imagining the Turkish invasions in terms of a constellation of cities, revealing Aristakēs' lifeworld situation as citizen of Arcn, his projected social composition made up of urban-conscious elite fractions, like merchants, land owners, and civil officials. Through ideological re-writing this composition is reduced to those elites who could potentially identify as Armenian Christian, and so be interpellated by this specific nationalist meaning of History, erasing the fact of non-Armenian participation in the social system. Yet to actualise the nationalist interpellation the *vardapet* must go beyond their urban situation, and encase the narrative in an ethnoterritorial ideological structure, reframing contradictory and antagonistic hegemonic apparatuses as complementary structuring elements of "Armenia". In such manner, basically non-Armenian historiographical stuff from the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle* – which provides the infrastructural narrative, fundamentally conditioning the *History*'s progression – is re-directed to "logically" arrive at an Armenian interpellation, and so the interpellated readers' spontaneous identification with the Bagratuni polity, despite the almost total absence of this polity from the narrative. Thus the homiletic sections project the nationalist vision of a single Armenian polity with a single ruler and church contained in a single land, albeit a vision blurred into the figure of a single city so as to displace the inherent fictitiousness of this unified "Armenia". Hence Armenianness forms the ultimate ideological horizon as well as the immediate interpellation from the title's "us" onwards, and yet is markedly absent in the intervening historiographical stuff. Assertive Armenianness is under a process of reconstitution in this conjuncture, so that the *History* forms a summoning of the Armenian nation into being through a narrative with an explicitly imperial infrastructure. Thus elite actors (re)produced through the imperial system or at least under imperial hegemony, often with lived experience of imperial service, and supported, however contradictorily, by imperial political economy, are able to be interpellated common-sensically in the first instance, and politically in the second, *as* Armenian, so that they understand the *History*'s exegesis of the crisis as an especially Armenian and so "their" story.

Nevertheless, the empire of New Rome was so constitutive of Aristakēs and others' lived experience that it could not be Othered as a predator perfidiously destroying "Armenia", nor instrumentalised as saviour, either T'ovma's continuator's *deus ex machina*, or Matt'ēos' apocalyptic and vague last Roman emperor. Instead Aristakēs and others' identification with New Rome must be sublimated, and the empire explicated as a *lived* phenomenon – importantly, it is

the collapse of imperial hegemony, *not* the annexation of the Bagratuni polity, that engendered the crisis and so the *vardapet*'s need to ideologically resolve it. Hence his ideological structure seeks to resolve the concrete political-economic antagonisms between the centralising, tributary political economy of New Rome, and the more fragmented, lordly political economy of the Caucasian polities. Through the paralleling of rulers as effective 'tillers of the land', the resolution of political-economic antagonism through the principle of patrimonial inheritance, and a political theology that prioritises sovereign offices over any particular sovereign, Aristakēs arrives at a general affirmation of stateness – regardless of a given polity's ethnicisation as Armenian, K'art'velian or Roman, or a given elitedom's irreducibility to a particular ethnicisation such as in Arcn. These polities are resolved in common through a socially symbolic act that asserts the generalised need for relations of domination guaranteeing the level of exploitation necessary for the hegemonic political economy's reproduction – the general need for a *state*, and the hegemonic space that states (re)produce.

For in this conjuncture the hegemonic apparatus that (re)produced hegemonic space for Aristakēs and others, the empire of New Rome, had collapsed, and the *vardapet* located this collapse in the fractiousness of a series of elites as well as the hubris of a series of rulers. All these had, in their sinful conduct, dividing kingdoms and wilfully ruling without God, brought about ruin of 'the land', a blurred double valence signifying both "Armenia" and the whole of imperial space. This ruin represents the loss of hegemonic space, and so the surety of Aristakēs' elite class fraction's reproduction alongside the general de-stabilisation of exploitative domination in the crisis, causing deep anxiety in Aristakēs as a male-gendered elite. The hegemonic system of exploitative domination was no longer directed towards his social position, neither the system of propertied social *production* through aristocratic patrimonies that supported the Armenian Church in contradiction with imperial taxation, nor the system of elite gendering that disciplined female-gendered bodies for social *reproduction*, providing actors as personnel for Armenian ecclesiastical institutions. In the *History* this classed and gendered anxiety appears in the double representation of a barren wasteland emptied of agrarian production on the one hand, and brutalised new brides and mothers, or else sinfully immodest fornicators, on the other.

All this socially symbolic representation thus aggregates into a historiographical homily that provides a libidinal apparatus in which male-gendered Caucasian elites, situated in or on the edge of imperial space, who recognise the Armenian interpellation, can invest themselves, finding ideological resolutions for the antagonisms of their lived experience. For in the 1070s the sense of self resulting from this lived experience went through a crisis of the whole social system, as the social relations that supported their social positions and class fractions dissolved into a total crisis of hegemonic space under the Romans' rapid retreat. For Aristakēs, first with the sack of Arcn, and then with each subsequent raid until the post-Manzikert collapse of Roman hegemony,

the surety of social reproduction was lost, so that the *History* attempts to identify and resolve the antagonisms that lead to this point – both for himself, and, in the form of a historiographical homily intended to act in turn, for other identified Armenian elites brought into the utopian national community of "us" established within the work. So whilst the narrative superstructure is a homily for an idealised Armenian kingdom, its infrastructure is the division and decline of *all* hegemonic apparatuses, as a reflection of perceived total societal collapse. It provides resolutions for Armenian Christian elites within or on the edge of imperial space, to transcend the fundamental contradictions of their lived experience in the interstices between antagonistic political-economic configurations and imperial systems. These resolutions move from the literal historical referent of a concrete hegemonic system in flux, through the interpretive code of Divine Providence, to the moral level of explicated sin, summoning the Armenian nation into being through an exhortatory interpellation, to arrive finally at the anagogic level where the concrete dissolves into a symbolic meditation on a utopian Armenian kingdom in perfect harmony, shorn of social antagonism. This vision, then, in itself, forms a general affirmation of stateness under stable hegemony, the ultimate principle underpinning elite social reproduction, emphatically asserted in the midst of crisis.

