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SOME COMMENTS ON ARMENIAN XAČKARS AND THEIR ICONOGRAPHY, WITH EXAMPLES FROM THE 9TH-13TH CENTURIES

Harry C. Merzian

INTRODUCTION

The Armenian xačkar is a common sight throughout Armenia today, and the skill of making xačkars is very much alive. The large number of xačkars and the wide variety of uses to which they have been put eloquently testify to the importance of the cross to the Armenian people. It might be said that the xačkars in Armenia serve more as signs of faith and religion than as objects of art. This must be borne in mind as one considers the iconographic program of certain xačkars; the faith context of xačkars in general is important to the interpretation of their decoration.

Arménians accepted Christianity as a state religion in the early 4th century, and it is documented that in the early Christian era, crosses made of wood and, later, of stone were used as symbols of the triumph of Christianity. In the 4th and 5th centuries, quadrangular steles decorated on all sides and resting on a base were built and also served the same function. In the 9th century, when the first evidence of xačkars per se appears, the image of the cross is often basic, and may be the only decoration on the xačkar's surface. Elements of the iconography in this period appear to

1 This article is based on an MA thesis prepared for the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, in 2005.
4 One might speculate on the connection between the appearance of xačkars in the 9th century and specific political situations prevalent at the time.
5 Granted, there are some with a more elaborate iconography, but these are in the minority.
have a Syriac derivation. During the period from the 11th to the 14th centuries, the xačkar's iconography expands to decorate the entire surface. Interestingly, the iconography surrounding the cross in this period is sometimes borrowed from Byzantine and Islamic iconography.

This article will offer comments on possible reasons why the Armenians would borrow these styles of iconography to complement the cross. Important questions will be asked regarding (1) why the cross maintains the center position in these designs, and (2) how the cross relates to the surrounding decoration. Representative examples of xačkars will be selected from among the surviving evidence. Although the iconographic development of xačkars may be divided into three broad historical stages, we will limit our analysis to the first two phases: the initial development of the xačkar's shape, in the 9th century; and the second, or "classical" phase, in the 11th-14th centuries. (The third phase, beginning with a 16th century revival of traditional themes with figurative motifs and Iranian stylistic elements lies outside our interests here.)

**XAČKARS FROM THE 9TH CENTURY**

**THE CROSS BECOMES THE VINE-PLANT: ICONOGRAPHIC ELEMENTS FROM ARMEENIAN HYMNOGRAPHY AND THE SYRIAC TRADITION**

*The Context*

Over the course of the 8th and 9th centuries, Armenians seem to have articulated an official Church attitude towards the cross, in the context of the hierarchy's struggle against heretical groups that opposed the veneration of any objects, the cross included. In his epistle *Against the Paulicians*, the great Catholicos Yovhan Ōjneći (717-728) implied that one

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6 Jeni, "The Figurative Arts and the Khatchk'ar", 262.
reason the cross should be especially revered and worshiped was the very fact of its rejection by deviant Christian groups.  

He states that reverence shown to a cross or image made in stone or gold should not be understood as putting faith in the stone or gold, as was


Another writer of the 11th century, Grigor Magistros, who was assigned to deal with the Tondrakite movement, emphasized that the cross is the focus of prayers of intercession:

When thou seest the sign of the cross thou shalt pray, because it reminds thee that Jesus Christ was crucified for thee; and thou must regard thyself as crucified along with him. In its presence thou shalt lay aside all earthly thoughts, and greet it with pure lips, and say: “Christ, thou Son of God, be thou merciful to me....” Thou shalt honor the pictures of the saints, and in thy prayers shalt meditate upon their sufferings and martyrs’ deaths, submitting thyself to them as thy teachers. They are related to thee, and have become witnesses of the truth. So shalt thou invoke them as thine intercessors before the true God; in order that He who sleeps not may, according to thy hand in his servant the martyr, pity thee who lovest the martyrs.


the practice of pagans; the Word instructed the faithful to worship the image of His human form, and the beneficent symbol of His victory. Furthermore, the Catholicos makes a distinction between objects that are and are not anointed with oil: it is when churches, altars, crosses, and images are anointed that divine power enters into the object. These thoughts are clearly stated in two of his canons at the Council of Duin in 719:

Canon 27: If anyone shall make a cross of wood, or of any other material, and not give it to the priest for him to bless and anoint it with the holy oil, one must not honor that cross or prostrate himself before it, for it is void and empty of the divine power, and such practice is contrary to the traditions of the Apostolic Church.

Canon 28: As for those which have been blessed and anointed so that they may become instruments of the divine mystery, we must honor and worship them, prostrate ourselves before them, and through them [Christ] dispenses his protection to men, and the graces of healing of ailments of souls and bodies.

Although it is not to be assumed that all xačkars were thus anointed, these canons are especially important as illustrations for understanding the status of the cross in the eyes of the Armenian Church. It is evident from the canons that the cross is to be revered, and that through the cross man receives divine protection and healing.

By the 9th century, the Armenian tradition already had a wealth of thinking on the cross, upon which to draw. The prayers for funeral rites are fundamental expressions of the Armenian understanding of the cross. These prayers are found in the earliest surviving Ritual [Uʿmğng], Venice ms. 457, which is usually dated to the 9th century. The aptness of the

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9 *Writings of Yovhan Imastasër Əjneći*, 42.


funeral prayers for xačkar iconography is evident in the common use of xačkars as gravestones.

During the prayers said at the home of the deceased [μαυρων], the liberation of humanity through the redemptive cross and incorrupt burial of Christ is stressed. The promise of the hope of resurrection and supplication to God to receive the soul of the deceased are given prominent place. To quote only one example, the Lord’s Prayer is adapted to the service as follows:

Our Father who art in heaven and on earth and in all,  
Hallowed be thy name upon us.  
Thy will be done, on earth as in heaven—  
You who prepared for us a rest from our earthly labors,  
In life endless and without suffering ...  
We beseech you, loving Lord,  
Receive now this soul with your holy ones,  
And count him among your saints....  
(Maštoč, Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1961, 298-299.)\(^{12}\)

In the graveside prayers, there is a direct connection made between the spoken prayer and the cross at the grave: Christ will raise the dead and will rise from the east with the holy cross before him:

When you come with glory, O Christ,  
And appear in your greatness,  
Bands of angels and hosts will run before you.  
You come with awe and with the sound of the trump,  
You awaken those who sleep,  
You raise the dead ...  
You will dawn from on high, from the east, and your holy  
Cross before you,  
You will appear revealed on earth and reward each person.  
(Jerusalem Maštoč, 1961, 328-329.)

With the image on the funerary cross placed facing west, the viewer necessarily faces the east, placing himself in a position to greet the rising

\(^{12}\) I am grateful to Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan for a preview of his translations of these funeral rites, and of the hymns on the Cross. The latter appear as part of his article, “Armenian Hymns of the Church and the Cross”, in this present volume.
Christ and, by extension, the resurrection of the deceased. It is clear that the prayers and the cross on the gravestone complement one another in creating a faith context for the iconographic program of the cross.

The cross as single image is characteristic of xačkars from the 9th century, such as those in the grouping seen in fig. 1. The liturgical canon for the Dedication of the Holy Cross (i.e., the Martyrium), which may have its origins in 4th-century Jerusalem, makes references to the cross that would justify the use of this iconographic theme. In all of these references, the cross has an obvious implication that Christ is already awaiting the faithful in heaven. A deliberate iconographic choice thus underlies Armenian xačkar iconography, distinguishing it from that of contemporary Byzantine art, with its preference for crucifixion scenes.

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14 The central focus throughout the funeral rites is on the resurrection of the soul. In general, Armenian xačkars present a cross without the corpus; the focus on hope of resurrection through Christ rather than on his death by crucifixion is thus also displayed in the funerary cross. The simplicity and emptiness of the cross give credence to a risen Lord and express the hope of joining him in eternal glory. L. Brubaker, Vision and Meaning in the Ninth Century: Image as Exegesis in the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus (Cambridge Studies in Palaeography and Codicology), Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999, 153-154 points to use of the cross without corpus as a sign of victory; e.g., the vision of Constantine in 312.


16 Although these have no cited inscriptions, and their exact dating is problematic, their form belongs to the initial phase of our analysis. Special thanks to the Centro Studi e documentazione della Cultura Armena for the use of this photograph.

17 See the translations of the canon for the Dedication of the Holy Cross (i.e., the Martyrium) in Findikyan, “Armenian Hymns of the Church and the Cross”. Abraham Terian’s forthcoming monograph devoted to the 4th-century Letter of Macarius of Jerusalem to the Armenians (to appear as vol. 4 in the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary’s AVANT series, Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press) dwells on the details of this event, known as the Encaenia.

The canon for the first day contains references to the cross as the entrance to eternal life.\(^{19}\)

(at Daniel 3)
*For we became immortal by means of the wood of life after having eaten the fatal fruit.* [14]

(at Ps 50/51)
*Through you was opened the path to the tree of life, which was guarded by the seraphim.* [17]

(at Ps 148)
*You gave us a triumphant sign, your holy cross, so that through it we might enter by the strait gate to the narrow path for which the earthly sons of mankind have yearned.* [18]

On the third day, there is reference to the cross as opening the gate to Paradise, and as guide to eternal life. Additionally, the cross is referred to as the stairway to heaven, set up as a path through the door of life.

*You erected your cross in the middle of the earth, and through it you opened to the first-created the gate of Paradise, guarded by the seraphim.* [31]

*But the life-giving wood of your cross is a scepter of power for the life of mankind and hope of creation. It became our guide to life eternal.* [33]

*It was displayed as a stairway to heaven, creating a perceptible path for the sons of men to enter through the door of life. For it was displayed as a symbol of Jacob's miracle, allowing the ascent and descent of the heavenly host.* [34\textit{b}]

\(^{19}\) Translations here and following are taken from Findikyan, “Armenian Hymns of the Church and the Cross”. The numbers he has assigned to the hymns are given in square brackets
Queen Katranidē Xačkar from Gareni (879)

The xačkar, in a cemetery at Gareni (fig. 2), has a stepped pedestal at the bottom of the cross. The cross takes up almost all of the available surface space, with the stepped pedestal underneath the cross making up a small part of the iconography. Given the reference to the cross as the stairway to heaven in the hymn cited above, association of the stepped pedestal with the stairway to heaven seems a plausible interpretation. In this interpretation, it would be reasonable for the size of the cross to be noticeably larger than that of the pedestal, indicating the grandeur of heaven.

This xačkar was erected by the wife of King Ašot I Bagratuni, Queen Katranidē, in 879. It is the oldest dated xačkar and stands 186 cm. high.\(^{20}\) We do not have any information about for whom or for what purpose the xačkar was erected. However, in the hymns the cross is repeatedly referred to as a sign of triumph with which we defeat the enemy.\(^{21}\) The Paulicians suffered a defeat in 872 (at the hands of the Byzantine Emperor Basil 1), and the Arab domination of Armenia would come to an official end in 882. If Queen Katranidē had this xačkar made for her husband, or for another noted warrior who fought against either of these enemies, the symbolism of the cross without the imagery of Christ crucified would be in context with the activities of the person whose grave it marks.\(^{22}\)

Rounded Xačkar from Tālin

Armenian xačkars, for the most part, consist of a rectangular block of tufa or basalt placed vertically to the ground. In this 9th-century example from Tālin (fig. 3), the unusual rounded shape of the stone complements the xačkar’s specific iconography.

The stone is made of basalt and has a diameter of 182 cm.\(^{23}\) The unusual rounded shape suggests a distinct function for this xačkar, but there is no surviving evidence about its use. The decoration on and around the cross is more detailed than that on other xačkars from the early period.

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\(^{20}\) Azarian, Khatchkar, 18, 20.

\(^{21}\) For an example, see n. 72, below.

\(^{22}\) The victory over the Paulicians in Byzantium “was accompanied by the shout, ‘Conquer for the cross!’” See Brubaker, Vision and Meaning, 157.

\(^{23}\) Azarian, Khatchkar, 19.
The weave design on the cross does not have a starting or ending point, which gives the impression of the cross as representing eternity. On this xačkar, the iconography can be viewed as the cross encompassing the globe, enhancing the theme of the cross as a symbol of triumph, omnipresent and protecting the world. 24

There is vegetation growing outward from the arms of the cross, and growing back to its center. The hymns for the first day of the canon for the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross are enlightening here: the cross is specifically presented as the tree of life, and it is stated that Christ's triumph over death brought salvation and eternal life "to the universe".

(at Daniel 3)

*Today, by your precious cross, you have revived your people. It is a staff of power and the tree of life, O God of our fathers.* [14]

*For he triumphed over death by his mighty power, and he called the universe to salvation and to eternal life. Exalt him forever.* [15]

**Grigor Nerēn Xačkar (881)**

The style just described above would prove consistently popular, and produce several variations which can still be seen on contemporary xačkars. These variations are often to be seen at the top of the cross, where the fruit is sprouting, and on either side of the cross, where the acanthus leaves are sprouting.

For example, the xačkar erected by the Aluan prince Grigor Nerēn (fig. 4) in the year 881 (250 cm. high) displays the cross as the tree of life. 25

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24 One thinks of the cross as the symbol of Constantine's "universal" triumph; the triumphant significance of the cross was also certainly expressed in Heraclius' triumphal procession with the relic of the cross from Persia across Armenia and back to Jerusalem in 628, at the end of its "captivity". Armenian interpretation of the Apparition of the Cross in Jerusalem (351) stresses the way in which the cross extended across the heavens. Even the expression "the Word imprinted on the Universe in the form of a Cross", from the Armenian text of Irenaeus' *Demonstration*, indicates an awareness of the cross as encompassing the whole world. See A. Rousseau, "Le verbe 'imprimé en forme de croix dans l'univers': à propos de deux passages de Saint Irénée," in *Armeniaca. Mélanges d'études arméniennes*, Venice: San Lazzaro, 1969, 67-82.

We do not know for whom or why this xačkar was erected. Although the
difference in date between Queen Katranidé’s xačkar and that of Prince
Grigor is a mere two years, Nerên’s xačkar introduces a quite different
iconographic theme, while maintaining the overall iconography of the
cross as tree of life.

At the top of the cross is the impression of a tree bearing fruit. The
fruit may serve as a reminder of how Christ brought back to life those who
ate from the tree of transgressions and how He is praised for being free from
the sin of eating the fruit.²⁶

Noraduz Xačkar

The xačkar shown in fig. 5, from Noraduz, was seemingly used as a
gravestone. It may be attributed to the 9th century on the basis of style;
there is no inscription cited.²⁷

Although the image is crudely sculpted, the theme can be analyzed in
two parts. First, the top half of the iconography is another variant on the
tree of life. The horizontal arm of the cross and above takes on a semi-
circular shape similar to the top part of a tree bearing fruit, while the vertical
arm of the cross resembles the tree trunk. The second part of the iconography
requires one to analyze the crosses on either side of the central
cross. The image of the three crosses as such brings to mind the time of
Christ’s crucifixion with the thieves on either side of him, as described in
the Gospels [Mt 27:38/Mk 15:27/Lk 23:33/Jn 19:18]. However, this alone
may not be a sufficient explanation to account for the presence of the two
crosses in all instances: in examples like that shown in fig. 16, the cross on
either side is shown being supported by a hand.²⁸ Something similar is seen

²⁶ Findikyan, “Armenian Hymns of the Church and the Cross”, §17.
²⁷ The image is taken from an album of images with no page reference or other information
(Murad M. Hasratyan, ed., Hachcary). From the 12th to the 14th century the art of xačkars was at the peak of its creativity. Thus, basic iconography such as that seen on the xačkar in fig. 5, would be treated in unique ways during the later period.
²⁸ This xačkar, from Siunik/Vayoč Jor, is dated to the 12th or 13th century. (Nersessian,
Treasures from the Ark, 112.) From the photograph of this xačkar, we cannot determine
its function. The general iconographic theme of the upper part of the xačkar is nothing
unusual: it is unclear whether the artist intended to bring to the viewer’s mind Christ be-
ing crucified with the two thieves, or simply to use the available space. However, the
portrayal of the cross in the iconography below is interesting. On either side of the cross,
in the corners, are what seem to be pendentives that are below the bottom of a dome.
The semi-circle just below this gives the impression that the cross stands in an apse.
Hanging from the main cross are pomegranates. In Christian art throughout the Middle
Ages, the pomegranate was known as the symbol of fertility. (See H. Schneider, “On the
in a 6th-century bronze votive hand with a cross, whose earlier prototypes come from the 1st to the 3rd century, A.D. During this period, bronze items in the form of hands were dedicated to Syrian gods.\textsuperscript{29} Thus, extrapolating from this earlier practice, we may speculate that the iconography of two crosses may have been intended to convey a votive sense.

\textit{Cruciform Xačkar from Šamut}

As was mentioned above, in the description of fig. 3, an unusual xačkar shape (in that case, a rounded top) can indicate an iconographic concept. In this case (fig. 6) the xačkar is again not the usual rectangular piece of stone with a cross portrayed on it; instead, the stone itself is in the shape of a cross.\textsuperscript{30} While we may never know the original reason for the artist’s choosing the actual shape of the cross instead of the more prevalent style of the rectangular stone with the cross depicted on its surface, it is possible that the artist felt the rectangular shape would obscure the iconography of the cross and wanted to make a stronger statement. Although there is no available information as to the function of this xačkar, its location on a peak may coincide with the iconography and provide a reason for the cross shape: as a symbol of Christian victory, the cross shape would have been prominently visible to all from the top of the peak.

The cross-shaped xačkar has surface carving as well. There is a round figure in the center of the cross, which may represent the universe. A cross is carved below the round figure. If one interprets the cross as representing Christ the Savior\textsuperscript{31} and the round figure as representing the uni-

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\textsuperscript{30} Image from Hasratyan, \textit{Hachcary}.

verse, it would be reasonable to say that the iconography of this prominently placed xačkar represents Christ as the Savor of the world. The repetition of the cross motif in the carving on the surface of a cross-shaped xačkar would double the veneration accorded to the cross. The rarity of Armenian xačkars in the shape of the cross reinforces the idea that the artist is trying to make a strong statement about the significance of the cross.

_Tër Yovhannēs Xačkar at Tafew (895)_

The 9th-century xačkars looked at thus far have a basic iconography which places the image of the cross at the center of the iconographic theme. At the monastery of Tafew, we see a xačkar with a more complex iconography on and around the cross (fig. 7). This xačkar was erected by Tër Yovhannēs in 895, as indicated by its inscription. The available information does not indicate where this xačkar was kept or what its function was.

In the center of the cross is a circle from which the stems of a flowery plant sprout outwards on all four arms of the cross. It is plausible to view this iconography as another version of the tree of life sprouting from the life-giving cross. The accuracy of the symmetry of the grapevine surrounding the cross is worthy of special note. However, more important for our analysis is the understanding of what the grapevine means in Armenian theology. Here, Evans’ analysis of the Armenian mosaic near Damascus Gate in Jerusalem is significant. Her findings regarding the significance of the vine and grapevine will be applicable to the iconography on this xačkar.

The _Teaching of St. Gregory_ points out the association between the vine and goodness. In commenting on Gn 49:11 it mentions how Christ, as the fulfillment of the “type” of Judah, uses the vine as a place to bind

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33 Image from Hasratyan, _Hachcary_. Tër Yovhannēs was sacristan of Tafew. Subsequently, he spent eleven years restoring the monastery and later served as bishop of Siwniq. H. Ajarian, _Zwriny Ḫbēzwēwēwēh bēzwēwēh_ [Dictionary of Armenian Proper Names], vol. 3, Erevan: State University Press, 1946, 557-558.

his donkey as a show of humility to the laborers of the vineyard.35 Evans posits a connection between the image of the vine and the thinking of early Syriac Christian writers, whose tradition was semitic rather than Greek. Syriac Christian texts were some of the first translated into Armenian; hence, there is nothing unlikely in positing an interpretation of Armenian iconography predicated on a Syriac theme.

The description of the “True Vine” by Cyrillonas (4th-5th c.) in his On the Pasch draws together the elements of Christ, the grapevine and the cross:

They saw the cluster hanging—
high at the head of the Cross;
Golgotha became the vine-plant
and from its sweetness looked out.
With their lips they received its [his] blood,
and seized with their hands his truth.
The vine is Christ who came to us,
reached out to us the Cluster in love.36

Near the top of the xačkar the grapevine is attached as it passes from one side to the other. This is the only place in the iconographic theme where the grapevine is attached to the cross, reminding the viewer of the cluster hanging—high at the head of the cross. The flowery plant sprouting out of the center of the cross, and the grapevine coming out from the cross, can be compared to the final sentence: The vine is Christ who came to us, reached out to us the Cluster in love.

XAČKARS FROM THE 12TH-13TH CENTURIES

BYZANTINE AND ISLAMIC ICONOGRAPHIC ELEMENTS

In xačkars from the “classical” period of the 11th-14th centuries, new iconographic motifs arise. These appear to be derived from Byzantine art,


on the one hand, and Islamic art on the other. While Byzantines and Armenians share the commonalities of the meaning and symbolism of the cross, and it is not unexpected for an artist from one Christian tradition to borrow iconography from another Christian tradition, the choice of borrowings is striking.

Yovhannavank Xačkar (1171)

In this xačkar from Yovhannavank, dated 1171 (fig. 9), the placement of the medallions and the connecting interlace between them is comparable to some Byzantine 11th- and early 12th-century processional crosses made of silver, silver gilt, iron, and bronze.

Although barely visible, in the upper medallion there is the abbreviation for the name “Jesus Christ”, with his image. The bottom medallion contains an image of Adam. Since this xačkar is from Yovhannavank, which means “monastery of John”, it is probable that the medallion on the left side of the cross is the image of St. John the Evangelist holding a book in his left hand and giving a blessing with his right hand. The medallion on the right side seems to be the donor offering the model of the monastery. This may suggest that the function of this xačkar was commemorative.

The medallions on this xačkar represent a variation on the Deesis. In adopting these Byzantine elements, the artist made a clear effort to create something different from the usual xačkar seen in Armenia. It may be that he and/or his patrons wished to emphasize that the Armenians were more in accord with the Byzantines than the Seljuk Turks who were gradually gaining a stronger hold on traditionally Armenian territory.

A small cross sits at the center of the xačkar. From the center, there is interlacing that shows no beginning or end and stretches to the ends of each arm of the larger cross. (This same means of expressing the cross’s


38 Compare crosses dating from the same period in Evans and Wixom, The Glory of Byzantium, 60-67.

39 At the time of this xačkar, Yovhannavank’s abbot was Xačik, according to a tombstone in the cemetery of the monastery. In the same period, Šušik, daughter of King Grigor of Balk, left the monastery a relic of St. Stephen the Protomartyr’s right hand. Karo Lafataryan, Հայաստանի երկրաբանության եվրոպական ազդեցությունները. Երևան: Արենի, 1948, էջ 48.
eternal nature was similarly seen in fig. 3.) The interlace forms the medallions around the previously mentioned figures. Medallion interlace, a framing system that developed in Roman decorative art, both separates and connects the images that it frames. This effect accentuates the independence and interdependence of the images.\(^{40}\) Hence, we see the intended relationship between Christ and Adam, and St. John and the donor on this xačkar.

**Prince Grigor Xalbakian Xačkar (1233)**

Many of the xačkars of the 13th century have a particularly rich iconography, as they combine both Byzantine and Islamic styles within the same Armenian Christian theme. This iconographic combination provides much more for the viewer to take in. A good example is the xačkar of Prince Grigor Xalbakian (also known as Grigor Přošian)\(^{41}\) built by Abēl in 1233 (fig. 10)\(^{42}\) and brought to جماع طارشين from Imirzek.\(^{43}\) Since the xačkar has been re-located, we cannot determine its original function.

On the lintel, there is the scene of the Deesis.\(^{44}\) There is a border encompassing this scene, which makes it more prominent against the ornamented background. The curve at the top of the lintel is a feature that appeared after the 9th century.\(^{45}\) As seen on many xačkars of this style, the curve actually starts from the back of the xačkar. We might speculate that this may have been done to give the impression of an apse or dome. If this was indeed the intent, the iconography is effectively accentuated by the shape of the xačkar.

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\(^{42}\) Image from Hasratyan, *Hachcary*.


\(^{44}\) Thierry and Donabédian, *Les arts arméniens*, 456.

The cross is seen with an elaborate tree of life iconography; a figure, usually identified as Prince Grigor, sits on a horse at the bottom.46 This central part of the xačkar also has a border that separates its iconography from that on the perimeter. Additionally, the cross as the tree of life is in relief and stands out from the base layer of the ornament on the xačkar. This effect emphasizes the cross as the focal point of the iconography. Furthermore, two of the roots from the tree of life form an arched panel that encompasses Prince Grigor. A possible interpretation of this feature is that it depicts Prince Grigor surrounded by the goodness the cross represents.

It has been suggested that the arched panel brings to mind a prayer niche, with a connection to floral symbolism, in which context the prayer niche is interpreted as the gate to the celestial garden or Paradise.47 Even though the xačkar has a function quite distinct from that of a prayer niche, the parallels in the decoration of prayer niches and this xačkar are clear and do apply: the borders are decorated and the iconography is arranged in such a way that the center of the iconographic theme is the focal point. As we view Prince Grigor in an arched panel with a floral background (i.e., a prayer niche is suggested), it is plausible to suppose that he was so delineated for a reason: he is the one upon whose behalf prayers are to be offered. By its iconography, the xačkar invokes prayers for his soul.

Prince Grigor is illustrated on horseback with some type of spear or staff. The choice to portray the prince as a warrior was made in the context of events taking place in 1233, when the Seljuk Turks, led by Ala’uddin Kai-Qobad (1220-1237), were invading Armenia in yet another episode of the Armenians’ ongoing struggle against them.48 The prince was in control of Antalya and the surrounding area.49

The decoration around the border of the xačkar is made up of eight-pointed stars filled with geometric or floral designs. Although this style of star was widely used long before and after the date of this xačkar, there is possibly a specific reason for its use in this instance. Davies’ research has demonstrated how early Christian baptisteries and mausoleums, both hav-

46 Thierry and Donabédian, Les arts arméniens, 456.
48 In the year 1200 the Armenians had liberated themselves from the Seljuk Turks at Amberd. Azarian, Khatchkar, 6. See fig. 8, and comments in n. 72, below.
ing an octagonal shape, can be related to the significance of the number eight. The *Epistle of Barnabas* put it succinctly:

> We also celebrate with gladness the *eighth day*, on which Jesus also rose from the dead, and was made manifest, and ascended into heaven.\(^{50}\)

In an Armenian context, the application of a scheme of eight ages to all of created time is found in the *Questions and Answers* of Vanakan Vardapet, a writer contemporary with this xačkar:

And these are the heads of the ages: in the first, Enoch was translated; in the second, the Flood; in the third, the Tower was built; in the fourth, the good news was given to Abraham; in the fifth, Solomon built the Temple; in the sixth, Christ became incarnate of the Virgin; in the seventh age ..., and at the start of the eighth will be the universal resurrection.\(^{51}\)

Given this, the eight-pointed stars in the border decoration may well have been used for the significance of the number eight. The meaning of resurrection would be complementary to the general iconographic theme, and in harmony with the expressions in the funeral rites and the hymns on the cross.

Part of the iconography on the eight-pointed stars features birds. In total, there are four birds represented. (Of one, only the end of its feathers and its feet are still visible from damage sustained.) Why are birds included in this iconographic theme?

Often, the peacock is used in Christian art as a symbol of rebirth and immortality.\(^{52}\) For the Armenians, it was flying birds, mainly swallows,

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\(^{50}\) Quoted in J.G. Davies, *The Architectural Setting of Baptism*, London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1962, 16-19. In the West, this thought was repeated by St. Ambrose, e.g., in his letters:

> But he who is born on the seventh day, although be born well, is born to labour, but he who on the eighth day obtains the mysteries of regeneration, is consecrated by grace and called to the inheritance of the celestial kingdom. (*Letter XLIV, 5*)

\(^{51}\) Thanks to Roberta R. Ervine for this reference from her forthcoming translation of Vanakan Vardapet’s work.

turtledoves and cranes, that were used as symbols of resurrection. Birds are used to decorate the canon tables of Armenian manuscripts. In some 10th-century examples, the birds are found near the upper portion of the iconography, while in some 13th-century examples, the birds were also used for decoration along the sides of the canon tables, in a way similar to their use on this xačkar.

In the Teaching of St. Gregory, bird imagery is frequently applied to the just, the resurrected and those who will be in heaven. Additionally, in the prayer for the repose of souls there is the reference,

*All nations of mankind rejoiced when they heard of the resurrection. With new feathers were they adorned at thy resurrection.*

Consequently, the inclusion of birds in the iconographic theme of the xačkar is a logical fit. The common thread running through the symbolism of birds, cross and Christ enthroned (on the lintel above the cross), is resurrection. Comparison with the earlier mentioned Armenian funeral rite, where the theme of the prayers is asking for the resurrection of the dead, is also appropriate. The vertical movement of the iconography on the xačkar, looking upward from Prince Grigor to Christ, coincides with the resurrection theme.

The surface of this xačkar has an elaborate Islamic-style ornament that serves as the entire background to the iconography. Why would Christians use an Islamic style of decoration to complement Christian iconography on a xačkar? First, we must have some understanding of what ornament is and what it means to Muslims. Then, we will be able to further explore possible answers to the question.

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53 See also, Vigen Ghazaryan, ed., *Hayrpat* [Commentaries on the Canon Tables], Erevan: Sargis Xačenč, 1992.


56 Teaching of St. Gregory, §603, where they are compared to doves; or §§605-606: “They will be joined to the band of Christ, flying the swift flight of shining-feathered white doves.” In addition, following a segment on plant metaphors of the resurrection, §§655-660 offer a variety of bird metaphors.

Baer posits that one of the primary functions of ornament is to embellish the surface of a building or of portable objects. This function embraces the expression of ideas of beauty and aesthetic concepts through the use of contemporary forms, materials and techniques. Some of the characteristics of Islamic ornament include: total coverage of the surface, establishment of relationships between forms, use of geometric motifs, infinite potential expansion, freedom in choice of subjects, and arbitrariness. Grabar adds that a comprehension of contemporary mathematical thought is also necessary to a complete explanation of Islamic ornamentation's character.

It is certainly possible that the ornament on the xačkars was used only to embellish the surface, and to "express contemporary ideas of beauty". There is nothing to suggest that such a usage would constitute an infraction of Christian canons. Another possible reason for its use would be that the artists of the xačkars, who in many cases were also architects, saw the ornamentation as a mathematical tool to give completion to the project.

Be that as it may, this ornament may well have been consciously adapted to Christian intentions: thus, it may symbolize that Christ, rather than Allah, is omnipresent. The cross is in the center of the iconography, and a Christian could say that, stemming from the cross, Christ is everywhere. However, we can also look at the ornament and the cross separately. As already described, the ornament, which is Islamic, is used as the background to the rest of the iconography on the xačkar, which is Christian. It is possible to interpret the fact that the cross is in the foreground as depicting its persistent meaning and value throughout troubled times in history. It is also reasonable to say that the cross over the ornament was intended to depict Christianity over Islam.

For Islam as for Christianity, it is axiomatic that although God/Allah may be described as all-powerful, omniscient, all-compassionate and merciful, His essence is beyond description: "His essential nature is infinite in the sense of being transcendent, uncharacterizable." The interlace line that passes over and under itself to form geometric patterns, known as the "infinite pattern", to Muslims symbolizes Allah's infinity and unity. Mad-

58 Baer, *Islamic Ornament*, 89, 90.
den posits that the Armenians, who stress the divine/human nature of Christ as one and undivided, reflect this view in their xačkars by the use of interlace. Here we see, then, the adoption of an Islamic style for a Christian expression: the iconography on the xačkar is such that the cross is inside of the borders and interior lacework of the infinite pattern.62

Another concept of early Islamic thought connected with its ornament may possibly explain the reason for the various geometric patterns seen in the border decoration of our present xačkar example. This concept, known as "atomism", says that all things are made up of and distinguished by various combinations of equal units. There is no need for a physical reality to remain the same, and it is evidence of a divine miracle if the exact same composition reappears. The Islamic artist, while not imitating or competing with God, looks to reshape the units of nature as much as possible.63 Although I do not intend to say that Armenian artists adhered to this thinking, it possibly explains why we see the geometric border decorations around xačkars change in an inconsistent manner.

The entire background on this xačkar is covered with an elaborate floral motif. Arguments have been made for the association of flowers with the celestial garden or Garden of Paradise.64 Since the Garden of Paradise is an idea common to Christians and Muslims, it is not unreasonable to use its Islamic iconography with a Christian theme. Consequently, we can view the iconography on the body of this xačkar as taking place in heaven, while the roots of the tree of life that encompass Prince Grigor are pulling him upward to resurrect his soul.

The All-Savior Xačkars of Vahram (1273-1286)

In the 13th century, there is a group of xačkars that are called Amenaprk'ič, "Savior of all". The iconography on these xačkars is a combination of Byzantine and Islamic. There is no iconography on this group of xačkars that is specifically Armenian except for the Armenian inscriptions. Nonetheless, however drastic the change in the iconography, the cross still remains as the focal point of the iconographic theme. The earliest example of such a xačkar, built by Vahram in 1273 (fig. 11), is at Halbat Monastery.65 It was commissioned by Abbot Yohannes66 and was

62 Ibid., 426.
63 Grabar, The Formation of Islamic Art, 203.
64 Baer, Islamic Ornament, 93.
65 Image from Hasratyan, Hachcary.
placed in a passage that joins a room called Hamazasp’s Hall to the church.\footnote{Karo Łafadaryan, Հայոց. Հայոց ճարտարապետության հանդիպումները մեծ պահեստների մեջ, [Halbat: Architectural Structures and Stone Inscriptions] (Հայոց ճարտարապետության հանդիպումները մեծ պահեստների մեջ 3), Erevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences, 1963. The library was restored just before 1273; there is a second xačkar, whose decoration is not of interest here, with an inscription on the back describing the restoration (p. 40). Yohannēs was the sixth abbot of that name; he succeeded Hamazasp. The text of our xačkar’s inscription is no. 74, p. 131. Other inscriptions of Yohannēs are also given.}

The scene at the top of the xačkar is the Ascension, with two kneeling angels carrying the bust-medallion of Christ. On either side of the scene there are two angels, each holding a stick in one hand, and pointing to Christ. Just above this scene there are the sun and moon, two figures with haloes, and two seraphim. The crucifixion is the prominent portion of the iconography. On either side of the cross are the Virgin Mary and St. John, and below them are Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. The twelve Apostles are portrayed in their separate niches and are turned toward Christ in prayer. It is the inscriptions that identify most of the figures depicted. On the arms of the cross, the inscription says, “The hands that created heaven didst thou spread out on the cross.” At the bottom of the cross, the founder is mentioned in the inscription: “Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on Tēr Yohannēs.”\footnote{Der Nersessian, Armenian Art, 197, 199.}

As already mentioned, this xačkar was placed in a passageway between Hamazasp’s Hall and the church. One speculates that the iconography and inscription on this xačkar were chosen to serve as a reminder to the monks to pray for the receiving of the abbot’s soul into life eternal, though it is possible that the function of this xačkar may have been more generally commemorative.

Unfortunately, we cannot say for certain if there were other xačkars with the image of the crucified Lord before 1273. Be that as it may, the question remains—why would the abbot commission a xačkar with this iconography? The entire iconographic theme has Byzantine and floral or-
nament. Der Nersessian believes that the xačkar was painted; some of the color still remains, adding to the uniqueness of the xačkar.\(^6^9\) This does not necessarily indicate that the xačkar was painted in 1273. But regardless of the time it was painted, this is a rare occurrence. Was the abbot or artist seeking to create something analogous to an icon?

It may be impossible to explain the choice for the Byzantine and Islamic iconographic combination on this xačkar, whose only trace of anything Armenian is the letters of the inscriptions and the overall form of the stone. The environment in the Halbat Monastery cannot be compared to the multi-cultural society that was to be found in the Cappella Palatina in Sicily, or even in Armenian Cilicia of the same period. Therefore, there is no easy answer as to why this iconographic selection was made. We also have no way of knowing to what extent the abbot participated in selecting the iconographic theme. It may have been his personal choice, or it may have been the choice of the artist, who decided to create something different from the norm.

The possibility that the choice of the iconography came from the artist becomes stronger when we examine more examples of his work. To our knowledge, there are another three xačkars that are signed by Vahram; these date from 1273 to 1286 (figs. 12, 13, 14).\(^7^0\) The crucifixion theme is evident in all of these xačkars (fig. 11 included). Some of the similarities among the four xačkars are: (1) the crucifixion (2) the shape of the cross (3) the niche at the bottom of the cross (4) the Deesis and (5) the floral background. These similarities, visible in xačkars whose creation spanned some thirteen years, allow one to say that the choice of this iconography may well have come from the artist rather than the patron. It was Abbot Yohannēs who commissioned the xačkar; however, had the decision for the iconography been entirely his own, the artist might not have continued to make similar xačkars with similar iconography. All of these xačkars came from the Halbat region, except for the one dated 1279. At present, the latter is in Ejmiacin,\(^7^1\) but this is not to say that it was not originally made in the same region as the others. Therefore, it is plausible that the combination of Byzantine and Islamic iconography seen on these xačkars was an idea from the artist, but congenial to the thinking and tastes of that

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\(^{69}\) Der Nersessian, *Armenian Art*, 200.

\(^{70}\) Figures 12 and 14 are from Hasratyan, *Hachcary*, fig. 13 is from Thierry and Donabédian, *Les arts arméniens*, 408.

\(^{71}\) For figs. 10, 11, 13 see captions in Hasratyan, *Hachcary*, for fig. 12 see caption for fig. 361 in Thierry and Donabédian, *Les arts arméniens*, 408, 456.
specific region. (This would still be valid whether the signature of Vahram was actually from the same artist or not.)

This iconographic theme on the Vahram xačkar of the All-Savior type is a good example of the crucifixion being placed prominently over the commonly known Islamic ornament. As was the case with the xačkar in fig. 10, these xačkars, too, can be interpreted as expressing the persistence of the cross throughout adverse times. At the bottom of the cross on each of these Amenaprk'ič xačkars, there is an arched panel with floral decoration; as in the xačkar of fig. 10, again, this could be interpreted as a focal point, invoking prayers for the soul of the deceased.