Affirming stateness can be detected as the political unconscious of other Armenophone compositions, as well as many other ancient and medieval works, all inevitably written by elites. It explains Matt'ēos' rapid change of tone between the 1070s and the conjuncture of Malik-Shah's super hegemony in the 1080s.[815] In this conjuncture Seljuq hegemony assured the reproduction of hegemonic space once more, assuring in turn Christian elites' social positions, represented by the writer as the sultan's special beneficence, which suddenly appears in the midst of an otherwise apocalyptic narrative. Similarly the composition attributed to Łevond re-interprets the eighth- and early-ninth century height of the caliphal hegemonic cycle over Armīniya in the light of the late-ninth century hegemonic interregnum, asserting a chauvinistic Armenianness in conditions of a new ethnicised Armenian polity, even as it ideologically resolves this polity's sub-hegemonic position *vis-à-vis* the Abbasid Caliphate.[816] Thus the affirmation of stateness is a consistently resonant political unconscious, with only gendered ideological resolutions appearing more consistently – and, of course, stateness and patriarchy are inextricable, as Ocalan notes 'Without understanding how masculinity was socially formed, one cannot analyse the institution of the state'.[817] Thus it is important to move beyond limited political readings of historical compositions, and develop critical *political-economic* readings, analysing the symbolic representation of generalised social dynamics and the social system as a whole, rather than reified "support" for

[815] Andrews (2017), 119.
[816] See generally Greenwood (2012).
[817] See generally Ocalan (2015).

one or another polity or political actor. Moreover, if stateness and its worship forms the political unconscious of the vast majority of historical compositions, the necessity of an anarchist heuristic is all the more evident.

A situated imagining of both writer and work as historical actors thus locates them in their own time and place, without reduction to any particular category, and asserting both as tangible social beings situated in concrete social relations. It thereby brings into focus vistas of a critical social history of the empire of New Rome and Caucasia in the eleventh century, and so articulates a move towards decentring Armenianness and this particular actor's worldview, as well as the eleventh century in particular, to encompass the whole medieval Roman hegemonic cycle over Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia, and Caucasia. This is necessary to analyse a social system that could produce an elite actor of the independent Armenian Church, who in a crisis of imperial hegemony used an imperial chronicle to re-constitute a chauvinist Armenianness based on the idea of a single church in a single kingdom for a single land – a vision more-or-less solely emplotted by Roman historiographical stuff. This phenomenon in itself implies a whole social system to be elaborated.

Yet the vistas are not limited to this. There is the question of heresy as a social phenomenon, and so an analysis of the T'ondrakean chapters in the light of the Armenian Church's situation in the counterpolitical conditions of Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia, as well as conditions of imperial hegemony, apparently generating the sublimation of anti-Chalcedonianism even in anti-heretical compositions. The interaction of ecclesiastical apparatuses, and their various instantiations of nationalism, whether Armenian, Georgian or Roman, is also a question in desperate need of non-particularist treatment – a process begun recently by Nikoloz Aleklsidze.[818] There is, finally, much to be elaborated about political economy, with the pulsating expansion of imperial hegemony re-arranging dispensations in an uneven and combined manner over the late-ninth to eleventh centuries, playing out variously at different intersecting macro and micro levels, and for differently situated elite fractions. Caucasia's aristocratic elitedoms in particular are in need of emancipation from methodological and political nationalism, revealing their integration into a variety of hegemonic apparatuses and systems across caliphal and Roman cycles. There also is the question of "urbanisation" and urban consciousness as social and political-economic phenomena over the *long durée*, from caliphal through to the end of Roman cycles. And, of course, all this takes place in a broader regional situation, with the expansion of the Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, and western Eurasian world-system between the early and central Middle Ages.

[818] See generally Aleksidze (2018).

Hence such a critical social history cannot be produced within the paradigms of Armenian, Byzantine, Kartvelian, Kurdish or Islamic studies as they are currently framed by disciplinary history, separate "fields" defined by different varieties of methodological statism. These are integrated social, political-economic, and cultural phenomena, and no amount of 'interdisciplinary' framing between discrete fields can properly encompass their complex relations. Instead present disciplinary boundaries must be abolished in a real movement towards a critical area studies of Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia, understood as a global historical-cultural region. This is not to abolish technical specialisation in a given language or material, but to sever the assumption that this technical specialisation equates to scholarly mastery over some transhistorical "culture", "ethnic group" or, more honestly, *nation*. Importantly this movement is not without relevant exemplars: there are rapidly growing critical fields in Medieval Anatolian and Ottoman studies which take precisely such an approach, in both cases explicitly combating the Kemalist nationalist paradigm that had been hegemonic.[819] The same move is thus possible in the exact same region during earlier hegemonic cycles. Established thus, a critical area studies of Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia has endless potential, with its rich set of social, political-economic and cultural phenomena in a global region, writing politicised social history as theory and socialising political theory as history, from an invariant subaltern perspective focused on the ever-present potentials for greater human freedom and equality.

[819] See, for example, Peacock, De Nicola & Nur Yildiz (2015); & Sipahi, Derederian & Cora (2016).