The Pōlos xačkar from Gošavank (1291)

The next xačkar under consideration is placed at a church entrance. Before turning to it specifically, one might well speculate as to what the connection is between a xačkar's function and its iconography in such a setting.72 Trilling noted that the interlace pattern seen on numerous xačkars from this period is apotropaic. Thus, one would expect to find xačkars displaying this ornamentation in places that need protection; for example, at doorways. Early Christians had considered the cross as a symbol of Christ or faith in Christ, and as a protective sign. The thought of the doorway as a special focus of danger and thus in special need of protection is ancient. Albeit Trilling seems to search out only examples of crosses and interlace which will support his assertion, it is the case that many such xačkars are indeed to be found near the entrances of Armenian churches

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72 Sometimes the connection is not at all apparent. Such a xačkar is the one erected by Spahsalar Začarē, in 1200 (fig. 8) at Amberd, commemorating a victory over the Seljuk Turks (cf. n. 48, above). A hymn for the second day of the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross offers an image that suits the use of a xačkar to commemorate a military victory:

*Christ, you gave us your cross as a staff of power. With this, we shall triumph over the lawless enemy.*

*This is a weapon of triumph, sharpened by the blood of the Son of God, and with this, we shall triumph over the lawless enemy....* [29]

One would expect the Amberd xačkar, then, to have a simple cross; however, the iconography on this xačkar is similar to what is found on other xačkars—it represents a tree of life. This iconography does not seem to flow inevitably from the xačkar's function as a symbol of victory. Why would the artist choose to use the tree of life in a context where an undecorated cross would have sufficed?
and monasteries. (They may have been added either at the same time as the construction of the building/s or after the construction.)

There is another possible reason for the placement of xačkars at the entrance to church buildings, however. This is found in the hymns. The canon for Friday in the octave of the Dedication of the Holy Cross makes reference to the cross showing the way to enter the God-created gate to the Lord’s garden/Paradise, and mentions specifically its Old Testament “type” in the blood sprinkled on the lintels of the Israelites prior to their exodus from Egypt [Ex 12].

*Let us praise the incorruptible holy cross, which became the thief’s guide and created for us a path showing us the way to enter the God-created gate to the Lord’s garden....*

*Seal of reason imprinted upon the lintels of their doors, keeping the people fearless of the extermination of the firstborn, it created for us a path showing us the way to enter the God-created gate to the Lord’s garden. [57D]*

Echoing the description of the cross as *seal of reason imprinted upon the lintels of their doors*, examples of a cross on the lintel can be seen above the south entrances of the Ereruk Basilica (dated anywhere from the 4th to the 6th century), on the lintel of the north door at the 7th-century Mrën Cathedral, at Halbat Monastery (13th century) and elsewhere.

While we have already discussed the function of the xačkar as it relates to its iconography when it is placed at the entrance of a church or monastery, it is worth noting that as the iconography on the xačkars increases in complexity, there are subtle features that add to the overall iconographic theme. The xačkar to which we now turn (fig. 15) is placed just outside the entrance of St. Lusaworič church at Gošavank. Built by Pöffos in 1291, it has some of these subtle iconographic features that are worth analyzing.

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At the top of this xačkar, there is a niche containing a blossoming tulip. It has been said that in Islamic literature, and particularly in Persian and Turkish poetry with their emphasis on Paradise, roses and tulips were used to symbolize Divine Beauty. As was noted with reference to the xačkar in fig. 10, for example, the location at the top of the xačkar is a place in the iconographic theme where Christ is depicted. Thus, the artist may have chosen the non-figurative tulip to depict Christ; the tulip is also situated between two eight-pointed stars, that are plausibly read as symbols of resurrection at the "eighth day".

In the center of the main cross, too, there is an eight-pointed star that has flowers sprouting from all eight points. The four corners of the eight-pointed star that are not on the arms of the cross are sprouting tulips. These four tulips connect with four tulips that come from the cross (as part of the tree of life), completing a continuous cycle. Once again, an impression is created of the cross as infinite. Looking at it from a different angle, if one were to consider the cross as representing Christ, then it could be said that this iconography depicts Christ as infinite. In either case, the fact that this eight-pointed star is depicted as sprouting flowers or giving life strengthens the impression that the iconography is purposefully chosen to symbolize new life.

The iconographic theme of the eight-pointed star with flowers sprouting from all points is repeated in the first two eight-pointed stars on the left and right of the main cross. Just below, on the third eight-pointed star to either side of the cross, the iconography is a circle with floral patterns stemming outward. This is somewhat similar to the center of the main cross. It seems that the circle is a symbol of infinity, and from there stems life. Continuing downward, the remaining eight-pointed stars all have a distinct image of the cross in the center. Since there are twelve of this type, one's mind almost inevitably draws a comparison with how the twelve Apostles were represented in fig. 11: there, also, the Twelve were represented vertically to just below the horizontal arm of the cross. The distance between Gošavank and Halbat, where these xačkars are found, is less than sixty kilometers. It is possible that the artists shared ideas or that Pόlos, the artist of the xačkar in fig. 11, saw Vahram's work at Halbat and created a variation on it in his own representation of the Apostles.

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78 Baer, Islamic Ornament, 95.
79 See n. 50 above, and the accompanying text.
80 Azarian, Khatchkar, 63.
At the bottom of the main cross is a round motif which is often interpreted as the universe. In this context, the cross stands above the universe. Alternatively, from the center of the motif, an apparent symbol of infinity, stem twelve flowery figures. There are two different styles of flowers, which alternate around the circle. This might be interpreted as the twelve Apostles encircling a symbol of infinity; i.e., of Christ.\textsuperscript{81} This is also seen as being above the universe. However, stepping back to look at the iconography of this central panel as a whole allows for yet another interpretation to arise: the panel can be read as depicting the levels of being, from the earthly to the Divine, starting with the world, the Apostles who came out from the world, and then the cross as Christ, the transition between earthly and divine.

CONCLUSION

The preceding few comments on xačkars from both the early (9th century) and the most prolific (11th-14th century) periods of xačkar production serve to illustrate that there are several meanings and symbolisms of the cross as portrayed in this art form, and that these have their counterparts in the liturgical music of the Armenian Church. The centrality of the cross to the iconography of these symbolic carvings parallels the centrality of Christianity for the Armenians as a nation, an enduring reality amidst their continual struggle to maintain their beliefs, whether against the dominant power of other religions or against groups within (such as the Paulicians or Tondrakites) who would have denigrated the cross and its symbolism.

As the iconography on xačkars became more complex, employing interlace and figural images, the latter remained secondary, and did not replace the cross as the central element of the iconographic theme. This fundamental characteristic resonated throughout the centuries, even when the artists were clearly borrowing iconographic styles from Byzantine art and from Islam. These imported styles were obvious, and were applied to the particular needs of the artists; they were consistently used to comple-

\textsuperscript{81} Russell points out that Armenian poetry of the 14th century and later represents Christ and his followers as flowers. \textit{Grigor Narekats'i, Matean oghbergut'ean (Book of Lamentations)}, introduction by James R. Russell (Classical Armenian Texts Reprint Series), Delmar, NY: Caravan Books, 1981, xxii, n. 32.
ment the cross and illustrate its various meanings and multifaceted symbolism.

The age-old tradition of making xačkars, that marks the landscape of Armenia even today, comes at no small cost. The arduous task of cutting the stone upon which a meticulous iconographic theme is sculpted can itself be considered a sign of faith. The task of making xačkars derives more from the faith of the people and their devotion to the cross than from a need for artistic expression per se. When it comes to describing xačkars and their makers, we may find no better words than those of Ananda Coomaraswamy:

The artist was not a special kind of man,  
but every man a special kind of artist.\(^{82}\)

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Figure 1
Armenian xačkars found in an unidentified cemetery in Armenia.
Figure 2
Armenian xačkar in Gaṙni cemetery, erected by Queen Katranidē (879).
Figure 3
Armenian xačkar in Verin Talin (9th century).
Figure 4
Armenian xačkar in Mec-Masra, erected by Grigor Nerēn (881).
Figure 5
Armenian xačkar in Noraduz (9th century).
Figure 6
Armenian xačkar in Šamut (9th century).
Figure 7
Armenian xačkar at Tafew monastery, erected by Tēr Yovhannēs (895).
Figure 8
Armenian xačkar commemorating the victory at Amberd (1200).
Figure 9
Armenian xačkar from Yovhannavank (1171).
Figure 10
Armenian xačkar of Prince Grigor Xałbakian, built by Abël (1233).
Figure 11
Armenian xačkar built in Halbat by Vahram (1273).
Figure 12
Armenian xačkar presently in Êjmiacin, built by Vahram (1279).
Figure 13
Armenian xačkar built in Drel, near Tumanyan, by Vahram (1281).
Figure 14
Armenian xačkar built in Marj by Vahram (1286).
Figure 15
Armenian xačkar built at Gošavank by Pōlos (1291).
Figure 16
Armenian xačkar from Vayoč Jor (12th-13th century).
THE HOLY MAR EPHREM
ON THE CROSS OF CHRIST

Edward G. Mathews, Jr.

I think that one could honestly say, without undue exaggeration, that in the early Church Ephrem the Syrian, or Eprem Asori as he is known in Armenia, enjoyed a renown almost unparalleled among figures of that period. His fame spread from his native Syriac-speaking land throughout the Christian empire, and his works were quickly translated into nearly every Mediterranean language of that time.²

It has recently become something of a commonplace among scholars of the early Church to state that Ephrem has finally regained the stature that he had in the early Church, after centuries of Western bias against Ephrem’s “poor stuff, lamentable standard of public taste” and “commonplace thought”.³ In today’s academic and ecclesiastical environments, very few scholars would hesitate to rank Ephrem alongside Dante as “the greatest of religious poets”.⁴ Rejoicing over this “successful revival” must, unfortunately, be somewhat mitigated as Ephrem’s regained reputation still

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¹ This is the text of a talk I presented on 8 May 2006, in the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary spring public lecture series, On the Cross. Apart from minor grammatical and stylistic alterations, I have left the text exactly as I presented it on that evening. I have added some footnotes to the text only for further reference; they are by no means intended to be exhaustive. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.


rests primarily among scholars. It remains a matter of great sadness that Ephrem continues to be too little known among the general church faithful. It is in hope, then, of making a very small contribution to the attempt at filling this very regrettable gap that I am very happy on this occasion to speak about Ephrem and to share with you a few of Ephrem’s thoughts on the cross of our Savior.

As far as the life of Ephrem the Syrian is concerned, we actually know very little, and most of what we do know is very anachronistic and inaccurate, if not downright misleading. In nearly all the surviving biographical works and artistic representations, Ephrem is remembered as a monk, or even a hermit. In actual fact, it is very unlikely that Ephrem had anything to do with monastic life, at least in any formal, organized fashion, although he no doubt lived in a very ascetic manner.

What little we do know of Ephrem’s life, after sorting out later traditions, can be gleaned from his own genuine writings. He was raised as a Christian in the city of Nisibis, was very involved in the day-to-day life of the church, and was even a “right-hand man” to his bishops, of whom the first was Jacob of Nisibis (†338), or Yakob Mcbin, a figure who is also revered in Armenian tradition. The term that Ephrem uses of himself is ‘allāna’, a word which can mean “pastor” but which is more normally used to describe the relationship of a disciple to his mentor as, for example, Elisha to Elijah; later tradition almost unanimously remembers Ephrem as a deacon. Under the last Nisibene bishop he served, Vologeses (†361), there was built a baptistery which has been called “the most beautiful Christian construction in the East”; it can still be seen today. Despite later traditions of his visits to Nicea, Caesarea, and even Egypt, there is no record that Ephrem ever left Nisibis until the very end of his life, when the Christian population was forced to evacuate. He seems to have emigrated along with his fellow Nisibenes to Amid, and from there he eventually found his way to Edessa, a total emigration of less than 140 miles. It was here in Edessa, the center of Syriac Christianity, that, according to the Chronicle of Edessa, Ephrem died on 9 June 373.7


7 L. Hallier, *Untersuchungen über die Edessenische Chronik* (Texte und Untersuchungen IX.1), Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1892, 149.
As for his writings, Ephrem wrote exclusively in Syriac. Although he personally never left his native Syria, his writings quickly did, so cherished were they by his contemporaries. While the chronology cannot be established with any certainty, it is not unlikely that within two generations after his death his works were already translated, or being translated, into Greek, Armenian, Georgian, Coptic, Latin, Syro-Palestinian, and Ethiopian. Later, they were also translated into Arabic and Russian, among other languages.⁸

While Ephrem composed biblical commentaries and apologetical treatises, he was most famous for his poetry, which the church historian Sozomen numbered at over three million verses.⁹ Ephrem wrote these poems in two styles: mémrê and madrâšê, generally translated as “metrical homilies” and “hymns”, respectively. The latter, Ephrem’s preferred medium of composition, were almost certainly sung in a liturgical context, although we do not know precisely how or when. The poems that have survived have come down to us in over fifteen collections, gathered together by his disciples and successors. These include hymns On Faith, Against Heresies, On the Church, On Paradise, On Virginity, On the Nativity, On Fasting, On Unleavened Bread, On Holy Week, On the Crucifixion, On the Resurrection, On Nisibis, Against Julian, On Abraham Qidunaya, On Julian Saba, and two collections that survive only in Armenian: Armenian Hymns and Hymns on Nicomedia.¹⁰

Ephrem is almost completely innocent of western theological thought, but his “method” of doing theology is still difficult to categorize; there is no single term or phrase that can quite capture the essence of Ephrem’s method of theological discourse. It is often referred to either as “typology”, or less inaccurately, as “symbolic theology”; one scholar has coined the term “symbolic—or mystical—synecdoche”.¹¹ Ephrem’s theological

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¹⁰ A brief resume of all the works by or attributed to Ephrem can be found in S.P. Brock, “A Brief Guide to the Main Editions and Translations of the Works of St. Ephrem,” The Harp 3 (1990) 7-29; for a much more complete listing, see K. den Biesen, Bibliography of Ephrem the Syrian, Giove in Umbria: Kees den Biesen, 2002.

method is indeed typological, but it is more than typology; it is indeed symbolic, but it is more than symbolism; it is, rather, an intricate weave of typology, symbolism, parallelism, and names.\textsuperscript{12} This method is a perfect vehicle for Ephrem’s unique and profound conception of the grand harmony that exists between God and all His creation. For Ephrem, these types (in Syriac \textit{tupṣē}, in Greek \textit{τύπος}) and symbols (in Syriac \textit{rāzē}, in Greek \textit{σύμβολα})\textsuperscript{13} are found both in the Bible and throughout all creation simply by reason of the fact that the world was created by God. Ephrem refers to nature and the two Testaments as “harps” on which the Divine Musician plays.\textsuperscript{14} In his \textit{Hymns on Virginity}, Ephrem marvels at this fact and says:

\begin{quote}
Wherever you look, God’s symbol is there; wherever you read, there you will find His types. For by Him all creatures were created, and He stamped all His possessions with His symbols when He created the world.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

In another place, he even says in mock despair:

\begin{quote}
This Jesus has so multiplied His symbols that I have fallen into their many waves.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{13} These Greek terms are only the most common parallels to the Syriac terms; they are in no way exact correspondences. For a discussion of these and other terms that Ephrem employs, see Bou Mansour, \textit{La pensée symbolique}, 23-71.


These symbols and types operate, for Ephrem, on two distinct planes: the horizontal, between the Old and New Testaments, and the vertical, between this world and Paradise.\textsuperscript{17}

But these symbols do not at all operate in any sort of one-to-one correspondence. Perhaps this can best be explained by using Ephrem’s own favorite image, that of the pearl. At the beginning of one of his \textit{Hymns on Faith}, Ephrem tells us:

\begin{quote}
I picked up a pearl, and it became a fountain; 
and from it I drank of the mysteries of the Son.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}

As he turned the pearl over in his hands it took on different hues. As Ephrem considered the Incarnation from different angles, he saw different and more profound facets to the meaning of the Incarnation. One might think of a kaleidoscope, which once gave young viewers an “infinite” variety of images, and which engendered in the child not mathematical exercises, but rather an innocent awe at the grandeur of what he or she was looking at.

And this is the entire aim of Ephrem’s poetry: to engender in his listeners that true worship of the Creator of all; to instill a desire to live the mystery of God’s love toward humanity. This desire leads to greater faith, and the resultant growth in faith clears the eye of the seeker to see more symbols, and to see them more clearly. As light is necessary for sight, so is faith necessary for recognition of God’s symbols. Faith thus leads one to a more profound sense of God’s activity on behalf of humanity. This deeper sense of the divine economy engenders a wonder and awe before the goodness of God, and it is this awe that leads one to the only proper activity of a human being, which is to give praise. As Ephrem himself says:

\begin{quote}
Look and see how Nature and Scripture
are yoked together for the Husbandman: 
Nature abhors adulterers, 
practicers of magic and murderers; 
Scripture abhors them too.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{17} Murray, “The Theory of Symbolism”, 7.

Once Nature and Scripture had cleaned the land
— they sowed in it new commandments
in the land of the heart, so that it might bear fruit:
praise for the Lord of Nature,
glory for the Lord of Scripture.\(^{19}\)

With particular regard to the cross in the hymns of Ephrem, it is surprising
that so little has been written. There is only a single article of which I am
aware that addresses this topic directly.\(^{20}\) Although Ephrem has no hymns
specifically dedicated to the cross—he does have one collection \textit{On the
Crucifixion}—it is clearly a crucially (pun intended) important element in
his thought. This can be illustrated in two ways.

All the types and symbols that we have just mentioned find their ful-
fillment, according to Ephrem, in Christ. It is Christ and Christ alone who
reveals their true meaning, and Ephrem often refers to Christ as “the Lord
of the Symbols”.\(^{21}\) One scholar has recently stated: “Nature and Scripture
are two treasuries of the self-revealing God who put on human language
for our sake. These treasuries are full of types, symbols and metaphors.
But the key to opening these and interpreting the mysteries, is the Incarnate
Son.”\(^{22}\) For anyone acquainted with the writings of Ephrem this
statement reflects a fundamental element of Ephrem’s theology, but
Ephrem is insistent on the fact that Christ is the Lord of the symbols only
by reason of His crucifixion. Ephrem clearly states that:

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\(^{20}\) P. Yousif, “La croix de Jésus et la Paradis d’Eden dans la typologie biblique de

For a nice general treatment of the cross in early Syriac writers, including Ephrem, see
Mar Cyril Aphrem Karim, \textit{Symbols of the Cross in the Writings of the Early Syriac Fa-

\(^{21}\) This title occurs, among other places, in Ephrem, \textit{Hymns on Faith}, 9.11, Beck, \textit{Des heili-
gen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Fide}, 46; Commentary on the Diatessaron, 1.1. L.
(CSCO 137)}, Louvain: Peeters, 1954, 2; \textit{Hymns on Virginity}, 6.7, E. Beck, ed., \textit{Des heili-
gen Ephraem des Syrers Paschahymnen} (CSCO 247-248), Louvain: Peeters, 1964, 6 (see
below for translation).

240.
On the fourteenth day of Nisan
He fulfilled the measure of all symbols.²³

and again:

It is Christ who brings all symbols to fulfillment in His wood,
their types in his body, their adornments in his beauty;
all of them by his entire self.²⁴

Elsewhere, he states even more succinctly, that Christ is:

The Lord of the symbols,
who fulfills all symbols in his crucifixion.²⁵

Ephrem even muses on the possibility that the “Lord of the Symbols” himself might perhaps have spent his youth meditating upon his own symbol:

O Son of the Creator, O Son of the Carpenter,
who when creating created all things in the symbol of the cross.
Perhaps even in the House of Joseph, the carpenter,
he was continuously meditating on the cross.²⁶

The other indication that the cross is of such crucial importance to Ephrem is that the cross, along with the crucified One, constitutes a component of his very own name! In one of his Hymns on Virginity, he demonstrates how this is:

If you add up the [letters] of Ephrem’s name
[they total] three hundred and thirty-one.
The cross is represented in its calculation,
and the crucified one is indicated in its total.
[Like] the cross with the hands stretched out upon it
The name [of Ephrem] hangs upon “crucified” and “cross”.²⁷

²⁶ Ephrem, Hymns on Faith, 17.11, Beck, Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Fide, 69.
What Ephrem is referring to here is an example of Syriac gematria. By assigning the numerical values to each letter, his name Ephraim, in Syriac ܐܦܪܝܡ, is counted as follows:

\[
40 + 10 + 200 + 80 + 1 = 331
\]

The words “Cross” and “Crucified” are similarly calculated:

\[
1 + 2 + 10 + 30 + 90 = 133
\]

\[
1 + 80 + 10 + 100 + 7 = 198
\]

As 133 and 198 total 331, Ephrem has thus “proved” his case that the components of his very own name are “cross” and “crucified”.

Ephrem finds symbols for the cross everywhere. When Aaron and Hur held up Moses’ hands as Israel fought against Amalek [Ex 17:8-13], this was a symbol of the victory of the cross. In Genesis, it is the wood for Isaac’s sacrifice at the hands of his father\(^\text{28}\) that is the type of the cross which Jesus himself will carry. Although, curiously, Ephrem makes no mention of this in his *Commentary on Genesis*, in his *Hymns on the Nativity* he is very explicit:

*When Sarah sang lullabies to Isaac
as to a servant who bore the image
of the King, his Lord: upon his shoulders
the sign of the cross, also upon his hands
bonds and pains, a symbol of the nails.*\(^\text{29}\)

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\(^\text{27}\) Ephrem, *Hymns on Virginity*, 21.8, Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Virginitate*, 73. It should be noted that Ephrem is speaking here of Ephraim, the second son of the patriarch Joseph (see Genesis 41:52, 48:1-20), not of himself.

\(^\text{28}\) Gn 22:3.

In fact, nearly every mention of tree or wood in the Old Testament is for Ephrem a symbol of the cross. As Robert Murray once said, "The reason why so many trees or pieces of wood can be seen as types of the cross is that the eye of faith sees every tree as pregnant with the mystery of the cross." The staffs—or rods—of Aaron and Moses are, for Ephrem, symbols of the cross precisely because of the power of the miracles they performed:

Aaron, who saw that his staff swallowed up the reptiles, anticipated Him whose cross would swallow that Reptile that swallowed up Adam and Eve.\(^{31}\)

In his *Commentary on Exodus*, Ephrem states that:

Aaron again raised the staff with his hand [Ex 8:2]—the staff, a symbol of the cross. Through it began all the plagues when it swallowed up the snakes, in the likeness of [that cross] that would [soon] destroy all the idols.\(^{32}\)

Further on in the same commentary, even the piece of wood that Moses throws in to sweeten the water becomes not just a symbol of the cross but a sign of its power:

When [Moses] threw [the wood] into the water, the water became sweet. [Ex 15:25] The wood is a type of the cross which sweetened the bitterness of the nations. After changing the water, he imposed laws on them, so that just as the wood had the power to alter nature, the law might lure [the Israelites] to freedom.\(^{33}\)

In addition to these examples, some of which are found in the works of other early Christian writers, Ephrem also finds symbols of the cross in

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places where others would not necessarily think to look. For example, in his *Commentary on Genesis*, he notes:

> After Lot had departed, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, “Rise, walk through the land, its length and its width, for I will give it to you. [Gn 13:14; RSV: northward and southward, eastward and westward].” Here the cross is clearly delineated. Thus that land promised to the forefathers through the mystery of the cross, because of the cross, repudiated any other heirs.  

Again, in the same *Commentary*, Ephrem sees the cross in Jacob’s blessing of Joseph’s sons, Ephrem and Manasseh:

> Jacob said, “Bring your sons near to me that I may bless them.” Israel crossed his hands because Manasseh was the firstborn and he put his right hand on the head of Ephraim the younger [Gn 48:9,14]. Here too the cross is clearly symbolized to depict by this symbol how Israel the firstborn departed, just as did Manasseh the firstborn, and how the peoples increased in the same manner as Ephraim the younger.  

But it is not only in the Bible that Ephrem finds symbols of the cross. As we noted above, the other “harp” on which God played was Nature. One example from nature is found in his *Hymns on Virginity*:

> For the skilled sailor who overcomes the raging sea,  
Your glorious wood is the sign; it has become the rudder of life.  
Your kindly wind blows, ships set out on a straight course through the raging sea into a peaceful harbor.  
Blessed is that one who has become a sailor,  
for he has preserved and brought forth his treasure.  

In nature too Ephrem finds somewhat unexpected examples, but interestingly, he insists that were it not for the cross, these symbols would not be

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able to fulfill even their natural functions. Several of these examples are found in his *Hymn on Faith* XVIII; it is worth looking at this hymn at some length:

.2 The order of a bird’s growth is three-fold: from womb to egg, then to the nest where it sings, when it is mature, it flies off into the air, and spreads its wings in the symbol of the Cross.

.3 Faith too matures in a three-fold fashion: for when the Apostles believed in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, then the Gospel message flew off to the four quarters [of the earth] in the power of the Cross.

.6 If a bird were to draw back its wings and deny that basic symbol of the Cross, the air then would deny it and would not bear it — not unless its wings proclaim the Cross.

.7 If a ship were to extend its masts in the symbol of the Cross from the pair of woods it forms wombs for the wind. As long as it extends [the masts in the form of] the Cross, then the way is made straight for its course.

.8 Should the ship belong to a Jew he unwillingly refutes himself by his action, for on his own ship, it is he who, with his own hands, stretches out and extends the symbol of the Cross.

.9 By the Cross the sea subjects itself to unbelievers for, unless the "crucifier" lifts up the cruciform wood [(i.e., mast) Syr. אמש אמש אמש אמש] and hangs a sail on it like a body, his course is completely impeded!

.11 Not even the ground can yield to the "crucifier" without the magnificent symbol of the Cross of light. It is the sign of the Cross that he constructs to break up the ground and to scatter his seeds in it.

.12 Without this symbol even his tunic would not fit him: to put it on he must extend his arms in the shape of the Cross. His garment is a mirror of the Cross! For on it is marked the sign that he denies.
If the "crucifier" buys a lamb and slaughters it,
he hangs it up on wood, O Lord, thus depicting your death.\textsuperscript{37}

The cross is the central mystery of the faith. It is also, as we have just seen, essential for life's simplest functions. According to Ephrem therefore, it must also be at the temporal and geographical—as well as the theological—center of the cosmos. Speaking in its temporal sense, he says:

It was in accordance with the order of things that [the Lord] brought his body from the gate of the maternal womb to the gate of the tomb. He opened the closed womb through his birth, and through His resurrection He opened the tomb which was surrounded and guarded. He placed his cross in the middle [between birth and resurrection], so that those born of the womb and making their way towards death would first meet the cross, the tree of life.\textsuperscript{38}

Also, geographically: Jerusalem, as the place where the crucifixion took place, is the center of the universe:

Christ died the death of the cross so that, through it, there might be delineated the mystery that through his death all who die will rise. [It can be seen] from this too that, when he was crucified, he was standing erect in the center of the cross, like the stone on the high-priest's breast. Jerusalem is the center of the earth because of the Just One who put his Law there, so that his rays might go forth to all the ends [of the earth]. Because, in the very same place, Grace fixed his cross so that he might extend his arms to every side, and lift up souls from every part [of the world].\textsuperscript{39}

For Ephrem, it was important that the Cross "undid" or, as some scholars put it, "annihilated" the old: in order for Christ to "make all things new"


[Rev 21:5], it was necessary, in the thinking of Ephrem, to abolish the old. For example,

That blessed tree, in its love, has come to us.  
Wood did away with wood; by fruit fruit comes to an end;  
by the Living One the murderer.  

By His sacrifice He did away with sacrifices,  
and by His incense libations,  
by His death the [Passover] lambs,  
by His bread the unleavened [bread],  
and by His Passion the bitter [herbs].  

This "annihilation" or "undoing" manifests itself in several ways in the thought of Ephrem. First, a common theme throughout a number of Ephrem's works is that "the People" who rejected the God of Moses and denied His Son, were "undone" or replaced by "the peoples", or the Gentiles. The promises now belong to them:

It was only right that they should have given the wood of the cross voluntarily to the Gentiles, since in their rebellion [the Jews] had rejected the coming of him who was bringing all blessings. In rejecting it themselves, in their jealousy, they cast it away to the Gentiles. They rejected it in their jealousy and the Gentiles received it, to their [even greater] jealousy.

Ephrem, in a very interesting passage, plays out this same rejection in the person of the thief who was crucified beside Christ; in his Commentary on the Diatessaron he says:

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40 Ephrem, Hymns on Virginity, 8.1, Beck, Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Virginitate, 28.

41 Ephrem, Hymns on Virginity, 8.9, Beck, Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Virginitate, 29.


Because Satan drew one of his disciples away from justice, [the Lord] rivaled with him in turn and drew one of his disciples away, so that he, who had been constrained to go up on the cross because of his sins, [the Lord] had him go up on the cross voluntarily on account of his faith. ... Paradise then was opened by means of a thief, and not by one or other of the just. It had been closed by Adam, who had been just, but then became a sinner. It was a sinner however who, once he was made innocent, reopened it. [Thus, the Jews] chose a thief and rejected [the Lord], but [the Lord] chose a thief and rejected them.\(^44\)

Even the Armenian version of the *Commentary on Genesis*, which generally has little in common with the genuine Syriac *Commentary on Genesis*, retains this Ephremic mode of thinking:

"Behold," [Isaac] said, "the odor of my son is like the odor of an abundant field which the Lord has blessed" [Gn 27:27]. Now, [the field] that is blessed and whose blessing has not turned into a curse is the garden in which was the tree of life, for it was not given to Adam, the robber, to eat from it and to live forever. That is, from that time when [God] cast them out, Adam, its tiller, went forth from it, and it was shut up and barred. When the Lord came and went up onto the wooden cross, he took and hung the key there on the wooden cross and he gave it to the thief, and that one opened and entered into the garden. And when it was opened, the odor of the tree of life issued forth in abundance and came and reached unto the Apostles. And by the intensity and abundance of its odor, it captivated the Apostles, so that they were overcome.\(^45\)

And it is, of course, the re-opening of this garden, or Paradise, that is the primary object of Christ's mission. Ephrem uses terms such as "savior" and "healer" which suggest His bringing deliverance, redemption and healing to mankind; nonetheless, to Ephrem the "ultimate symbol" if one can

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use such an expression, is "Paradise regained"—although, indeed, the new Paradise is a "Paradise renewed", even greater than the first.

As all the symbols find their fulfillment in Christ's cross, so is the new Paradise opened—and consequently, the old abolished—at the crucifixion. In fact, in the thought of Ephrem, no other time for that occurrence was possible. And not only was Paradise reopened at Christ's crucifixion, but this occurred specifically at the moment when the soldier's lance pierced and opened the side of Christ.

At this very moment, two things happened: first, the lance with which Christ was pierced removed the sword from the hand of that cherub whom God had placed in the Garden of Eden to prohibit anyone from re-entering. Access to Paradise became possible once again for humanity.\(^{46}\)

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Blessed is the Merciful One who saw the sword} \\
\text{beside Paradise, barring the way to the Tree of Life;} \\
\text{he came and took himself a body which was wounded} \\
\text{so that, by the opening of his side,} \\
\text{he might open the way into Paradise.}^{47}
\end{align*}\]

Elsewhere, Ephrem writes even more vividly:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Blessed indeed are you, living wood of the cross,} \\
\text{for you become a sword hidden to Death;} \\
\text{The sword which struck the Son,} \\
\text{although it struck Him, with it He killed Death.} \\
\text{For His sword pierced that sword} \\
\text{[that guarded Paradise].}^{48}
\end{align*}\]

The second thing that happened at this moment is, of course, that blood and water poured out of Christ's side when it was pierced. These elements are the fruit of the new "tree of life" for the peoples. As Christ crucified is, for Ephrem, the new tree of life, it/He also becomes the source of nourishment for His followers, as the old tree of life had been


meant to be. Again, similar thinking can be found in a collection of hymns that survive only in Armenian:

*From the rock water gushed forth for the Jewish people
who drank and were strengthened.*

*From the wood on Golgotha the Fountain of Life
gushed forth for the Gentiles.*

*Whereas the first Adam was given trees of Eden for food,
to us the Planter of Eden has himself become food for our souls.
We went forth from Paradise with Adam, when he left it,
but now that lance has been removed by another;
let us gird ourselves and enter.*

49

Following from this re-opening of Paradise, it remained for mankind to be properly attired for this re-entry into Paradise, abolishing the garments of skin with which Adam and Eve had been clothed when they were expelled from the garden [Gn 3:21-24]. Again, Christ restores not only the original garments of humanity, but garments even better than the original. In fact, what Ephrem calls the "garment of glory" is a very common theme in his writings: "Blessed is He who took pity on the leaves of Adam and sent down a garment of glory to cover his nakedness." 50 This same theme is also indicated by the Gospel account that Christ abandoned his garments in the sepulcher upon his resurrection, to indicate that humanity will have no further use for such garments and will henceforth be clothed in the garment of glory that it had before the sin of Adam and Eve. 51

This re-clothing of humanity is to Ephrem very literal, as well as being a symbol representing the restoration of the relationship between God and his people. This "re-clothing" even presents to Ephrem the quite unique—and, if I may say so, the only reasonable—exegesis of the problematic Gospel passage where Jesus curses the fig tree and causes it to wither [Mt 19:21]. Jesus is not engaging here in some rash act of destruction but instead is showing his disciples that fig leaves—the traditional interpretation of the "garments of skin"—will no longer be needed, as humanity will be re-clothed in glory:


51 See Brock, The Luminous Eye, 65-76.
When Adam sinned and was stripped of the glory in which he had been clothed he covered his nakedness with fig leaves. Our Savior came and underwent suffering in order to heal Adam’s wound and provide a garment of glory for his nakedness. He dried up the fig tree to show that there would no longer be any need of fig leaves to serve as Adam’s garment, since Adam had returned to his former glory, and so no longer had any need of leaves, or “garments of skin”.

At this point in our presentation, we have now traveled from the cross into Paradise—re-entry into which was the very purpose of Christ’s ascending the cross, and the very path along which Ephrem wants to lead all his listeners or readers. Let us conclude with a stanza from his *Hymns against Heresies* which is, in effect, Ephrem’s prayer that we follow this very same path:

*For the sake of the fruit He opened the path from the tree to the cross and led it down from one wood to the other, [*lit., from wood to wood*] from Eden to Sion; from Sion to Holy Church, and from the Church to the midst of the Kingdom. Let us go forth on this path As in a parable, Our Lord called Himself “the Way” Come, let us travel on Him to that One who begat Him.*

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ARMENIAN HYMNS OF THE CHURCH
AND THE CROSS

Michael Daniel Findikyan

Presented below is a complete English translation of the Armenian hymns\(^1\) associated with the Feast of the Exaltation (or Elevation) of the Holy Cross [Հարսանիք Հայրենիք առաջ] which, in the Armenian Rite, continues for seven days, each day having its own canon\(^2\) of hymnography. Included as well is a translation of the canon of hymns for the so-called Feast of the “Dedication of the Holy Cross” [Հարսանիք Հայրենիք առաջ], which is nothing else but the Feast of the Dedication of the 4th-century Constantinian basilicas of Jerusalem, sometimes referred to as \textit{Encaenia}.

Received tradition in the Armenian milieu, endorsed by some older scholarship, interpreted the word \textit{nawakatik} according to its secondary meaning, “inauguration”, and consequently considered this feast to be an anticipatory solemnity or pre-feast ushering in the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, as one indeed finds on the eve of some (but not all) major feasts of the Armenian Church.\(^4\) The hypothesis is problematic on a number of counts, not least of which being the content of the hymns for the Feast of the Dedication, with their patent references to the “Dedication in Jerusa-

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\(^1\) For convenience I use the word “hymn” to translate the Armenian \textit{šarakan}. I use the same word in reference to the basic Armenian hymnographic unit, or \textit{patker}, a structure usually consisting of three, but sometimes four or more verses, each known as \textit{tun}, which, in turn, is the root building block of Armenian hymnography. The Armenian terms \textit{patker} and \textit{tun} are translations, respectively, of the Greek hymnographic terms \textit{eikón} and \textit{olíkós}.

\(^2\) “Canon” refers to the Armenian term \textit{kanon}, which, in the context of hymnography, refers to the entire set of hymn genres to be sung during the Night, Morning, Midday and Evening Hours of the daily cursus.

\(^3\) Both series of texts have been translated from the \textit{Jaynkal Šarakan} [Noted Book of Šarakank], Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1914, 341-366.

\(^4\) For examples of this specious trend, which still echoes in the conventional wisdom of the Armenian Church, see Nerses Ter-Mikaelian, \textit{Das armenische Hymnarium: Studien zu seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung}, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1905. 7; Garo Bedrosian, \textit{Feasts of the Armenian Church and National Traditions}, tr. Arra Avakian, Los Angeles: Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, 1998, 241-245.
lem” [4]. and to the building of the “holy church” [1, 4, 5, 7], “the temple” [8], “the sanctuary” [7, 8, 9], and “the altar” [9]. The proper identification of the Armenian feast with the 4th-century Jerusalem festivities surrounding the consecration of the Constantinian basilicas was sealed in the work of Charles Athanase Renoux, O.S.B., on the Armenian Lectionary of Jerusalem, and his expert collation of that important document with the testimony of Egeria and other early sources for the history of 4th-century Jerusalem.

This is the first English translation of this body of hymns. Some years ago Charles Renoux published a French translation of the same hymns in the course of a study on the theology and history of the cross in the Armenian Rite. The current translation makes no pretense of improving on Renoux’s characteristically masterful work. Our renderings of the hymns differ less in substance than in interpretation. The current translation is

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5 Numerals in square brackets refer to individual hymns in the translation below. Numerals preceded by a slash [/] refer to strophes within a hymn.