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Appendix I: Chronology in the *History*

Chapter	In-text Dating	Events
1 . *Events in the lands of the Armenians*	'in the twenty-fifth year [of Basileios II's reign]' Year 450 Armenian Era (1001 CE), 'and thereafter the land rested for fourteen years.' Year 464 AE (1015 CE)	Basileios' 1000/1 campaign for Davit' *kouropalates*' inheritance. Basileios' granting of titles and lands to Bagarat of Ap'khazet'i and Gurgen of K'art'li, before returning west. Death of Bagarat and succession of Giorgi of Ap'khazet'i-K'art'li, a battle between Giorgi and the Romans.
2. *Regarding the kingdom of the Armenians*	Year 467 AE (1018 CE) Year 468 AE (1019 CE) Year 470 AE (1021 CE)	A Roman 'prince' arrives from Nikomedia, putting a poll-tax on the land and rebuilding Theodosioupolis. Petros I is elevated to the Armenian patriarchate. Basileios comes to the East, and a Roman army loses to Giorgi.
3. *How the emperor turned back a second time on the land of Tayk', where the Kart'velian troops were defeated*	N/A	*The narrative here continues directly from the previous chapter*.
4. *Concerning the last war which was in Šlp'ay*	N/A	*The narrative here continues directly from the previous chapter*.
5. *The reign of Kostandin*	'Kostandin…ruled after Vasil for four years' 'in the first year [of Konstantinos VII's reign]', year 475 AE (1026) 'with the coming of the second year [of his reign]'	Introductory remarks about the emperor. A certain 'Komianos', Roman governor of Vaspurakan, plans subterfuge but is foiled and captured by the Cappadocian army. The emperor sends a eunuch named Nikētas to 'Virk' (i.e. the Roman theme of Iviria)' and he gave gifts and titles to

	‘with the coming of the third year [of his reign]’	*azat*s in return for their patrimonies and retirement to Constantinople. The eunuch Symeōn *parakoimomenos* arrives in the east with a large army, crossing into ‘Virk‘’.
6. *How Romanos ruled*	‘in the first year of his reign’	Rōmanos’ 1030 campaign to Aleppo.
7. *The capture of the city of Edessa*	N/A	*These events are historically part of the same campaign as that recounted in the previous chapter.*
8. *The death of Romanos*	‘He had ruled for eight years.’	Final statement in the summing up of his reign.
9. *The reign of Mik‘ael*	‘Now in the coming second year [of his reign]’ ‘In the beginning of his reign…in the month of Arats‘, in the year 482 of our era (1033 CE)’ ‘having reign for seven years and eight months’ ‘[he] reigned for six months’	Roman forces recapture Berkri, captured by the ‘Persians (emirs of Azerbaijan)’ in the immediately preceding narrative unit. A solar eclipse. The death of Mikhaēl V. The death of Mikhaēl VI.
10. *The reign of T‘eodosios’ son, Kostandin, called Monomak‘*	‘in the first year of his reign’, year 490 AE (1041 CE) ‘in the following three years [after Maniakes’ rebellion]’ Year 494 AE (1045 CE) Year 493 AE (1044 CE)	Geōrgios Maniakēs’ rebellion. The deaths of Yovhannes-Smbat III and Ašot IV, and the end of the Bagratuni kingdom of Ani. The Roman conquest of Ani. Katakalon Kekaumenos arrives to be governor of Ani.[820]

[820] This is the claim in the *History*, but it must be incorrect since it contradicts the date for the taking of Ani given immediately beforehand, and so must instead refer to his appointment as *doux* of Iviria.

11. *Regarding the destruction which took place in the Basen district and on the mountain which is called Smbat's*	'In the same year (1044/5?)' Year 497 AE (1048), 'in the second year of our captivity' 'Upon the arrival of the next year…in the month of September, on the Wednesday of the feast of the Holy Cross.'	Seljuq Turkish raids begin. More Turkish raids. Another Seljuq army invades Caucasia.
12. *Regarding the merciless destruction of Arcn*	N/A	*These events are dated either to the same year as chapter 11, or that of chapter 15.*
13. *Regarding the great battle that happened on the plain of Basen where the Romans were defeated*	N/A	*These events are dated either to the same year as chapter 11, or that of chapter 15.*
14. *For how long the patriarch Petros remained in Constantinople, then how he returned*	'for three years' '[He] remained for two years, and then passed to Christ.' 'After three years'	The length of time *katʻołikos* Petros (*r.* 1019-1058) stayed in Constantinople. The amount of time Petros was in Sebasteia before dying. The length of time *katʻołikos* Khačʻik (*r.* 1058-1065) stayed in Constantinople before leaving.
15. *Regarding how terribly the city which is called Kars was struck*	*Dated retrospectively in the next chapter.*	An account of Kars' sack.
16. *Regarding the sultan's arrival*	'The year after this [sack of Kars] occurred was [the year] 503 of our era (1054 CE). Now the same month, and the same date of the month as [in the previous year?] when [the Turks] took the land captive, and burned Arcn and other cities and *avan*s…'	The sultan Tughril Beg advances into Caucasia and besieges Manzikert.
17. *The end of Monomakʻ's reign*	'a reign of thirteen years'	Monomakhos dies.

	Year 504 AE (1055 CE), 'In the same year'	Theodōra sends diplomatic gifts to Tughril Beg, but a Turkish army arrives regardless.'
18. *The reign of T'eodora, which translates as 'God-Given'*	'for two years' 'this transpired in the year 506 of our era (1057 CE), which was the tenth Roman indiction' 'Alas that year (1057 CE)' 'From the beginning of that year which we recalled above (1057 CE)' 'this is the thirteenth year (1057 CE)'	The length of Theodōra's reign. The rebellion of Isaakios I Komnēnos. A lament for the events of 1057. Seljuq raids. A lament recounting the number of years since the first Seljuq raids.
19. *Concerning the inestimable ruin which happened to Mesopotamia and its cities, which was a great ruin*	N/A	*These events appear to be part of the same raid as chapter 18.*
20. *The reign of Komianos*	'All this took place in that same world-destroying year (i.e. 1057 CE)'	An account of Isaakios' violent usurpation.
21. *The destruction of the shahastan city of Melitene*	'During autumn of that grievous year, while the Romans were occupied with the clamour of kings, when the month of Areg had come (i.e. October, 1057 CE)' 'for five months of winter, from its inception until the month of Navasard' 'during the same year', year 507 AE (1058 CE)	A Turkish raid enters Caucasia, one half heading to Melitēnē. The length of time the raiders had to wait at Melitene before being able to leave. A list of monasteries and churches destroyed by the Turks.
22. *Concerning the evil sect of the T'ondrakeans that appeared in the district of Hark' and agitated many people*	*Datable by the presence of 'the blessed patriarch Sargis' to the period 992-1019 CE*	An account of the spread of the T'ondrakean heresy in the region.

23. *How that fire of heresy also inflamed the borders of Manaŧi*	N/A	*Contextually related to the previous chapter, but not directly.*
24. *How the world-renowned city of Ani was massacred by the sword*	Year 513 AE (1063/4)	The sack of Ani.
25. *Concerning the emperor of the Greeks who was captured by the emperor of the Persians*	'ten years later [than the various raids and defeats, Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes] decided to make war'	The battle of Manzikert.
Postscript	Year 482 AE (1033)	Reference to the solar eclipse recounted in chapter 9.

Appendix II: Glossary of Theoretical & Technical Terms

For relevant bibliography see the Critical & Theoretical Literature section in the Bibliography. All words in italics can be found separately under their own headings.

Actor & Historical Actor: *actor* refers to the humans and other elements active in a particular social system, acting upon each other and so participating in the *relations* that make up the system as a whole. Thus every single human is an *actor*, and compositions, manuscripts and all other objects of material culture are *actors* too. *Historical actor* refers to an *actor* that is explicitly *situated* in her *conjuncture*, and precisely located in her own historical system of *social relations*, the method adopted in this thesis. Cf. Latour (2005), esp. 21-26.

Alienation: a process of separation, for example between the ability of humans to produce and their ability to exercise control over the process of production, but especially in this between material realities and their perception, lived conditions and the way they are experienced, and so between a concrete social system and its abstract representation. Alienation is inherent to *lived experience*, emerging from the contradiction between the way material conditions are lived and the way they are experienced and so narrativized, and this narrativisation in itself forms another level of alienation as the represented social system separates further from its concrete reality. Hence Aristakēs' vision of society-as-the-church forms an alienated projection of the concrete social system, *fetishizing* in this *reified* image actual *social relations* which are irreducible to the Armenian Church.

Always-Already: this term is used to emphasise the simultaneity of a given set of dynamics. So, for example, any given polity is understood as emerging *always-already* within an inter-polity *hegemonic* system, or, in terms of narrative analysis, all information is understood as *always-already* narrativized – that is, there are no "simple facts". In these examples *always-already* articulates how neither element can be put before the other, and are instead internally and so *dialectically* related.

Anarchist Heuristic: the theoretical perspective and ethic adopted in this thesis. It begins from the critique of *methodological statism*, and adopts therefore a methodologically anti-state standpoint. This means the analysis constantly looks both to reveal the role of *hegemony* and state-systems in the *reproduction* of *exploitative domination*, and to emphasise the role of *counterpolitical* contestation and *social antagonism* in defining the conditions to which *exploitative domination* must respond. Most importantly the entire analysis is from an explicitly *subaltern* perspective, and so stubbornly *critical* of all *elites* and eliteness. In addition an *anarchist heuristic* recognises that totalising pure theories can be as misleading as the *positivism* and *empiricism* of *disciplinary history*, and so allows for varying high and low theoretical perspectives and standpoints, as well as apparently contradictory approaches depending on particular analytical task. Cf. generally Graeber (2004), Scott (2012) & Ocalan (2015).

Capitalist Modernity: a term designating the period usually referred to simply as "modernity". The term articulates two key points: 1) that "modernity" is a term refering to the *cycle* of *conjunctures* in which capitalist *political economy* has been *hegemonic*; and 2) that there are alternative 'democratic' modernities existing as potentials inherent in the *counterpower* of *commoners*. Cf. generally Ocalan (2017).

Class & Class Fractions: these refer to actors with shared sociopolitical and socioeconomic positions in the *social system*, so that they form a single *class* of actors. These shared positions are particularly defined by their common relation to the total system of *exploitative domination*,

and a given set of actors' role within this. For example, an *elite class* participates in generalised domination, and is privileged by the distribution of exploited labour surpluses, not having themselves to produce. A *subaltern class*, on the other hand, is a set of actors dominated so that they can be exploited in the production of a surplus, which is then appropriated and redistributed by the *elite class*. This is, however, the highest level of abstraction when analysing *class*. At lower levels of abstraction *classes* are split into *class fractions*, differentiated again by their common sociopolitical and socioeconomic positions. For example, the *elite class* in Roman Caucasia is split into aristocratic, mercantile, ecclesiastical and imperial fractions, each defined by a different relation to the total system of *exploitative domination*. Likewise, the *subaltern class* is differentiated between urban and rural commoners in the first instance, and then a wide range of further differentiations depending on particular political-economic role: small landholder, artisan, herder and so on. Nevertheless, the most fundamental differentiation is whether an actor produces surpluses for someone else, with her labour-power made systemically available for further exploitation, or an actor is a beneficiary of systemic distribution and able to dispose of surpluses, even if mostly towards the reproduction of their own social position.