7 Frederick C. Conybeare translated the canon for the Feast of Šolakaf [Effusion of Light], a commemoration of the foundation of the Cathedral of Holy Ejmiacin as the result of the vision of St. Gregory the Illuminator. Pieces from that canon are also appointed for the Third Day of the Holy Cross [35], [36], [37], [38], [39], and [40]; and the Fourth Day of the Holy Cross [41], [42]. See his Rituale Armenorum, being the Administration of the Sacraments and the Breviary Rites of the Armenian Church, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905, 23-25 (facs. repr. Elibron Classics, 2002; repr. Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2004). Cf. Renoux, “La croix”, 157, 160. In time the cathedral in Valaršapat came to be known as Ejmiacin and the name Šolagaf became associated with the church built over the wine-press, where an unnamed companion of St. Hripsimē was martyred. Agafangelos §201, 737, 748, 759. See the notes and references in Robert W. Thomson, tr., Agathangelos, History of the Armenians, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1976, 479, 480.

8 Renoux, “La croix”.
intended to accompany my forthcoming study on the emergence and development of the Feast of the Cross from within the solemnities surrounding the ancient Feast of Encaenia in Jerusalem, as reflected in the Armenian Hymnal [Saraknoc]. To facilitate reference to the hymns, numerals have been assigned sequentially to each one, beginning with the canon of the Dedication and continuing through the canons for the seven days of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. It is my hope that in addition to providing a convenient reference for my forthcoming work this English translation may also serve those who are not fluent in Classical Armenian or French, giving them access to this significant body of Armenian hymnography. In any case, the interested reader is encouraged to refer to Renoux’s translation and study, especially to his valuable notes.

Armenian tradition is unanimous in attributing all of the hymns presented here to the 7th-century Catholicos Sahak Joroporeci (†703). Scholars have long recognized that the traditional attributions of Armenian hymns are for the most part historically unreliable because these traditions generally postdate the hymns themselves by centuries. Armenian composer lists appear rather suddenly in the 13th century. Nerses Ter-Mikaelian demonstrated that, with a few notable exceptions, Armenians showed little interest in identifying the composers of the Saramank before the monumental creative activity of Catholicos Nerses Snorhali, “the Gracious”, (†1173). In fact, Ter-Mikaelian has shown how the various com-

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9 The list of authors at the beginning of the Saraknoc reads, in part, “Those who drank from the Spirit and from time to time sang the melodious hymns of the Saramank ... the [canons] of the Cross and of the Church: Isahak Joroporeci, who waged war against the Arabs.” Jaykbal Sarakam, 5. See Ter-Mikaelian, Das armenische Hymnarium, 100. On Sahak see Robert W. Thomson, A Bibliography of Classical Armenian Literature to 1500 A.D. (Corpus Christianorum), Turnhout: Brepols, 1995, 190. Norayr Bogharian [=Polarian] enumerates the following individual hymns within the canons as attributable to Sahak, implicitly rejecting the Saraknoc’s sweeping attribution of all of the Dedication and Cross canons to him: Dedication of the Holy Cross [1-3, 4, 5, 7-9]; Exaltation [10-15, 17, 18]; Second Day [23, 24]; Third Day [30-33]; Fourth Day [43, 44, 47, 48]; Fifth Day [49, 56]; Sixth Day [57-62, 63, 64, 65]; Seventh Day [66-72, 74-78]. N. Bogharian, Համարցահարելիք [Armenian Writers], Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1971, 95-97. While Bogharian does not give his rationale for paring down the traditional ascriptions to Sahak, he has clearly rejected Sahak’s authorship of the Magnificat hymns, Crucem tuam adoramus [20], and the accompanying hymn with refrain for the Veneration of the Holy Cross [21-22], as well as all hymns that are common to the hymnographic canons of indigenous Armenian feasts. Significantly, Bogharian also attributes to Sahak several other canons, whose theme is either the Church or the Cross: the Sunday of the World Church [Aæxarhamatran Kiraki], the Holy Cross of Varag, the Discovery of the Cross.

10 Ter-Mikaelian, Das armenische Hymnarium, 63-104, esp., 102-104.
poser traditions, some of them nearly contemporary with one another, not infrequently contradict each other in their attributions.\textsuperscript{11} The great Armenian philologist Manuk Abelyan came to a similar conclusion based on his exacting literary analysis of certain hymnographic canons attributed to one and the same author. Abelyan found structural, stylistic, poetic, and linguistic features that were so different as to practically rule out common authorship for the hymns analyzed by him. Abelyan wrote: "To this or that famous person are attributed a series of hymns which cannot be the work of one author."\textsuperscript{12} In general, the various author lists are accurate for those composers who chronologically succeeded Nersès Šnorhali. Before that time, the names of authors mentioned in the lists must be considered with the greatest reserve. On the other hand, traditional Armenian attributions of liturgical compositions, even when not historically accurate as to person, sometimes do reflect the era in which a piece was composed, translated, or adopted by the Armenian Rite.\textsuperscript{13}

While it would be imprudent and altogether unnecessary to rule out any contribution to this body of hymnography on the part of Sahak, a number of factors militate against a single origin for the 78 hymns that constitute the hymnographic canons for the Dedication and the seven days of the Cross. In the first place, it is most improbable that the ancient and well-known hymn \textit{Crucem tuam adoramus} [20], for example, which spread practically throughout the Christian world, was composed in Armenia.\textsuperscript{14} Furthermore, Renoux has pointed out that a number of hymns in

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 91.

\textsuperscript{12} "Այդ հայր ամրոց միսրից մտրած է ամենասեր" [History of Early Armenian Literature], vol. I, Erivan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences, 1944, 475.

\textsuperscript{13} See, for example, my conclusions regarding the role of Catholicos Yovhannès Mandakuni in the origin and development of the early Armenian rite of Dedicating a Church. While, contrary to traditional attributions, it is all but certain that Yovhannès did not author this ritual, historical reconstruction and comparison with other rites reveal that the Armenians may well have begun to adopt and to adapt the Byzantine ritual for church dedication during Yovhannès' times. Michael Daniel Findikyan, "The Armenian Liturgy of Dedicating a Church: A Textual and Comparative Analysis of Three Early Sources," \textit{Orientalia Christiana Periodica} 64/1 (1998) 117-119.

this corpus also appear in other hymnographic canons, notably those belonging to indigenous Armenian feasts of the Church. While the question of the priority of these hymns will have to be considered in our subsequent study, what can be said for the current purposes is that the presence of such “multi-use” hymns in this corpus clouds the issue of their origin.

Moreover, even a cursory reading of the canons reveals a wide variety of literary and linguistic styles and themes among the Armenian hymns of the cross. The variety is found not only among the hymns as an entire corpus, but even within the individual canons for each day. An example of this pluriformity is the presence within the corpus of three acrostic hymns. The first is embedded within the canon for Ex 15 on the Third Day of the Cross [34]. The first letter of each of its nine verses spells out “Στῆπαννός”, referring, according to Gabriël Awetikean, to Stepannos of Aparan, a 9th-century bishop of Mkk, and the apparent composer of this hymn. Elsewhere, the canon for Friday opens with a five-verse acrostic whose initials are the first five characters of the alphabet [57]. The acrostic ends abruptly after the fifth verse, never to be completed. After the acrostic and a second hymn unremarkable in the present context, there follows a second acrostic of five verses in alphabetical order, unrelated to the former acrostic. The peppering of acrostics among hymns of more conventional form suggests that the canons in which the acrostics are found have been reconstituted using pre-existing hymnographic material of various sources and genres.

Another sign of the heterogeneity of the corpus is the relative frequency of tonal modulation throughout the corpus and especially within

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17 Pace Bogharian, who seems to attribute both of the latter acrostics and the hymns surrounding them, to Sahak Joroporeći. Bogharian, Armenian Writers, 96.
individual canons. In general, constituent hymns of a series tend to be composed in a single tone of the Armenian octoechos. In the Canon for the Elevation of the Cross, to give one example, most of the series [14-16, 18-19] is in Tone 6, while the Hymn for Ps 50/51 [17] is in the musically contrasting Tone 5. Moreover, appended to this series are two supplementary hymns which do not carry one of the conventional generic designations that would associate them with a scriptural canticle or psalm. One of these is Crucem tuam adoramus [20] in Tone 4; the second seems to be the remnant of a responsorial psalm with refrain in Tone 2 [21-22]. Such a tonal smorgasbord within a single canon is not unprecedented, but it is uncommon enough to be noteworthy. While not impossible, it seems unlikely that this canon was composed by a single individual. A more plausible explanation is that the canon as we have it today contains hymns of differing provenance and date. Similar examples are to be found in the hymns for Ex 15 of the Third Day [30-31]; in the series for the same day [35-39 vs. 40]; the series for the Fifth Day [50-54 vs. 55 vs. 56]; the series for Friday [61-63 vs. 64-65]; and the series for Saturday [71-77 vs. 78].

More disconcerting for one who would read through these hymns from beginning to end as if from the pen of a single, saintly hymnographer is the striking diversity in language from one hymn to another. On the one hand, our corpus contains strophes that would be entirely suitable for inclusion in a chrestomathy for first-year students of Classical Armenian: their vocabulary is basic, their grammar simple, conventional and straightforward. Unassuming hymns such as [23], [29], [35], [65] and [75], to list just a few, may be followed, on the other hand, by verses of extraordinary complexity that employ luxuriant vocabulary woven densely into a poetic matrix by masterful exploitation of the subtleties and the marvelous flexibility that distinguish the medieval Armenian idiom. Hymns [24], [34], [49] and [76] are good examples of such rich compositions that contrast sharply with the less pretentious pieces around them.

With respect to linguistic complexity, another category of hymns strikes the eye of the pedantic translator—those that stretch conventional

18 The term "series" translates the Armenian term karg, which, in the context of hymnography, refers to all of the hymns used during the Morning, Midday and Evening hours of the Daily Office; i.e., the hymns deriving from Dan 3, the Magnificat, Ps 50, Ps 148, Ps 112, Ps 91 and Ps 140. What remains is the Hymn of Ex 15, known as the Ōrhuwīn. The hymns of the karg for a given day are often presented together, in sequence, in the Šaraknoč. For a list of the hymn genres, their derivation and their place in the daily office, see Renoux, "La croix", 145 n.1b.

19 It is not uncommon, however, for the Hymn of Ex 15 to be of a different tone than that of the rest of the canon.
Armenian grammar and usage to, and sometimes beyond the limits of correctness. Be it awkward syntax [4], [20], [21], [54]; \(^{22}\) the unconventional use of a preposition \([64]\); \(^{23}\) or an odd word choice where any number of more appropriate words are available \([13]\), \(^{24}\) our corpus of hymns betrays occasional lapses and solecisms that, if committed by a first-year student of Armenian, would be cause for swift censure. Yet before casting judgment on the linguistic proficiency of the author(s) of these texts, it is advisable to consider other explanations. Naturally, some apparent errors and difficult readings are no doubt due to typographical errors in the printed edition, \(^{25}\) or cumulative errors in the manuscript tradition. A critical edition of the Šaraknoč has yet to appear. \(^{26}\)

Another factor that must be considered is the possibility—indeed, the probability—as in the case of *Crucem tuam adoramus* that some of these hymns may in fact be translations. Beyond the well-known and now much-studied rigors attending the translation of any text, an effective rendering of hymns from one language into another carries its own difficulties and perils. In addition to the conventional criteria of good translation—precision in conveying the sense of the text, attention to rhetorical

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20 If the text is correct, “holy Church” is connected to the other phrases of the strophe by apposition alone, making the determination of who the queen is, and who—the Queen or the holy Church—has been crowned a matter of speculation. Renoux’s solution is: “Comme une reine revêtue de vêtements brodés d’or, l’Église sainte se tenait à ta droite, ornée du signe de ta croix. Dieu de nos pères.” While this rendering is reasonable, and the reference to Ps 44/45:9 is certain, the Armenian text remains far from unambiguous. Renoux, “La croix”, 146. I have opted for a more literal translation that preserves the ambiguity of the text.

21 Without editorial interpretation and emendation—namely, the addition of “and”—the final sentence in the hymn is grammatically untenable. See the notes accompanying the hymn below, as well as references there to Renoux’s alternate solution.

22 An unstated (and seemingly changing) subject further complicates the awkward construction of the second verse, and hence its intended meaning.

23 The use of the preposition \(\text{um}^\circ\) is unconventional in the context.

24 The word \(\text{ returnType} [\text{Mesiayn}], \text{“the Messiah”}, \text{while not unprecedented, is rarely encountered in liturgical texts. In the Armenian scriptures it is found only at Jn 1:41 and 4:24, where, precisely the word “Messiah” is translated “Christ” in the biblical text itself. The words \(\text{Kristos} [\text{Christ}], \text{prkič} [\text{savior}] \text{and ŷceal} [\text{anointed}] \text{are vastly more common in Armenian hymnographic texts.}

25 See my editorial emendation in [54/3] and [76/1] for example.

considerations, sensitivity to poetic style and nuance, and aesthetic quality, among others—the translator of hymn lyrics must also contend with musical and metrical considerations. Any translation necessarily represents a compromise in managing these criteria, one or more of which will have to be sacrificed for the sake of excellence in one of the others, according to the good judgment and priorities of the translator. In translating a hymn, fidelity to its original melody, meter, or even “spirit” could be given precedence by the translator over slavish precision in grammar and usage. This phenomenon may explain the oddities in the texts of some of our Armenian hymns.\(^{27}\)

Based largely on striking resemblances between certain Armenian and Georgian hymns, Renoux has recently proposed that some hymns from these two venerable traditions of Caucasian Christianity are in fact translations of earlier, presumably Greek models.\(^{28}\) It may well be that in addition to the Bible and some Greek and Syriac patristic texts, St. Mesrop Mašōtš and his early-5th-century colleagues-in-translation had early hymn texts on their desks.\(^{29}\) Yet even if it can be established that a given hymn text is a translation, one may not conclude a priori that its rendering into

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Armenian was the result of a scholarly initiative (by a single scholar or team of scholars) akin to the sweeping intellectual program of Armenia’s “holy translators”. Theological and canonical treatises, sacred scripture and even liturgical texts, though they are part of the patrimony of the entire Church, are actually the affairs of the clergy and the intellectual elite, to whom the production, study, preservation and transmission of such literary artifacts have always been entrusted. Sacred music is altogether another matter. As arguably the most popular and accessible components of liturgy, hymns enter the domain of the common folk who hear them, learn them, sing them, and who, by teaching them, perpetuate them. In the multicultural setting of 4th-century Christian Jerusalem which (as Baumstark theorized long ago and Renoux and others have begun to substantiate) became a center of diffusion for hymnographic traditions that ultimately found their way to the corners of Christendom, one can easily imagine pilgrims hearing an appealing sacred tune in Greek, and then making their own spontaneous renderings into their mother tongue. Such ad hoc translations, especially if they effectively preserved remnants of the original melody, could well spread and eventually find their way into the worship of distant churches. From there, codification into manuscript anthologies of hymns is but a small step. The reception and canonization of hymnographic material into the Armenian Rite are historical phenomena that have yet to be studied. What is certain, however, is that for the ancient rites of the Christian East, the orthodoxy and propriety of liturgical texts has been controlled, on the whole, not so much by the episodic study and decree of ecclesiastical authorities (though this has certainly occurred), but continuously, by the force of the tradition itself through the inherent momentum of the worshiping community over a period of centuries. If a hymn was beautiful, and if it was not conspicu-

30 Baumstark, Comparative Liturgy, 6, 95-96.


32 The phenomenon of liturgical reform has recently been addressed for the Byzantine Rite by Thomas Pott, who distinguishes “spontaneous” from “non-spontaneous” reform of
ously incompatible with the theological tradition (as reflected by and large in the liturgy) but was somehow reflective of the piety and Christian aspirations of the people—and especially for Armenia, of the monks—it was sung. And if it was sung, we may safely assume that it was taught and propagated. If the hymn's popular spiritual momentum was sufficient to attract the attention of scribes and their patrons, then it was only a matter of time before it found its way into the earliest anthologies of hymns and eventually into printed editions of the Šaraknoč.  

Much work remains to be done on the development of the Šaraknoč. For the present purposes it is sufficient to recognize in the hymns that follow an intriguing variety in style, content and, conceivably, origin. Also evident is the intimate relationship between the divine mysteries of the Cross and the Church, curiously but compellingly juxtaposed, contemplated and celebrated. To this curious juxtaposition we shall have to return.


The great Armenian scholar of the liturgy, Sahak Amatuni, published a collection of 270 "apocryphal" or "extra-canonical" hymns, gathered from manuscripts of the Šaraknoč and other texts, which never entered the printed editions. These hymns, and thus the rationale for their exclusion from the canonical Šaraknoč', have yet to be studied. It remains to be seen, therefore, whether these hymns fell out of use "spontaneously" through some sort of attrition, or through hierarchical decree; or, for that matter, whether these hymns, for whatever reason, never gained the popular momentum necessary to be canonized in the first place. Amatuni includes a number of spurious hymns associated with the seven-day solemnity of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Sahak Amatuni, Զեխ կար հարրավարդուն հայ առաքյալները [Old and New Extracanonical or Unauthorized Hymns], Valarsapat, 1911, 120-131.
1. *Exodus 15*

Upon the rock of faith you have built your holy Church. Keep her in peace.

You granted mercy in the dwelling of the angels and the place of mankind’s expiation. Grant her your unshaken peace.

In the temple of the glory of your holiness, children sing to you. Grant them your abundant mercy.

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34 The phrase, “dwelling of the angels [παντρομήνη ζωήματι] and the place of mankind’s expiation [παντρομήνη, place of expiation; mercy seat, ἱλαστήριον]” has parallels in John II of Jerusalem’s homily on the dedication of the Church of Sion, whose central idea is the “mercy seat”, the kapporet described in Ex 25:17. See Michel van Esbroeck, “Une homélie sur l’Église attribuée à Jean de Jérusalem,” *Le Muséon* 86 (1973) 283-304, especially §96, p. 304. I thank my doctoral student at the University of Notre Dame, Vitalijs Permiakov, for this insight. Another striking parallel is found in a prayer from the beginning of the Armenian Divine Liturgy which, by its references to “holy signs” and “this holy place”, among others, has strong hagiopolite overtones: “In this dwelling of holiness, this place of praise; in this habitation of angels [ζωήματι παντρομήνη], this place of expiation of mankind [ζωήματι παντρομήνη]; before these holy signs and this holy place ... we bow down in awe and worship....” [Michael] Daniel Findikyan, ed., *Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church with Modern Armenian and English Translations, Transliteration, Musical Notation, Introduction and Notes*, New York: St. Vartan Press, 1999, 7. I am grateful to Rev. Dr. George Leylegian for his suggestion on the possible hagiopolite origins of the prayer.

35 The phrase “unshaken peace”, oft encountered in Armenian liturgical texts, may be inspired by Heb 12:28: “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken [μονήμενον], and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe.” An intercession in the Divine Liturgy associates the “unshaken peace” of the Church with the power of the cross of Christ:

Be mindful, Lord, and have mercy and bless your holy, catholic and apostolic Church, which you have saved by the precious blood of your Only-begotten, and have freed by the holy cross. Grant her unshaken peace [ζωήματι ζωήματι μετέχει].

Findikyan, *Divine Liturgy*, 37. See also the Litany from the Morning Hour:

We have as intercessors with you, O beneficent Son of God, the asceticism of the holy martyrs; so that you may grant unshaken peace [ζωήματι ζωήματι μετέχει] to the world and keep stable the holy Church, established on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets; we beseech you.

Text taken from *Բարձոր զարմանահայր անդրե բեթենկուր* [Book of Hours of the Holy Church of Armenia], Antelias, 1969, 298. See also [43/3] below.
2.
Come, people, to the temple of Christ’s glory. Give praise, everyone, in the highest.
For Christ the king crowned her with his wondrous glory. Give praise, everyone, in the highest.
In her even the hosts of angels in their choirs celebrate the feast of the Lord. Give praise, everyone, in the highest.

3.
The life-giving cross, which became salvation for us—through it, we all sing your praise.
Radiating on earth as light from the Father of light, and a scepter of power for the faithful—through it, we all sing your praise.
A brilliant effusion, it was shown to us miraculously for relief against the enemy. Through it we all sing your praise.

4. Daniel 3
At the marvelous Dedication in Jerusalem, your cross was shown to us in radiant majesty, O Lord, God of our fathers.
A queen stands on the right, the holy Church, crowned in gold braids, in the sign of your cross, O God of our fathers.

36 The recurring image of the cross as a “scepter of power” [քրաքրար քարուկ] is derived from the Armenian text of Ezek 19:11.

37 քարուկ. It is conceivable that this term, incorporating the root nor [new], might suggest that the strophe was composed when the dedication itself was still in recent memory.

38 The strophe implies that the holy cross was displayed on the Feast of the Dedication; i.e., on September 13. This suggests that the strophe antedates Codex Jerusalem 121 (see Renoux, Le codex Jérusalem 121), where the display of the cross takes place on the second day of the Dedication, the nascent Feast of the Cross.

39 Although this strophe is clearly dependant upon Ps 44/45:9, the tantalizing reference to a “queen” standing “at the right”, presumably at the right side of the “church”, begs to be identified with Helena, who most assuredly would have been given a place of honor at the Dedication ceremonies were she present, creating a scene that doubtless would have become imprinted in the liturgical memory of the event. Eusebius, in his Life of Constantine, waxes eloquent on Queen Helena’s having presided over the Dedication ceremonies of the churches built at Bethlehem and on the Mount of Olives, while curiously withholding any role for Helena in connection with the churches on Golgotha. Scholars have postulated various hypotheses to account for this silence. Egeria informs us that “the Great Church on Golgotha” was built by Constantine “under the supervision of his mother” (25.8-9), but this does not necessarily mean that she was present at the Dedication of the Martyrium. Eusebius, Life of Constantine, 41-43.3; Introduction,
And reborn in baptism of the holy font, today we celebrate the feast with joy by the sign of your holy cross, O God of our fathers.

5. Bless the Lord and exalt him forever.
For the holy Church is betrothed to Christ. The heavenly bridegroom has crowned her with the cross; to the left and to the right it takes wing, making heirs of the nations. Exalt him forever.
Come, O people of Christ, let us bow down before this divine sign. Nailed to it with him, we also reign with him. Exalt him forever.

6. *Magnificat*
We magnify you, O Word and indescribable offspring of the Father. Having taken body from the Virgin, you were made manifest to us.
We magnify you, who trampled down death as God, and dissolved the seal of death. You were lifted to the cross by the will of the Father.
We magnify you, who were buried in a new tomb, and you rose on the third day. You ascended to heaven with the glory of the Father.

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translation and commentary by Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, 137-138, 291-294 and the references to scholarship on this issue. Whether historically or metaphorically, the hymn clearly intends to posit a link between the Queen and the Church.

40 References like this one and allusions to baptism are many in this corpus of hymns. Sozomen distinctly associates baptism with the feast of Encaenia:

> The festival continues eight days, initiation by baptism is administered, and people from every region under the sun resort to Jerusalem during this festival and visit the sacred places. (*Ecclesiastical History*, II.26)


41 This hymn is one of only nine Magnificat hymns in the entire Armenian tradition that are not addressed to the Mother of God. Michael [Daniel] Findikyan, *The Magnificat Troparia of the Armenian Apostolic Church: Translation with Historical and Theological Commentary* (unpublished Master of Divinity thesis submitted to St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary, Crestwood, New York, 1989), 10, 19, 91. This raises the possibility that this hymn came about as the result of adapting a pre-existing hymn to make it conform with the style and content of the Magnificat hymns. Note that if we omit the stock phrase “We magnify you” from the beginning of each strophe, we are left with what appears to be a primitive credal statement.
7. Psalm 50/51
In your sanctuary of holiness, which you chose by your coming, O Christ; in her we beseech you in unison: hear the voice of our supplications; accept us and revive us.

With your divine light, shining more brightly than the sun, you illuminated your holy church. In her we beseech you in unison: hear the voice of our supplications; accept us and revive us.

Today even the angels rejoice at the brilliance of your holy church. In her we beseech you in unison: hear the voice of our supplications; accept us and revive us.

8. Psalm 148
In the temple of the holiness of your glory, O Christ, which you illuminated from heaven by your divine dawning. In her, we shall sing your praise unceasingly.

You granted us the redemptive mystery of the knowledge of God your high-priest and witness. By his supplications, spare us.

Keep untroubled and peaceful the faithful people of the holy Trinity, those who take refuge in the sanctuary of your glory.

9. Psalm 112
Your altar, O Lord of hosts, was erected in faith in your sanctuary. Come, people, let us venerate it.

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42 The theme of brilliant light from the cross outshining the sun is connected with the Apparition of the Holy Cross over Golgotha on May 7, 351. See the note and references accompanying [71/1]. The same image is found in the account of the baptism of the royal army by St. Gregory in Agafangelos (§833); a radiant likeness of the Lord’s cross appeared over the Euphrates river, “and the light shone out so brightly that it obscured and weakened the rays of the sun” [ο μεγάλος στόχος του θανάτου, όσο τοποθέτησε ο θεός στην απόβασή του και στην ἐκκολησίαν]. Thomson, Agathangelos, 368-369. Jesus’ apparition to St. Paul is described in the same terms: Acts 26:13.

Today a precious stone was set up in your sanctuary. Come, people, let us venerate it.
In her was offered the true sacrifice and the incorrupt oblation. Come, people, let us venerate it.

CANON FOR THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS
FIRST DAY

10. Exodus 15
O Christ God, who spread apart your spotless arms on the cross and gave us the sign of triumph. Through it preserve our lives.
O Christ God, in the world-saving unfolding of the arms of your cross you gave us a scepter of power; through it preserve our lives.
Through the wood of life you restored to life the one who died by eating from the wood of transgressions. Through it preserve our lives.

11.
The holy cross, relief for the faithful, was erected on earth, triumphing over the enemy. Come, people, let us venerate it.
God the creator was lifted onto the cross, and upon it he renewed and revived those who had died in sin by eating of the wood.
When the Son of God comes again, the holy cross will appear and shine light, for it is the hope of the faithful.

12.
The wondrously built and powerful wood of your cross, O Christ, appeared on earth as a scepter of power. Come, people, let us venerate it.
Concealed by the Jews, the unconcealed treasure was revealed as the wood of life at the Queen’s wish. Come, people, let us venerate it.
This is the weapon of triumph for the faithful, trophy and victorious seal against the enemy. Come, people, let us venerate it.

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44 The text is ambiguous, perhaps intentionally so: the “unfolding of the arms” [pwnq.ws wcnwuds jhbd] may refer to the arms of Christ and/or the arms of the cross.
13. The indescribable apparition appeared to the Queen. Sitting in the court in Jerusalem she searched for the precious wood of the cross, upon which they nailed the Messiah.\[45\]

At her stern command, the Jews assembled, displaying for her the precious wood of the cross, on which the creator of creatures went up and ascended.

When the holy cross was discovered in the place of holiness with a fragrant scent of incense, the universe was abundantly filled with gifts.

14. Daniel 3

Today, by your precious cross, you have revived your people. It is a scepter of power and the wood of life, O God of our fathers.

For we became immortal by means of the wood of life after having eaten the fatal fruit. The four-armed cross was erected in the middle,\[46\] facing south,\[47\] O God of our fathers.

And you willingly ascended your cross, O Christ. You spread out your arms\[48\] to gather to yourself the human race, which had been alienated from you, Lord, God of our fathers.

15.

Bless the Lord and most highly exalt him forever.

Today the only-begotten Son spread out his spotless arms upon the holy cross. Most highly exalt him forever.

\[45\] Անամնելված [Mesiayn]. This term for “Christ”, “the Savior”, or “the anointed One” is encountered very rarely in Armenian literature. The authoritative ՆԵՐՆԵՐԻ ԼՐԱՑՄԻՆ [New Lexicon of the Armenian Language], Venice: San Lazzaro, 1836 (repr. Erevan: Erevan State University Press, 1971), II, 252 (hereafter, NBHL) refers only to one other text; it too is found in the Ծագուն.

\[46\] By implication, either “in the middle of the two thieves” or “in the middle of the Earth”, as is common in patristic thought. For the latter, see Renoux, “La croix”, 149, n.11.


\[48\] A continuation of the allusion to Jb 39:26.
For he triumphed over death by his mighty power, and he called the universe to salvation and to eternal life. Most highly exalt him forever.

16. Magnificat
Mother and virgin maiden of Christ, who always intercede for the world. All nations call you blessed.\(^{49}\)
Pure dove and heavenly bride, Mary, temple and throne of God the Word. All nations call you blessed.
Through you the rational ones and the earthly ones were well-pleased, and through you, we have drawn near to the wood of life. All nations call you blessed.

17. Psalm 50/51
O wood of life, instead of the fatal fruit, you gave forth Christ. Fortify and protect the covenant of the faithful.
Through you was opened to us the path to the tree of life, which was guarded by the seraphim.\(^{50}\) Fortify and protect the covenant of the faithful.
Through you the forefather was liberated from [the sin of] eating the fruit. And all faithful bow down before you. Fortify and protect the covenant of the faithful.

18. Psalm 148
Called "tree of knowledge",\(^{51}\) it removed and exiled us from life. Through it Mother Eve transgressed and deceived the forefather.
But the life-giving wood of your cross is a scepter of power for the life of mankind and hope of creation. It became our guide to life eternal.
You gave us a triumphant sign, your holy cross, so that through it we might enter by the narrow gate\(^{52}\) to the restricted path, for which the earthly sons of mankind have yearned.

19. Psalm 92
Faithful people, let us always sing a triumphant and new blessing in the highest to Christ the king.

\(^{49}\) Lk 1:48.
\(^{50}\) Gn 3:24.
\(^{51}\) Gn 2:9.
\(^{52}\) Mt 7:13-14.
Who came to illuminate his chosen, holy church. And he crowned her with his holy cross. Let us sing his glory.
Today we too celebrate the Dedication of [the] Holy Cross. And to the Savior we offer glory and honor forever.

20. [Hymn for the Veneration of the Cross]\(^{53}\)
Before your cross, O Christ, we bow down;
And we magnify your burial;
And we glorify your holy resurrection.
Come, faithful ones, let us bow down to Christ our God.
For he came [and]\(^{54}\) through his cross, granted gifts to the world.

21.
Glory to the holy cross. Alleluia.\(^{55}\)

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\(^{53}\) This is the Armenian version of the ancient and practically universal hymn, *Crucem tuam adoramus*. Its placement at the end of the canon, as well as its lack of a generic designation, corroborate its antiquity. It follows the pattern observed in the *Book of Hours*, where, in series or lists of liturgical propers, newer material tends to supplant older material, leaving material of sometimes remarkable antiquity at the end as a sort of postscript. See Michael Daniel Findikyan, “The Multiplication of Propers in the Armenian Liturgy of the Hours and Baumstark’s Law of the Preservation of Ancient Liturgical Material,” in R.F. Taft and G. Winkler, eds., *Comparative Liturgy Fifty Years after Anton Baumstark (1872-1948): International Congress at the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome, 25-29 September 1998* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 265), Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 739-759. The heading in square brackets does not appear in the Šarakncöç.

\(^{54}\) The text as it stands (“For he came through his cross granted gifts to the world”) is untenable without editorial interpretation and emendation; see the alternate solution in Renoux, “La croix”, 150. This seems to be an example of a syntactical compromise made during the translation process, presumably out of musical considerations. (Armenian deacons throughout the world sing this well-known hymn, with its lively melody, many times during Holy Week—without editorial emendation.)

\(^{55}\) There are subtle but highly significant differences between the text of the refrain in the Šarakncöç and that printed in *Uemq nEmf\(\eta\)* [Great Week], 467 and more recent editions of the liturgical services of Holy Week. Instead of the third-person demonstrative suffix, \(\eta\), the latter substitutes the second-person demonstrative suffix, \(\eta\), on the words “cross”, “Sion”, and “resurrection”. This emendation effectively changes the meaning of the refrain, imparting a possessive sense to the words, i.e. “your cross”, “your Sion”, “your resurrection”. By contrast, the correct version in the Šarakncöç (reflected in the translation above) maintains the third-person suffix, which is equivalent to the definite article. This entails interpreting “cross”, “Sion”, and “resurrection” not as moments in Christ’s divine economy to be glorified *per se*, but as architectural monuments in Jerusalem to be venerated as a result of their consecration and dedication; i.e., “the Cross”, re-

22.
The light of your countenance became a sign for us,
And you filled our hearts with joy.  
You filled them with their fruits of wheat, wine and oil.

Glory to the holy cross. Alleluia.

Glory and worship to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
Now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Glory to the holy cross. Alleluia.

**CANON FOR THE SECOND DAY**
**[MONDAY]**

23. *Exodus 15*
The power of your holy cross, O Christ, which you erected for the salvation of the world—let it protect us from all temptation.

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ferring to Golgotha, vis-à-vis the Martyrium; “Sion”, the church built over the site presumed to be the Upper Room and the third holy place in 4th-century Jerusalem; and “the Resurrection”, that is, the Anastasis, the rotunda built over the tomb of Christ. Armenian deacons and scribes, separated from the solemn Dedication festivities in Jerusalem by centuries and many hundreds of miles, made sense of the refrain by making an almost imperceptible adjustment to the text.

56 Cf. Ps 4:6-7. This and the following verses are abbreviated in the text, as follows: ἔργον ἔργον ήκρεος ἡμῖν. Σάφοι ήπιοι ἐκ οἵματος. Βολὴ οἴκου ἡμῶν. Ἰακ. 346. The well-known text appears in full form in *Great Week*, 467. The abbreviation of liturgical texts in printed editions and manuscripts is a sign of their familiarity, and thus frequently of their antiquity. See Amatuni, *Extracanonical Hymns*, η.—η. [= iii-iv].

57 Cf. Ps 4:7. The verse seems to have been selected for its reference to the divine Light, a pervasive image in these hymns, as well as for its patent Eucharistic and sacramental overtones.
For on it, God, you were lifted up, and on it you poured out your precious, holy blood. Let it protect us from all temptation.
And by the sign of your cross you showed the world your second coming. Let it protect us from all temptation.

24. When Adam turned a deaf ear in life-creating Paradise, through the deceptive seduction of the wood of the tree of knowledge, he ate of the fruit by the serpent's seduction and settled below, in the capital, Jerusalem.
The dawn gave forth in Paradise the wood of the cross. He came and met his end in the place of the Skull. The elemental wood rose to the sentry. The holy four-winged cross is the protector of our souls.
Uncreated Word, consubstantial with the Father and the Holy Spirit, having appeared on Earth, creation glistened. By the power of the mighty One, he assigned to us too the grace of adoption.

25. Daniel 3
Today the sign of the Lord appeared among the luminous clouds through the fiery effulgence of the cross. Those who saw it, ran ahead to the city and told of your sign, O Lord, God of our fathers.
The ray of the holy cross shone from the East; your sign, with rays like the sun, was seen by all at the third hour.
The redemptive cross was shown to us as a refuge, so that with it, we might triumph over the lawless enemy. We have received the seal of establishment, your cross, upon our souls.

26. Bless the Lord and exalt him forever.
Today the sign of the holy cross appeared in heaven. Come, new people, together bless the Lord and exalt him forever.
Today, reflecting upon holy Golgotha, an awesome sight appeared to the people. Priests, bless the Lord in song, exalt him forever.

27. Magnificat
Mother of light, O Mary, holy virgin, you gave birth in the body to the light from the Father, and you became the dawn of the Sun of righteousness. With spiritual song, we magnify you, O holy lady.
The throne and tree of life of the immortal fruit were more excellent than the cherubim, O Ark of the covenant of the Word and golden urn of the heavenly manna. With spiritual song, we magnify you, O holy lady.
Through you was opened the gate to paradise, guarded by the seraphim, and through you was given to us the wood of immortality, which, upon it, the immortal victim of the sacrifice today illuminated from heaven. With spiritual song, we magnify you, O holy lady.

28. Psalm 50/51
The sign of the triumph having appeared from heaven, today the light of mercy has shone upon the nations.
And today a multitude of people saw the holy cross adorned with beams of light.
At the appearance of your holy cross, O Christ, today Jerusalem reveled exceedingly,
And the multitude of the assembly saw the rising of the light of your divine, radiant sign.
The all-triumphant power of your cross, O Christ, was displayed by your power as relief against the warring enemy.

29. Psalm 148
Christ, you gave us your cross as a scepter of power. With this, we shall triumph over the lawless enemy.
This is a weapon of triumph, sharpened by the blood of the Son of God, and with this, we shall triumph over the lawless enemy.
This is a throne of sovereignty, and upon it is seated Christ, the Son of God. And with this, we shall triumph over the lawless enemy.
This is an altar of holiness, and upon it is sacrificed Christ, the Lamb of God. And with this, we shall triumph over the lawless enemy.
This is a forerunner to the day of the coming of the Savior, and a crown of splendor for the faithful. And with this, we shall triumph over the lawless enemy.

59 This hymn is unusual in that it contains five verses, not the conventional three. Also, it is devoid of the penitential themes and refrain that customarily comprise the hymn associated with Psalm 50/51 (known as Osormea). These may be signs of later manipulation and reconfiguration of existing hymnological material into a more conventional Armenian hymnographic form.
60 Like the preceding hymn [28], this hymn contains five short verses. The simple declarative statements of each verse are also similar to the previous hymn. The possibility that the material in each of these hymns has a common origin that was later redistributed according to the conventional Armenian hymnographic forms is not implausible.
30. *Exodus 15*

The life-giving cross, which became salvation for us—through it, we all sing your praise.

Radiating on earth as light from the Father of light, and a scepter of power for the faithful—through it, we all sing your praise.

In a brilliant effusion, it was shown to us miraculously for relief against the enemy. Through it we all sing your praise.

31.

O Word of God, you are seated upon the throne of glory; you humbled yourself from the paternal bosom; you took body from the Virgin, restoring our earthen nature in place of the fallen light.

You erected your cross in the middle of the earth, and through it you opened to the first-created the gate to Paradise, guarded by the seraphim, raising him to life after he ate the fatal fruit.

And by the power of your cross, O Christ, you founded the catholic Church as a dwelling for the holy Trinity, enlightening the nations in her through rebirth.

32.

To you, O Christ, who gifted the catholic Church with the triumphant, precious, God-pleasing holy sign, we offer hymns of praise always in the highest.

By your will, O Christ, and on the wings of the all-powerful Holy Spirit, and in a choir of angels, it soars and comes upon Mount Varag to dwell in us.

Come, people, let us venerate this divine and holy sign. Together, lift up your hands in holiness and let us always glorify the one who dwells upon it.

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61 These three verses are also found in the hymn of Ex 15 for the Feast of the Dedication of the Cross. *Jaynkal Šarakan*, 341.

33. Called "tree of knowledge", it removed and exiled us from life. Through it Mother Eve transgressed and deceived the forefather. But the life-giving wood of your cross is a scepter of power for the life of mankind and hope of creation. It became our guide to life eternal. You gave us a triumphant sign, your holy cross, so that through it we might enter by the narrow gate to the restricted path, for which the earthly sons of mankind have yearned.

34. *Acrostic Hymn ("Stepannos")*

[θ] You gave your holy cross as holy of holies to the church, O Lord, for with your immaculate hand extended upon it with nails, you gathered to yourself all races of rational beings. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

[σ] The luminous holy sign was previously shown as a vision of the mystery beyond words; for the blazing, fiery seraph surrounded it in the midst of splendid and majestic Paradise. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

[β] It was displayed as a stairway to heaven, creating a perceptible path for the sons of mankind to enter through the door to life. For it was displayed as a symbol of Jacob’s miracle, allowing the descent and ascent of the heavenly host. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

[ϕ] The marvelous wise one called it the tree of life by means of the Spirit. For the Creator of creatures was lifted upon it. And drops of his incorruptible blood, flowing from his side, erased the sins of the one born from the side [of Adam]. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

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63 Gn 2:9. This hymn is also used as the hymn of Psalm 148 for the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross, *Jaynkāl Šarakān*, 346.

64 Mt 7:13-14.

65 The cave of the Anastasis is often referred to as the "holy of holies" by Eusebius, Cyril of Jerusalem and Jerome. See the references in Wilkinson, *Egeria*.

66 Gn 2:9.

67 Gn 28:10-17.

68 θύμων [pāytn].

[U] By the radiance of the vision of a column, it was shown to be a guide for the people of Israel. An intense strike of the scepter parted the mountainous swells of water, transforming it into solid rock. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

[U] Working wonders, Moses lifted up his hands in the form of a cross against the Amalekites, and he defeated Beliar in battle. And he who was sealed upon a solid mass, with it, subdued and vanquished [Beliar]. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

[U] By the sign of your cross, O Lord, the darkness that swallowed up the world dispersed with a shudder. For you crowned with that all-conquering holy sign the man who had sinned by transgressing against the wood of life, crucifying him with you. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

[U] The wondrous sign, which, at the end of that brief day extinguishes [the day’s] condensed, supposed light, yet radiates from heaven with its tremendous rays; and all the companies of the infidels lament, groaning. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

[U] By the intercession of the holy Mother of God, accept our requests, Lord, when you rise in the East with wonder beyond words, making the triumphant, holy cross your forebear. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

35. Daniel 3
Rejoice today, O holy church and celebrate your feast, O daughter of Sion. For the Lord God was pleased to dwell in you, the God of our fathers.

Rejoice, Queen, daughter of Sion, and exult O supernal Jerusalem, for Christ the king of heaven is coming to you, Lord, God of our fathers.

70 Ex 17:8-13.

71 Mk 15:33.


73 Cf. Mt 21:5, Jn 12:15.
Rejoice, Sion, mother Church, for upon you the divine ray from the Father of light has shone, Lord, God of our fathers.

36. Bless the Lord and highly exalt him forever.
He crowned the holy Church today with the sign of his cross. Bless the Lord and highly exalt him forever.
He enlightened the race of the sons of mankind by rebirth of the holy font. Bless the Lord in song. Highly exalt him forever.

37. Magnificat
Rejoice, Mother of God, exalted by the seraphim. Light shined forth from you upon us and you became the mother of Him who stretches out [the heavens]. Races and tribes magnify you.
You became the foundation of the Church. You became the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit [and are] served by the angels. Gabriel heralded to you the good news. Races and tribes magnify you.
We see the terrible, wondrous mystery revealed. Having conceived by the Holy Spirit, you gave birth to the Word of God in the body. Races and tribes magnify you.


75 Cf. Is 60:1ff.

76 Is 40:22.
38. Psalm 50/51
You established your Church by your word, O Christ, upon the apostolic rock, in order to sing spiritual songs in her.
The altar of holiness was erected in her. [Christ] distributes his body and blood and from this he gives us renewal for the forgiveness of our sins.
In a dove-like appearance, the Holy Spirit descends upon the body and blood of the Lord for the healing of our spirits.\(^77\)

39. Psalm 148
Shine, Jerusalem!\(^78\) Adorn your fortress, for the heavenly Groom has come near you. Granting you salvation, he has crowned you with his wondrous glory.
Today Christ, the Sun of righteousness has shone on you, O Queen, the daughter of Sion. And the grace of the Holy Spirit has been spread about you plentifullly with gifts.
Rejoice today holy Sion, mother Church.\(^79\) Brighten your children like the sun, for Christ the king has filled you with inexpressible glee.

40. Psalm 112/113
The Only-begotten descended from the Father and the light of glory with him. Voices have resounded in the abysses of hell.
Seeing the great light, Patriarch Gregory joyously recounted it to the faithful king.
Come let us build the holy tabernacle of light. For in it light has shone on us in the land of Armenia.

\(^77\) The descent of the Holy Spirit, while referring to the Eucharistic epiclesis, also alludes, of course, to Pentecost, one of the biblical events that was associated with the Church of Sion.

\(^78\) Cf. Is 60:1-5.

\(^79\) See the notes accompanying Hymn [35].
CANON FOR THE FOURTH DAY
[Wednesday]

41. Exodus 15
Rejoice, O holy Church, for Christ the king of heaven today has crowned you with his cross, and he has adorned your fortress with his wondrous glory.

Exult greatly, O daughter of Sion, for through your renewal earth has today become heaven, and the heavenly king was pleased to dwell within you.

With the choirs of the heavenly hosts, we celebrate today and lift up unceasing glorification. Be glad, immaculate Bride, in your inscrutable mystery.

42.
A tabernacle of holiness was erected, the holy Church, and Christ the king was sacrificed in it. Come, faithful, let us bow down to Christ with a new song.

The choirs of angels, having descended from heaven, sing aloud. Making melody with their wonderful voice, they sing songs of praise, chanting the three holies.

Rejoice! Be glad, O holy Church become bride. Brighten your children in praise of Him who shined a beam of light on you, O mother Church.

43. Daniel 3
Today the holy Church was filled with divine grace, a resplendent column of light. In her we praise you, O God of our fathers.

Bridal chamber for righteous men, in her a divine beam radiated from the Father of light. In her we praise you, O God of our fathers.

80 A possible allusion to a rite of surmounting the church building with a cross. According to the vision of St. Gregory, “the Lord’s cross” [ἡ χριστιανικὴ ἑκκλησία] appears at the apex of the four churches of Valarsapal. Agafangelos §738, cf. 769; Thomson, Agathangelos, 278-279, cf. 308-309.

81 Cf. [2/2] from the Canon for the Dedication of the Cross: “For Christ the king crowned her with his wondrous glory.”

82 Cf. Zec 2:10.

83 Cf. [39/3] from the Canon of the Third Day: “Rejoice today holy Sion, mother Church. Brighten your children like the sun, for Christ the king has filled you with inexpressible glee.” See the notes accompanying [35/1].
Bestower of mercy, O Lord, bestow upon her your unshaken peace.\textsuperscript{84}
There we praise you, O God of our fathers.

44. Bless the Lord and most highly exalt him forever.
With the bodiless multitudes, he comes today to the holy Church, Christ
the king. All nations praise and most highly exalt him forever.
Come into the Church, you who believe in the Holy Trinity. Praise God.
Joyfully proclaim a feast to the corners of the table, and most highly
exalt him forever.

45. \textit{Magnificat}
Rejoice, O Mother of God, hope and mother of salvation. O recipient of
light, we magnify you.
Mother of light and virgin, treasure of life, with a divine voice and praise,
we magnify you.
Holy mother of the immaculate light, honored by angelic praise, we mag-
nify you.

46. \textit{Psalm 50/51}
Renovating us, whom you created in your image, you made us a temple
for yourself. Receive this temple in our midst, renovated by us, as a
dwelling place for you.\textsuperscript{85}
O Giver of life, you grant us the living image of your servile form, bear-
ing the one who raises up all in the glory of the holy Trinity.
Save the son of your servant, whom you honored by the sees of Rome,
where they placed the rock of faith of the foundation of the holy
Church.
You wondrously adorned this latter [church]. You made its foundation
glisten by dwelling in it with [us], thereby making the sumptuous, lus-
trous glory of this latter house greater than that of the first.

\textsuperscript{84} For “unshaken peace”, see the note accompanying [1/2].

\textsuperscript{85} Clearly the hymn is associated with the renovation or rededication of a church.
Aweti\kern1pt\kern1ptkean, citing the 13th-century historian Vardan Arewel\kern1pt\kern1ptti, attributes the hymn to
A\kern1pt\kern1ptot Bagratuni (7th century), who composed it for the dedication of an Armenian
church known as \textit{Amenajirkti}\kern1pt\kern1ptt [Savior of All]. See the references and other interpreta-
tions of this hymn in Renoux, “La croix”, 162, n.53, citing Aweti\kern1pt\kern1ptkean, \textit{Explanation},
522-524.
47. *Psalm 148*

Adorner of the holy Church, with magnificent glory, he set out a glittering dwelling, a tabernacle for the choirs of angels. Praise him all creatures!

With miracles arising from himself, he laid her foundation upon the foundation of the holy Apostles. And he granted forgiveness in her. The sons of mankind were promoted among the supernal, vigilant angels. Praise him all creatures!

By his omnipotent power and through his indescribable birth,\(^{86}\) he divinely opened his hands to the human race. And he bestowed dazzling vestments and ornaments as incorruptible grace, and wreathed crowns from the unapproachable light. Praise him all creatures!

48. *Psalm 112*

Today the multitudes of heaven rejoice and delight at the dedication of the holy church, for an eternal high-priest has been granted to us for the enlightenment\(^{87}\) of the holy, universal Church. Glory to your advent, O Lord.

Today a pillar of light from on high became our shelter, for the heavenly king comes into the holy church and the hosts of angels proliferate to celebrate with humanity. Glory to your advent, O Lord.

Today the true high priest, by means of the divine law, honors and erects the quadrangular table of the cross. He distributes the body and blood of the Lord, worthily sacrificed. O saved, new people, draw near in purity and beseech Christ to grant this to us for length of days.

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**CANON FOR THE FIFTH DAY**

[THURSDAY]

49. *Exodus 15*

O chariot\(^{88}\) beyond description, and vessel of the impenetrable mystery, O holy four-winged [cross], invisibly reverenced in awe by the hovering, fluttering wings of the seraphim; we bow down to you. Come to our aid in our comings and goings.

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\(^{86}\) δυνάμει, lit. “origin”, “arising”.

\(^{87}\) The Armenian Տուտարմուց, like the Greek φωτισμός-φωτισμός alludes to baptism. NBHL I, 901.

\(^{88}\) This hymn stands out among most of the other hymns of the octave by its luxuriant vocabulary and style.
Invincible sign and vessel of the unassailable power, O holy four-winged [cross], you appeared to the dismay of the rebels, who shuddered and trembled for fear of you, and submerged in dread, they perished. We bow down to you. Come to our aid in our comings and goings.

The prophet Zechariah envisaged you as a golden lamp stand with seven lamps of light,\(^9\) shining upon the earth. O holy four-winged cross. The immaterial being who came into being in our [human] nature, and who was stretched out upon you, purified the filth of the human race through the fountain flowing from his side. We bow down to you. Come to our aid in our comings and goings.

When you emerged from burial,\(^10\) O holy four-winged [cross], the legions of the Slanderer’s armies perished in awe of you; and at the rising of the youngster\(^11\) the faithful rejoiced. We bow down to you. Come to our aid in our comings and goings.

Heaven on earth, and speechless intercessor for us in heaven, O holy four-winged [cross]. You are the forerunner to the awesome and blazing resplendence [that] foretells the coming of the Son of God. We bow down to you. Come to our aid in our comings and goings.

When you shine from the East in light beyond words and enlighten those of faith; and when you condemn the race of faithless Jews, O holy four-winged [cross]; enlighten me also, darkened in sin, and promote me among those of the book of your kingdom of heaven ineffable, so that you may be unceasingly praised. And yours is the glory forever. Amen.

\(^9\) Zec 4:2.

\(^{10}\) The hymnographer has portrayed the discovery of the cross using language that alludes simultaneously to Christ’s resurrection from the tomb. Eusebius makes a similar juxtaposition with reference to the excavation of Christ’s tomb:

As stage by stage the underground site was exposed, at last against all expectation the revered and all-hallowed Testimony of the Saviour’s resurrection was itself revealed, and the cave, the holy of holies, took on the appearance of a representation of the Savior’s return to life. (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 28; Cameron/Hall, 132-133.)

\(^{11}\) All three of the traditional accounts of the discovery of Christ’s cross (traditionally referred to by their protagonists, Judas Kyriakos, Helena and Protonike) involve the miraculous resuscitation of a youth, after coming into contact with the true cross. For the most recent of a spate of studies on the discovery of the cross, see Hans J.W. Drijvers and Jan Wilhelm Drijvers, *The Finding of the True Cross: The Judas Kyriakos Legend in Syriac* (CSCO 565, Subsidia 93), Louvain: Peeters, 1997 with its *status quaestionis* and bibliography. Cf. [59] below, which explicitly mentions “Judas”, thus attesting the Judas Kyriakos tradition.
50. Daniel 3

Today the choirs of angels rejoice at the dedication of Christ’s holy Church, singing praise to the Lord God of our fathers.

Today the choirs of the holy Apostles celebrate the feast of the upper Jerusalem; in the intelligible temple they offer spiritual songs, singing Lord God of our fathers.

Today lifting up their voices in song, the choirs of faithful cry out together: Make us worthy, in the temple of your holiness to glorify the all-holy Trinity, the Lord, God of our fathers.

51. Praise the Lord and most highly exalt him forever.

The One who enlightened the holy, universal, mother Church with the divine light; all nations praise and most highly exalt him forever.

The One who elevated the children of the holy Church to the choirs of the supernal hosts; priests, bless and most highly exalt him forever.

52. Magnificat

The angel proclaimed the good news with a divine voice, O Mother of God, heavenly gate. Rejoice, O delighted one, the Lord is with you.

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92 Renoux notes that this hymn and the others in the series except [56] are taken from the canon for the Feast of the Ark of the Covenant [磬 biển Ｕｙｙｒｙ ｘｕｙｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙｕｙùù]. Renoux, "La croix", 165, n.60. In the 1914 Jerusalem edition of the Ṣarāknuṭ, the Magnificat hymn [52] is also other than that in the canon for the Ark of the Covenant. Jaynakal Šarakān, 315, 358. Celebrated on July 2 in the Armenian and Georgian Lectionaries of Jerusalem, the feast of the Ark of the Covenant is said to commemorate the deposition of the Ark, according to 1Sam 7:1ff, in the home of Abinadab on a hill at Kiriath-Jearim ["City of Forests"] following its return from capture by the Philistines. Renoux, Le Codex Jérusalem 121, II, 348-349; Tarchischvili, Lectionnaire, II, 19. Renoux includes this feast among a few others for which he admits, "Il y a cependant des commémorations dont la célébration à tel jour ne peut s’expliquer." Le Codex Jérusalem 121, II, 54/192. In Peter the Deacon’s expanded gloss on Egeria’s diary (12th c.), De locis sanctis, L.2, he writes: “Nine miles from Jerusalem there is a church at Kiriath-Jearim, the place where the Ark of the Lord used to be.” Wilkinson, Egeria, 187-188. He may be referring to a Byzantine church whose ruins were excavated early in the last century at the summit of the Tel Deir el Azar, near Abu Ghosh. Maraval, Lieux saints, 297-298. Based on examination of mosaic relics, it has been tentatively dated to the second half of the 5th century. H. Vincent, “Église Byzantine et inscription romaine à Abou-Ghôché,” Revue Biblique 16 (1907) 414-417; Asher Ovadiah, Corpus of the Byzantine Churches in the Holy Land (Theophaneia: Beiträge zur Religions- und Kirchengeschichte des Altertums 22). Bonn: Peter Hanstein Verlag, 1970, 18-20. The hymnography for this feast shows little interest in this obscure episode from the Old Testament, but rather manifestly concerns the dedication of a church. One may speculate that these hymns derive from the dedication of the ancient church on this site.
The One seated among the cherubim with the Father was pleased to dwell incorruptibly in your womb. Rejoice, O delighted one, the Lord is with you.

He who was surrounded and protected by the fiery seraphim is revealed among men today on an earthly lap. Rejoice, O delighted one, the Lord is with you.

53. Psalm 50/51
Shine, Jerusalem, for your light has come. Adorn your fortresses and the glory of the Lord will rise upon you.

Praise from Sion befits you, O God, with songs of praise and psalms; and prayers will be offered to you in Jerusalem.

Praise the Lord, Jerusalem, and bless your God, new people, [the] queen, [the] daughter of Sion.

54. Psalm 148
Today the divinity exults, creating the earth anew. Holy choirs of vigilant angels glorify [the divinity]. Let us, too, adorn this holy feast with shouts of praise.

Today we too delight in this feast with universal acclaim. With magnificent resplendence [the divinity] appeared in the world. [Expressions of] thanksgiving rush toward God. They unceasingly proclaim the living Word.

Rejoice and exult virgin holy Church and Bride of the heavenly Groom. Behold we see the Anointed One, Christ, coming to you, the Light to the nations!

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93 For a similar theme see [39]. This hymn is also remarkable in that it does not contain the usual penitential themes and refrain typical of the Olormea hymn associated with Psalm 50/51. See the note accompanying [28].

94 Ps 60:1.

95 Ps 64:2-3.

96 Ps 147:12.

97 Unusual vocabulary and syntax give the impression that this strophe could be a translation.

98 This verse, inspired by Mt 21:5, should read $\eta\nu\nu\nu\nu$ instead of $\eta\nu\nu\nu\nu$ an apparent typographical error. Jaynkal Šarakan, 359.

99 Cf. Is 60:3.
55. *Psalm 112*

Wisdom of the Father, who, from the beginning, in wisdom established the Church, which Moses signified by prefiguring it in the tent resembling heaven on Mount Sinai, illuminated by the glory of God.\textsuperscript{100}

Imprinting the mystery of your incorruptible economy from the holy Virgin in the ark of the divine covenant\textsuperscript{101} of the testaments of the Word of God, a place of rest for the glory of the uncreated One.

In the turning of the Jordan\textsuperscript{102} you gave an example of the return of our nature to life; and through the destruction of Jericho by means of the ark, [you gave an example of] the captivity of death and of hell; of the cross working wonders in the new Israel. The children shall sing praise to you, Lord.

56. *Psalm 91*

Today the choirs of angels rejoice at your establishment on earth, O luminous, heavenly tabernacle, O holy Church. Be glad, precious Stone, our shelter and hope.

Delight, immaculate Bride, fittingly veiled. Adorn yourself with glory and run ahead to the heavenly Bridegroom. Be glad, barren mother of many, behold the Bridegroom comes to you.\textsuperscript{103}

In this very place a font of baptism was renovated for us; a mother’s womb, in which, conceived by the Spirit, second birth is given to us who believe in Christ. Be glad, you, who formerly had no mother, behold your son comes to you.\textsuperscript{104}

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\textsuperscript{100} Cf. Ex 33:7-11.

\textsuperscript{101} The only reference to the Ark of the Covenant in this series of hymns occurs here and in the following strophe. These hymns are said to have their origin in the ancient hagiopolite Feast of the Ark of the Covenant. See Renoux, “La croix”, 165 and the annotations to [50] above. Yet even here the references are drawn from classical patristic typology for the Mother of God and the cross. The hymn shows no interest in the details of the Feast of the Ark of the Covenant drawn from the lections appointed in the Armenian Lectionary of Jerusalem for the feast. Renoux, *Le Codex Jérusalem* 120, II, 348-349.

\textsuperscript{102} Jos 3:7-17.

\textsuperscript{103} Cf. Mt 25:1-13; Zec 9:9.

\textsuperscript{104} There can be little question but that the original context of this hymn involves the renovation of a church, including the installation of a baptismal font. The word “without mother” [\textit{mawālufield}] alludes to an existing, or newly-built church which formerly had no baptismal font, and therefore, according to the traditional imagery, could not become a mother to those who are to be born again in baptism. The baptismal font is portrayed, in other words, as the “mother” of the church.
Canon for Friday

57. Exodus 15

[α] Let us praise the incorruptible holy cross, which became the thief’s guide and created for us a path showing us the way to enter the God-created gate to the Lord’s garden.

[φ] A key to the kingdom was given to earthen mankind. Thus having been cast out for eating the first meal, [mankind could enter] eternal life. It created for us a path showing us the way to enter the God-created gate to the Lord’s garden.

[γ] It appeared to the Egyptian race in the shape of a scepter, showing them the power of the holy cross and snatching away the magical scepters. It created for us a path showing us the way to enter the God-created gate to the Lord’s garden.

[η] Seal of understanding imprinted upon the lintels of their doors, keeping the people intrepid against the extermination of the firstborn. It created for us a path showing us the way to enter the God-created gate to the Lord’s garden.

[β] Appearing like a pavement of precious stone in the form of the cross, dividing the Red Sea [and] leading the people by a pillar of cloud, undifferentiated light. It created for us a path showing us the way to enter the God-created gate to the Lord’s garden.

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105 The first five strophes of the hymn form an acrostic. Neither the acrostic nor its refrain, however, continues at the end of the hymn, as is customary.

106 The refrain, “showing us the way to enter the God-created gate to the Lord’s garden” is also found in the concluding strophe of the penitential hymn of Ex 15 in Tone 3, ἴνα ἡμᾶς γενήσονται [Turn your wrath]. Apart from their common refrain, the strophes are distinct. Jaykal Sarakan, 90. Also common to the two hymns is the entire fifth verse, above, which appears as the concluding strophe of the penitential hymn. The original placement must be here, in the hymns of the cross, where this strophe is the fifth in an acrostic. From here it was subsequently taken into the penitential hymn. This shows that the latter, in its present form, is a compilation of existing material.

107 According to the editors of the authoritative NBHL, the only attested usage of the uncommon word here translated “extermination of the firstborn” is in the works of Catholicos Zakaria of Jag (835-876), who therefore must be considered a likely candidate for the authorship of the hymn. NBHL I, 12, 136. See Thomson, Bibliography, 230; Bogharian, Armenian Writers, 122-124.

108 See the note accompanying the first verse of this hymn.

58.
By the sign of your all-triumphant cross, O Christ, you took away the con-
demnation of the human race.
You granted us victory in combat to eradicate the power of the enemy.
Through this bring peace to our lives, only-compassionate One, and save
us from all temptation.

59.
Today the God-loving Queen seeks the precious wood of the cross, which
was left on Golgotha. Come, faithful, let us bow down before this di-
vine holy sign.
Today Golgotha hands over that which was covered in the ground, send-
ing it up with fragrant incense by blessed Judas.\textsuperscript{110} Come, faithful, let
us bow down before this divine holy sign.
Today by the saving, holy cross, the dead youth is revived\textsuperscript{111} and Satan
laments over his own destruction. Yet we who believe in Christ shall
bow down before this divine holy sign.

60.
\[L]\ We have taken refuge\textsuperscript{112} in your cross, O eternal Creator, who gave us
a triumphant guardian against the enemy. Through it we beseech you,
Savior, defend our souls.
\[R]\ Exalted King, you ascended the cross for our sake, and through it took
away the transgressions of Adam the first-created. Through it we be-
seech you, Savior, defend our souls.
\[9]\ Holy summit of faith and wood of life revealed to mankind, the vile
demon saw it and was destroyed, never to rise up again. Through it
we beseech you, Savior, defend our souls.
\[9]\ The enemy shuddered when the holy cross was revealed, and in awe
of his glory he was destroyed in the abyss of the earth. Through it we
beseech you, Savior, defend our souls.
\[6]\ Heaven exulted and the earth rejoiced, for the holy cross was mani-
fested as savior, and bearer of light to the universe. Through it we be-
seech you, Savior, defend our souls.

\textsuperscript{110} The reference is to the Judas Kyriakos tradition regarding the discovery of the cross of
Christ. See most recently Drijvers/Drijvers, \textit{True Cross} and the vast bibliography there.
Cf. the note accompanying [49/4] above.

\textsuperscript{111} See the note accompanying [49].

\textsuperscript{112} This and the following four strophes form an acrostic.
61. Daniel 3
Today you were sacrificed,\textsuperscript{113} O Lamb of God, for the transgression of the first-created. Sacrificed\textsuperscript{114} on the cross, you poured out your blood for [our] salvation. Blessed Lord, God of our fathers.
Today in exchange for the knowledge of the wood of death by which the first father died, you granted us your redemptive sign, the wood of life. Blessed Lord, God of our fathers.
Today having taken away the flaming sword, you opened to the sons of Adam the way to the tree of life, which the seraphim surrounded and protected with care. Blessed Lord, God of our fathers.

62. Praise the Lord and highly exalt him forever.
By being nailed to the cross, Christ released those in bondage, yet he indelibly bound the enemy by his life-giving cross. Praise the Lord and highly exalt him forever.
Instead of the fatal fruit of the tree he fed the fruit of life upon the four-winged [cross] to the race of the sons of mankind. Praise the Lord and highly exalt him forever.
He erased the writ of condemnation, born from the rib, with flowing springs of fire pouring from his side, which was wounded by the lance, and with which he quenched the thirst of the universe. Praise the Lord and highly exalt him forever.

63. Magnificat
Mother of light,\textsuperscript{115} O Mary, holy virgin, you gave birth in the body to the Light from the Father, and you became the dawn of the Sun of righteousness. With spiritual song, we magnify you, O holy lady.
The throne and tree of life of the immortal fruit were more excellent than the cherubim, O Ark of the covenant of the Word and golden urn of the heavenly manna. With spiritual song, we magnify you, O holy lady.
Through you was opened the gate to Paradise, guarded by the seraphim,\textsuperscript{116} and through you was given to us the wood of immortality, which, upon it, the immortal Victim of the sacrifice today illuminated from heaven. With spiritual song, we magnify you, O holy lady.

\textsuperscript{113} χηδωρ.
\textsuperscript{114} μνημονιμωτηρ.
\textsuperscript{115} This hymn is also sung as the Magnificat for the Second Day of the Cross [27].
\textsuperscript{116} Gn 3:24.
64. Psalm 50/51
O four-winged [cross] born of light, sign of splendor, building life for all. The Deity ever spreads his arms toward you.\(^{117}\)
Refuge and guardian of the races of the four corners of the world at the rising and the setting [of the sun]; salvation from demons and a mighty rampart.
O tangible stamp and seal on the face of all,\(^{118}\) you, from whom rays shine like the sun, are also imprinted\(^{119}\) as a mystery upon the divine ones.

65. Psalm 148
O guardian who arose from Eden, sign of victory against the invisible enemy.
You opened up sealed Paradise and guided the thief; you took the flaming sword as booty by order of the uncreated One.
Through you we all, here below, exult at your second coming, and the choirs of the bodiless ones delight perpetually with God.

CANON FOR SATURDAY

66. Exodus 15
You shined upon us the sign of the victory of your cross, a great light, O King eternal. And you gave it to your faithful as a solid rampart, a mighty tower in the face of the enemy. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.
This is a crown adorned by the grace of the intelligible Light and placed upon the head of the sinner. [It is] painted in suitable hues with the blood and the water from the lance-wounded side, that you sustained from the soldier. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.
With this you parted the abyss of the sea of sin, and you engulfed the captor in the depths of eternal fire. You retrieved your people\(^{120}\) into the

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\(^{117}\) The terse line, לְפִי מַעַל יָהּ, especially using the preposition מ, does not really mean that Christ’s arms are spread out “upon” the cross, although it certainly implies this. The word מַעַל יָהּ is normally used in liturgical texts to designate the oremus prayer posture. Cf. Renoux’s translation: “Sans cesse (nous voyons) sur toi Celui qui tient les bras étendus.” Renoux, “La croix”, 171.

\(^{118}\) An apparent allusion to the ancient custom of making the sign of the cross on the forehead.

\(^{119}\) קֶשֶׁת, lit. “you are accomplished.”
abodes of heaven of the fallen hosts. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

The sign lifted on a pole became a figure of the four-armed holy cross.  

Moses fashioned a bronze serpent for the Israelite camp, to deliver those who had been wounded by the poison of the biting reptiles. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

Before your charitable sovereignty we submit the portrait of your immaculate Mother. When you come with the glory of the Father to judge the enemy of your cross, forgive us for our errors through the intercession of your Mother and virgin. We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.

[Here is inserted hymn #17 from the Canon of the Elevation of the Cross]

[Here is inserted hymn #18 from the Canon of the Elevation of the Cross]

67.
O Consubstantial with the Father, you willingly came to suffer. You took upon yourself suffering. Enduring the cross, you descended into the tomb.

The oil bearers came to your tomb, O Savior. They brought sweet oil to perfume your incorruptible body.

They heard the good news of the angel, who said, “The Lord has risen from the dead. He has granted you life.”

120 Cf. Ex 14:27-29.

121 Num 21:4-9.

122 This strophe also appears as the fourth verse of the well-known hymn, հեղբ եսմիհեղբ [We entreat you], which is sung during the Armenian Compline service known as the “Peace Hour”, and which is undisputedly attributed to St. Nersès Snorhali. Jaynakal Šarakan, 429, 5; Book of Hours. 626-627. Bogharian, Armenian Writers, 235. The verse appears again as the final strophe of the Penitential Hymn of Ex 15 (Orhnuïwn) in Tone 5; Jaynakal Šarakan, 92. None of the other verses of [66] is found in either of the latter hymns, even though they are all related by the common refrain, “We beseech you, Lord, protect us under the shadow of your holy cross.” We are thus compelled to question the authorship of the three hymns containing this strophe. The Penitential Hymns are traditionally ascribed to St. Mesrop Maštoc, while Archbishop Bogharian seems to have tacitly accepted the attribution of [66] to Sahak Joroşoreći. Jaynakal Šarakan, 5; Bogharian, Armenian Writers, 95-97.

123 հարվուտ, lit. “to offer incense”.

68.
O God most merciful in all things, look compassionately upon me and rescue me, for you alone love mankind.
And with your life-giving cross keep me; and with your resurrection save me and deliver me, for you alone love mankind.
And at your second coming, O Lord, renew me again and deliver me, for you alone love mankind.

69.
Christ God, who stretched out your hands upon the cross and dissolved the seal of our condemnation, have mercy [on us].
You were nailed to the cross and by the flowing of your blood you saved the universe from sin. Have mercy [on us].
You were buried in the earth and you rose on the third day. You destroyed hell by your word. Have mercy [on us].

70.
Hell shuddered from the cruciform wood. By the power of the Holy Spirit the earth was renewed. Who is this who has thwarted death?
The angel gave good tidings to the virgin Mary. This is the Word from the beginning,\(^{125}\) the Son who is before the ages. This is the King who thwarted death.
He rose on the third day. The rocks split.\(^{126}\) The earth shook. Hell trembled. This is Christ, the One who lives through the ages.

71. Daniel 3
Christ God,\(^{127}\) who exhibited your triumphant sign more fiery than the sun,\(^{128}\) high above holy Golgotha. For this we extol you, God of our fathers.

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\(^{124}\) Cf. Mt 28:6-7.

\(^{125}\) Cf. Jn 1:1.

\(^{126}\) Mt 27:51.

\(^{127}\) This hymn concerns the miraculous apparition of the holy cross in the sky above Jerusalem on May 7, 351. There can no doubt that the author of this hymn had the Armenian version of Cyril's *Letter to Emperor Constantius II* in front of him. The three verses of this hymn relate the event as described by Cyril using verbatim terminology and phraseology from the Armenian version of the fourth paragraph of his letter, and in the exact sequence that those phrases occur in Cyril's letter. Vahan Inglizean demonstrated that the letter is a slavish "hellenizing" translation of the Greek, and on that basis he dated it to the 7th-8th centuries. Idem, գիշեր քաղաքությունում գարել սուր սերք արքայազնի ռկազմի վրա. Այս պատճառով գյուղացի պատմություններից հետ ստացավ թաղումի իրագրությունը [The Letter of Cyril of
For your resplendent and holy, saving cross, O Lord, adorned by the light of heaven, reflected and appeared to Jerusalem. For this we extol you, God of our fathers. And by its flaming, radiant gleam, it surpassed the rays of the solar bodies. And awestruck, both natives and pilgrims proceeded to the place of expiation for prayers.

72.
Praise the Lord and exalt him forever.

Christ typified today the awesome mystery of his second coming through the shining of the holy cross, by which the earth reveled. And exalt [him] forever.

It was exhibited in an awesome manner. Jerusalem rejoiced. But terrified, the ranks of those in hell trembled. And exalt [him] forever.


See the note accompanying [7/2].

The phrase, "reflected and appeared" [ἰερά ἐν οὐρανῷ ἱλασμῷ] is verbatim terminology from Cyril's letter, coming just a few lines down from the passage quoted in the first verse of the hymn. Inglizean, "Letter of Cyril", 8.

The phrase, "by its flaming, radiant gleam, it surpassed the rays of the solar bodies" [ἰερά ἐν οὐρανῷ ἱλασμῷ ἠφανίστηκεν αὐτής] is yet another verbatim citation from Cyril's letter. The unusual phraseology is due to its "hellenophilic" style of translation from Greek, where conventional vocabulary, syntax and intelligibility are compromised for the sake of rote, mechanical translation of successive words and sometimes even syllables in the base text. For an overview, see Abraham Terian, "The Hellenizing School: Its Time, Place and Scope of Activities Reconsidered," in Nina Garsolian, et al., eds., East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period, Dumbarton Oaks Symposium. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1982, 175-186.

73. Magnificat
Mother of God, more resplendent than heaven, you dawned on us the
great and excellent Light, by whom the darkness of ignorance dissipated. In the voice of the seraphim, we extol you and with spiritual
song we magnify you.
Swift and luminous Cloud, who poured out from the heavenly sea the
rain of life within you, which you spilled upon the parched earth; in
the voice of the seraphim, we extol you and with spiritual song we
magnify you.
O Eden, cloistered Garden planted by God, in the midst of your paradise
the tree of life was also planted by the Spirit. He filled the universe
with the immortal fruit. In the voice of the seraphim, we extol you
and with spiritual song we magnify you.

74. Psalm 50/51
Today the triumphant sign appeared on earth and made the universe spar-
kle. You gave your cross, O Lord, as a weapon of triumph to rescue
us from the deception of the enemy.
Wood of life erected in the middle of the universe; hope and refuge of
the human race. Let this keep us from our every danger to rescue us
from the deception of the enemy.
By the triumphant power of your cross protect us, Christ God, for you
stretched out your hands upon it and dissolved the seal of condemna-
tion for our errors, to rescue us from the deception of the enemy.

75. Psalms 148-150
All creatures bow down before your cross, O Christ, which was erected
for our salvation. Let it be our triumphant protector to rescue us from
the deceit of the Slanderer.
On it you were lifted up, O Lifter of the curse, who are glorified with the
Father, to gather together by the life-giving wood those who have
been alienated; to rescue us from the deceit of the Slanderer.
All creatures have been illuminated through it. Those who were held cap-
tive in the sin-loving prison waited for it, which freed us from the de-
ceit of the Slanderer.

132 Is 19:1.
133 Cf. Agafangelos, §82: "And instead of carved pieces of wood he set up his cross in the
middle of the universe." Thomson, Agathangelos, 92-93.
76. Psalm 112
The troops of cherubim with the fiery seraphim surrounded and guarded the path to the tree of life in the garden created by God. Today you shone forth upon the earth, O wood of life and salvation, adorned by God. The children of the holy Church praise you.
A ram [caught] in the sabek tree was offered in immolation in place of Isaac. But upon you was sacrificed the immaculate Lamb as reconciliation with the Father and to take away our sins. The children of the holy Church praise you.
The Pauline splendor professed you as the locus and the altar of the divine Word. For through you we have been rescued from the biting, bodiless beast, and droplets of the incorruptible blood that poured forth upon you have erased the sin of the one born of the rib.

77. Psalm 91/92
You gave your holy cross as a weapon to your holy Church. With it, condemned, the enemy was defeated.
With it protect your people, Christ. Through it we worship you with the Father and the Spirit.
We take refuge in you, O Christ, who are coming again by means of your cross in order to save us on that day of the awesome tribunal.

78. Psalm 140
Today the apparition of the great, gleaming sign of our Lord God radiates on the [Feast of the] Dedication in Jerusalem. O people, extolling Christ, celebrate with joy!

134 The attribute of "garden" is wknwjb [uncreated], which is untenable. God indeed "planted a garden in Eden" [Gn 2:8]. This seems to be a textual error, the correct reading being wmmn.wdmj [created by God], which is attested in Awetikean, 534. A hurried scribe could easily confuse the two words, especially if the latter word were in its common abbreviated form, wdmj.

135 Gn 22:13 (LXX).

136 Col 1:18-22.

137 The "dedication in Jerusalem" [ ] can refer to none other than the basilicas on Golgotha, presumably the Martyrium, as the third strophe attests. The juxtaposition in this hymn of two historical events, the apparition of the cross (securely dated on May 7, 351) and the dedication of the Martyrium, may suggest that the hymn was composed at a time when the memory of the Dedication of the Martyrium was still vivid, the site still largely known for that spectacular event.
For the glimmer of the life-giving holy cross was revealed in the East, shining like the sun with the piercing light. O people, extolling Christ, celebrate with joy!

Reflecting from heaven in awesome and spectacular wonder, the Lord’s sign was shown over holy Golgotha. O people, extolling Christ, celebrate with joy!
VARDAN (THE GREAT) AREWELČI,
HOMILY FOR WEDNESDAY
IN THE FEAST OF THE ELEVATION OF THE CROSS

Roberta R. Ervine

In this homily for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, the word *cross* is mentioned only twice. Rather than focus on the cross *per se*, the homilist has chosen to focus his remarks on the Body of Christ, that great result of the cross which is the Church. Indeed, the middle part of the octave for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross—Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday—comprises three days devoted to this very idea. The readings for Wednesday include: Ps 147, Zep 3:14-18; Mt 16:13-19; and the passage which serves as the text for this homily, Heb 9:11-15 (which the homilist extends to include vv. 16-28 as well).