Common & Good Sense: these terms have been adopted from the work of Antonio Gramsci, who defines *common sense* – that is, what is taken as self-evident and pre-given about the world and the way it works – as permeated by *ideology* on account of *hegemony*. So, for example, it is *common sense* that our contemporary world is made up of nations, which, by exercising their self-determination, have established themselves as states. This statement is uncontroversial for the vast majority of people, yet it implies an ideological standpoint – that the only legitimate base for statehood is nationhood, and the only legitimate "self-determination" national – and mystifies actual political, economic and cultural dynamics – clearly the processes involved in the coming about of nation-states are far more complex than any idea of abstract nations as unitary actors out-there-in-the-world. Thus, although the statement seems innocuous, its common sense nature is explicitly *ideological* and the result of a long process of enforcing *nationalist hegemony*. Most importantly, this *common sense* in itself serves to reinforce *nationalist hegemony*. Nevertheless Gramsci argues that common sense contains within itself *good sense*: intuitive and instinctively critical understandings of the world anchored in human *actors*' material conditions, and showing their latent potential to become conscious of these conditions and organise to change them. *Good sense* is thus broadly analogous to what is normally meant by *common sense.* Cf. Rehmann (2013), 126-131.

Commoner & Subaltern: these terms refer to the broad mass of non-elite classes. 'Commoner' defines such actors by the fact that they can – indeed, often are forced – to relatively autonomously *reproduce* themselves through systems of commons, whether common lands for grazing, or commoning practices that share produce through mutual aid, and so forestall individual destitution and starvation. This politicised term avoids defining non-elites by their functional role in *exploitative domination*, as "producers" or "peasants". These terms imply an *elite* perspective, prioritising non-elites' role in *reproducing* dominant *classes*. Commoner, on the other hand, implies a *subaltern* perspective – the perspective of non-elite classes themselves – emphasising the ability of non-elites to exist without dominant classes, and so also the effort that elites must put into enforcing *exploitative domination*. *Subaltern* is adopted from the work of Gramsci, and signifies *hegemonised* actors and classes reduced to subordinate status.

Conjuncture: a critical-historical understanding of periodisation that avoids the *positivist* and inevitably linear implications of usual periodisations, as well as the *reification* inherent in *disciplinary history*'s usual recourse to "context". *Conjuncture* refers to the way in which social, political, economic and cultural dynamics come together into a particular constellation in a particular time and place, giving it a level of historical coherence and specificity. The particular constellation of each *conjuncture* has various latent potentials, and those that eventually became

actualised are not the only important factors in understanding any given time and place. Similarly *conjuncture* as a mode of analysis demands that *actors* are *historicised* in their time and place, so that they are seen as actively participating in their *system* of *social relations*, rather than *reified* figures judged against a stage backdrop as implied by "context".

Counterpower: in the first instance *counterpower* can be defined as the resistance of *subaltern classes* and *actors*, but where resistance implies domination coming first and defining the terrain of struggle, counterpower is *always-already* prior to *hegemony*. State-systems desire a fixed terrain, a fossilised set of legible *social relations* that only exist to support their own systemic *reproduction*. What forces *hegemony* to become dynamic, and change over time and place, are the myriad ways in which *social relations* refuse fossilisation, constantly overspilling and dissolving *hegemonic* arrangements.

Critique/Critical: not a negative assessment or value judgement, but a reflexive process of working out the concepts and processes that have conditioned a given phenomenon, and so provided its form of appearance. Where a *positivist* analysis, elevating *empiricism* to an absolutist way of knowing the world, a totalising epistemology, remains at the level of a phenomenon's form of appearance, and takes that as a pre-given and isolated fact, *critique* or *critical analysis* reveals this form of appearance to be a moment in a broader set of interrelated processes that can be mapped and understood as part of a dynamic whole. Thus a *critical* mode of analysis begins from within, or immanently, to show the processes that collapse a given phenomenon's *objectified* and *reified* appearance into a broader set of *social relations*, revealing how this configuration *produced* and *reproduced* such an appearance.

Critical History: the project of writing explicitly political history, which recognises that there is no "objective" methodological standpoint, nor is there the possibility of writing history without theory. Attempting to write non-political, "objective" and theoryless history is, it is argued, only to reproduce so many elements of *hegemonic ideologies* on account of *common sense*. Cf. Wild On Collective (2018).

Crisis: crisis is technically defined as "tangible destabilisation in the necessary conditions for a class of actors' social positions". Understood from the perspective of an *elite*, for example, a crisis might be constituted by the inability to extract enough surplus to maintain and reproduce the same socioeconomic position, or it might emerge from the inability to provide enough gold to circulate this surplus and distribute effectively to elite class fractions. The fact of this crisis does not, however, help to explain its origins, which must instead be located in dynamics of *production* and *reproduction* – for example, inability to extract surplus may indicate less surplus *production* in general, or it may indicate increased action on behalf of *commoners* to hold onto more of their produce. From the perspective of a *subaltern* actor, on the other hand, *crisis* may come about because of a rising rate of *exploitative domination*, endangering her ability to maintain the irreducible minimum for life prevailing in her social system. Thus *crisis* has both objective and subjective factors at the level of particular classes and actors, with some *conjunctures* forming a *crisis* for one set of actors, but not another. Objective *crisis* can also emerge at a systemic level, however, when the *social system* as a whole experiences tangible destabilisation in the necessary conditions for *reproduction* as a whole.

Dialectic: an approach to historical and social phenomena that emphasises the processes by which they move through different and often contradictory states in different moments, and so locating them in movements of opposites through their relationality. A dialectical approach thus begins from the assumption of a state of flux, with any apparently fixed object representing in fact a given phenomenon's form of appearance in a particular moment. Dialectical approaches are therefore essential in overcoming *positivism*'s hegemonic position in the academy, providing the

tool for dissolving apparently fixed objects into the patterned dynamics of historical and social movement. See generally Lefebvre (1939).

Disciplinary History: the academic institutionalisation of history writing, divided into various "disciplines" defined by chronological, regional and, most problematically, *national* criteria, as with Armenian, Kartvelian, and Kurdish studies. Alternatively several disciplines are defined by *methodologically statist* criteria, such as Byzantine and Ottoman studies. The *common sense* of *disciplinary history* is *empiricist* and *positivist*, and so *critical history* has emerged in response.