1 For an English translation of the hymns for this day, see Michael Daniel Findikyan, “Armenian Hymns of the Church and the Cross”, in the present volume.

2 Interestingly, vv. 12, 22-24 of this passage are freely adapted by the 7th century *vardapet* Yovhan Mayrivaneči (575?-640?) in the introductory section of his work outlining the significance of the physical parts of a church. *[Analysis of the Cathedral Church and the Arrangements Made Therein], Sion 1967, 70-75; here, 70:*

> And [Paul] says, he entered ... into the holies ... taking his own blood, thus giving to us an eternal redemption [Heb 9:12]. Then he mentions the things of the Law, and says again, it was necessary for those under the Law to be purified through such things ... but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these [Heb 9:22-23]. This he says concerning the things which pertain to Christians. And after this he says, Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God on our behalf [Heb 9:24].
The homilist is Vordan, surnamed the Great and referred to as “Arevelci” [the Easterner] to distinguish him as being from the Armenian homeland, rather than from the Kingdom of Cilicia. As the spiritual child of Vanakan Vardapet (1181-1251), Vordan represented the intellectual tradition of the famous jurist and theologian Mxitar Goš (ca. 1140-1213), and would himself become spiritual parent and grandparent to several more generations of Armenian Christianity’s greatest luminaries. Vordan’s influence extended to the Cilician royal court, on the one hand, and to the monastic schools of the Armenian homeland on the other, where he taught for the greater part of his career—at Andrēi Anapat (1246-1260), Aljoy Vank (1268), Halbat (1265-1266), and Xor Virap (1260-1265, 1267, 1269-1271).

Vordan was both a noted teacher and a prolific writer. Over the course of three decades, he authored works of theology, history, geography, commentary and polemic, as well as encomia, hymns, miscellaneous collections of information, and responses to specific questions. Bogharian [Polarian] tentatively includes the present homily among writings from the early part of Vordan’s career, perhaps because at the close of his introductory remarks, Vordan not only makes a disclaimer of “ignorance” but specifically refers to his “junior status”.

**Vordan’s Use of Scripture**

Biblical language and biblical concepts are the natural idiom of the homilist, making passages that are not direct quotations or even allusions, sound as though they were, simply by virtue of the rhythm and resonance of the language. That having been said, in its some twenty manuscript pages, the homily deftly weaves together more than eighty identifiable scriptural quotations and allusions. More than a dozen of these are packed into the introductory paragraphs, where they set the tone for the rest of the discourse. Both Old and New Testaments are represented, as one would expect in a homily devoted to a passage which links tabernacle and temple to Church. However, less than twenty references and allusions to the Old Testament stand over against some sixty to the New. It is clear that, in this

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3 Abp. N. Bogharian [=Polarian], ԶԱՐԳԱՐ ՈՐՄԲԱՆ [Armenian Writers], Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1971, 29-300. P.P. Antapian, ԶԱՐԳԱՐ ՈՐՄԲԱՆ ՈՐՄԲԱՆԵՐ ՈՐՄԲԱՆԵՐ ՈՐՄԲԱՆԵՐ ՎՐԱՑ, ՎՐԱՑ ՈՐՄԲԱՆԵՐ ՎՐԱՑ [Vordan Arevelci. Life and Work], vol. 2, Erevan: Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences, 1989, 326 lists it among 18 known homilies attributed to Vordan. (There are, however, other homilies also attributed to Vordan which do not appear in Antapian’s list; further investigation is called for.)
instance, the homilist’s emphasis rests on the fulfillment rather than the prophetic background. The largest number of Old Testament citations are taken from the Psalms (7), with the prophetic books of Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel represented at one citation apiece (Jeremiah provides two), as is also the case for the wisdom books of Proverbs and Job; the pentateuchal book of Leviticus is cited twice.\footnote{Vardan has little interest overall in the historical books of the Old Testament. The two or three citations in this homily which might derive from the historical books all have parallels in the Prophets, and it is from the latter setting that I assume them to have been derived.}

At some point in the future, it will be an interesting exercise to compare the use of biblical references across the full body of Vardan’s homiletical writing.\footnote{Perhaps one day there will be an Armenian equivalent of the Biblia Patristica Index, but that day is far in the future.} For the present, we may compare the citations in two of his homilies: the one presented in this article, and his homily \textit{On the Ten Commandments},\footnote{The text and translation of this homily, by the present writer, appeared as “Vardan Arevelci’s sermon \textit{On the Ten Commandments},” \textit{St. Nersess Theological Review} 8 (2003), 13-83.} a homily in which Vardan does not identify himself as “junior in status”; on that occasion, in fact, his audience appears to comprise clergy of lesser attainments than his own. The biblical citations in that homily are fewer than those in \textit{Homily on Wednesday in the Elevation of the Cross}, and are drawn from fewer biblical books, although the balance between Old Testament and New Testament citations is more equitable: twenty-six citations are drawn from the twelve Old Testament books, and thirty-nine from thirteen books of the New.

\begin{tabular}{ll}
\textbf{ON WEDNESDAY IN THE ELEVATION OF THE CROSS} & \textbf{ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\textbf{Genesis} \\
3:19 (twice); 6:3; 9:6 \\
\textbf{Exodus} \\
3:14; 15:1,21; 20:18; 25:40; 32:1-6 \\
\textbf{Leviticus} \\
12:3,7,8; 18:5 \\
\textbf{Deuteronomy} \\
5:14; 6:4 \\
\textbf{1 Kings} \\
12:28 \\
\textbf{Job} \\
11:9
Psalms
15:12; 49:16; 56:10; 110:4; 131:14; 144:19;
148:3

Psalms
112:9; 115:8/135:18

Proverbs
3:34

Isaiah
66:3

Jeremiah
7:10-11,14/32:34/34:15

Lamentations
4:20

Ezekiel
18:4,20

Ezekiel
18:4,20

Malachi
11:6

Wisdom of Solomon
14:14-15

Matthew
1:20; 5:15; 16:16; 18:20

Matthew
5:6, 13, 22, 28 (twice), 40-41, 42, 34, 48;
7:7; 12:36 (twice), 37; 19:20

Mark
4:21 (=Mt 5:15); 8:29 (=Mt 16:16)

Luke
1:345; 2:34; 11:33 (=Mt 5:15); 12:32

John
1:14, 29, 36; 2:19; 3:34; 6:31, 55; 8: 12/9:5;
11:10

Acts
13:17

Romans
3:24; 6:14; 9:3

1 Corinthians
1:30; 2:9; 10:3; 11:26; 12:24

2 Corinthians
3:6; 5:1-4; 12:2-4

Galatians
3:27; 4:26

Ephesians
1:18; 3:20; 4:4 (twice); 5:2

Philippians
3:9

Colossians
2:9

2 Thessalonians
2:13

Colossians
2:19; 3:1-2, 5

1 Thessalonians
2:9
In addition to citations and references, Vardan incorporates biblical material into his homily in other ways as well. He is able to include large passages in his homily by summarizing them: since the content of Heb 7-8 is essential background for an understanding of the material in Heb 9:11-16, Vardan offers a brief reworking of those two chapters, immediately following his arithmological consideration of the number of chapters and verses contained in the epistle. (In fact, he begins by pointing out that the crucial verse on which he is about to expound—on which, in fact, the whole typological exposition of Christ and his Church as the fulfillment of Old Testament worship depends—occurs in the twelfth chapter, and the fiftieth verse, though he leaves it to the listener to pick up on the significance of those numbers.) In the following two long paragraphs, Vardan recaps the substance of Heb 7-8, describing the priestly heritage of Jesus, and the superiority of his priesthood over that of mortal priests who offered the blood of animals on their own behalf as well as on behalf of others. In addition, he puts into the mouth of the faithful Jews ("the ones who truly served the Law") the prayer that God would see fit to perfect what was so obviously an imperfect system of sacrifice, exchanging "the shadow for the truth, the mortal and sinful priesthood for the immaculate and immortal priesthood...." The summary closes with a quotation from Heb 7:3.

Vardan is also a master of biblical restatement. Like others in the Armenian tradition, he is given to recasting (and in some cases, expanding) passages to make them more understandable to his audience—and to make clearer their suitability to his own intended application. In this homiletic

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7 See n. 15, below.
setting, he puts his restatements into the mouth of the Apostle. Vardan's comments on the second half of Heb. 9:11 (through a greater and more perfect tabernacle and one not made with hands) are a case in point. After quoting the verse exactly, Vardan proceeds to recast it in a way that will allow him to emphasize one of his major points: the divine status of Christ's actual flesh. "Do not," he says, "seek the tabernacle outside the priest, for his body is the tabernacle." Then follows the proof text Jn 2:19 ("As He said to the Jews, 'destroy this temple...'")), which provides Vardan's transition into the statement that the tabernacle and the One who dwells in it are, in Christ's case, "precisely the same, one in nature and power, will and activity."

As his thinking on the status of Christ's flesh continues to unfold, Vardan expounds on the words greater and more perfect. Then, he takes up the phrase not made with hands, again putting words in Paul's mouth: "He says, 'The Jewish tabernacle human beings established, for the hands of Bezalel and Uriah fashioned the tent of witness, and the hands of Solomon's and Hiram's servants [fashioned] the Temple. This tabernacle, however, human hands did not put together, but rather the Word, the high arm of God the Father [Acts 13:17], the governing Light...'."

When dealing with Heb 9:13-14, Vardan specifically says that he is restating Paul's words in order to reveal their meaning: "What he is saying is something like this..." He goes on to put into Paul's mouth a long comparison of the partially effective blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of heifers mentioned in the verse, with the sacrifice of Christ, who was "sacrifice and priest and altar", offered up by the "fire of the eternal Spirit".

As his concluding point, Vardan restates Rom 3:24 in conjunction with 1 Cor 1:30—He became our righteousness ... and we are freely justified by grace, and follows it by crediting the Apostle with a statement that those "invited by the prophets to inherit eternity will receive the good news—that is, that Christ has died the death—and they will receive the good news promised to those who have kept the covenant...."

In addition to restatements and expansions of biblical texts with exegetical intent, Vardan also makes exegetical comments in passing: at the conclusion of his introductory remarks, Vardan speaks of lighting the apostolic lamp and putting it on the lamp stand of faith in the sacerdotal Word", thus offering an interpretation of Jesus' saying found in the synoptic Gospels [Mt 5:15/Mk 4:21/Lk 11:33], No one, having lighted a lamp, puts it under a bushel, but rather on a lamp stand, so that it may give light to all who are in the house. Vardan refines Jesus' own interpretation of the saying ("let your good works so shine before people that they may see them and glorify your father who is in heaven") in such a way that the
“good works” become specifically “faith in the priesthood of the Word”, and those who are “in the house” are the people present in the congregation, while the person who will be lighting the lamp is the Holy Spirit. The image of the lamp is later maintained by Vardan’s comparison of the day’s scripture text to a “lamp” that he will trim “with shaking arms”.

PATRISTIC SOURCES

Commentaries on the Epistle to the Hebrews in Armenian are few indeed. The only two which pre-date Vardan are found within larger commentaries on the Pauline Epistles as a body. Both date from the same time period. A *Commentary on the Fourteen Epistles of Paul* was composed in the 11th century by Géorg Kal, and a compilation of commentary on the Pauline Epistles was put together in the same century by Anania Sanahneči (1000?-1070?).

Patristic commentaries on the Epistle translated into Armenian from other languages are only two: that attributed to Ephrem the Syrian, and John Chrysostom’s writings on the Epistle to the Hebrews. A brief selection from Euthalius’ writings, entitled *Comments from the Epistle to the*}

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9 Aside from these, there is only one more medieval commentary, which post-dates Vardan: that of Yovhan Oronče (1315-1387), who compiled a compendious amount of commentary, although in its present form it does not seem to extend beyond Ephesians. See Petrosyan and Ter Stepanyan, 108-109.

10 The commentary attributed to Ephrem appeared in *U. ԵՊՐԵՄ ՀՕՐՍՈՒՇ ՈՒՂՈՐԻՎ, ՈՂՈՐԻՎԱՏԵՐՈՒՄ* [Writings of St. Eprém Xorin Asori], vol. 3, Venice: San Lazzaro, 1836, 194-233. John Chrysostom’s writing appeared as *ՊԵՐԾՈՒՄՆԵՐ* *ԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈՂԽՈղ* [John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, on the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews], Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1855. There are also fragments of the commentary by Cyril of Alexandria; these were collected by J. Lebon. “Fragments arméniens du commentaire sur l’ épitre aux Hebreux,” *Le Musée* 44 (1931) 69-114; 46 (1933) 237-246.
Hebrews,\textsuperscript{11} is included in the compilation of commentary on the Pauline Epistles by Anania Sanahneči, mentioned above; the same compilation also includes selections from Ephrem, Cyril, and Origen.\textsuperscript{12}

As study of the Armenian tradition of biblical commentary is in its infancy, it is far too soon to say anything definitive concerning Vardan’s patristic resources. While I am certain that persons steeped in patristic literature will have much more to add to the pot of knowledge than I, the following few observations may make a small contribution to our growing picture of how at least one influential Armenian vardapet used the tradition of the Fathers.

In the course of the homily, Vardan mentions by name Dionysius, Gregory “the theologically eloquent” and John “the golden-worded”. Each is mentioned only once.

The single citation from Dionysius the Areopagite is his definition of priesthood as “a divine science and operation”, deriving from the very beginning of his Ecclesiastical Hierarchy.\textsuperscript{13}

John Chrysostom’s Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews contributed several things to Vardan’s thinking, directly and indirectly. The introductory argument of Chrysostom’s homilies may have contributed the notion

\textsuperscript{11} Euthalius the 5th century deacon is known for his division of Scripture into manageable sections. The Armenian translations of Euthalius’ writings were collected by Aristakēs Vardanian. The text appeared in Handes Amsorya 34-41 (1924-1927) and then as a single volume,  naoaepo sēnep sēnep [Works of Euthalius], Vienna: Mekhitarist Press, 1930. This text is now available on the internet, as part of the Titus project of the University of Frankfurt (titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/arm/evtali/evtal.htm). His writings include not only the stichometry of the Pauline Epistles but also a handy list of Old Testament references to be found in them, as well as a biography of the Apostle. For further bibliography on matters related to Euthalius see Robert W. Thomson, A Bibliography of Classical Armenian Literature to 1500 AD, Turnhout: Brepols, 1995, 53.

\textsuperscript{12} It remains to be seen what material from each writer has been included in the compilation. According to Bogharian’s comments, the compilation was made in 1055 at the behest of Catholicos Petros Getadarj (1019-1058), during the latter’s final detention in Sebastia. Armenian Writers, 178, 185. From the entry for J 234 in Bogharian [Polarian], Nwlep 5meełq 5gzmiq sep[Uppa] [Grand Catalogue of St. James Manuscripts] (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Armenian Library, Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1966, I. 639-640 it appears that the material on the Epistle to the Hebrews extends from pp. 426-509. Euthalius occupies but half a page; Ephrem, two; Cyril, two; Origen, one; while the remainder appears to derive from Chrysostom.

that the Epistle to the Hebrews does not bear Paul's name as its author because of Jewish hostility against Paul, which might have prejudiced the willingness of Jews (Christian converts included) to read the epistle; however, this idea is found in other patristic writings as well. The statement "Let no one with filthy mind and unclean deeds enter the church," identified by Vardan as being taken from Chrysostom, derives from Homily XV.6. (Whether or not Vardan was also familiar with Chrysostom's Instructions to Catechumens, which expands on this statement at length, is not clear.)

Vardan shares his imagery of the flesh as "veil" or "curtain" with Chrysostom, Homily XV.4, and with Gregory of Nazianzus' Oration XXI.2. (Again, whether or not Vardan was familiar with Chrysostom's Instructions to Catechumens, which contained material of a similar nature, is uncertain.) Although Vardan directly ascribes to Gregory the statement that Christ's flesh may be called 'a twin god', I have not been able to trace this quotation, and hope that someone from among our readers will be able to shed light on its origin.

Patristic material also appears in the homily without mention of any specific source. For example, Vardan notes that attributions of the epistle to other writers have been made. Such attributions are to be found in Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History (III.38 and VI.25). The attributions of the epistle to Luke or Clement are also mentioned by Severian of Gabala and Euthalius.14

It is from Euthalius, too, that Vardan's information on the stichometry of the Epistle to the Hebrews derives, information upon which he bases his arithmological observations early in the homily. While there was a considerable body of arithmological symbolism available to draw on, Vardan limits himself to the parallels between the number 22 and the number of creations in Genesis; and between the number 30 and the number of days in the month, as well as the 30 progenitors of humanity. Whereas in later compositions he would be much more expansive in his arithmological interpretations, in this instance Vardan simply tells his hearers to "examine at your leisure" the mysteries inherent in seven and one hundred and three (=703), the number of verses in the epistle.15

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14 The immediate source for Vardan's comments on Pauline authorship is not clear, however; Euthalius includes in his comments on Hebrews that the epistle may have been translated by either Luke or Clement. Writings of Euthalius, 144.

OUTLINE OF THE HOMILY

The homily has a clear introduction, body and conclusion. Vardan brings the homily full circle by including in the conclusion an echo of the introduction's concentration on various ways in which the Church may be described as a gathering; the angelic gathering and that of the departed righteous are specifically reiterated. Within the body of the homily, there is a clear intention to emphasize the actuality of Christ's flesh, its participation in his divinity, and its eternal union with the Word.

Introduction

A. The introduction begins with an exercise dear to the hearts of medieval grammarians: an exploration of the term Church as a "homenym"—that is, as a word which can be applied to a variety of entities. Using the meaning of ekklesia, or "gathering", Vardan identifies the Church as

1. the gathering together of two or three believers, described by Jesus in Mt 1:20
2. the gathering of all the people of God
3. the Faith which gathers believers into one
4. the physical church building, a gathering of various materials which gathers angels and humans together to praise God
5. the faithful gathered to hear this specific homily.

B. Vardan then makes his disclaimer: of junior status, he is merely going to follow Christ's injunction to put the "lamp" of the day's scripture reading on the "lamp stand" of faith and let it illuminate those "in the house".

16 A favorite example of "homonymity" was the application of the word "man" to an actual human being and to the two-dimensional portrait of a human being. See for example Yovhannēs Erznkaci, Ζωημορφωτικος Ἐθιμολογικός Πρώτων Ἐπιστημῶν [Compilation of Commentary on Grammar], ed. L.G. Xačerian, Glendale, CA: Alco Printing Co., 1988, 87. (A marginal note by the author identifies the source of this example as "Aristotle".)
A. Background material: the appropriateness of the passage to the day is set out.
   1. The arithmological significance of the epistle in general (using the significant numbers 3, 22, 30 and 703, derived from the Euthalian divisions of the Epistle) is hinted at.
   2. Authorship issues are addressed.
   3. The pericope is located within the epistle (using the significant numbers 12 and 50).
   4. General intent of the epistle is described: Paul wishes to convey that the New Law has everything the Old Law had, but in more perfect form.

B. Jesus as priest: his qualifications
   1. Jesus’ descent from Levi would be inconsequential, given the deficiencies of the levitical priesthood (synopsis of Heb 7-8).
   2. Jesus’ “descent” from the priestly line of Melchizedek (application of Ps. 110:4).
   3. Jesus’ partaking in the divine gifts given by God to all humanity (prophethood, priesthood and kingship) made clear at his baptism, and by his descent from David.

C. Efficacy of Jesus’ priesthood: he provides the good things which are to come
   2. Positive effects: the kingdom of life, reopening of Paradise, graces of the Spirit, gift of adoption, provision of living food and drink.

D. Jesus’ temple/tabernacle: his own flesh
   1. The temple as his flesh.
      a. His own testimony to the flesh as temple.
      b. Scriptural references to flesh as heaven, veil or tabernacle.
   2. The flesh as a temple greater and more perfect.
   3. The flesh as a temple not made with hands.
      a. John the Theologian on the transformation of the flesh.
      b. The transformed flesh as eternal union.

E. Jesus’ sacrifice: himself
   1. Superiority of this sacrifice to that of bulls and goats.
2. Jesus’ sacrifice as eternal: sacramental recalling of this sacrifice does not imply any re-sacrifice.
   a. The Cross as eternal weapon for our individual re-conquest of satan.
      i. Satan as not evil by nature.
   3. Call to those who believed in the imperfect sacrifices of the Old Law to embrace the perfect sacrifice of the New.
   4. Call to those who embrace Christ’s sacrifice to live a pure life.

Conclusion

A. Anticipation of Christ’s indwelling in the specific church where the homily is being delivered.
B. Anticipation of the final Church, the gathering of the saints at the eschaton.

A WORD ON THE MANUSCRIPT

The text presented below is taken from J 413, the only one of four Jerusalem manuscripts currently available to me. Although the decision to present a diplomatic text using this manuscript was largely a practical one,¹⁷ it should be said that J 413 dates from the 13th century and thus is one of the earliest.¹⁸ The homily occupies pp. 780b-790a in the manuscript. Page numbers are noted in square brackets in the Armenian text.

Paragraph divisions and punctuation have been added; however, the scribe indicates both participle and infinitive by the ending -ητά; this has not been regularized, as the translation makes clear which form was intended. In the English translation, editorial additions are marked with square brackets, while deletions are enclosed in pointed brackets.

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¹⁷ It is my hope to provide in future a critical edition of Vardan’s homilies, once it becomes clear that we have in fact uncovered the full extent of his homiletic output.

¹⁸ Anfapian lists four Matenadaran manuscripts of the text, all more or less contemporaneous with J 413 (M 1324, 4139, 5443 and 5862). Of the other Jerusalem manuscripts, one is from the 14th century (J 373) and the remaining two date from the 18th (J 372 and 656).
VARDA[N AREWELĆI
HOMILY FOR WEDNESDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS

[Text:] But Christ being come an high priest...[Heb 9:11]

By the supernal light were the creatures made to shine with a shadowless
noonday, at the imperative voice of the Light Essential, who bade [them]
walk their way inerrantly thereby [Jn 11:10]. For He is the light of the
world [Jn 8:12, 9:5], illumined by whose glorious dawning our orthodox
primates legislated this: that on the festal blessing of a church there should
first be a solemn assembly of prelate and presbyters and sanctified people,
both freemen and commoners, gathered with sincere love in accordance
with God’s will. Relying upon the Light divine, they shall with faith call
the heavenly Bridegroom into the bridal chamber made with hands¹ which
has been called by his name,² that he may come with his glory and dwell
therein, saying for love of it, “This is my resting place for ever and ever”
[Ps 131:14].

And in its order, the mystery thus defined is beautiful. First of all, be-
cause the Type should take form alongside the True, in order that they re-
ceive from one another rays of heavenly grace. For truly, two believers
together are the Church [Mt 18:20]: as it says, “I will dwell in them and I
will walk among them, and I will be³ their God and they will [be to me a
people].”⁴

¹ A deliberate contrast is intended with the temple or house “not made with hands”,
which is God’s true dwelling [Mk 14:58, Acts 7:48; 17:24; 2 Cor 5:1 and especially Heb
9:11, 24]. For imagery of the bridal chamber, see Sebastian P. Brock, “Some Distinctive
Features in Syriac Liturgical Texts,” in Roberta R. Ervine, ed., Worship Traditions in
Armenia and the Neighboring Christian East (AVANT 3), Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s

² References to both the Ark of the Covenant and the Temple as being called by God’s
name are to be found in the Old Testament: see 2 Sam 6:2 and 1 Kgs 8:43/2 Chr 6:33, Jer
7:19-11, 14; 32:34; 34:15.

³ Reading the first person singular future instead of the third person singular.

⁴ References to God’s dwelling among humankind are numerous (e.g., Ex 29:45, Zec 8:8,
Rv 21:3) and the sentence “I will be their God and they shall be my people” is even
more frequent. However, the idea that He “will walk among them” is not; it is to be
found in Lv 26:12. This latter phrase is reflected in Armenian hymns; e.g. in the canon
for the eighth day of the Nativity/Theophany: թե երբ ազգենցության աշխարհը տեսած
եմ երբ բնական նախագահ ընդունել, իսկ հայկական մեկնություն [you walked among men and saved the universe from
Adam’s curse]. It is common for biblical citations to be abbreviated (as is the case here);
it was assumed that the reader would be able to supply the rest from memory.
The people of God, too, are truly called a Church: as the great David said, “I will confess you among many people; in the great congregation will I praise you.”

Faith, too, is the Church, which is able to gather together all the ends of the earth. Although it is not possible that this be a single location, it is nonetheless called Catholic, [signifying] the general and entire [body of] Christians who have one mother—the font⁶; and one garment—Jesus [Gal 3:27]; and one food⁷—their view of divine scripture, and the body and blood of the Son of God [Jn 6:55]; and one hope of their calling [Eph 4:4] and place of eternal rest [Heb 4:9].

Homonymously,⁸ this place of prayer is called a Church, because it is “gathered together” from various substances—from stone and wood, from plaster and water and soil and sand—and is called one [structure] for the dwelling of the One King, God, my Lord Jesus Christ. Moreover, it is aptly called a Church, because together with the visible components which are in it, the dual Church of angels and of human beings gathers into it in many and various ways the glorious graces of our adored Christ’s godhead, thanks to the perceptible power of the sacraments which it contains.

And now the Holy Spirit has made into a Church this gathering of people who are in this “tent of witness” and, I might say—yes!—“going up to Jerusalem”⁹—and [those who are] in other places like this, yet, as scripture testifies, are mystically to be seen here.

From this point forward, we require the grace and assurance and wisdom of those spirit-bearing men who have stood at the head of those Churches as an example of that one Truth from worthiness of which I, due to my junior status and ignorance, find myself so far removed. Yet, it is by trusting in that Grace which elevates the unworthy¹⁰ and which raised to

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⁵ This citation conflates Ps 56:10 and Ps 25:12. The word “many” does not occur in either verse.

⁶ The idea of the font as the womb of Mother Church seems to be an extension of Gal 4:26. At the outset of his exposition of the symbolism inherent in the font’s location, Yovhan Mayrivaneč, Analysis, 73 calls it “the ever-bearing womb of Christ’s Bride”.

⁷ An allusion to 1 Cor 10:3.

⁸ Grammar texts from the Cilician period explain homonymity as a quality shared by, for example, a real man and a painted image of a man. See n. 16 in the introduction, above.

⁹ Perhaps alluding to Heb 12:22.

¹⁰ While this may be an instance of biblical language rather than actual citation, Prv 3:34 speaks of giving grace to the lowly, and similar statements are to be found in 1 Sm 2:7-8, Ps 113:7 and in the New Testament in Jas 4:6 and 1 Pt 5:5.
prominence those ancient persons humble\textsuperscript{11} in word and understanding—and [trusting also] in you reverend persons who have so commanded, and in your loving and impartial prayers, paternal and fraternal—that we have agreed to stand forth before God the Benevolent. With my meager mind I shall take a little dew from the boundless sea\textsuperscript{12} and light this apostolic lamp for the benefit of today’s sacramental worship, setting it on the “lamp stand”\textsuperscript{13} of faith in the sacerdotal Word, to give light to all who are in this house by the Holy Spirit’s igniting. With my inept and shaking arms I shall trim this “lamp”, the celestial and God-inspired phrase which says, \textit{This Christ, being come an high priest….}

This text is especially suited, perhaps, to this place of worship in this hour where we, the limbs of Christ, stand ready in harmonious order—chief priests and priests and priestly children of the people—to set Christ as the perfect Head\textsuperscript{14} of this most beautiful “body”. For he has come, high priest and prototypic priest and Head and ornament, so that he may “put you on” as a sanctified Body and robe of glory;\textsuperscript{15} and then, through your prayers and blessings, [he will “put on”] this temple, to the glory of himself together with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

This is a mystical saying, and one to be accepted. For it is of Paul, who always spoke through Christ, [and] who became worthy of the hearing of things unspeakable and the vision of the third heaven while in the flesh. [2 Cor 12:2-4] Moreover, it is in the most sacred tenth Epistle, ac-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} A reference to 1 Cor 12:24 and Heb 7:7.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Perhaps alluding to Jb 11:9 or Hab 2:14.
\item \textsuperscript{13} The image is drawn from the parable in Mt 5:15/Mk 4:21/Lk 11:33.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Christ is referred to as the Head of the Body in Eph 1:22, 4:15, 5:23; Col 1:18, 2:10, 19.
\item \textsuperscript{15} This statement is an interesting inversion of a common \textit{topos}; the “robe of glory” set aside by Adam at the Fall and with which he is re-invested by Christ, is here the glorious robe of sanctified humanity, with which Christ invests himself, making the Church his new incarnation. See Sebastian P. Brock, “The Robe of Glory: A Biblical Image in the Syriac Tradition,” in \textit{Spirituality and Clothing-The Way 39} (1999) 247-259; idem, “Some Distinctive Features in Syriac Liturgical Texts”, 141-160; esp., 143-144; idem, “Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition,” in M. Schmidt and C.F. Geyer, eds., \textit{Typus, Symbol und Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern, und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter}, Regensburg: Friedrich Puster, 1982, 11-40; and P.F. Beatrice, “Le tuniche di pelle,” in the same volume, 473-474. See also, E.G. Mathews, Jr., “The Holy Mar Ephrem on the Cross of Christ”, in the present volume, 64-65. There are also numerous references to a “robe” or “garment” without the epithet “of glory”: for example, Prayer 1 §45 of \textit{The Armenian Prayers of St. Ephrem the Syrian} (forthcoming with an English translation by E.G. Mathews, Jr.) mentions “that former garment of which I had been stripped by my sins.”
\end{itemize}
cording to the order of the literary [canon], though not the order of writ-
ing. This is the perfect number, the Monad’s equal and fulfillment, the
parent of completion and the origin of infinity, and a gift of God. [The
Epistle] was written to the people who gave a tenth to God. In it is the
greater mystery of the priesthood of Levi, who was God’s portion and
tithe, in place of Israel’s firstborn, [Nm 3:41] and he tithed the people to
whom Paul wrote this epistle.

It contains: three sacramental readings; twenty-two chapters, in parallel
with their feasts and with the number of the creations; thirty citations,
the number of] this transient life’s mensual lunar cycle. According to
the pagans, the power of a clan [passes] from father to son and to grand-
son, and they say mankind has thirty progenitors. [The Epistle] also has
703 verses, in harmony with the mystery of seven and one hundred and
three; you may examine it at your leisure.

16 Vardan is following the order of the Pauline Epistles as listed in Euthalius (Writings of
Euthalius, 90), where the epistles to churches precede those to individuals. 3 Cor is not
included in the list.

17 This follows the development of Heb 7, establishing the superiority of Melchizedek’s
priesthood (and that of Christ, the “priest forever after the order of Melchizedek”) on the
basis of the latter’s having received a tithe from Abraham himself.

18 Vardan’s introduction to his Commentary on the Psalms, in a passage taken from
Epiphanius’ On Weights and Measures, mentions how significant it was that the authori-
ties in Jerusalem sent to Ptolemy “the 22 exoteric books” of Hebrew scripture, in addi-
tion to others. See Michael E. Stone and Roberta R. Ervine, The Armenian Texts of
Epiphanius of Salamis De Mensuris et Ponderibus (CSCO 583, Subsidia 105), Louvain:
Peeters, 2000, esp., 104-105, n. 86. Compare IV Ezra 14:44-45 for more on the signifi-
cance of 22.

19 Eusebius’ In Praise of Constantine uses the lunar cycle to emphasize the relationship
between the number 30 and the number 3:

For what the triad is in units, thirty is in decades. This number is the
solid boundary of the second great luminary after the sun; for clearly
the circuit of the moon from conjunction to conjunction is what makes
the cycle of the month, at the end of which, receiving once again a re-
birth, it begins a new light and a new life, adorned with thirty units,
honored with three decades, glorified with ten triads.

Translation from H.A. Drake, In Praise of Constantine: A Historical Study and New
Translation of Eusebius’ Tricennial Orations (University of California Publications, Clas-
sical Studies 15), Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1976, 94.

20 Euthalius appears to be Vardan’s source for the divisions of the epistle into readings,
chapters, citations and verses; the significance of the numbers is supplied by Vardan
himself, as noted above.
Acting in accord with his divine genius, Paul did not put his name at the beginning of this epistle as [he did] in the others, lest in anger they deny access to his word—for the unbelieving Jews hated him because he was a great personage [who had] separated [himself] from them, and was acquainted with the Law and the prophets, wherewith he nettled them. The believing [Jews hated him] because he clearly preached the Gospel to the heathen without [preaching] circumcision and the Sabbath and dietary scruples, and not as the other Apostles, [who] by their preaching caused these things to be enacted, making concessions because of their weakness.21 Because of this fact, he concealed his name and his apostolate, so that they might first grasp the force of the epistle by reading it, and see its profitability, and later learn [the identity of] the writer.

It is assuredly an epistle of Paul, and not of Luke or Barnabas or Clement,22 as some think. For he who out of ardent compassion for his race desired to be accursed that they might be saved [Rom 9:3] wrote this epistle with that very same love, in hope of their salvation, and entrusts many elevated mysteries to this message, as well as perfect theology, as if to perfect men nourished on the Law and the prophets23 and thus deeply immersed in God’s dispensation.

He glorifies it with the truth of God’s judgment. And coming to the appropriate spot in the second reading, in the twelfth chapter and in the fiftieth verse, he sets in place this sagacious word and says, But Christ being come an high priest. For the Jews could not believe in perfect salvation and life without high priest and sacrifice and temple and blood. The teaching and admonition of this they had followed and been raised in.

21 The explanation of hostility towards Paul on the part of Jews and Jewish converts to Christianity alike is also found in Chrysostom, Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Introductory Argument, 1. Severian of Gabala, too, identifies hostility to Paul as the reason the Apostle’s name is not appended to the epistle. (Fragments on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Prologue. See K. Staab, ed., Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche: Aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben (Neu-testamentliche Abhandlungen 15), Münster in Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1933 (repr. 1984), 200-201.

22 Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. VI.25 quotes Origen on the attribution of the epistle to Luke by some and to Clement by others. In III.38 Eusebius finds it likely that Clement was its translator, a thought also mentioned in the Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews attributed to Ephrem the Syrian. See Writings of St. Epiphanius of Asiori, vol. III, 194-233; here, 194. Tertullian (De pudicitia 20; Eng. tr. by Gösta Claesson available at tertullian.org) ascribes it to Barnabas. The attributions to Luke and Clement are mentioned also in the Fragments on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Prologue of Severian of Gabala; Staab, 345. See n. 11, above in the introduction, for Euthalius on the same subject.

Knowing this, the inspired Paul sets up the argument of the Epistle from this perspective: [that] the New Testament’s worshipers likewise have high priest and temple and sacrifice and blood; everything that the [Old] Law had, the New also has, with a superiority as great as that of the True over the shadow. [Heb 10:1] Thus it is said here, But Christ being come an high priest...

And inasmuch as they might have objected to that [by saying], “He was not of the priestly tribe and of the house of Levi; how could he be a priest according to the Law?” [Paul] first resolved this issue by saying, “The priesthood of Levi could not create perfect salvation with remission of the people’s sins, because [the priest] himself was under transgression’s obligation, and offered sacrifice for himself as well. Too, [the levitical priests] were mortal. Thus, many high priests succeeded one another, and the sacrifice which they offered and the blood which they sprinkled on the people was weak and without efficacy, because it was [that of] dumb [beasts]. So thousands upon thousands and myriad upon myriad animals of various kinds were offered in sacrifice. And all of them were unable to cleanse the hearts of those offering them from the conscience pangs which troubled them, as being condemned of God. For this reason, the good ones among the people, the ones who truly served the Law, protested to God forcefully, to exchange the lesser for the greater, and the weak and inferior for that of greater force, the shadow for the truth, and the mortal and sinful priesthood for the immaculate and immortal priesthood, and the dumb holocausts and sacrifices and blood for that which is able to remove the world’s sin and reconcile [God] with humanity.

And God, who is good by nature and a fathomless depth of love for humankind, who sees the wishes of those who fear him [Ps 144:19]24 and [gives us] more than we can ask for or even think of [Eph 3:20], in his own person and through his own understanding fulfilled the wishes of the saints, and [filled up] what was lacking in the Jewish law—and himself came as high priest; not after the order of Aaron, but “after the order of Melchizedek”, no genealogy of whom is related, prior or posterior. No beginning is recorded for him by written history and no ending [in] death, but he is and remains “a priest forever” [Heb 7:3].25 This is not outside of

24 The word “sees” is not in the biblical text.

25 The enigmatic figure of Melchizedek gave rise to a wide variety of legends and interpretations: he was the Holy Spirit, or the Son of God (Omar Hesse, “Markus Eremita und seine Schrift ‘De Melchisedech’,” Oriens Christianus 51 [1967] 72-77), or the giver to Cyrus of God’s writ, to be kept until the Magi offered it before the infant Christ (M.E. Stone, “Armenian Seth Traditions,” in Bentley Layton, ed., The Rediscovery of Gnosticism: Proceedings of the Conference at Yale, March, 1973 (Studies in the History of Re-
the Law and scripture’s testimony, and it is not mandated or merely promised; rather, it comes with the oath and indissoluble pronouncement of God the Father and the Holy Spirit, said to the Son through the mouth of David: “The Lord has sworn and will not repent” [Ps 110:4], and so on, “...after the order of Melchizedek”; which means [he is] not only priest but king.

Thus every elevated rank and venerable title which [God] gave with gifts as the heritage of Adam’s children,26 to the just and to many others by his providence—by means of which [however,] they were not able to be saved—through the salvation of them all at his coming, the second Adam [1 Cor 15:45-47] took them upon himself according to the flesh which he had, infinitely, as befit his divinity. His kingship he took, as a consequence of his incarnation, by his birth from Mary, being descended from the house of David and the tribe of Judah. He who was the natural lord of these graces received priesthood and prophethood27 on the day of his baptism in the Jordan by John, as the Father’s voice and the Holy Spirit affirmed, [Mt 3:16/Mk 1:9/Lk 3:21] deathlessly transforming what was his [by descent] into the eternal priesthood of Melchizedek. [He who was] God without lack, having received these gifts, sanctified them and gave them [Eph 4:8] to his Church forever; that is, to be for him a royal priesthood [1 Pt 2:9], prophesying those things which are to come.

Concerning this it says, But Christ being come an high priest, not of dumb sacrifices and weak offerings, but of the good things which are to

26 Var’dan’s teacher, Vanakan Vardapet, in his Questions and Answers, relates that God gave three gifts to Adam: prophecy, priesthood, and kingship. Adam’s priesthood was shown in his giving of names to the animals just as a priest gives a name at baptism; as a prophet, he recognized Eve as being from his own bone. Var’dan’s own U$\mathit{h}nah\mathit{h}/\mathit{h}w\mathit{n}\mathit{w}\mathit{h}/\mathit{h}m \mathit{g} [Commentary on the Pentateuch], M 1267, f. 5r also mentions the priestly giving of names. See Roberta R. Ervine, “Antecedents and Parallels to Some Questions and Answers on Genesis in Vanakan Vardapet’s Book of Questions,” Le Muséon 113 (2000) 417-428.

27 Reading a$p\mathit{w}m\mathit{m}/\mathit{h}n\mathit{h}$ instead of a$p\mathit{w}m/\mathit{h}n\mathit{h}.$
come [Heb 9:11]; that is, of those good things which were to come about through him, which had never been [brought about] by anyone. And what are these good things which are to come through him? First, the removal of sin; then the dissolution of death; the destruction of hell; the kingdom of life; the opening of paradise; the distribution of the Spirit’s grace; the gift of divine adoption; and the living food and immortal drink which contain all these. For all this did Christ ... come an high priest.

Now, according to the holy Dionysius, this priesthood was a holy order, a divine science and operation. When one says “high priest”, he expresses that One who distributes all good things. This high priesthood did God the Word carry out, having taken it upon himself through his human incarnation. The levitical priesthood was not able to distribute those gifts; thus, he did not say “a good thing”, singular, but “good things which are to come.” For the good things which Christ gave to his Church—that is, to the faithful—as a heritage are not described through a defined number; and he is yet to give [them] “what eye has not seen”. [1 Cor 2:9]

Inasmuch as a high priest must have a temple and a tabernacle, as the Jews required, he says by a greater and more perfect [tabernacle] and [one] not made with hands. [Heb 9:11] “Do not,” he says, “seek the tabernacle outside the priest, for his body is the tabernacle.” As He said to the Jews, “Destroy this temple...” [Jn 2:19] Not that we should understand the tabernacle to be one thing, and the dweller [therein], another; they are precisely the same, one in nature and power, will and activity. (Because of the weak thinking of the Jews was this stated by the Lord and by Paul.) [The latter] sometimes called the flesh “heaven”; at [other] times a “tabernacle” and a “veil”. A temple and heaven and a veil do not allow [one] to see whatever is within them; the flesh likewise concealed the godhead and separated [from it] those who were unable to look on it with faith as did Simeon and John and at one point Peter, in the confession of Him.

28 Eccl. Hier., I.1
29 The connection between “veil” and “flesh” is made explicitly in Heb 10:20. That between “flesh” and “tabernacle” is based on 2 Cor 5:1,4 and appears to have been used to expound Heb 8-9. Compare also Gregory Nazianzus, Oration XXI.2, on the “veil” of human flesh. (In section 10 of the same oration, Gregory applies the image of Christ as “great High Priest” to Athanasius.)
30 The statement that the flesh can be referred to as a “curtain” because it “concealed the godhead” is also found in Chrysostom, Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews, 15.4.
31 An allusion to Lk 2:34.
32 Probably alluding to Jn 1:29,36.
33 An allusion to Mt 16:16/ Mk 8:29/Lk 9:20.
[Paul] called [the flesh] “great” [Heb 4:14] and “perfect”,\(^{34}\) for “in Him”, he said, “was contained all the fullness of the godhead bodily” [Col 2:9], and the will and activity of Father and Holy Spirit too. It is not [the case] that God “metes out the Spirit” [Jn 3:34] to the Son!\(^{35}\) How could [the flesh] not be “great” and “perfect”? For he performed so much righteousness so perfectly, that one cannot state or fully grasp it. Although his divinely glorious flesh was of the mature stature of the first Adam,\(^{36}\) yet with the limited greatness of its essential kingship it is worshiped and glorified by angels and by earthly beings.

It is denoted by “great” and “perfect”, not because of his divinity only—than which nothing is more perfect—but because of his taking and anointing the flesh and its becoming what he had anointed; I would go so far as to call it “a twin god”, as Gregory, the theologically eloquent, states.\(^{37}\)

He calls [the flesh, the tabernacle] *not made with hands* that is, *not from these created things*. He says, “The Jewish tabernacle human beings established, for the hands of Bezalel and Uriah fashioned the tent of witness, and the hands of Solomon’s and Hiram’s servants [fashioned] the Temple. This *tabernacle*, however, human hands did not put together, but rather the Word, the high arm of God the Father [Acts 13:17], the governing Light. He did not build it like a house and dwell in it; rather taking our entire nature he created a new fusion,\(^{38}\) and [one that was] ineffable, without confusion and without alteration.”

John the Theologian, desiring to express this inexpressible, divinely made union, said, “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” [Jn 1:14], not by changing the essence of the Word into flesh, but by transforming its weakness and instability into his own immeasurably powerful and change-

\(^{34}\) Heb 12:2 calls him “the perfecter”.

\(^{35}\) This sequence of citations is also found in Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 15.4.

\(^{36}\) Alluding to 1 Cor 15:45-47.

\(^{37}\) I have not identified this quotation. However, *Epist. 51* and 52 both discuss the flesh of Christ at some length.

\(^{38}\) Armenians seem to have recognized the phrase Երիտասարդ երեր or Երեր Երիտասարդ as characteristic of Gregory Nazianzus’s thought; it is memorialized in the hymn for his feast day: *Արմիներ արմադար երերևելիս երիտասարդ երեր երիտասարդ երեր* [who taught the salvific economy of the incarnation on our behalf as “one from two, a new, marvelous mixture”]. See Հոգեվան Հայոց Համագործակցություն [Collection of Spiritual Hymns]. Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1936, 725.
less ... the same effulgence, preserving its density and igniting it with lightning rays.

And how can he say not of these created things? for it is our created nature which the Lord made divine. Yet because he did not wish to close it off from the increate Word of God, he glorifies the thing taken with the nature of the One who takes it. As he says elsewhere, "Jesus Christ, yesterday and today; and the same forever," [Heb 13:8] having assurance from the Lord who called [himself] the Son of Man and the bread of life come down from heaven that he was with the Word in heaven prior to his ascension into heaven.

Not, he says, of these created things, because this creation is either from earth, as Adam was, or from seed, like all of us. But the forerunner Gabriel, wanting to reveal him to his mother, said "the one who is to be born of you [will be] holy and son of God" [Lk 1:35]. And to Joseph he said, "what is born of her is of the Holy Spirit" [Mt 1:20]. Let the followers of the Nestorians' stated opinions be ashamed, who, not reining in their arrogance, make bold against this orthodox confession, and by their idle words divide what is not divided in reality!

We, however, will follow the unerring apostolic road to the salvation of our souls, and we shall look at these [subsequent] phrases in order. First [Paul] says, Not with the blood of bulls and goats, but with his own blood he entered in [Heb 9:12]. He had already demonstrated that Christ himself is both high priest and tabernacle. [Since] sacrifice and offering and blood are also requisite, that likewise is from him; so he offered himself as a sacrifice to God, as a sweet savor [Eph 5:2]. [Paul] hereby demonstrates the great deficiency of the earlier [sacrifice] by comparison with the incomparable elevation of this new sacrifice.

With his own blood he entered, it says. That is much more marvelous! Thus, entering in once for all, he invented eternal salvation; for the levitical high priests went in year after year with blood not their own, into a


40 This phrase brings together Jesus' identification of himself as "the bread of life" and the one "come down from heaven", in Jn 6:31-52.

41 The verse actually reads, "the blood of goats and calves", but in his citation Vardan uses the word order of Heb 9:13, "by the blood of bulls and of goats". The same verse is used in Cyril of Alexandria, Scholia on the Incarnation of the Only Begotten (Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church 47), Oxford, 1881, 185-236, in the context of his explanation "How Emmanuel is One" (I.7).
sanctuary made with hands; all [these] were much more paltry and without power. But he, the Son of God, immortal Lamb, entered before his Father with his own blood; how could it not be, that with one true entering in and with one sacrifice he should remove fully the world’s sin!

And if anyone should wonder why, then, all these sacrificial offerings [are made] throughout the whole earth until the end of the world, we respond that this is like unto the latter [sacrifice]; for it is not a succession of living things that die, but only the eternally Living One who once, despised by the Jews, died on the cross and since then is sacrificed for the faithful by means of the same glorious and honorable sacrament, for the increase and nourishment of, and atonement for, Christians living and dead, against the wounding and insatiable ferocity of Satan—not that he was evil in origin, but he was the origin of anyone who wills to invent [evil] and by deception transmit it to others. By the single sacrifice the Lord had the ability to kill him, or to immediately throw him into the threatened torments; however, justly and rightly [he preserved him] to the end of this world. [The Lord] does not remove self-determination from those to whom it has been given, together with rationality; rather, he cut off [Satan’s] tyrannical power, and ravaged hell, his den, and empowered the faithful by giving them the cross and its fruit as a weapon, together with the hope of ineffable glory. Thus by his own will, [Satan] strives to his own destruction in deceiving human beings; they will not give up crowning themselves by a good eagerness, armed with the awesome and awful sacrifice which is ever inexhaustibly offered up, until the body of the Church is fully whole, rev-

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42 Allusion to 1 Cor 11:26.


44 The parallel between the deadly fruit of the tree in Gn 2:17 and Christ as the fruit of the cross/tree of life is made in the hymnal canon for the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross: see Findikyan, “Armenian Hymns of the Church and the Cross”, §§15, 17, 62.

45 The cross is spoken of several times in the hymns for the octave of the feast as “weapon” or “weapon of victory”. See translations in Findikyan, “Armenian Hymns of the Church and the Cross”, §§ 12, 29.
erencing the virtue of the font, coming once again to repentance, by Christ's mercy and through the life-giving outpouring of his blood.

What he did one time in person, entering into the holy place, is the same for all eternity.\textsuperscript{46} Here, it is the heavens that he calls the holy place, the place unattainable by earthly beings. He demonstrates all the more certainly the perfect salvation which he created once by his blood. And that salvation which he uncovered had been concealed; it is obvious that through the Father's creatorly compassion and love it was surpassing perfect; and it was hidden with him at the expulsion of Adam from the garden, until he saw the blood of his Son; thereafter, opening it he swiftly set in place our salvation through that revered blood of [our] God and high priest. This is [the meaning of] the saying, "God made manifest his love toward us" [1 Jn 4:9], and, "the mystery which was concealed has now been revealed."\textsuperscript{47}

He offered that god-imbued blood to the Father, and received our reconciliation; and by the Father's and the Spirit's will he gave that same blood to us who are saved, as life and immortality and eternal salvation. Thus, what we bring up to this mystical altar by the hand of priests and high priests, the Head of the Church, the great high priest who stood in the Holy of holies, offers to God. And it is he himself who is offered; who is both there and here, God uncontainable, glorified by all, both high priest of the Church and slaughtered lamb; whom John saw in his revelation, slain upon the heavenly altar, with seven eyes and seven horns, worshiped amid the twenty-four elders [Rv 5:6]. How much love and how much compassion, and what faith is required to understand those sayings and, forgetting all things [Phil 3:13], to ever embrace that eternal life of Christ's, which is yet in keeping for us with the Father\textsuperscript{48} and which will be yet further revealed on the day of his revealing.\textsuperscript{49}

For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of heifers sprinkling [the unclean, sanctifies to the purification of] the flesh, how much more [that which he offered by the Spirit] to the father—[himself as immaculate, eternal sacrifice]. What he is saying is something like this: "You Jews believed in atonement through the blood and ashes which the palpable fire burned—the flesh and skin and offal of animals—and taking it they sprin-

\textsuperscript{46} Paraphrasing Heb 9:12.

\textsuperscript{47} Synopsis of 1 Cor 2:7-10.

\textsuperscript{48} Alluding to Col 3:1-4.

\textsuperscript{49} Allusions to the day of Christ's "appearing" or "revealing" are found in Lk 17:30; 1 Tm 4:1; 6:14; Ti 2:13; 1 Pt 1:7.
kled you therewith. So do not disbelieve in this [sacrifice], and do not be amazed seeing the gap between this sacrifice and that one. For the former was bull and goat and heifer and their blood and ashes; whereas the latter is God’s son as sacrifice and priest and altar, and the fire of this sacrifice is the eternal Spirit.

Thus, the former were flesh, and cleansed the flesh from a fleshly [un]cleanness; in other words it was only able to cleanse anyone who was contaminated by touching something dead or torn by animals or someone with a discharge or a leper, or who had eaten something unclean; but flesh could not cleanse the [actual] flesh [itself]. As a certain profane [writer] has said: “How can one cleanse clay?”

For which reason, no one’s conscience was at rest that “we have been cleansed.” And sins committed had no forgiveness, but [the one committing them] was put to death. Here, however, [Paul] says, “It will cleanse your conscience from dead works.” Because it is sinful acts which contaminate a person, and not those things mentioned above; for deeds corrupt us, and make us corrupted and defiled. There is nothing that renders us more disgusting and hateful in God’s eyes than [what] sin counterfeits. This is obvious from [the fact] that Anania [and his companions] and David the prophet elevated all creatures, inanimate and animate, to the blessing and praise of the Creator—but not the sinner: “But to the sinner God says, ‘Why do you even recite my statutes? or why do you take my covenant on your lips?’” [Ps 49:16]

Yet such committers [of sin] whom the Law kills and the sacrifices were unable to save, the blood of Christ, by means of the font, renders heavenly; and to those who have sinned after the font and have repented with penitence, it grants life. As it says, “The written Law kills, but the spiritual gives life.” [2 Cor 3:6] [The former] said beneficial things, but it could not provide the assisting force of the Spirit, because that which was under obligation was servile and not free, as is this spiritual, filial [Law].

As [the Apostle] says, It will cleanse your consciences from dead works, to worship the living God.

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50 Interestingly, John Chrysostom in his First Instruction to Catechumens, 3, uses the metaphor of a clay vessel to describe the mystery of baptism in terms of the remolding of the person. English translation by W.R.W. Stephens. (Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers 9), Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1889, 159-165.

51 Alluding to what western tradition refers to as the apocryphal Song of the Three Young Men (Dan 3:24-90 in the LXX and Armenian Bibles), and to Ps 148. Both are used in the office of Matins [masbouh duw].

52 Based on the exegesis of Gal 3 and 4.
So then, those who remain in dead works are unable to worship the living God. For worship by means of vile acts suited the worship of idols, which were not living. The true God, however, says, “Be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy” [Lv 11:44, 20:26; 1 Pt 1:16]; and “if the wicked offer to me ox and sheep and incense, I shall turn away my face from it as from a dog and a blasphemer;” 53 and, “It is a fearsome thing to fall into the hands of the living God” [Heb 10:31] with an impure way of life. As John the golden-worded says, “Let no one with filthy mind and unclean deeds enter the church.” 54 See how much greater glory has the latter [temple] than the ancient one; there anyone who had touched a dead thing’s bones could not enter—then how do you, dead in sin, presume to be “alive” to God before confession? Therefore he is the mediator of this new covenant; thus when a death occurs for salvation, because of transgressions under the first covenant, those who have been called to an eternal inheritance will receive the good news [Heb 9:15].

Thus Jesus is not only priest and sacrifice and temple, but mediator too, as was Moses of the old [tabernacle]. And if one looks more closely at the [term] “mediator”, there is no one except Jesus as mediator from among humankind. 55 For a “mediator” is one who enters between two, and is related to both, as a human being [is related] to a human being. But between God and man who else could be “mediator” except Christ—with the Father’s divinity and with his humanity—who acceded to both justly, and reconciled [them], putting the blame on someone else—Satan—as he indeed was [to be blamed].

He was also called mediator because, as it were, he carried messages back and forth, and made peace. 56 For the Father did not wish to give us the kingdom, 57 because he was angry [with us] as being worthy of death and as covenant breakers through Adam and the Israelites. He had given them the oath of covenant and alliance so that they might worship him by that means and live. 58 Since they did not keep it, they entered under obliga-

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53 Reference to Is 66:3.
54 Chrysostom’s Instructions to Catechumens constitutes a lengthy elaboration on this theme. The quotation given here, however, is taken from Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews, XV.6.
55 A reference to 1 Tm 2:5.
56 An allusion to Eph 2:15. The image of the Son’s conveying words back and forth is found in Chrysostom’s Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews, XVI.2.
57 An allusion to Lk 12:32.
58 Perhaps an allusion to Lv 18:5 or Dt 4:1.
tory death. The mediator taking this upon himself willingly died and freed us, writing with his blood a testament for us and a covenant treaty appropriate to his mediation; it was not written in black and white like the testamentary covenant of the Jews.

So when a death occurs for salvation, because of transgressions under the first covenant, those who have been called from the beginning will receive the good news that Christ, who became our high priest, died for us and gave his body and blood as atonement for us, and the remembrance of his death as intercessor [on our behalf]. Sin cannot lord it over us, relying on that; as the Apostle writes, "No more shall sin have dominion over you, for you are not under the Law, but under grace" [Rom 6:14]. According to the old Law, the same soul that sinned also died, but when we sin, Christ dies for us and justifies us. As it says, "The blood of Christ cleanses us of all our sins" [1 Jn 1:7], and "Beloved, do not sin. And if anyone sin, we have an intercessor with God, Christ Jesus the just and spotless" [1 Jn 2:1].

It is written in the Law, that "the soul which sins shall die" [Ez 18:20]. And for as long as we are in the body, it is impossible for us to be without sin. If we were to die as often as we sinned, we would never have been able to enjoy the good news to which we have been called. For this very reason, he became mediator of the new covenant, so however much we sin and become liable to death, it is he who dies for our obligations. And through the memorial of his death that we offer to the Father, is our salvation; and we rise up from the catastrophe of sin and are given life from death through his death; and receive the good news, we who were invited from the beginning—and have believed—to inherit heavenly life and immortality. Not by our own righteousness, but by faith in Christ’s righteousness. He became our righteousness from God the Father, and "we

59 Reading ἑγάπη for ἑγαπη.
60 This terminology occurs multiple times in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The covenant in blood also figures in 1 Cor 11:25, recalling the Last Supper narrative of Mt 26:28/Mk 14:24/Lk 22:20.
61 Interestingly, the NBHL quotes this same wording—ἡμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ ἄνθρωπου ἐκτίσθη μισήματι αὐτῶν ἡμᾶς ἐκτίσθη μισήματι ἡμᾶς— as appearing in the Commentary on Mark of Barsel Maškeworči (1280?-1345?).
62 The addition of the phrase "from the beginning" is an allusion to 2 Thes 2:13.
63 A reference to Ez 18:4, 20. The reference is repeated at the start of the next paragraph.
64 An allusion to Phil 3:9.
65 A reference to 1 Cor 1:30.
are freely justified by grace” [Rom 3:24], as said the Apostle who now iterates, “So when they are worthy of death because of the first covenant’s transgression, those invited by the prophets to inherit eternity will receive the good news”—that is, that Christ has died the death—“and they will receive the good news promised to those who have kept the covenant, through God’s eternal mercy.” This is all.

Hereafter we will rein in our words, setting their limit at this, sparing the purified and discerning ears of our hearers. The hour has come for [you], prudent and sapient listeners, who in particular recognize the “field’s fruitfulness” and sufficiently take to heart what is appropriate.

May the holy high priest come to us, according to our calling in the hope of faith, with his whole captivity, with the Father’s compassion and the Holy Spirit’s gifts, bringing with him the myriad hosts of angels and all the flocks of the just. And with blessed joy may he celebrate with us this dedication of this sanctuary built with hands, and this temple dedicated to his name, and may he dwell herein with his heavenly glory.

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66 This sentence is the only example adduced by the NBHL for the word ζωηδωρωματι.

67 He may be referring to the parable of the field in which a treasure was buried; there are, however, other parables concerning fields which may also be intended. Only in Ps 64:12 do the words ωρωρωματι and ωρη occur together.

68 Referring to Eph 1:18; 4:4.

69 An allusion to Eph 4:8.

70 Jesus describes the second coming as being accompanied by angels, in Mt 16:27; 25:31.

71 Mk 13:26-27 describes the sending of the angels to gather the just, in the context of the second coming.
Անդրեաս Զարգարյան
Ավանի փորձանություններ

[Բարձրակետ]

Ռահատակել ելույթ աշխատանքը...

Բոլորը հայտնի են պատմական աշխատանքի պատմության ժամանակաշրջանում: Ռահատակման շարժումը համարվում էր աշխատանքի զուգակցության տեսանկյունից, պատմական աշխատանքի գրեթե իրականացման կարգավորման մեջ։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը պատմական աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։ Այսպիսով, ռահատակել ելույթը աշխատանքի համար շատ կարևոր է։ Այն երկրորդ աշխատանքի բազմակի մոտիվ է։
Այստեղ նշվում է հայ մայրերենից խաղաղ, համարժեք արահայազգային ու պատմական տեղեկություններ, որոնք համարժեք են տնտեսական առաջնորդական գործընթացի համար։ Պատմական գործընթացի համար նախապատրաստ է տալիս, որ հաշվի է երկիրի պետական և տնտեսական ուսումնասիրությունների կամ այլ պատմական սարքավորությունների հետ կապված։ Այսպիսով, հայ մայրերենից խաղաղ Առաջարկությունները կարելի է ստանալ ուրիշ կապերի հետ։
Բուլատյան բանակ տարածքում է տարված, որ հարմարելիք ենինջը երաշխում, իսկ այլ պահանջ է հայտնում, որ թերթ էր մասնակցության կառույցներում, եւ քարտեզերի տեղեկատվության տարածումը հարաբերաբար հին։ Հատկապես ինչպես այս բանակի ինչպես այն ծառայությունը տրողում է։ Այս այս համարին բարձրացում են բնակչության լուսավորությունը։ Քաղաքային գրադարանները հանդես են ունենում գրականության և հնագիտության հետ։
անի, ուր հաջորդի է պատահած զարգացել և զարգացման: Իսկ մորֆոլոգիան մատերադաս է սկսվում դարձանքներին մատրուկության, որ գլուխը կընդունեն ունակություն ուղարկել և մուտք ընձամբ համարել, ուկարեն երբ զարգացման կներքում է հանդիպում այսինքն, որ նրա հաջորդը միանգամից այս ստորև՝ թե կարող է գրել և ոչ է ռեժիմը, որ անհարց կարծիք չի պատկերում է ոչ համարվում մասին, այլ է թե, եթե պատահած դարձանքների է, այլ է այսինքն առաջին է ուղարկել այսինքն, որ որևէ զարգացման կամ ստորաբաժանում ուղիղ կատարվում է ստորաբաժանման գլուխը. Պատկերված է այս առանցքային անունը այսինքն պատահած է այսինքն. Պատկերված է այսինքն.
Այս աշխատանքի ընթացքում զարգացած եմ ինքնագիտական, տեխնիկական և գործառույթային հարցերի համարով. Այսպիսով զարգացած եմ ինքնագիտական, տեխնիկական և գործառույթային հարցերի համարով.

3 An abrasion has created a lacuna the length of two letters.
իրավաբանության անհաջախումների առաջապատմությունը: Ներքև, եթե սպասարատ ենք այն այս պատկերը ու այս անցյալը, որտեղ նկարված իրավաբանության անհաջախումների պատմությունը կերտված է։ Նրանց բաց տեղում ռազմական տարրերի ազդեցության պատճառով, կատարվող մասին լիներ հավանաբար գրանցված։ Այսպիսով, իրավաբանության անհաջախումների պատմությունը կերտված է ռազմական տարրերի ազդեցության պատճառով, ինչից հետո նրանց հավանաբար ընդհանուր համար բարձրացել և կերև ցրտվել դասական սրբազան տարրերին։ Իրավաբանության անհաջախումների պատմությունը կերտված է ռազմական տարրերի ազդեցության պատճառով, կաշույց տարածվել և արտահայտի առկայության պատճառով, ինչից հետո նրանց հավանաբար բարձրացել և կերև ցրտվել դասական սրբազան տարրերին։ Իրավաբանության անհաջախումների պատմությունը կերտված է ռազմական տարրերի ազդեցության պատճառով, կաշույց տարածվել և արտահայտի առկայության պատճառով, ինչից հետո նրանց հավանաբար բարձրացել և կերև ցրտվել դասական սրբազան տարրերին։
քահուց եւ գահագրական առաջնորդության եւ զարգացման քարոզ այսօր է քարոզի պատմական եւ փաստաթղթի համար, հետի տեղում անցնելու համար և զարգացման համար անկախ պահպանող ուր ամենա կարևոր տեղական համար, ինչ այս զարգացման խորհրդանշում է գրառված հատուկ ձևերով։

Նրա հետ զարգացման եւ զարգացման ախտատերությունը, այուրագույն տեղում գտնվող քարոզի հարված համար է տուժում եւ համաշխարհում համարվում է կարևոր պահանջից, քանի որ զարգացման համար զարգացման համար գրավում են այն պահանջներ, որոնք զարգացման համար են մտնում։

Այս պահանջները դեռևս հնչել են զարգացման համար և զարգացման համար, նրանք հնչել են զարգացման համար և զարգացման համար։ Սա ստիպում է տարբերակիչ կարգավորում եւ զարգացման կարևոր համար։

Այս պահանջներից մեկը զարգացման համար է, իսկ պահանջներից մեկը զարգացման համար։ Սա ստիպում է տարբերակիչ կարգավորում եւ զարգացման կարևոր համար։

Այս պահանջներից մեկը զարգացման համար է, իսկ պահանջներից մեկը զարգացման կարևոր համար։ Սա ստիպում է տարբերակիչ կարգավորում եւ զարգացման կարևոր համար։

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Սուրբ Ներսես Թեոլոգիական Շարունագանություն Բնակչության Տեղեկություններ. Այդ Մեծ Հայքի հերոսների կենսագրությունները գրվել են հայ պատմական և մշակութային գրականության նման, մի շարք պարզ և հսկա հետազոտությունների համաձայն։
AN ARMENIAN ENCOMIUM ON THE HOLY CROSS ATTRIBUTED TO GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN

Nishan Baljian

St. Gregory of Nazianzus, surnamed the Theologian, is among the Armenian Church’s most beloved patristic resources. Translation of his homilies is traditionally attributed to Movses Xorenaci, and although the dates of Xorenaci may be in dispute, the mere fact of this attribution

speaks to the antiquity of Gregory’s reputation among Armenians. Several of his sermons, popularly known by their first lines (Oration XLV, Ἴλα υμονοὶ ζύμη, and Oration III, ὲν Ἰεωνοὶ for example) were widely studied and had informal commentaries in the form of notations [Lμδθνθμθπ] devoted to them.³

The text presented and translated here is attributed to “Gregory the Theologian” in the manuscript from which the text was first recorded by the Mekhitarist fathers who published it in Bazmavêp 90 (1933) 444-449. However, the assumption that its author was Gregory Bishop of Nazianzus seems to me open to question. Although it is quite clearly a translation, rather than an original Armenian composition, this homily does not to my knowledge appear in the Greek corpus of Gregory’s work.⁴ Migne’s Patrologia Graeca does not include it among his orations. Quasten’s Patrology makes special mention of it under “versions” rather than “translations”, citing the Bazmavêp printing; Geerard classifies the text under “dubia” and knows of only the Armenian version as printed in Bazmavêp.⁵

The Armenian Church feasts the cross of Christ on four different occasions:

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³ Daivi Kpêyareći (1150?-1220?) authored notes on Gregory’s homilies, preserved as Matenadaran manuscript M5602 (pened by the author himself in 1178) and Jerusalem manuscript J318. (Armenian Writers, 266.) Excerpts from the notes found their way into other writings, such as the Questions and Answers of Daivi’s younger contemporary, Vanan Vardapet (1181-1251). Gêorg Erznkaçi (ca. 1350-1416) based an edition of the notes to Gregory’s ὲν Ἰεωνοὶ on lectures given by the great nobleman vardapet Yovhannës Orotneçi (1315-387). The latter, some fifty pages in length, is preserved in J 718. Armenian Writers, 407.

⁴ Gregory Nazianzen does mention the Apparition of the Cross in 351, in his Second Indictive against Julian the Emperor, where he relates the story in detail, including the appearance of a miraculous flame that “issued forth from the sacred place and stopped them,” consuming the impious as the people of Sodom had been consumed. He also stresses that people present at the apparition found their garments permanently “stamped with the brandmarks of the Cross”. (Oration V.7)

⁵ Johannes Quasten, Patrology, vol. III. The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature, Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, Inc., 1994 (7th paperback printing; first published Utrecht: Spectrum, 1950), 241. M. Geerard, Clavis Patrum Graecorum, vol. II (Corpus Christianorum), Turnhout: Brepols, 1974, 198. Unfortunately, the Bazmavêp printing includes no front material; the text simply appears “as is.” It contains several textual errors, some of which I have been able to correct. These are noted in the text which follows.
(1) The Invention of the Cross, which falls on the nearest Sunday to October 26, celebrates the rediscovery of the Cross, according to tradition, on the site of what became the Holy Sepulcher Church, by the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great.

(2) The Exaltation or Elevation of the Cross, celebrated on the Sunday nearest to September 14 (Sept. 14 in the Byzantine calendar), which in the Armenian tradition marks three “exaltations” or “elevations” of the Cross—the lifting up of the cross to the faithful by James, first bishop of Jerusalem; the uplifting of the cross by Cyril, immediately following its unearthing by Helena and the miraculous resurrection or healing which accompanied that discovery; and the return of the cross from Persia in 628.

(3) The Apparition of the Cross, which in the Armenian calendar falls on the fifth Sunday of Eastertide (May 7 in the Byzantine tradition), celebrates the appearance of the Cross in the heavens above Jerusalem in 351.

(4) The Cross of Varag, celebrated on September 28, marks the discovery, during the 7th century reign of Catholicos Nersès III, the Builder, by a certain Todik, of the relic of the cross that had been brought to Armenia by St. Hripsimé and her companions in the days just preceding the official conversion of Armenia to Christianity in the early 4th century.  

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6 On the martyrdom of Hripsimé and her companions see Agafangelos, Ημερμενημάτις Χριστιανικῆς Ευαγγελίας [History of Armenia], English tr., Robert W. Thomson, Agathangelos, History of the Armenians, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1976, §§81-108. The relic was moved to S. Nān in Lower Varag, where it remained until 1021, when the last king of Vaspurakan, Senekērim (990-1016) carried it to Sebastia and put it in that city’s Church of the Holy Cross [S. Nān]. After Senekērim’s death in 1026, both the relic and his own remains were transferred back to Varag, where they stayed until 1651. In that year, the relic was stolen by the Ottoman governor of the region. He and his fellow thief died dreadful deaths; admonished by their fate, their successor, Ibrahim Bey, returned the relic to the monastery. Torgom Guşakian, Umruban be Sob [Saints and Feasts] (Durian Library 18), Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1939, 314-323. On the powers associated with relics of the cross, see Lynn Jones, “Medieval Armenian Identity and Relics of the True Cross (9th-11th Centuries),” Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies 12 (2001-2002) 43-53.

For celebration of the Apparition on May 7 in the oldest Armenian tradition, and the gradual move away from that date, see also R.H. Vardanyan, Զոհասգիր Զուհասգիր ՝ 18-րդ դարի Հայոց հունսկության 4-18-րդ դարերի Հայոց հունսկությունը [The Armenian Festal Calendar, 4th-18th Century] (Theological Faculty Series 2), Erevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1999, 553-568. Gérard Garitte discusses the Feast of the Apparition in the Georgian calendar, referencing the Armenian celebration: Le Calendrier palestino-géorgien du sinaiticus 34 (Xe siècle) (Subsidia Hagiographica 30), Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1958, 218, and Michel Tarchnischvili
The content of the encomium shows that it was intended for the celebration of the Apparition of the Cross, a major feast in the Armenian Church. The readings for the feast are: (Arawotean Žam and Andastan) Ps 96:1; Gal 6:14-18; Mt 24:30-36; Lk 11:33-12:12; (Patarag) Ps 148:12-20; Ps. 85, 86, 87; Acts 17:1-15; Ps 65:1-2; 1 Jn 1:1-10; Ps 147; Jn 7:14-23. Of all the readings, only Gal 6:14-18 is reflected in the encomium.

Here the first of several puzzling questions arises. The Psalm for the feast—Ps 96/97:6, “The heavens declare his righteousness; and all the peoples behold his glory”—is not the one used as the text of the encomium. Instead, the text of the encomium is Ps 18/19:1, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows forth his handiwork.” Only the first phrase appears in the opening of the encomium, but the encomium deals with the second as well (both the firmament and his handiwork are specifically mentioned). So, it appears that the choice of text is intentionally not the text for the Feast.

A second puzzling matter is the encomium’s preoccupation with monastic virtues and poverty. The logical progression of the encomium is disturbed by the statements on poverty that punctuate it but do not seem to logically follow from the statements made just before them. In fact, the story of Constantine’s vision of the cross is so strikingly interrupted by a passage on Christ’s mission and on poverty, that it leads the reader to sus-

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7 Anania of Širak (615?-690?) in his *Homily on the Epiphany of the Lord* has a long section on the Apparition, stressing the great number of baptisms which took place following the event:

They all hastened to be baptized, so that the fonts and cisterns of water were not enough for them; till at last the blessed [Cyril] ordered the great baths, which were called the public baths, to be cleansed, that they might there carry on the saving [rite of] baptism.

For Anania, this event surpassed the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, because “on that occasion the Spirit was bestowed on the Apostles alone.” He also describes Cyril’s letter to Constantius. *蒌$, ածառուկելակին Տառան* [Homily on the Epiphany of the Lord], in A. Abrahaymian, Տիրական Տիրական Տիրական Տիրական *[Širakačič’s Writings]*, Erevan: Publications of the Armenian SSR Manuscripts Library, 1944, 283-291. The English translation of this homily is forthcoming as an appendix in Abraham Terian, *The Letter of Macarius of Jerusalem to the Armenians* (vol. 4 in the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary’s AVANT series). It is worth mentioning that the altar in the baptistery chapel in the Armenian Cathedral of St. James in Jerusalem houses a cauldron said to have been used by Cyril during this baptismal period.
pect a page may have fallen out of order. In this passage, we are told that the Apostles taught us both negative and positive lessons when Christ sent them out to preach without even the basic necessities of travel. On the negative side, they taught us to overcome hunger, separate from women, abstain from food and drink, and spurn worldly wealth. On the positive side (which sounds remarkably like the negative side!) they taught us to honor poverty and despise wealth, cleave only to one woman, not give way to idle words, honor tears and eschew finery, go the extra mile, and take up the cross, turn away from relatives and follow Christ. At the conclusion of the encomium, the speaker returns to this theme, stating that the apparition of the cross exhorted the wealthy to despise their gold and give to the poor, while consoling the poor by demonstrating that worldly wealth "counts as nothing". While Gregory of Nazianzen's *Oration XIV* is entitled *On the Love of Poverty*, it seems to be primarily devoted to generosity and an awareness of one's dependence on God, rather than on the honoring of poverty *per se* and the despising of wealth.

The third puzzling aspect of the encomium is the Christological thinking alluded to in it. As his transition into the subject of the cross, the homilist mentions certain people who say that, as part of his "taking upon himself the form of a servant", Christ emptied himself of equality with the Father. "until the cross". The encomiast maintains that this Christological position is unacceptable, and uses Paul's boast in the sufferings of Christ as evidence against it. The implication is that the encomiast opposes those who preached the corruptibility of Christ's flesh: Julian of Halicarnassus also took to task those who say that Christ's body was *phtharton* like ours until the resurrection: does this mean that the author espouses some form of Julian's thinking? In any event, the issue appears to be one more at home in the 6th century than in the days of Gregory Nazianzenus.

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8 Armenian Christology is the subject of Peter Cowe's recent study, "Armenian Christology in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries, with Particular Reference to the Contributions of Yovhan Ójneči and Xosrovik argmanič," *Journal of Theological Studies* 55 (2004) 1-54.

9 See R. Draguet, *Julian d'Halicarnasse et sa controverse avec Sévère d'Antioche sur l'incorruptibilité du corps du Christ* (Dissertationes Series 11/12) Louvain: P. Smeesters, 1924, 95-96. A spectrum of non-orthodox thinking on *kenosis*/emptying would continue to be evident into our own century as theologians of various persuasions continued to debate the exegesis of Phil 2:6-7.

10 In addition to Cowe's article, mentioned above in n. 8, the interested reader may examine the writings of Xosrovik Ţargmanič (670?-730?) for direct information on the mainstream Armenian Church's thinking on the Incarnation as it developed in response to Jul-
Finally, we should also draw attention to the very strange dating given for Constantine the Great’s vision of the cross: it is twice stated that the vision took place in 320,\(^\text{11}\) at a time when Constantine was losing to the barbarians in war. (In one place the speaker adds that it was followed by a victory on the Danube.) Constantine was despondent, and “sought to find assistance from a more mighty god”. The apparition took place “around the beginning of the afternoon”, and “those standing nearby” attested that they too perceived the miraculous apparition.

Eusebius mentions that Constantine was calling on God when the cross appeared to him.\(^\text{12}\) However, Eusebius clearly records the event as having taken place in 312, on October 28, near the Tiber. The account of the historian Socrates\(^\text{13}\) (I. 2) states that the apparition took place as Constantine

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\(^{11}\) The difference between the dates 312 and 320 in Armenian script is great, and the possibility of confusing them is very small.