Discourse Marker: an interjection in the narrative that marks a point reached, for example marking the end of a 'digression' and return to the main narrative. In such manner discourse markers structure the narrative, indicating for the audience how it is to be understood.

Dominion & Condominium: dominion refers to a given polity's direct control over a given area, for example Roman *dominion* over western and central Anatolia lasted from the seventh through to the eleventh centuries. This is distinct to *hegemony*, which does not necessarily imply direct control – for example imperial *hegemony* over Caucasia subsumed relatively autonomous royal polities within itself, whereas imperial *dominion* over Caucasia only began with these polities' annexation. Condominium, on the other hand, is an attribute of *hegemony* in situations where two competing hegemonic powers are more-or-less balanced in a given area, for example the Fatimid caliphate and New Rome's balanced position in the Levant between the late tenth and mid-eleventh centuries.

Elite & Elitedom: an *elite actor* is one who participates in generalised domination and is privileged in the distribution of exploited labour, receiving a portion of produced surpluses while not having themself to produce. An *elitedom* is an integrated set of elites in a particular locale, for instance in a given city like Arcn, which has an elitedom made up of different categories – merchants, aristocrats, ecclesiastics and so on. *Elite* and *elitedom* thus intersect with *class* and *class fraction* as categories, but these are not reducible to each other. *Classes* and *class fractions* are usually spread across different locales, unlike an *elitedom* which is more spatially delineated, and *elite* is a simple category that does not presume any particular political-economic configuration, whereas *class always-already* implies a particular form of *exploitative domination* – for example the imperial class and its relation to taxation.

Empiricism: an understanding of what can be known, an epistemology, that prioritises observation above all else, and operates on an absolute understanding of truth – X happened in a particular time and place, because Y source said it is so, and Y source is "reliable" because of Z reasons. When *reified* to the level of "knowledge-as-such" – i.e., nothing exists that is not empirically observable as a distinct object or event – *empiricism* constitutes *positivism*, and to a certain degree the two are inextricable. However, *empiricism* can also be understood as one particular mode of analysis among others, a reflexive standpoint that can be adopted for particular methodological problems – e.g. in what timeframe was a given composition written – without being taken as the only form of truth. In such manner a conscious *empiricism* can be used to establish the bases for other, non-positivist modes of analysis.

Exploitative Domination: this refers to the fact that exploitation and domination are mutual constitutive and so inextricable, forms of domination are required to *reproduce* exploitation, and exploitation functions to constitute forms of domination and *reproduce* them in turn. This is in contrast to Marxist traditions, which have tended to place exploitation before domination, and anarchist traditions, which have tended to prioritise the latter.

Fetishism: fetishism is the process that mediates the *objectification* and *reification* of *social relations*, so that relations between humans are perceived as distinct objects with lives of their own divorced from their social preconditions – indeed, lives that explicitly mask their social

preconditions. These *reified* objects are "fetishes", and one central example in the *History* is the figure of society-as-the-Church: the Armenian Church is in reality not a single object, but a collection of *institutional apparatuses* made up of *social relations*, itself part of a broader *social system*. In this figure, however, first the relations making up the Armenian Church, and then those constituting the whole system, are *objectified*, and then this object is *reified* as having a life of its own more real than the actual people making it up. Thus society is *fetishized* in the figure of the Armenian Church. Cf. Rehman (2013), 34-60.

Hegemony, Superhegemony & Hegemonic Cycles: *hegemony* is generalised social, political-economic, and cultural dominance by a given institution or apparatus of institutions, particularly state-systems, as well as the parapolitical apparatuses normally termed "organised religion". Beyond particular polities with their particular state-systems, inter-polity dynamics generate regional, interregional, and, at least since the onset of *capitalist modernity*, global *hegemonic* systems. Regional, interregional and global *hegemonic* systems experience cycles of a given polity's dominance – so, for Anatolia, Upper Mesopotamia and Caucasia, we can observe intersecting cycles of ancient Roman, caliphal, medieval Roman, Ottoman-Persian, Ottoman-Russian, and eventually Republican Turkish and Soviet/post-Soviet *hegemonies*, with the transitions and ruptures between these *cycles* forming *hegemonic* interregnums of varying length and depth. For some of these cycles the given polity is so total as to form a *suprhegemony*, as with the Islamic Caliphate in the late seventh to mid ninth centuries. There are also regional, interregional and global cycles of *political-economic hegemony*, characterised through Marxian political economy as different modes of production, slave- or lordship-based, tributary, capitalist and so on, which form different configurations of *exploitative domination* that shift and mutate in and out of each other depending on *conjunctural* dynamics, not successive historical "stages". On the other hand, within state-systems *hegemonic classes*, *class fractions* and institutional apparatuses exercise disciplining *political-economic* and cultural control over the organisation of *social relations*, directing exploitative domination to their particular interests. Cf. Rehman (2013), 117-146.

Historicising: this refers to the process of *situating* a given *actor* or phenomenon in its historical *conjuncture*, so that it can be understood within its own time and place.

Historical Composition: a term for narratives or texts that emphasises their existence as compositions drawing on other narratives and texts, and coming about in a particular time and place, a particular *conjuncture*.

Historical Materialism: the tradition of historiographical thought begun by Karl Marx and, to a lesser extent, Friedrich Engels, often referred to as "Marxism" but preferred here in order to avoid assumptions about economic reductivism. The name refers to the traditions emphasis on *historicism*, the *situation* of phenomena in the specificities of time and place, and *materialism*, not in the reductive sense of *material* over and against agency or human activity, but in the sense of humans engaged in *material* processes that involved combined thought and action.