\(^{12}\) For the Armenian text of Eusebius’s history, see Եվսեբիոս Կասեատյան պատմություն [Eusebius of Caesarea’s History of the Church, translated from Syriac into Armenian], trans. Abraham Carian, Venice: San Lazaro, 1877, esp., IX, 9.10-11. The Armenian records that Constantine had a trophy of the Savior’s passion put in the hand of his own statue, with an inscription saying, “By this salutary sign, the true proof of bravery, I have saved and freed your city from the yoke of the tyrant and moreover, having set at liberty both the senate and the people of Rome, I have restored them to their ancient distinction and splendor.” (p. 11)

was leading his troops, just after midday. He saw a pillar of light in the heavens in the form of a cross, on which were inscribed the words, "By this, conquer." He asked those around him if they beheld the same spectacle; and as they unanimously declared that they did, the emperor's mind was strengthened. The next night, Christ told him to reproduce the sign. Although certain details tally with the encomiast's account, Socrates says that this took place in the 7th year of Constantine's reign; i.e., in 312. Sozomen, too (1.3), quotes Eusebius as stating that the apparition took place at midday with soldiers to witness it. He adds a chorus of holy angels, who stand by at the vision, exclaiming, "Oh, Constantine! by this symbol, conquer," and says that Christ himself appeared to Constantine, showing him the symbol of the cross, and commanded him to construct one like it and retain it as his help in battle.

Although the 6th century Byzantine historian John Malalas (491-578) describes the apparition as taking place in Constantine's sleep, in contrast to the other historians and the encomiast, he does place the apparition seven years after Constantine's becoming emperor (i.e., in 320), and gives the setting as a battle in which Constantine was being defeated by the barbarians.14

While I leave the determination of this encomium's time period and probable authorship to others more senior in the fields of patristics and Armenian studies, it does appear to me that the ascription of this enco-

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14 Elizabeth Jeffreys, Michael Jeffreys, Rogher Scott, et al., The Chronicle of John Malalas: A Translation (Byzantina Australiensia 4). Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986, XIII.1-2. Edward G. Mathews, Jr. remarked to me that although Malalas was Byzantine and wrote in Greek, his name suggests he might have been Syrian, and he was a monophysite. If one were to search the 6th century for events in the Syrian world that would have drawn attention to the cross in a special way, one might focus on the return to the sanctuary of St. Sargis of a cross "embellished with much gold and precious stones", offered by the Persian king Chosroes to Gregory of Antioch (571-92), a contemporary of Malalas; the same king also donated to Gregory of Antioch a golden cross with a long historical inscription on it, describing what Chosroes owed to the intervention of St. Sargis. Gregory, "having received these crosses, with the approval of the emperor Maurice, dedicated them with much ceremony in the sanctuary of the martyr." Evagrius Scholasticus, Ecclesiastical History, VI.xxi,1307-1310 from the 1846 translation by E. Walford, London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, now available at http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/evagrius, as part of their series, Early Church Fathers: Additional Texts. The Ecclesiastical History was edited by J. Bidez and L. Parmentier (Byzantine Texts), London: Methuen, 1898; a French translation was made by A.J. Festugière, Byzantion 45/2 (1975) 187-471. The promise to give the crosses is also mentioned by Theophylact of Simocatta in his History, V.1.7-8. Michael Whitby and Mary Whitby, The History of Theophylact Simocatta: an English Translation with Introduction and Notes. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986,132-133.
mium—at least "as is"—to Gregory the Theologian Nazianzenus, should be carefully reviewed.
ENCOMIUM ON THE THEOLEPTIC HOLY CROSS\textsuperscript{1}
ATTRIBUTED TO GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN

[Text]

\textit{The heavens declare the glory of God!} [Ps 18:1]

All prophetic writings inspired by the Holy Spirit, affirmed worthy according to the Spirit, surpass one another in their evocation of [the Spirit’s] grace: one relates the acts of its past operations; another gives knowledge of what is contemporary, at hand; and yet another lauds its future wonders. Their words do not instruct us with\textsuperscript{2} things alien, contradictory to one another, but rather they build up appropriately, in a variety of thoughts, a harmony of the Spirit’s good pleasure. Some do this to a greater extent, and others to a more modest degree, according as [the Spirit] administers, distributing grace to each.\textsuperscript{3}

The elements of David’s song extend their tuneful warbling into [the realms of] the visible and of the speculative. At one and the same time, it brings together the former and that which is to come; prophetic glorification is also evident. Moreover, it contains many different ideas of the soul’s salvation; thus, with evangelic words it gives good tidings of joy, and with mournful ones [it preaches] the salvation and repentance of sinners. Together with that, it relates the formation of the creatures. Bringing to light the condescension to them of Christ’s incarnation, it sets that forth. It brings harmonious sayings to bear on the many and various passages of the great divine ways.

So now it says here, \textit{the heavens declare the glory of God}. At times they declare the visible, which is obvious to all; and at times they give a

\textsuperscript{1} The Armenian word \textit{նահատակվուշք} is translated here as “theoleptic”, one of the two Greek equivalents given in the Mekhitarists’ great classical Armenian dictionary \textit{Նահատակվուշք} [New Lexicon of the Armenian Language], vol. I, Venice: San Lazzaro, 1836 (repr. Erevan: Erevan State University Press, 1971; hereafter, NBHL). The word implies a range of meanings; the cross is the object \textit{which received God, held God, was possessed by God, was inspired bylimbed with God}. For another reference to the cross as “theoleptic”, see Harry C. Merzian, “Some Comments on Armenian Xa`kars and Their Iconography, with Examples from the 9th-13th Centuries,” n. 8, in the present volume.

\textsuperscript{2} The use of the verb \textit{հատակվուշք} makes one think that this may be an oblique reference to Gal 3:24-25, where the Law of the Prophet Moses is said to have “instructed” us.

\textsuperscript{3} Alluding to Gal 3:5, or perhaps to 1 Cor 12, where the distribution of spiritual gifts is discussed at length.
sign of the things to come. Thus [the heavens] are truly a declarer of God’s immensely wonderful powers, fitly bearing in themselves the demonstrations of the creatorly energia; by their inactive silence, they shout as with a trumpet; they declaim, not with musical sound but rather in such a way that one grasps the state of things by looking [at them]: for, lo, the courses of the luminaries and the ordering of the stars—all the orderly arrangement of the heavens!—will show the handiwork of God, formed through the Word and by none other [Jn 1:3]. [The heavens] interpret the things that were from the beginning. They also prophesy future things, and speak about the true glory wherewith they offer glory from another; [1 Cor 4:7] which is apt for this time.

The heavens are said to be a declarer of the glory of God’s power, not a denier thereof. They announce the “father of light,” “who dwells in light inaccessible” [1 Tm 6:16], infinite and beyond comprehension.

Certain people—out of sheer obstinacy and having fallen into untoward thinking, being led astray by vain babblings—because of His incarnation and emptying of himself for our sakes even unto the form of a servant [Phil 2:6-7] say that he went so far as to strip away his divine glory and make himself devoid of equality with the Father, until the cross. [Then] he again sought out and took up the things that he had put away from himself—which is both an inappropriate and a devilishly obtuse thought. As the Savior says, “The Father is in me and I in the Father,” and he says again, “The Father who dwells in me” [Jn 14:10]. So—if it were as they think—the Father’s glory would be diminished because of the Only Begotten’s equal glory and consubstantiality!

But let us leave them to their opinions and witless thoughts, and let us utter our own: “Let it not be that I should boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!” [Gal 6:14] Thus [Paul] boasts in the sufferings where-with God glorified Him—not [two] different gods, but rather an indivisible Oneness with perfect hypostases and a single godhead. Together with the flesh united to His divinity—together with all of us related through the flesh—he sought the primal glory which had been stripped away [from the flesh] by the serpent and the tasting [of the fruit in Eden].

Reading ὑψ. πάντας as ὑψ. πάντα as. As “heavens” is plural, we have elected to maintain the plural throughout, although the Armenian has opted for singular forms.

Wisdom is “from the beginning” in Prv 8:23. Is 41:26 and 48:16 also mention declaring or speaking of things “from the beginning”.

It would seem more apt for the text to read ἑλέον παντοί [the Father of light]. reflecting Jas 1:17 and going on to conflate it with 1 Tm 6:16. However, it is possible that the writer chose the Gnostic / Manichaean term “man of light” deliberately.
Taking these things to heart, dear ones, let us carefully look to the Author of our salvation [Heb 5:9], who for our sake did empty himself into the form of a servant [Phil 2:7]. Humbling himself from loftiness, he took on our poverty. He exchanged the cherub throne for the Virgin’s womb. The One dwelling in inaccessible light descended into a manger; the One seated at the right hand of his Parent was wrapped in swaddling clothes. The One whose throne was the heavens and the earth his footstool [Is 66:1] had no place to lay his head [Mt 8:20]. The King of kings deigned to be numbered in the lineage of a carpenter’s house. The One glorified by seraphim and cherubim was blasphemously insulted by Jews. He was persecuted by his own, struck with a rod, nailed on the cross, taken hostage under death, and contained by the grave. In this manner did he re-create the world’s salvation.

Moreover, one likewise ought not to place this under a covering bushel [Mt 5:15/Mk 4:21/Lk 11:33]; he hunted all the world with the fishing net of truth—and those whom he chose from among fishermen, he sent against sword and fire and various trials, [armed] with the foolishness of preaching [1 Cor 1:21] and with abject poverty. What might one set out as prior or more ultimate poverty than that which not only does not even have a staff or scrip on the journey, but [takes] only a single garment as a cover for their nakedness, without shoes! [Mt 10:10/Mk 6:8/Lk 9:3; 10:4; 22:35] [It is they] who overcame the world and left the world’s wisdom speechless, and they humbled its proud arrogance through the glory with which they boasted in the derision of the cross, which “to those who are

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7 An allusion to Jn 1:11.
8 Assuming the Armenian ḫp̣ḥẉṃ to be translating ὑπως (“perhaps/likewise”).
9 An allusion to Mt 4:19/Mk 1:17, where Jesus calls Simon and Andrew from their nets to become “fishers of men”. Gregory Nazianzen uses this image in Oration XXXVIII.1: “He is made a Fisherman; He condescendeth to all; He casteth the net; He endureth all things, that He may draw up the fish from the depths, that is, Man who is swimming in the unsettled and bitter waves of life.” (Translation from Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 2, Vol. VII; taken from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library, www.ccel.org.)
10 In Jn 16:33 Jesus tells the disciples, “I have overcome the world”; the saints’ having “overcome the wicked one” is mentioned in 1 Jn 2:13, 14; in 1 Jn 4:4 overcoming the world is implied in the statement, “You have overcome them, for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.”
11 The allusion is apparently to 1 Cor 1:19-20; however, the Armenian word డృగుడు బుడుడు occurs only in Mt 22:34, where Jesus is said to have “left the Sadducees speechless.”
lost is foolishness, and to us who are being saved, is the power of God" [1 Cor 1:18] and the glory of the one who fell from glory. It is this cause of the world’s salvation and instrument of its life; this means of death’s condemnation, [which is] the glory of Christ God that the heavens relate.

When or in what time? these things are not hidden matters for those in the know; but let any of you who do not know lend me your ears with rapt attention, so that you may take pleasure in the mystery of this great day: it was the year three hundred and twenty of the world’s salvation and the restoration of the cosmos and the advent of God’s Word. It was the seventh year of the reign of Constantine the autocrat Augustus, son of Constans, king of the Spanish. Barbarian nations had armed themselves against him, and having been beaten by them he sank into the depths of despondency. He sought to find assistance from a more mighty god, ignoring the one whose devotions he had previously honored, the one magnified by Diocletian and his ilk.

While he pondered, thinking about these things, around the beginning of the afternoon the heavens began to declare the glory of God’s cosmic and liberating salvation, of which his August Person was in quest. He noted the marvelous apparition with its splendid form; by the symbol and its wonder it halted the regent. He spoke with those standing nearby, [to ask] whether they were experiencing the same divine marvels. Hearing confirmation of the facts from them all, he thus made himself a disciple of Christ. Taking refuge in that symbol and gaining the victory, he was empowered [by its] invincible might throughout the time of his reign.

In the fullness of time [Gal 4:4] and with the appearance of God’s Word, God takes on the form of a servant [Phil 2:7]—the wealthy one becomes destitute; the inaccessible Nature is joined with this transient one; the King is called a servant; the Undying joins with mortals; he calls his maidservant “Mother”; the face of the seraphs’ Lord is spat upon; the Mighty One willingly becomes weak; the One who created heaven and earth by his Word is nailed to a tree; the One who is worshiped with the Father and the Holy Spirit on the throne of glory is crucified with robbers; the One who gave iconic form to this dust is “sown” lifeless in the dust of death;[12] the Keeper of Israel [Ps 120:4] and of all creation is kept by soldiers.

[12] Underlying this there would seem to be a quite profound exegesis on the parable of the sower in Mk 4, where the word being sown is expounded upon as “the Word” being “sown”. The parable thus interpreted has its counterpart in 1 Cor 15:42-44, where the mortal is “sown” and rises immortal because of the “sowing” of the Word.
He chooses and sends out those who are "unfit", and he is pleased with those who are detestable to many. He sets up such as fishermen to be counselors of God's eparchy. He empowers the weak; he prepares those without military rank to make war. One of them even joins their enemies! Against armor and helmets and weaponed soldiery with swords drawn, together with arrayed armaments, he sent them into battle [armed] with words alone; and with a might invisible did they stand against physical authorities and the incorporeal enemy. They were decimated by the edge of the sword; they left this world by stoning; they were handed over to the fire and thrown into the sea. They became a spectacle for men and angels [1 Cor 4:9].

Through that, they taught [us] to defiantly overcome hunger, and they enjoined [us] to separate from women; they rejected relations with men and did away with frequent food and libations, considering them contemptible. They turned away inherited patrimony and [the holding of] time-honored office, and instructed [us] to spurn worldly wealth.

And what did they teach instead? To worship the Crucified, as creator of heaven and earth; to bow down to a tree; to offer [one's] goods to others, and to empty out [one's] possessions to the very bottom; to honor poverty and despise wealth; to forsake many women and cleave modestly only to one; to abdicate [one's] desires, down to increasing the inflammation of passions by a "lustful glance" of the heart [Mt 5:28]; not to give way to vain words and facetiousness or whispered ridicule; to honor tears and to distance oneself from finery; to pursue prayer and fasting through sleeping on the ground and through vigilance; to show alacrity in the same, night and day, with holiness; to love one's enemies as well, and to bless those who curse one [Mt 5:44]; and to allow one's cheek to be smitten, and to take off one's garment as well as one's cloak [Mt 5:40/Lk 6:29]; and—the pinnacle of virtue—to take up one's bodily cross, to consider one's relatives as foreign [Lk 14:26], and with unwavering love to follow after the life-bringing Crucified one who had no place to lay his head [Mt 8:20/Lk 9:58].

This is the custom of those "of whom this world is not worthy" [Heb 11:38]. And what did he give [them] in return? The mere promise, the invisible expectation, of things [to come] after much time—albeit [the prom-

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13 He may be referring to Eph 6:11-12.

14 Such sayings are found in Mt 16:24/Mk 8:34/Lk 9:23; Mk 10:21. The encomiast has added the word "bodily".

ise] was very trustworthy and elevated—[things] which eye had not seen nor ear heard, neither had the hearts of human beings conceived a suspicion of them [1 Cor 2:9/Is 64:4], the unlying and the true.

This is the custom at which the Jews were scandalized and the heathen were stupefied [1 Cor 1:23]. By this fire did He sunder son from father and daughter from mother [Mt 10:35/Lk 12:53]. By this foolishness and this preaching was he pleased to save us who believe [1 Cor 1:18, 21]. He who by a mere glance would have been able to get the victory [did not accomplish this] by force of divine threat nor by being enveloped in gold and might; he whose Word is sharper than any two-edged sword [Heb 4:12] [did not accomplish this] by resorting to weaponry; he who by his wisdom hung the heavens and by his skill established this earth and patterned man after himself [did not accomplish this] by laying hold of wise men and counselors; he whose kingdom has no end [Lk 1:33] [did not accomplish this] by winning over kings as friends!

Instead, he raises up the poor and sets them on a royal throne. For this reason, he is slow to give divine knowledge, to execute salvation, for the great and exalted of this world, lest through such people the power of the kerygma be weakened, and the heathen be in turmoil [Ps 2:1-2] suspecting and insinuating that the faith did not receive its foundation by heavenly power, but that they entered under submission to the Gospel yoke unwillingly, by virtue of kingly threats and by the sword and fire of terrible princes of this world. Either that, or having been deceived by treasures and honor and various luxuries and gifts—the things which they hoarded up for themselves until that very year; that is, the three hundred and twentieth counting from the salvific condescension of our Lord. Then was that other suspicion removed, so that the heathen might not say, "Where is their God?" And the Jewish race, hated by God, took his neglect of the faithful to indicate opposition to [the faith]. For that reason, he freed the people who had undergone persecutions and death, and brought out into plain view the hidden power, with a glory wherewith he glorified himself.

The heavens declared that in a brilliant display, not with any of a variety of shapes, but with the likeness of the cross! by which the king was

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16 The NBHL refers this phrase (μνήμη χωρισμένη) to John Chrysostom’s eighth homily on 1 Timothy (Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers 13; available at www.ccel.org), which comments on 1 Tm 2:8-10, concerning the sober dress appropriate to holy women.

17 This phrase can be found in Ps 79:10, 115:2; Jl 2:17.

18 Perhaps alluding to Jn 13:32.
confounded; by which, too, the faithful had been ridiculed as worshipers of a crucified god and reverencers of a man condemned to death.

This ridicule is Christ's glory—true glory, and our eternal salvation! Those who had scoffed, it made into worshipers, and the blasphemous king it turned into its celebrator. It turned [his] insults into boasting and transferred [him] from death to life [Jn 5:24]. Becoming a believer in the Trinity, he became a member, Christ's body; he sowed the seeds of peace, and gave roots to meek bravery. He became an ornament to the Romans' realm, and a destroyer of all the forces of the enemy. He routed the forces of the pagans' kingdom in the waters of the Danube river. With the "rod" of Christ's cross he thrust them down deeper than Pharaoh [had been] by the rod of Moses. For that wood sank only Pharaoh, whereas this sign of wood, Christ's cross, sank the incorporeal "Pharaoh" at the same time that it drowned the kings in the river's currents.

The divine apparition of the cross accomplished this. Moreover, it established the truth, [hitherto] dimly shown; it pulled up falsehood by its roots, and exalted the horn of the Church. By means of their worshipers, it set up the persistence of vain idols to ridicule and mockery. This was the first occasion of liberty for the Church, as well as the lifting of persecution and the destruction of idolatry.

And what of the second [apparition], and the reason the Universal Church celebrates today—which is even more marvelous and exalted than the first? Although it bears in itself the imprint of that same shape [of the cross], it has a variety of deep meanings. The Jews had once asked the Lord to give them a sign from heaven, as a test [Jn 2:18; 6:30]. He refused, ignoring that evil and wicked generation, for it was not [a request made] in faith, but as a test and a mockery. Nonetheless, after a certain time passed, what they had requested was given to them; it was shown in a miraculous, translucent light—and not to the Jews only, but to all the Gentiles.

When did this take place? or in what time? In the days of Constantius and Constantine, two autocratic brothers and Augusti, sons of the great and victorious Constantine, in a time when the erroneous schism of the Ari-

19 The body of Christ and its members are mentioned in Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 12:12, 27.
20 Perhaps alluding to Lk 10:19.
21 This phrase is reminiscent of the prophetic language in 1 Sm 2:10; Ps 89:17, 24; 148:14; Ez 29:21.
22 Constantine I had three sons: Constantine II died in 340; Constans was assassinated in 350; following Constans' death, Constantius II reigned alone as emperor until 361. Albeit the names of the three are quite similar in Armenian, the encomiast (or his translator, or perhaps a subsequent scribe) appears confused about who was reigning in 351.
ans was progressing apace. And the opinions of many of those ruled by Constantine were drawn to it, on the grounds that he had given his approval to the tenets of the Arians' sect, [himself] thinking their inapt thoughts. This was unworthily rumored of his Exalted Piety, for he was far removed from such thinking. But on account of his ardent love for the Christian peoples, he multiplied his generous support towards the churches of God; he attempted to ignite peace among those who confessed Christ, in order to remove enmity from among the household of faith [Gal 6:10]. Towards others, he maintained a wrathful enmity, through war undoing the power of the heathen's vain rites.

During his pious reign the great city of Jerusalem, having the blessed Cyril as its head, seated on the patriarchal throne, was made worthy of that wondrous, great theophany. We have no need to hear or receive knowledge of the details of that supernal light man from man or woman from woman or unbeliever from believer, for it was shown to all in common. Remaining [visible] for long hours it was affirmed, to the boasting of those who believed in Christ and to the shame of the Jews, as well as to the vilification of pagan idolatry. These things miraculously occurred in the third watch of the day, when the sun glistened with heat. [The apparition] dimmed the latter's light, and it clothed Golgotha in luminescence, along with the Mount of Olives. It made Jerusalem new, and declared

23 Constantine I received Arians in 327, and recommended to Alexander of Egypt that he be allowed to return. This decision was affirmed in 335 by the council which ousted Athanasius.

24 The years of Cyril's patriarchate were several times interrupted. He served as Jerusalem's bishop from 348 to his first expulsion in 357; and again from 360-362 and from 367-378.

25 Reading ἄνθισθι instead of ἀνθίσθι.

26 The NBHL gives this sentence as the only example of the word ζυγή being used to express the Greek ήλιος.

the glory of Christ, not only from the heavens, but on earth, and [in] the firmaments which lie between the two.

This declaration brought the king glory and armed him against the enemy, getting him the victory. It joyfully empowered the Church's leaders, too, to opposition. It crowned [the Church], more so than Olympians are crowned. It exhorted the wealthy to despise their gold, to spurn their stores of treasure, for the benefit of the needy. It consoles the poor and comforts them by [showing them that] this world's wealth counts as nothing. It renders fearless the might of those powerful with armies.

So to Him are due glory and dominion and honor, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

28 The reference here seems to be to Arius.

29 The NBHL gives this sentence as one of only two instances where the word ςπωςκομβω is used with the meaning ςπωςκομβω.
Անհրաժեշտ է, որ կերպարները և գրական տարածքները, կորուստները ան համեմատ գրականության բնության որոշ, եզրակացությունն առաջացնող մասը, այս դեպքում համիլություն ձևավորող է, ինչ բացատրում է, որ քանի որ, եզրակացության հետ կապված գրականության բնության արագությունն եղել է մեծ, ինչ կապված էր հատուկ գիտելիքի աճի և կարևոր ազդեցությունից, ուր այլ մասին ապացուցվում է, որ քանի որ, եզրակացությունն առաջացած էր մարդկության այս բնության արագության հետ կապված գրականության աճի հետ.

Սպասելով համար, նմանական գիտելիքի աճը և դրան կապված գրականության աճը, այս գիտելիքի աճի մասին, շարունակում են եզրակացության հետ կապված գրականության այս բնության արագությունը, որ այլ մասին ապացուցվում է, որ քանի որ, եզրակացությունն առաջացած էր մարդկության այս բնության արագության հետ կապված գրականության աճի հետ.

1 The NBHL considers this as either a hapax legomenon or a misspelling of the word փեր՝ ստորիկ կանանց, սակայն Բեսենսի կայքի ստորիկ կանանց այս եզրի անհնար է.

2 In the text, the word appears as գիտելիք.

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Առաջին թվով թղթի վրա կարճ նշանակություն կոչվելու է կարճ անպատասխան և հատկացված համար, բայց տրամադրվել է մատյանի մակարդակի, որն ազդեցություն է ունեցել միայն այդպիսի թղթերի վրա: Առաջին թվի վրա կարճ պատմություն է դասավորվել, որ այս զբաղված է կանխատեսել հատկացված համար: Առաջին թվի վրա կարճ պատմություն է դասավորվել, որ այս զբաղված է կանխատեսել հատկացված համար.
ըստ երկիրծ զգացում, թե ինչպես կարժանանում այսպիս և ինչպես ուղղակի լինեն։ մեկ էլ էջ և համար համար, ինչպես է դասարան աշխատել։ ինչ է պահպանված, ըստբերե որ տպակառու է վերջին։
3 Following the parallelisms of the sentence, possibly կարող են կարող ե

Սուրբ Ներսես Թեոլոգիական Հատոր

Արտահայտություններ, որ ձեր գրառությունը բարելավեց հանգեցույցներ, քանակություններ, մարտականություններ, որ ձեր հանգեցույցները պահպանեց նշանակությունը ու սիրողի համար գործադրեց նախատեսություն ու կանխարգելեց առավելագույն արտահայտությունը։ Այս գրառությունը բարելավեց հանգեցույցներից ու մարտականություններից առավելագույն գործադրությունը, որը ձեր հանգեցույցի վրա էր համարդակաց ու սիրողի համար։ Այս գրառությունը բարելավեց հանգեցույցներից մեկն էր և այսպիսի գործադրությունը ձեր հանգեցույցի վրա էր համարդակաց ու սիրողի համար։ Այս գրառությունը բարելավեց հանգեցույցներից մեկն էր և այսպիսի գործադրությունը ձեր հանգեցույցի վրա էր համարդակաց ու սիրողի համար։ Այս գրառությունը բարելավեց հանգեցույցներից մեկն էր և այսպիսի գործադրությունը ձեր հանգեցույցի վրա էր համարդակաց ու սիրողի համար։ Այս գրառությունը բարելավեց հանգեցույցներից մեկն էր և այսպիսի գործադրությունը ձեր հանգեցույցի վրա էր համարդակաց ու սիրողի համար։ Այս գրառությունը բարելավեց հանգեցույցներից մեկն էր և այսպիսի գործադրությունը ձեր հանգեցույցի վրա էր համարդակաց ու սիրողի համար։
Nishan Baljian

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վորագրվել են պատմական վերաբերիչ նշանների հետ: Սա կարող է բազմաթիվ պատմական վերաբերած հավաքածուն, որը կարող է լինել սուր և տեղական պատմական տեղեկատվության համար։

Սա պատմական վերաբերած հավաքածուն է, որը կարող է լինել սուր և տեղական պատմական տեղեկատվության համար։ Սա պատմական վերաբերած հավաքածուն է, որը կարող է լինել սուր և տեղական պատմական տեղեկատվության համար։

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BOOK REVIEWS


Reviewed by Edward G. Mathews, Jr.

One can hardly exaggerate the importance of good reference tools for scholars in any field. In the field of Armenian studies, one thinks of such essential works as, among many, the Nor Bağirik, Hakob Anasyan’s Bibliography (regrettably though, only two of the projected ten volumes have appeared), the several significant catalogues of the great Armenian manuscript collections, the new Album of Armenian Paleography, not to mention several important journals devoted to Armenian studies. One bane of the western scholar, especially one who is not at one of the larger universities that has a chair in Armenian Studies, is to keep abreast of what is being published in the field by Armenian scholars.

Under the general direction of Manea Erna Shirinian, the founding editor of Armeniaca, this problem has, in large part at least, been resolved. The volume under review here is the second issue of a major reference tool that catalogues the work of Armenian scholars for western scholars; and not a simple catalogue, this volume offers short summaries—from a couple of lines to a couple of pages—of the contents of each work, whether monograph or article. The volume is essentially divided into three primary categories: I. Monographs, Dictionaries, Texts and Translations (pp. 1-44, alphabetical by author); II. Collections (pp. 46-75); and III. Journals and Periodicals (pp. 78-185, alphabetical by title in English translation). The following few pages are devoted to relevant materials from Conference Proceedings, Materials from the International Seminar “Christianity and Law”, and two volumes entitled Art of Christian Armenia, and The Historical-Cultural Heritage of Širak; it is not clear why these last were not included in II. Collections, particularly as this section only contains three titles.

This volume catalogues not only all the major works from Armenia—primarily those in Armenian but also including a few Russian titles—that appeared in 2001, but also includes a number of things from 2000 which
had inadvertently been left out of the first volume. It is also “par for the course” that with many hands engaged in the project the summaries are of varying levels of length and accuracy. Specialists might discover lacunae here and there but, even so, this volume will be of extraordinary usefulness for anyone working in any area of Armenian studies, ancient, medieval or modern. The sole problem that remains for the western scholar is to find the actual article he or she desires.

Fifty-four monographs published in 2001 are reviewed here in vol. 2, as well as another seventeen that were published in 2000, and these range from a monograph on the excavations of Urartian Aragac, to the Sacrament of the Military Oath, to a Dictionary of Biblical and Armenian Saints’ Names, and a Russian translation of Tovma Arruní’s History of the Arruní House. Even included is the original Armenian version of Aram Topchyan’s volume now published in a revised English translation as The Problem of the Greek Sources of Movses Xorenaci’s History of Armenia (Hebrew University Armenian Studies 7; Peeters, 2006), as well as a number of small religious pamphlets, some of which contain important patristic texts. There are also reviewed (with summarized articles) seventeen journals, including some fairly new ones such as Armenian Army, Darj, Law and Reality, and Pedagogical Thought. Three journals: Éjmiacin, Garun, and Iran-Nameh, are also catalogued for 2000, having been inadvertently left out from vol. I.

Because this publication will be of such great usefulness, this reviewer feels compelled to point out that Armeniaca is currently being published privately and the binding will not long withstand sustained use; the copy used for this review is already splitting in the front and in the back. Perhaps, a prominent western publication house will step in and take on the publishing and distribution of subsequent volumes, a feather in their cap and an even greater boon for Armenian scholars.

Reviewed by Edward G. Mathews, Jr.

As anyone who has attempted any serious venture into the field of Eastern Christianity knows, good basic reference tools of the kind of which one finds such a plethora for Classical Studies, simply do not exist. For Syriac studies in particular it is no different. Despite the fact that Syriac studies has really exploded in importance and popularity in the last quarter century or so, the primary dictionary was completed in 1901, long before any of the modern critical editions of Syriac texts now available. There is nothing that resembles a serious encyclopedia (Coptic studies already has one), nor does there exist a complete, up-to-date, reference grammar. Sebastian Brock has single-handedly kept students and scholars of Syriac studies relatively up-to-date, periodically publishing in various issues of *Parole de l’Orient* bibliographical updates to the old references of Moss and Ortiz de Urbina. Select bibliographies can also be found for such Syrian authors as Isaac of Antioch, Jacob of Sarug, Jacob of Edessa, and Bar Hebraeus (the latter being perhaps the most comprehensive of these four).

Now, with the volume under review here, we do have a bibliography for the Syriac author generally considered to be the Homer of his tradition: Ephrem the Syrian. More than any other figure in the early Christian Church, Ephrem’s popularity reached throughout the Mediterranean world, even before his death in 373. He is also the single Syriac figure who is generally recognized by scholars in a wide variety of fields. In addition to the numerous works that survive in Syriac (not all of which are genuine), there are many more works attributed to him in most of the Mediterranean Christian traditions and which survive only in Western or other Oriental languages. Due to his current popularity secondary works on Ephrem have grown to quite an unruly number.

In what is obviously a labor of many, many years, Kees den Biesen has provided students of Ephrem with a volume that has already become an essential reference tool for Syriac studies. In a volume of nearly four hundred pages, he has attempted to collect every single text, either in the original Syriac or in any of a number of ancient language translations, along with translations of these works into modern languages, as well as all the secondary literature—which includes not only monographs or books
specifically devoted to some theme or aspect of Ephrem’s legacy, but also articles scattered in all sorts of journals, chapters in books or scholarly monographs—more than 1000 titles in all! All this would have been enough for most scholars, but den Biesen also gathered those articles which included any significant mention of Ephrem—an additional 800+ titles—which he divides into “Titles partly dealing with Ephrem” and “Titles incidentally dealing with Ephrem”.

Den Biesen’s volume is divided into two main sections: “Classification of the Titles” and “The Titles”. The first section, “Classification of the Titles”, is further divided into seven primary categories. The first contains general treatments of Ephrem in encyclopedias, lexica and dictionaries, general handbooks of patrology, theology and history of Christian literature, etc. The second section deals specifically with the various sources, with texts and translations listed separately, and studies of Ephrem’s life. The third section provides a complete list of the ancient and modern editions of the collected works of Ephrem that survive in Syriac. The fourth section does the same for the works that survive in other ancient language traditions, including Greek, Armenian, Georgian, Arabic, Slavonic and Latin. Section five deals with the edited texts, translations ancient and modern, and studies of the individual works of Ephrem. The subdivisions of this section include his Poetical Works (Madrašê and Mêmêrê, respectively), Commentaries on the Old Testament, Commentaries on the New Testament, Prose Works, Ephraem Graecus and Ephraem Latinus. This section is particularly useful, as one can simply refer to this section and see immediately where the work is edited and translated, and what, if any, translations exist, together with any secondary literature, all in the same entry. The sixth section, “Selected Studies”, arranges the secondary studies of the works of Ephrem according to various topics that include symbolic theology and theological hermeneutics, Ephrem’s poetry, Ephrem and the Diatessaron, Ephrem’s exegesis, Christology, and trinitarian doctrine, theology of Paradise, Christian life, asceticism and spirituality, Mariology, etc. The seventh and final section lists the modern translations of Ephrem’s works into such languages as (besides the common western scholarly languages) Arabic, Armenian, Catalan, Dutch, Greek, Polish, Romenian (sic), Russian, and Swedisch (sic).

This initial part of the book is referenced to the larger, second part, which provides the full bibliographical information for all the works referenced in the first section. This section is also further subdivided into four parts: Editions, Titles Exclusively Dealing with Ephrem, Titles Partly Dealing with Ephrem, and Titles Incidentally Dealing with Ephrem. Each of these four parts, a total of 1813 references, list its titles alphabetically by
author or editor. In appendices, den Biesen then lists the contents of six old large collections of the works of Ephrem. These include the great (though flawed by modern standards) six volume edition of Ephrem's Syriac and Greek works edited by J.S. Assemani, the great 18th-century Maronite scholar T.J. Lamy's more critical (but still inadequate) edition of Ephrem's Hymns and Sermons, two old editions of the Greek works attributed to Ephrem, and the four volume Mekhitarist edition of the Armenian works attributed to Ephrem. Unfortunately, the seven-volume edition by K.G. Frantzoles of the Greek works attributed to Ephrem was left out from this appendix.

What might seem at first glance to be a somewhat awkward or even confusing arrangement of the material, actually turns to be a very simple, straightforward and extremely "user-friendly" arrangement. One can easily find, for example, the edition or editions of Ephrem's collected works, as well as all the available translations; or the text, translation(s) and studies of a single, particular work; or even the studies of any particular modern scholar such as Sebastian Brock, Robert Murray, or Pierre Yousif, with only a minimal flipping of pages. And this is true not only for Ephrem's Syriac works, but if someone wanted to find what survives in Armenian, Coptic or Ethiopic, for example,—churches that are also coming to realize the importance of Ephrem for their own traditions—, this can be accomplished with great ease, even if a certain work is published only in some obscure journal or Festschrift.

This volume will be of incalculable usefulness, not just for Ephrem scholars, but for scholars in related fields, as well as for teachers and students. Apart from a few minor items, this bibliography is accurate and complete to the time of publication—which does, alas, mean that it is already more than five years out-of-date—but the author promises periodic updates. Thus, while scholars and students in the field of Syriac studies still have no modern, reliable dictionary, grammar or encyclopedic reference work, they do now have a bibliography for one of the first—and the greatest—author in the Syriac language. This work definitely belongs in every library whose collection includes the field of Eastern Christianity. Perhaps too this work may serve as a catalyst for many other necessary research tools.
This volume is part of George Bournoutian’s project to make primary sources on early modern Armenian life in the Ottoman/Persian territories available in English for a general reading audience. Having already produced a translation of the *Journal of Zakaria of Agulis* (Costa Mesa: Mazda, 2003), Bournoutian has now translated the *Chronicle of Zakaria’s contemporary and namesake, Zakaria of Kanakeh*. These writings shed important light on the second half of the seventeenth century, a period of cultural and economic revival which followed the Ottoman-Persian peace of 1639.

The contemporaneity of the two works gives them special interest, made all the greater because one writer was a traveling lay businessman and the other, a member of the clergy. Their accounts complement and confirm one another, although the two men had no knowledge of one another’s writing.

In the course of his *Chronicle*, Zakaria of Kanakeh offers the reader a surprising quantity of information about himself. His nickname was Zakehos, and he was lame (I.iii). His grandmother Khosrov was sister-in-law of Melik Dawit Turkchabilmaz; her daughter Khanagha, Zakaria’s mother, married Melik Dawit’s surveyor, a man named Mkrtich’, of Georgian heritage. The story of how his father’s ancestors had been sent as hostages to Yovhannavank in Armenia is told by Zakaria (III.xvi), and was the basis of his own desire to join the brotherhood there. Among Zakaria’s ancestors were also Armenians deported to Persia by Shah ‘Abbas (I.ii).

When Zakaria was young, the family had an orchard on the banks of the Hrazdan (II.xxxvi). At an early age, he and his brother Khachatur were taken by their father to be registered in the census; he relates that his father was all but killed for bringing “lame and crippled” sons to be counted (I.38). They also had a sister, who lived in Dzoragegh (II.xxx). Like others at the time, Zakaria was affected by witnessing executions (II.xiv), earthquakes (II.vi) and celestial phenomena (II.lxiv).

In 1637, with his brother Khachatur, Zakaria rented a shop in the house of a certain Melik Afa in Miapor, where they worked as goldsmiths
His brother was nearly eaten by wolves in the days that followed the deportation of Armenians from Ayrarat (I.32) As regards his life in religion, Zakaria tells us that he studied the books of Genesis through Maccabees with Bishop Yovhannēs (II.xxix). He spent time in Ėjmiacín under Catholicos Yakob Jughayeći (II.xliv.xlvii) and in Istanbul he later made a pilgrimage to Yakob's tomb (II.xlvi). He lived and worked in Yovhannavank (II.li), traveled to Sanahin (III.vii), and was an overseer of pilgrimage to relics of St. George (III.xv).

The text of the *Chronicle* is intended to speak for itself. Bournoutian's brief introduction gives information on editions, and particularly on the manuscripts used in preparation of the Darbinian-Melikian Russian edition on which his English translation is based. A short word on translation and editorial matters completes this part of the book, which totals a mere three pages. Presumably a broader historical/literary analysis of the *Chronicle* is left for a later time, when more volumes of the projected translations have been completed and can be studied comparatively.

As a chronicler, Zakaria feels himself to be in the tradition of the ancient historians, and is clearly producing a piece of literature for someone he considers very literate: At several points, he addresses his reader as someone possessing "vast knowledge". Too, the reversible acrostic poem at the outset of the work, while one might debate its precise translation, is certainly an elaborate example of its type. Like the medieval historians, Zakaria sets the scene for contemporary events by delving into the past. Although the *Chronicle* does not go so far as to begin with the creation of the world, it does open with a trio of chapters listing the Persian kings. Chapter 1 includes the rulers from Alexander the Great through the Arsacids. Chapter 2 lists the Armenian Arsacids; in this context, Zakaria speaks of the Sasanian takeover of Persia and its effect on the Armenian Arsacid dynasty. The chapter closes with the words that, after Ardashes, "the Armenian kingdom ended and remains so to this day." Chapter III resumes the king list, giving the Sasanian monarchs' names and scattered details of their reigns. Zakaria mentions a "period of confusion" following Yezkert (Yazdigerd III), and names only "Sharayeazch'i" and Tamur as rulers in that lengthy period.

For early material, Zakaria states that he draws on Movses Xorenac'i and Agatangelos, whom Zakaria identifies as secretary to King Trdat IV. Information on the later kings he derives from the historian Aβa kêl of Tabriz (ca. 1600-1670), whom he knew personally (III.xiv). In Book III of the *Chronicle* he will also refer to Tovma Mecopeći (1378-1446). In his limited footnotes, Bournoutian points out historical inaccuracies in these sources, and supplies regnal dates for the various rulers.
With the reign of Jihan Shah, Zakaria offers greater detail: the shahs Jihan (1447-67), Ya'qub (1478-90), Isma'il I (1501-1524), Tahmasp (1524-76) Isma'il II (1576-77), Mohammad Kodabandehe (1578-1587) are each allotted a full chapter. To Shah Abbas (1587-1629), however, a full fourteen chapters are devoted, comprising, as Zakaria says, "everything I have heard—both lies and truth." Several tales concerning the Shah's habit of going about through his realm incognito are told, dwelling on how this resulted in unexpected elevation for the hospitable (I.xi, xv, xix) and even in the remittance of penalties against apostate Christians who chose to for-sake Islam and reconvert to their original faith (I.xiii). The recorded tales are told from a variety of points of view: in some, the Shah is referred to as wise, beloved and resourceful; in others, he is described as cunning and malicious. Zakaria's sources for these tales are named: his mother, his landlord, a certain priest Petros, and an old man named Eranos from Vagharshapat.

With a pair of chapters devoted to the exploits of Shah Safi (1629-1642) and questions surrounding his identity, Zakaria moves into a description of events in the region of Ayrarat from the days of Shah Safi to those of Shah Sultan Hosein (1694-1722).

Book II of the Chronicle is totally comprised of hearsay and eyewitness material relating to the capture of Erevan by the Ottoman Sultan Murad IV and its retaking by Shah Safi for Persia. To put his information into context, Zakaria returns briefly to the reign of Shah Abbas and his appointment as governor of Erevan of Amir Guna Khan, who settled Armenians from Van, Mush and Erzrum in the region of Erevan. The book is clearly intended to give the flavor of Armenian life in the period, rather than to record events in chronological order. Stories of martyrdom, character descriptions of government and church figures, and records of weird events form the bulk of the material in this book.

Events and social mores quite strange (to say the least) to a modern reader are mentioned in a matter-of-fact way that makes their strangeness all the more striking. Zakaria's was a world in which the character and personal habits of a minority governing class tossed the lives of the majority population to and fro on capricious waves of benevolence or malice. The pages of Book II are peopled with arrogant tanûters, irascible khans who made their opponents' bones into bread, and benevolent Muslims who delighted in making donations to Christian monasteries. The Chronicle's world is one where people were hanged with dogs, cut into pieces, or paraded about the town decked in carrion; villagers were eaten by wolves, assaulted by bandits and irregular militias, and menaced by dragons, locusts and famine. Young girls especially were carried off into captivity,
sometimes in groups. But while the innocent often suffered, died the martyr’s death, or committed suicide to avoid worse fates, Zakaria relates with obvious pleasure that a poetic justice also tracked down evildoers and the impious, Christian and Muslim alike.

It was a world where boundaries and distinctions shifted: mixed populations of Muslims (Shi’a or Sunni) and Christians might find themselves on the same side or on opposite sides depending on the issue or their perceived best interests: it was not unheard of for Armenians to kill their compatriots in order to appease the will of an overlord, or for Muslims to harbor Christians in times of need. Indeed, it might not always be clear who was a Christian and who was a Muslim, since circumcision or baptism (with or without the consent of the person on whom the ritual was performed) was enough to constitute a legal conversion. The line between lay and religious, too, was blurred—for a village priest to be simultaneously a civil servant or a tax collector was not unusual. Zakaria also includes Jews in his record, paying particular attention to an ill-fated messianic uprising in Thessaloniki (II.57).

Neither were the boundaries between natural and supernatural set in concrete: in Zakaria’s world, for mysterious lights to appear over the graves of those killed for their faith was a matter of course, and there was nothing strange about a man’s claiming to have an invisible demon wife. Celestial portents were watched with superstitious care, although the Armenians understood that eclipses in particular were a natural phenomenon.

Book II concludes with a selection of riddles that Zakaria says he composed himself. Among them is the following well-known one: how might a person transport a lamb, a wolf and a bale of hay across a river by boat, without endangering either the lamb or the hay.

Book III was apparently begun prior to what are now Books I-II. Zakaria calls it a “kondak” of Yovhannavank; that is, a compendium of all the historical information he could find concerning the building and history of that monastery. Chapter 2 lists the great church builders of Armenia, beginning with Sts. Thaddeus and Gregory the Illuminator and going on through Nersès the builder to Zakaria. In chapters 3-4, Zakaria specifically attributes the founding of Yovhannavank to St. Gregory, basing the attribution not only on written sources, but on comparative architectural evidence as well (e.g., the measurements of a cross known to have been erected by St. Gregory are compared with the measurements of one at Yovhannavank attributed to Gregory; the number and location of the church’s doors are compared to those of Byzantine 5th century buildings). Chapter 5 deals with the derivation of the monastery’s various names, while 6-7 bring together written and oral information concerning the mon-
astery’s jurisdiction. Chapters 9-10 deal with the stages of the monastery’s construction, while chapter 11 gives the texts of twenty-five memorial inscriptions found in the monastery. Of these, thirteen are dated and come from the 13th-17th centuries, while twelve are undated. There is also a listing of properties and in-kind gifts to the monastery.

The gawazanagirk of the monastery follows in chapter 12, starting with St. Gregory and listing the abbots up to Abbot Sargis, who was serving in Zakaria’s own day. He includes Arakël of Tabriz, the historian whom he had queried about many details for his own Chronicle. The list of abbots is not complete, as Zakaria points out, but he fully expects the lineage to continue, as he leaves several blank pages for his successors to fill in the names and deeds of future monastic heads.

With Chapter 13, Zakaria turns to a more detailed account of the lives of the great abbots Zakaria (1637), Yovhannēs (1651) and Sargis (1679).

The final three chapters of Book III are devoted to the story of how pilgrimage to the relics of St. George caused an altercation between Yovhannavank and Georgia which resulted in the arrival at Yovhannavank of Zakaria’s paternal ancestor and others as hostages.

Following the text of the Chronicle, Bournoutian has added useful maps: one of seventeenth century Persia, and another giving locations mentioned in the text. The maps are followed by a sixteen page commentary, including a brief historical overview, a short biography of Zakaria, and comments on the style and value of the Chronicle for the history of Eastern Georgia and Eastern Armenia, as well as for an understanding of Safavid administration, and Church affairs.

A word should be said about the last point in particular. Zakaria is an unbiased reporter on the affairs of the Church in his day. Scoundrels are not omitted from the account: the disciple of Catholicos Yovhannēs IX who became “Mekhlu baba”, head of an anti-clerical movement (I.xxix) and the trouble-maker Bishop Onoprios (share space with neutral characters; men like Bishop Mikayēl of Kanakēr (I.xlii), who was “ignorant of Scripture but experienced in secular affairs.” Perhaps Zakaria is frank about the shortcomings of some clergy because the sterling worth of others more than makes up for them. Bishops Pilippos abbot of Bjni, Yovhannēs abbot of Salmosavank and Yovhannavank, and Mkhīfar abbot of Sevan (I.xliii-xlv) are remarkable for their humanity and their sanctity. The valiant vardapet Zakaria; Yakob of Julfa whose tomb worked miracles; Eremin of Marmsashēn who miraculously—and permanently—silenced a lake full of frogs, are all honorably highlighted in the Chronicle.

The volume concludes with a glossary, a select bibliography, and an index.

Reviewed by Edward G. Mathews, Jr.

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of Stephanos Siwnci for the history of the Armenian Church. One of her great bishops and theologians, Stephanos was a close contemporary of Yovhannes Ojnci (he died less than a decade after Ojnci), and a student of both Solomon Makiencli, compiler of the Tınakan, and of Movses Siwnci Kerfolahayr (The Rhetorician), who was also predecessor to Stephanos as the bishop of Siwnik. With such luminaries this period almost qualifies as a second “golden age”; it was certainly an age when fundamental codes were compiled—e.g., the Code of Canon Law known as the Kanonagirk—and several commentaries which were to become almost manuals and which marked the beginnings of a new standardization of various aspects of the liturgy.

In addition to having written a commentary on the Grammar of Dionysius Thrax, Stephanos was himself an accomplished theologian. He taught biblical exegesis at Duin for many years, and wrote commentaries on Genesis, Job, Ezekiel, the Four Gospels, and the Catholic Epistles, as well as a treatise On the Visions of Daniel. In addition, he composed poems on a number of biblical themes. His treatise On the Incorruptibility of the Body, addressed to the increasing number of Armenian adherents to the teachings of the Syrian Bishop, Julian of Halicarnassus, who had opposed the teachings of Severus of Antioch on this matter, is an essential treatise on this issue. In addition to his own original works, Stephanos was also a master of the Greek language, and translated into Armenian the mystical works of Pseudo-Dionysius, and two theological/anthropological treatises: Gregory of Nyssa, On the Creation of Man, and Nemesius of Emesa, On the Nature of Man.

Perhaps the most important contribution of Stephanos, however, was in the realm of the liturgical life of the Armenian Church. He composed commentaries on the Daily Office, on the Gospel Canon Tables, and on the Rite of the Foundation of a Church, as well as funeral prayers. Yet, despite the importance and the number of his compositions, only his
Commentary on the Four Gospels exists in anything that resembles a modern critical edition [M. Saribekyan (Erevan, 1994)], albeit one laden with errors. When one considers the foundational position of Stepanos’ liturgical works for the history of Armenian liturgy, this fact is startling. It is, in part, to fulfill this most regrettable gap that the present work was published.

This work of Very Rev. Fr. Findikyan, now Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan Professor of Liturgy, and Dean at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary in New Rochelle, New York, originated as a Ph.D. dissertation under the direction of Robert Taft, S.J., the most highly regarded liturgist of this generation. The work is divided into the following sections: Table of Contents (pp. 9-13); Bibliography (pp. 15-26); Introduction (pp. 27-57); Texts and Translations (pp. 59-217); Textual Issues (pp. 219-317); discussions of the various daily offices and of the Eucharist (pp. 319-510); and a Conclusion (pp. 511-523). These chapters are followed by three appendices that treat, respectively: three Armenian liturgical terms; translations of short liturgical treatises falsely attributed to Yovhannēs Ōjneći; and synopses of those texts included in chapters 2-5 (pp. 59-217). The work is concluded with general indices and indices of biblical citations (pp. 623-641).

On can hardly do justice to a work like this in such a short review, but several noteworthy aspects of this work require highlighting. The editio princeps of Stepanos Siwneći’s Commentary on the Daily Office, which is found in a long and a short recension, was published by Sahak Amatuni in 1917. This edition is based on only two of the known manuscripts; it is further marred for modern critical study by numerous typographical errors and is even lacking several lines, presumably due to a printer’s error. In the present work, Findikyan has produced not just a corrective to Amatuni, but the first truly critical text utilizing all the available manuscripts. In addition, he has chosen a different base manuscript as a better representative of the text, and has carefully corrected all the errors and omissions of Amatuni’s text. By utilizing all the available manuscripts, he was even able to identify a second, interpolated recension of the short version, which he has labeled SS-S+. With his text and textual commentary, he has thus put the text on sure philological grounds, a method far too rare in studies of liturgical works.

Fr. Findikyan has also produced clear and accurate English translations of all three texts: the longer recension and the two short recension. These translations—the first ever into a modern language—are very carefully crafted and, even if a technical term or phrase is missed here and there [see Winkler, Orientalia Christiana Periodica 72 (2006) 383-415], they will be of great benefit for non-Armenian readers. A reader of Armenian might
have preferred it, however, if Findikyan had managed to put text and translation in parallel columns or at least on facing pages for easier comparison, instead of into separate sections; but this is a minor quibble.

In another long section, comprising chapters VI and VII, Findikyan examines three parallel liturgical treatises that are attributed to Stepanos' contemporary YovhanneS Ōjneći (he provides translations only of these texts, in Appendix 2). Scholars have long observed a strong resemblance between these texts and the Commentary of Stepanos, but have been divided over whether they are authentic works of Ōjneći or not. Applying the same philological methods that he did with the Commentary of Stepanos Siwnecí, Findikyan has definitively established once and for all that the apparent parallels in these texts are actually citations extracted from Siwnecí's own Commentary, and cannot, therefore, be the work of Ōjneći, his earlier contemporary, but must have been the work of a later writer. Findikyan wisely does not posit any solution as to who this later author might have been, as there are too many other unedited works and far too little careful and critical modern study to establish the firm points of reference that are necessary pre-requisites to any attempt at such a solution. His detailed articulation of the relationship and interdependence of these texts is perhaps the most original section of this work.

Then, once having done this textual ground work and having established the actual chronology and relationship of these texts, Findikyan then devotes the remaining chapters (VIII-XII) of his monograph to laying out an order and an evaluation of the structure of the Armenian Daily Office as it must have been practiced in the 8th century, with specific reference to the witness of Stepanos Siwnecí on the development of the Armenian Daily Office, but utilizing also the witness of later liturgical commentators such as Mowsës Erznkačí and Xosrov Anjewaćí.

The new critical texts of the three recensions of Stepanos Siwnecí's Commentary will certainly be of primary importance to scholars of Armenian liturgy and literature, and the careful English translations of these texts and those of Ps-Ōjneći will extend the usefulness of this monograph not only to liturgists who do not know Armenian but to scholars in a number of related fields as well. But caveat lector: this work is not for the faint-hearted or for the liturgically illiterate. It is a dense, closely argued work that constitutes a foundational study of the Armenian liturgy as practiced in the 8th century and, despite the occasional lapse or shortcoming necessarily found in every such ground-breaking work, will now be the standard work for scholars of Armenian liturgy to follow. It is to be hoped that these scholars—including the still youthful Fr. Findikyan himself!—will apply this standard to the remaining massive corpus of medieval Ar-
menian liturgical texts so that even more of the history of the Armenian liturgy can be reconstructed on the same sure foundations.

Reviewed by Edward G. Mathews, Jr.

The medieval Armenian biblical commentary tradition is a veritable "embarras de richesses". And it is indeed embarrassing how much of this rich material remains essentially unknown. As Thomson himself observes, "The amount of material is enormous, while the investigation of the sources of Armenian texts is in its infancy." (p. 11) Armenian and Byzantine scholars are already in great debt to Thomson for his translations and studies of nearly every important Armenian historical work, which include those of Movses Xorenaci, Elišē, Agatangelos, Łazar Parpeći, and Tovma Arçuni. In this volume, Robert Thomson offers a translation of the first known commentary on Proverbs by a relatively unknown, but not insignificant, author of the late 9th century.

A translation of a classical text almost necessarily follows a rather standard format. Thus, this volume begins with a lengthy introduction (pp. 1-41), itself divided into four sections which treat, respectively, the author and his works (1-12), Hamam and Proverbs (12-18), characteristics of the commentary (18-34), and a brief synopsis on the only two known later Armenian commentaries on Proverbs, those of Nersēs Lambronaći and of Grigor Tafewaći (34-41). The central section is a heavily annotated English translation of the Armenian text (pp. 45-191), which is followed by a diplomatic edition of the Armenian text (pp. 193-286). The volume is concluded by a bibliography and two indices (pp. 287-307). Curiously, through an apparent editorial oversight, the single page introduction to the text appears on p. 43, before the translation.

The introduction provides the little information that is known about the author Hamam—which is almost nothing certain. The first section also includes a very succinct resume of the beginnings of Armenian biblical commentary and its relation to its predecessor traditions, the Greek and the Syrian, examining those sources with which the early Armenian commentators were most likely familiar. Thomson then analyzes the characteristics of Hamam's commentary. Thomson notes that the biblical text cited for comment (known as the *lemma*) is often a different text from that found in Hamam's comments; it is almost as if, as Thomson surmises, someone else
added in, or changed, the *lemma* text later—despite the fact that Hamam is commenting on the Armenian *textus receptus*, as evidenced in the Zohrab Bible. Thomson provides several pages of the more striking examples. Of even more interest is the fact that some of these readings are unattested in any extant biblical version, Hebrew, Greek or Syrian.

In the main section Thomson provides the reader, as one has come to expect from him, with an exceptionally fine English translation of a text that Thomson admits is notoriously difficult, fraught with "grammatical irregularities", *hapax legomena*, and the textual problems already mentioned. Not a few of his notes read "the grammar here is very unclear," "the meaning of this sentence is obscure," or "the reference is unclear." Nonetheless, the large number of notes he adds to help clarify these same problems, questions of sources and parallels, biblical citations, etc., are of particular value. There are hardly any pages with fewer than ten notes.

The last section is a diplomatic edition of the only surviving manuscript of this commentary, Matenadaran 1151, dated 1603, which amounts to a major corrective to the mistake riddled edition of M. Saribekyan (Erevan, 1994). But above and beyond offering a corrected text, Thomson has made a number of astute emendations which further enhance his edition of this text. Thomson has also numbered each paragraph, and has formatted the text utilizing different fonts, so the lemma and the commentary are always clearly distinguishable to the reader. A translation of such a difficult text will require much comparison to the text and, therefore, it might have been preferable to publish text and translation on facing pages.

This volume, then, is more than "just a translation"—though even if it had been, it would still be useful. With a substantial introduction, a heavily annotated translation, and the first reliable modern text in Armenian, Thomson has produced a new and very significant work that is of great importance to the very overlooked field of Armenian biblical commentary, but that will also be of great value for Armenian studies in general, not to mention for the wider field of biblical studies.

According to Koriwn’s *Life of Maštoc*, the Book of Proverbs was the first text translated into Armenian using the new alphabet. The highly important history of Armenian translation activity need not be rehearsed here, but one cannot help wondering if Thomson’s choice to translate a *Commentary on Proverbs* also portends that it will be but the first of many more such works from one who is so clearly a master of the material. One can only hope that he will continue his efforts to help bring forth these riches of the Armenian tradition and to alleviate the embarrassment of their having remained hidden for far too long.

Reviewed by Susan Fournier Mathews

This publication by Gorgias Press reprints a late 19th century study of the Lord’s Prayer. This short monograph is comprised of a preface, an annotated Table of Contents, and an Introduction, followed by eight chapters of text, and a short index. The volume contains no bibliography.

In the Introduction: “The Church and the Synagogue” Chase presents the case for maintaining that for the first fifty years of its existence the Church was closely allied with the Jewish synagogue. There developed in the Apostolic Church a synagogue system, so that among Christians, as among Jews, there were both Hebrew and Hellenistic synagogues. The Church was then modeled and molded on the synagogue system of organization and worship. Chase discusses this with a view to illustrating the bearing this has on the Synoptic problem, the larger context for the question of the position of the Lord’s Prayer in the Apostolic Church. The Lord’s Prayer in its original form, as first taught by Christ, was in Aramaic. Its liturgical use from the very beginning in Hellenistic (Christian) synagogues would necessitate translation into Greek. To this chapter, Chase adds two “notes”: one on “the Hellenistic synagogues”, and the other on “the Pauline Epistles and the Synoptic Gospels”.

The body of the book consists of a highly technical examination of each verse of the Lord’s Prayer with various occasional notes, as follows. Chapter I: “Our Father which art in heaven”; Chapter II: “Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come” with notes on the *Acta Thomae*, some Syrian Baptismal Prayers, and Agathangelus; Chapter III: “Thy will be done, in earth, as it is in heaven”; Chapter IV: “Give us this day our daily bread”; Chapter V: “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” with a note on Syriac versions of this clause; Chapter VI: “And bring us not into temptation” followed by a note on the form of this clause in the King’s Book (sic); Chapter VII: “But deliver us from the evil one,” with notes on the *Yetser ha Ra‘*; on the ‘Songs’ in St. Luke’s Gospel in relation to ancient Jewish Prayers; and on the bearing of some of the Offices and Liturgies on the interpretation of *apo tou ponērou*—‘from evil’ or ‘from
the evil one'; and Chapter VIII: the final Doxology. Of the 145 pages devoted to the actual text of the Lord's Prayer, 96 are concerned with the last petition.

Chase's overarching concern throughout this work is to examine the early liturgical influences on this first prayer of Christians, from the Christian synagogues, to the New Testament and the Didache, to major Church Fathers, to various liturgical rites. The latter include Liturgical Invocations, Laying on of Hands, and Baptismal prayers though, oddly, there is no study made or evidence brought to bear from Eucharistic liturgies. The reader will need a good command of Greek, Latin, Syriac, Aramaic, and some Hebrew in order to work through this monograph, since none of the foreign words or passages—some quite lengthy—from the New Testament, the Fathers, ancient texts or liturgies, is translated into English.

Chase brings to bear an impressive array of ancient biblical and extra-biblical texts, both Eastern and Western, to illuminate some background and liturgical influences on this most beloved of Christian prayers. The reader will, however, be somewhat perplexed by the lack of any general conclusion to Chase's exposition; one might also have expected some sort of theological assessment or commentary (though he does present a disclaimer from doing so). Still, this critical work makes for a good starting place and reference for a critical study of the Lord's Prayer; it is also a useful collection of some pertinent data and texts. Thus, while this study of over a century ago is worthy of a reprint, the modern researcher will definitely need to supplement Chase's material with more recent scholarship from the past century! The primary value of this study today is as a preliminary work for a thoroughgoing examination of the Lord's Prayer in the liturgical and devotional context of the sub-apostolic church.

Reviewed by Roberta R. Ervine

Gohar Muradyan’s new comparative text of the influential early Christian work *Physiologus* is a welcome addition to medieval studies in general, as well as to Armenian studies in particular. In it, she has brought together not only the main text, but analysis and annotation of the original Armenian material as well. The resulting volume is the first substantial study of this influential work’s Armenian recensions since N. Marr’s 1904 edition of the Armenian/Georgian recensions in the *Texts and Studies for Armenian-Georgian Philology* series.

*Physiologus* proved popular throughout the middle ages and beyond. It appeared not only in Greek and Armenian, but was translated into Georgian, Syriac, Coptic, Arabic, Romanian, Old Church Slavonic, and Latin; from Latin it spread yet further, into the languages of Western Europe. An anonymous work in its earliest manuscripts, *Physiologus* was frequently attributed to Epiphanius, and sometimes to Philo of Carpathia, in the Armenian tradition. But no matter who its author was considered to have been, the subject matter of the work endeared it to moralists and preachers of many milieus.

The work’s principal interest, the drawing of moral lessons from the behavior of creatures in the animal—or even the mineral—kingdom, with special application to monastics, gave it great practical appeal. Standard medieval *topoi* such as the hart’s enmity towards the snake, the lion’s habit of covering its tracks with its tail to elude hunters, or the eagle’s renewing its youthful vision by approaching the sun all have roots in *Physiologus*.

As Muradyan points out in her introduction, *Physiologus* was not the only work of its kind, only the most single-minded. Parallel material may be found in authors both pagan (Pliny, Ovid, Aristotle, Plutarch) and Christian (Timothy of Gaza, Tatian, Basil the Great, Cosmas Indicopleustes). Armenians, too, speculated about the habits of animals real and mythical, and derived lessons from their behavior: among these Armenian writers were Eznik, the author of the Armenian *Geography*, Vanakan Vardapet, and the Vardans Aygekči and Arewelçi, to name a few. The ubiquity of references to material deriving from *Physiologus* is one of the rea-
sons why Muradyan's work will be welcome in many different scholarly arenas.

In her extensive, twelve section introduction, Muradyan deals with aspects of Physiologus’ manuscript tradition and transmission, drawing particular attention to the additional material in the Armenian manuscripts, as well as to important variants.

A review of the literature occupies section II of the Introduction. The editio princeps by Pitra (Spicilegium Solemnense 3, Paris 1855, 374-390), its French translation by Cahier (Nouveaux mélanges d'archéologie, Paris, 1874) and the influence of the latter in particular on subsequent scholarship are discussed. Following this is an assessment of Marr's contribution, with special attention to his conclusion that there may have been secondary contacts between the Armenian Physiologus and its Greek or even Latin counterparts.

The preparation of the Armenian texts in this volume was based on a collation of thirty-five Matenadaran and seven Jerusalem manuscripts Muradyan notes that Physiologus is often found in company with other fabulous material and sometimes with Lives of the Fathers. She lists eight Armenian recensions and describes their manuscript families, sub-recensions and contents. This general overview is followed by an exhaustive list of the variations within each recension. Next, differences between the recensions are dealt with sequentially, chapter by chapter.

Muradyan then turns to a description of the two manuscripts most directly involved in this "revised diplomatic" edition. The Greek is based on Moscow II, per Karnejev's printing ("Der Physiologus der Moskauer Synodalbibliothek," Byzantinische Zeitschrift 3, 1894, 26-63) and the Armenian, on the 13th century ms. M 2101. The latter was previously utilized by Marr who, however, was interested in comparing it to the Georgian rather than the Greek. Instances in which Muradyan has chosen to depart from the readings of the two fundamental manuscripts are carefully outlined. Discrepancies in the Greek, drawn from F. Sbordone's critical text (Physiologi Graeci singulae variarum aetatum recensiones, Rome, 1936) are given at length, with supporting evidence from the Armenian. This information is followed by a list of significant discrepancies in phrasing between the Greek and the Armenian.

Section VIII of the Introduction is devoted to a study of the translation technique of the Armenian, especially as this offers evidence for an early translation date. Particular attention is given to glosses within the text. Of great interest to anyone studying translation techniques or working with translated texts is her extensive listing of (1) non-literal translations of
Greek compounds and prefixes, and (2) variant translations of specific words or grammatical forms.

Section IX constitutes a brief list of instances where Physiologus citations of the Bible offer evidence of a new translation. That section leads naturally into Section X, which brings together references to Physiologus across the spectrum of Armenian literature. Citations are adduced from Eznik, Teaching of St. Gregory, Elišė, Yovhannēs Erzinkači, Vahram Rabun, an anonymous commentary on Philo, Vardan Arewelči, and Nersēs Šnorhali. Muradyan dwells at some length on material found in Mxiṭar Goš, and then briefly mentions 16th and 18th century references.

In contradistinction to Marr's previous conclusion that the Armenian translation was probably made in the late 6th or early 7th century, Muradyan in Section XI establishes a terminus post quem non of 476 for the translation of Physiologus into Armenian, based on the translation of month names in the text. This date is much closer to the one of 470 proposed by L. Xačikyan.

The Introduction concludes with a short summary of the preceding sections.

The volume's main body is taken up with the parallel Greek-Armenian text, accompanied by detailed notes on variants, biblical citations and parallel material. An English translation follows the parallel text as a separate section; the notes to the translation point out discrepancies with the Greek. There is clear intent to make the English translation as literal a rendering of the Armenian as possible; that notwithstanding, the English translation would have benefited from closer editorial attention.

The Appendices to the volume are at least equal in importance to the main body of text. The index of biblical citations includes not only direct quotations but allusions as well, a very useful addition. The shorter Armenian recension is given in another appendix, with a brief introduction and detailed notes but without English translation. The third appendix consists of a parallel Greek-English text of three chapters in the Greek which are absent from the Armenian: The Frog, The Salamander, The Adamant Stone. Appendices IV and V introduce and give parallel texts for two sets of original Armenian chapters: the first comprises four chapters (The Bear, The Žrahaw, The Bee, The Crow) and the second, thirty short chapters mostly on exotic creatures and miracle working bodies of water—though one also describes Indian philosophers. Parallels with the Armenian Geography are pointed out. In addition, close verbal parallels with Vanakan Vardapet's Questions and Answers are quoted extensively in the notes.

A select bibliography concludes the volume.

Reviewed by Edward G. Mathews, Jr.

St. Gregory of Narek, born in Vaspurakan, around the middle of the tenth century AD, was a student and monk at the monastery of Narek for most of his life. Over the course of his life he composed a number of works that include a *History of the Holy Cross of Aparan*ł, a *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, and many *Odes* and *Hymns* (Arm. *Taler ev Ganjer*). But St. Gregory is most widely known for his *Matean Olbergutyyan*, usually translated as *Book of Lamentation*, which was completed shortly before his death in 1003, just a generation before Armenia fell to the Byzantine Empire. While this book has been translated into a number of modern languages during the course of the second half of the 20th century, three new translations have appeared at the advent of the third millennium: a French translation by J.-P. Mahé (2000), the first complete English translation by Khachatur Khachaturian (2001), and the complete English translation of T.J. Samuelian, under review here.

The *Book of Lamentation* is held in high esteem by the Armenian people—an esteem even greater than that accorded to a work such as the *Confessions* of St. Augustine in the west. Nearly every Armenian has a copy in the house, many even reverencing their copy as a sort of talisman. As Samuelian’s subtitle suggests, the *Book of Lamentation* shares a main theme with the *Confessions*: it is primarily a personal and intimate communion with God. And as St. Gregory makes very clear in his prefatory *Drušiwnk* and in the subscription of each *Lament*—“Speaking with God from the Depths of the Heart”—the preparation of the soul for this communion is the primary, if not the sole, purpose of his book. Following both his teacher Anania and certain trends of the times, St. Gregory writes in the style of a dirge in order to lead the reader to tears and to confession of one’s sins, by which means one receives the forgiveness of God. For Gregory, true repentance brings down the infinite mercy of God which can overcome any and every sin, however loathsome. Thus, to the prayerful reader, the penitential and mournful style of the dirge is overcome and superseded by the joy of forgiveness and the hope of salvation.
The Book of Lamentation is not an easy text to translate. More than any other Armenian author, St. Gregory uses numerous rare words, not a few of which he probably coined himself for this work, and many of which come from the spoken language of his time. The style just described and St. Gregory’s intimate knowledge of the Bible all contribute to a very complex text. And, it should be noted, while St. Gregory actually set down the text of this book in the last two or three years of his life, these Laments clearly come from a long and intimate communion with God, some experience of which a translator himself must have in order to convey the depth of St. Gregory’s text. It is in conveying this sense of divine communion—in very simple, readable English—that Samuelian’s translation excels. While one may quibble here and there with the “non-scholarly liberties” that Samuelian has taken with the text, he has clearly produced a translation that is not only eminently readable but one that a person in any walk of life can pray with. Perhaps a couple of short comparisons will illustrate this. Compare Samuelian’s rendering of the beginning of Lament 1:

The voice of a sighing heart, its sobs and mournful cries,  
I offer up to you, O Seer of Secrets,  
placing the fruits of my wavering mind  
as a savory sacrifice on the fire of my grieving soul  
to be delivered to you in the censer of my will.

Compassionate Lord, breathe in  
this offering and look more favorably on it  
than upon a more sumptuous sacrifice  
of rich smoke. Please find  
this simple string of words acceptable.  
Do not turn in disdain.

with the rather archaic translation of M. Kudian (1977):

The plaintive cry of sobbing sighs from my heart  
I proffer unto thee, who seest all secrets;  
And placing the fruit of the ardent desires  
From my troubled mind,  
Upon the fire of grief that consumeth my soul,  
With my will as incense burner,  
I forward it to thee, O compassionate Lord!  
Gaze upon this, mine offering,
As upon a sacrifice rich with smoke;
And savour the aroma of its fumes.
Receive this array of inadequate words,
With pleasure and not with anger.

Or compare Samuelian’s rendering of the beginning of Lament 33:

Let this offering of words, compassionate God,
from the fruits of my soul rise to you with incense,
mixed by you with the sweet oil
used by the pious Mary,
which you accepted with respect
just as you also accept offerings astonishingly
from prostitutes, fortunate to be making offerings.
May my humble words also praise you and may you
accept their reaching toward
your unreachable head, God on high,
in spite of the reproach of the Psalmist,
“Do not let the leafy boughs of my head
be anointed with the oil of the sinner.”

with the more scholarly exact translation of J.R. Russell (1997):

Now commingle with the sweet compounded oil
Of Mary, the righteous woman,
The measure of these words of worship
Offered to you from my soul’s first fruits,
O Blessed and Merciful One,
Sharing it equally in the vessels of incense.
May you feast abundantly on my meager words,
Giving it equal place with the blessed harlots
Received by you with gifts of eternal wonder,
That it be accepted at your inaccessible, lofty, lauded
height
Unchastened by the Psalmist’s rebuke:
“Let not the sinner’s oil anoint the leaf of the topmost
boughs.”

Such comparisons are not at all meant to denigrate these other two sam-
ples; rather, they are intended simply to highlight the simplicity, the read-
ability, and the “pray-ability” of Samuelian’s new translation. Its bi-lingual
format, utilizing the text from the critical edition of P.M. Xačatryan and A.A. Łazinyan (Yerevan, 1985), and notes help to make the volume even more useful. It is clear that Suren, the character in Shahan Shahnur’s novel, A Retreat Without a Song, who denounced the Book of Lamentation as “the most deceitful, the most unwholesome, and the most immoral of all” Armenian books, never read it in Samuelian’s translation.

Reviewed by Edward G. Mathews, Jr.

John Chrysostom, Bishop of Antioch and later Patriarch of Constantinople, was one of the most prolific authors of the early Church, and certainly one of the most popular. The very name accorded him during his tenure as Catholicos and by which he is still known, Chrysostom (Arm., *Oskeberan*), "Golden-tongue", attests to the general popularity of his homilies in his own lifetime and throughout the centuries. The number of his works that survive in Greek surpasses any other Greek patristic writer, and his works are even among the most popular in Latin, Syriac, and Armenian cultures. Such a figure as Thomas Aquinas was reputed to have offered "the whole town of Paris" in exchange for a copy of Chrysostom's *Homilies on the Gospel of Matthew*.

It seems to have been during his short tenure as Patriarch that Chrysostom delivered fifty-five homilies on the Acts of the Apostles. Apart from a *Commentary on Acts* attributed to Ephrem the Syrian these homilies appear to be the only extant commentary on Acts from the early Church. Scholars have noted, following the lead of the church historian Socrates, (*Church History*, 6.4) that there are often two versions of the homilies of John Chrysostom. These are termed, respectively, "the rough", or "unrevised/as delivered" version, and "the smooth" or "revised/polished" version. There has been considerable doubt, however, whether the revised versions were done by Chrysostom himself, by some aide of his, or even by some later figure.

Rose Varteni Chétanian has undertaken to prepare a text of the Armenian translation of four homilies from the series on Acts. This work was originally prepared as a dissertation under the direction of Gilles Dorival, a well-respected Chrysostom scholar. Following the usual format for the CSCO series, the text and translation are in separate volumes. The usual format, for both text and translation, is to have a running text with notation marking where a new manuscript page begins. Chétanian has chosen instead to keep to a format of one text page per manuscript page; this may make for a slightly clearer format to read but creates many pages that are
half blank, especially in the text volume. Thus, had the format been different, each volume might have comprised considerably fewer pages.

Chétanian bases her edition of the Armenian text on the two surviving manuscripts that contain these homilies complete, and consults a number of manuscripts that contain fragments or catenae. While it is very likely that an Armenian translation existed, perhaps even from the time of the early translators in the 5th century, the colophons inform us that this version had been lost, but that in the 12th century a Greek text of the homilies was rediscovered in Constantinople. At this time Grigor VKayasër, the Catholicos of Armenia and translator of many Greek and Syriac texts, ordered that a new translation be made. He may have begun it himself, but it was completed by a certain Kirakos.

Chétanian demonstrates in her introduction that the Armenian is clearly a translation of a Greek "rough" text which closely resembles the text as found in an 11th-century manuscript (now in New College, Oxford) which differs substantially from the published editions of the Greek homilies (from which the only extant English translation was made). She also makes general comments on the characteristic features of the Armenian version. It is a very literal translation—"la traduction littérale qui calque fidèlement le mot à mot grec". (text, p. xlviii-xlix) This literalness often results in a simple transliteration of the Greek word rather than a translation, or sometimes in a double translation of the Greek to try to present the full range of the underlying Greek word. Sometimes, the translator simply misunderstands the Greek, and at other times alters number, person, and even tense of the Greek. In addition to these characteristics, the translator, unlike his earlier predecessors, did not seem to understand the Greek genitive absolute.

In her French translation of the Armenian text, Chétanian follows the lead of the Armenian translator and renders a very literal translation of the Armenian. The sole exception is that she retains the correct title "Homilies", pace the Armenian translator, who titles the work a "Commentary" (Arm., meknutìwn). At the end of the translation volume, Chétanian provides two extremely useful glossaries: the first, Armenian-Greek and the second, Greek-Armenian; each includes the French word she has employed in her translation, as well as where in the text the word occurs. The volume is completed by a bibliography, but has no scriptural or subject indices such as are often found in newer CSCO volumes.

In contrast to the sentiment of Aquinas mentioned above, the Dutch Renaissance scholar Erasmus once commented, in a letter to Tonstal, the bishop of Durham, after he had finished reading John Chrysostom's Homilies on Acts, that "I have never read anything so lacking in artistry. Even
passed out and drunk, I would have written something much better (sed nihil unquam legi indoctius. Ebrius ac stertens scriberem meliora)." This oft-cited comment has too often been taken out of context and has far too long served to warn readers away from this text. The work of Chétanian goes a long way toward dispelling this opinion of Erasmus and restoring these homilies to their deserved place. It is now to be hoped that Greek scholars will finally take up the challenge and produce a critical edition of the Greek homilies, a project announced twice in the last century but which has never been brought to fruition.
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NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS

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