Historiographical Stuff: this term refers to the basic claims about "what happened when", and seeks to emphasise the indeterminate nature of these claims outside of their presentation in a particular narrative. So, for example, the *History*'s historiographical stuff is understood as originating in the *Armeno-Roman Chronicle*, but the signification of this stuff changes radically between the two narratives, so that in the former it is directed towards an emphatically Armenian story – despite the fact that this "stuff" is pretty much entirely concerned with New Rome.

Identification: the act of a given *actor* recognising themselves or something else as falling into a particular social category, for example an *actor identifying* themselves as "being Armenian". *Identification* has a *dialectical* relation with *interpellation*, *historical actors*' identification with

social categories forming the antithesis to institutional *interpellation*, as they dynamically shape this according to their own social forms.

Ideology, Ideological Structure & Ideological Resolutions: ideology is not understood as a more-or-less coherent set of principles and doctrines to which one notionally subscribes, but as systems of logics and representations that function to naturalise historically and socially specific social relations, particularly those of exploitation and domination, for example in "human nature". Cf. Rehmann (2013), 147-178.

Imagination: the process of combining different conclusions drawn from different modes of analysis, into a particular envisioning of historical dynamics and their *lived experience*. This term has been adopted to emphasise that historians have always been engaged in imagining, but this is a virtue so long as it is *critical* and reflexive process.

Interpellation: the act of naming a given actor, calling upon them as *always-already* being X – for example, the *History interpellates elites* as *always-already* "being Armenian", with some number of them confirming this *interpellation* by recognising it and so *identifying* themselves with the *interpellated* social category. *Interpellation* is particularly a quality of *institutional apparatuses*. Cf. Rehman (2013), 147-178.

Institutional Apparatus: an interconnected set of institutions, including the practices that emerge from, are associated with, and help to *reproduce* those institutions. For example, the Armenian Church is an *institutional apparatus*, and labelling it thus helps to avoid *objectification*, implying that this apparatus is a unitary actor rather than internally contradictory. Cf. Rehman (2013), 147-178.

Libidinal Apparatus: a given composition or narrative's structured system of desire, into which *historical actors* can recognise and invest themselves, finding *ideological* resolutions for their *lived experience*. For example, in the desire to overcome the *crisis elites* are able to invest themselves in Armenianness, recognising Aristakēs' *interpellation* and *identifying* themselves with his projected vision and explanation.

Lifeworld: *intersubjective* understandings of what is self-evident or given about the world and its make-up, as perceived by a set of associated human actors in a given time and place, their "common sense", which emerges from the social practices of their everyday lives. So, for example, an essential element of *lifeworlds* in the twenty-first century is the self-evident and pre-given fact of the world's division into hundreds of discrete "countries". How these "countries" – which everyone recognises in their *good sense* is in fact just another name for "states" – are perceived varies between sociopolitical and socioeconomic *class*, time, and place, and so form part of *subjective worldviews*, but the fact of the globe's division into "countries" is general *common sense*.

Lived Experience: a combined category that articulates how *lived conditions* and *narrativized experience* come together in the *lived experience* of a *historical actor*. Thus the category asserts that experience is directly connected to material conditions, but mediated through levels of *alienation* that require *narrativisation* in order to bridge inevitable gaps and inconsistencies. These levels of *alienation* are themselves mediated by the way in which a given *actor*'s *lived experience* is defined by their *subjective worldview*, and the intersection of this with broader *intersubjective lifeworlds*. A *socially symbolic reading* is intended to read back through the levels of *alienation* represented in a given narrative, back to the *social system* that conditioned the *lived experience* of the writer who wrote the given narrative.

Mediating Passage: this refers to those passages in the *History* that serve as transitions between the narrative structure as it progresses chronologically through emplotted *historiographical stuff*, and the ideological structure as this develops through the writer's *socially symbolic act*.

Methodological Statism: the assumption that states are both histories organising principle, and the fundamental units of analysis. In terms of Byzantine Studies this is particularly clear, a discipline entirely structured around the historical fortunces of a particular state-system, and so conditioned to approach analysis from the perspective of "good" or "bad" policies based solely on the criterion of what effectively reproduced the imperial system. Nevertheless, *nationally* defined disciplines such as Armenian, Kartvelian and Kurdish studies are subject to the same methodological pitfalls, only in mystified form, as the existence of the "people" or "nation" is taken for granted, and the question becomes why this entity could not realise itself as a state.

Narrativisation: the process by which the contradiction between lived conditions and experience are resolved in a *socially symbolic* act, so that the *alienated* fractures of life-as-experienced are brought together into relation with each other. Analysing this process is what allows a *socially symbolic reading* to move back through the composition to the social system in which it was produced as an *actor*.

Nationalism & Methodological Nationalism: nationalism in this thesis is understood in both a broader and more specific manner than generally understood – any propagation of a coherent people out-there-in-the-world for political purposes related to statehood is understood as *nationalist*, regardless of the social extent or depth of these sentiments. Hence Aristakēs is *nationalist* in his attempt to interpellate *elites* that either already do or potentially could *identify* as Armenian.

Political Economy: this is understood particularly in its Marxian sense as a process of analysis that critically analyses the social whole in its dynamics of *production* and *reproduction*. Rather than splitting analysis into separate "social", "political" and "economic" realms, the political and the economic are understood as different moments of a total *social system*.

Positivism: a philosophical standpoint that views the world as discrete *objects* and events, and analyses them only as, and only when, *empirically* observable. *Positivism* is thus *empiricism* elevated to an absolutist epistemology, focused entirely at the level of a phenomenon's form of appearance. So, for example, a positivist analysis of the *History* focuses on its status as a "source" for eleventh-century "Armenia" – the composition and its subject are two totally discrete objects, pre-given and self-evident, rather than phenomena interrelated on historical and social levels, with the *History* in an intrinsic part of the dynamic processes which *reproduced* an eleventh-century "Armenia" in the symbolic universe of *historical actors*. The solution to *positivism*, then, which has become the hegemonic epistemology under *capitalist modernity*, is a *critical* and *dialectical* mode of analysis.

Reification & Objectification: reification refers to the process by which social phenomena are endowed with an apparent life of their own – that is, they are made to seem more and more real. Intrinsic to this process of *reification* is a simultaneous *objectification*, whereby social phenomena, necessarily therefore constituted by *social relations*, appear more and more "thinglike" as objects divorced from their social preconditions. So, for example, a given contemporary "country" is a *reification* of particular polities and state-systems, endowed with a life of its own as "France" or "Russia", and *objectified* so that all the various relations, *institutional apparatuses* and so on making up that "country" are erased. Cf. Rehman (2013), 78-83.

Sense of Self: this is a term offered by Rogers Brubaker to replace the more problematic "identity", articulating exactly the rough collection of self-understandings that form what people

usually mean by "identity", and so indicating a much looser, less *objectifying* phenomenon. Cf. Brubaker (2004), 28-63.

Situation & Situatedness: situation refers to the analytical process of locating a given *actor* in her historical system of *social relations*, so that she is understood as an active participant rather than an individualised figure cast against the backdrop of "context".

Social Antagonism: the tensions and contradictions inherent in *social systems* on account of *exploitative domination*, a technical term for the more colloquial and potentially misleading "class struggle". Antagonims does not only emerge between *subaltern* and *elite classes*, but also between *class fractions*, for example between the hegemonic imperial *class* and subhegemonic Caucasian *elitedoms*.

Sociality: the quality of human social relations and associations in the most general sense.

Social Production & Reproduction: *production* in simple terms can be defined as "the process by which human activity is applied to modify nature, in order to generate a particular outcome". From this general definition it can be further seen that *production* is therefore necessarily social, in that any *production* process necessitates deep relations and coordinated action between human and non-human *actors*. Furthermore, this definition implies that all processes of *production* imply simultaneous processes of *reproduction*, in particular of the conditions that enable a given process of *production* in the first place. Understood at a societal level, therefore, as all the *production* processes that go into generating an appropriable surplus, for example, these imply all of the processes of *social reproduction* that enable surplus production as such. In such manner it becomes clear how analysis of class must at the same time be an analysis of gender. *Production* and *reproduction* at a societal level also implies the forms of domination that coerce humans into participating as producers in a given process.

Social Relations & Social Being: the fundamental tenet of *historical materialism* is that all phenomena are social in the sense of emerging from relations to and between humans and non-humans. There is nothing "pre" or "post" social, there is only the quality of social relations in a given time and place. Hence in this understanding of the world's make-up – this ontology – of social relations, all individuals are *always-already social beings*, in that they emerge, live, and die in social relations, and at no point are separate or autonomous from them. This has corollaries then for understandings of consciousness, since *social being* implies the priority of *intersubjectivity* over *subjectivity*, and so the centrality of *class* and *class fraction* for a given *actor*'s *subjective worldview*.

Socially Symbolic Reading: the method adopted in this thesis as a social-historical mode of narrative analysis. It begins from the assumption that all *narrativisation* forms a socially symbolic act that bridges the contradictions in a given *actor*'s *lived experience*, thereby providing her with *ideological* resolutions meaningful within her *worldview*, and resonant with her *sense of self*. Since an *actor*'s *worldview* and *sense of self* necessarily reflect the broader *common sense* and intersecting *lifeworlds* of her *social system* and *conjuncture*, a *socially symbolic reading* provides a route to reading back through the narrative to these broader social-historical elements. The method begins by isolating ideologemes, the smallest units in the narrative that symbolise both a conceptual antinomy and a social contradiction, and then traces how these ideologemes mediate between different levels in the narrative's ideological structure. So an ideologeme effects the first translation from the literal historical referent, the "what happened", to the allegorical level – "what it means". In this translation the concrete social system, full of struggle on account of *exploitative domination*, is shorn of *social antagonism*, and re-presented in symbolic form. From this allegorical level the ideologeme effects another layer of *alienation*, the moral level of "what it means", apportioning relational meaning to the fractures of life-as-experienced. This then leads

to the final anagogic level, where the *interpellated* reader is brought into a symbolic meditation on the destiny of the narrative's utopian community, a social system shorn of all social antagonism and brought into perfect relation with each other through the socially symbolic act.

Social System: the system of *social relations* prevailing in a given time and place, a more technical term for the *common-sense* term "society", adopted in order to emphasise exactly the systemic nature of these *social relations*, and to avoid *objectification*.

Subjectivity & Intersubjectivity: subjectivity refers to things that pertain to an individual – so a *subjective sense of self* is, in more *common sense* terms, an "individual identity". *Intersubjectivity*, on the other hand, refers to things that pertain across a number of individuals. Hence *lifeworlds* are *always-already intersubjective*, in that they are *always-already* constituted by more than one individual – and indeed the vast majority of phenomena are *intersubjective*, reflecting all of our *social being*.

Value & Valorisation: value is understood as the socially recognised importance of a given activity. In terms of political economy, this is the socially recognised importance of a given amount of labour, represented by the money form it is appropriated in. It also, however, refers to the broader understanding of "values", what forms of *sociality* are understood to be valuable or *valorised*.

Worldview: an *actor*'s individual understanding of "who we are", "how we came to be" and "what it means", her *subjective sense of self* that emerges from the social activity of their everyday lives. An *actor*'s *worldview* is thus conditioned by the *intersubjective common sense* and intersecting *lifeworlds* of her *social system* and *conjuncture*, so that pre-given and self-evident elements of *hegemonic ideologies* are reproduced therein. Nevertheless, a given *actor*'s *worldview* can never be reduced to *hegemonic ideologies*, but instead reflect the particular ways in which these are actualised in *lived experience*.