UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

A Window into the Tenth Century:

The Life and Literary Works of Anania of Narek

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures

by

Jesse Siragan Arlen

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Doctor of Philosophy in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures

University of California, Los Angeles, 2021

Professor S. Peter Cowe, Chair

This dissertation revolves around the literary works and activities of a significant but little known figure of the tenth century AD, Anania of Narek. To date, no monograph has been written on him in a Western language, nor have any of his books been translated. The goal of this project is to contextualize his works and recover his impact on several of the primary developments in the Near East and Mediterranean that marked his era and in so doing offer a novel view into the multifaceted and interconnected worlds of the period's various and competing ethnoreligious communities. Anania was the first abbot of Narek monastery, which was founded during a regional explosion of cenobitic monastic institutions. Through a reading of his *Book of Instruction* and other sources, I present a picture of the intellectual and ascetic-mystical educational system he initiated there. This system became the crucible that formed several of the

leading figures of the next generation, including Uxtanēs of Sebasteia and Grigor of Narek. One of the first of the major medieval monastic academies, Narek became a model for later ones that endured throughout the Armenian *oikoumené* as intellectual and artistic centers into the early modern period. Anania also was caught up at the center of the Tʿondrakian controversy, which had its origins in a Christian community existing outside the structure of the official church in the borderlands between the Byzantine Empire and ʿAbbāsid Caliphate. Through a careful reexamination of the sources, I offer a new perspective on the development of "Tʿondrakecʿi" as a heretical epithet and explain how ascetic figures such as Anania could be denounced as such by the official church hierarchy. Anania was also at the forefront of the Armenian Church's self-defense vis-à-vis the assimilationist agenda of the Byzantine Church and Empire in its eastward expansion. Reading his *Root of Faith* alongside other contemporaneous texts, I reconstruct the *vardapets'* (theological doctors) defense of their church's right to autonomous existence and their self-presentation as preservers of the faith of early Christianity, in universal consensus and communion with the other Christian communities living outside of the Byzantine Empire in Egypt, Ethiopia, the Middle East, the Caucasus, India, and China.

The dissertation of Jesse Siragan Arlen is approved.

Sebouh David Aslanian

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Timothy William Greenwood

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2021

Dedicated to the memory of Tenny Christiana Arlen

Ա՛ռ չարժումն անճին՝ յիշատակ

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_____. "***Ընկերութիւն, սէր եւ գրելու մղումը Քրիստիան Բատիկեանի*** **Մետաղէ երազներ** ***վէպին մէջ*** (Friendship, Love, and the Urge to Write in Christian Batikian's novel *Metal Dreams*)." *Pakine* 59 no. 1 (2020): 70–80.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation centers on Anania of Narek (Anania Narekacʿi, ca. 910–990),[1] who is known as the first abbot of Narek monastery (*Narekavankʿ*)[2] and as the relative, teacher, and spiritual father of Grigor of Narek (ca. 945–1003). Although Anania was one of the most influential figures of his generation, his importance and impact both on regional developments and on the subsequent Armenian intellectual tradition has only recently begun to garner the attention they deserve. His neglect and general absence from historiography of the period is due to several different factors. First, he became entangled in a contemporary ecclesiastical controversy — the Tʿondrakian crisis, on which more below — that marred his reputation within the Armenian church establishment and may have led to the suppression of some of his works. Only a fragment remains of the work that he was best known for in the generations that immediately followed his, *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians* [Հակաճառութիւն ընդդէմ Թոնդրակեցւոց]. Then, due to the coincidence of his first name, "Anania," with other figures of that same name in the Armenian literary tradition,[3] several of his works were incorrectly attributed by early generations of modern scholarship, which further obscured his legacy. Finally, the majority of his works were not available outside of manuscripts until 2011, when his extant literary oeuvre was properly established and published in complete form for the first

[1] All dates are *anno Domini* (AD), unless otherwise noted. In general, I follow the Hübschmann-Meillet system for the transliteration of Old Armenian terms and names, but the Library of Congress system for bibliography. Citations will generally be abbreviated with full references available in the bibliography. Armenian fonts are rendered via "HG Hay," developed by Hagop Gulludjian (Kouloujian), whom I thank for giving me permission to use.
[2] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 544, p. 98.
[3] In particular Anania of Širak (ca. 610–685) and Anania of Sanahin (*fl.* 11th c.).

time.[4] To date, none of his books have been translated into a modern western language, and so he remains largely beyond the purview of the western academic community.

The only monograph devoted to Anania was published in 1986 in Armenian by the late Hrachʿya Tʿamrazyan, director from 2007–2016 of the Matenadaran (the Mesrop Mashtots Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts) in Yerevan.[5] Tʿamrazyan's philological and literary research established the proper attribution of Anania's works, which he edited and published in 2011. He was the first to indicate the importance of this neglected figure and contextualize him within the Armenian literary tradition. Along with Anania's pupil Grigor and the latter's father Xosrov Anjewacʿi, Tʿamrazyan presented a vivid picture of the literary, spiritual, and intellectual contributions of the writers of the "School of Narek" (***Նարեկեան Դպրոցը***) in a series of monographs he devoted to them.[6]

Anania has not yet been adequately situated within the political, social, intellectual, and religious developments of the wider Near East and Mediterranean region — the Byzantine (or East Roman) and Islamicate worlds — which he participated in and impacted through his several major works that responded to these developments. The goal of this dissertation is to offer a rich contextualization of Anania's works in relation to these wider issues as well as to recover the extent of his impact on several of the primary regional developments from the mid-ninth to mid-eleventh century. In so doing, this study offers a novel perspective on the multifaceted and interconnected worlds of the period's various and competing ethnoreligious communities, thereby contributing to the wider scholarly conversation on this period and region. By looking

[4] They may be found, along with introductions by the editor, Hrachʿya Tʿamrazyan, in *MH* 10:309–657.
[5] Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*.
[6] Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*; idem, *Narekyan dprotsʿě*; idem, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev norplatonakanutʿyuně*; idem, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě.*

out at the world from the vantage point of the abbot of Narek, this dissertation aims to offer fresh insights to scholars interested in this pivotal period of Mediterranean and Near Eastern history.

Literature Review

The Publication of Anania's Writings

As mentioned above, it was in 2011 that the extant literary oeuvre of Anania of Narek was properly attributed to him and published. Until that time, only scattered individual works of his had been published, often incorrectly attributed to a different figure of the same name.

The first publication of one of Anania's works was in the eighteenth century, when his *Encomium on the Holy Universal Church* [Ներբողեան ասացեալ ի սուրբն կաթողիկէ եկեղեցի] was published in an anthology of religious texts.[7] In this collection, it was not specified to which Anania the *Encomium* belonged. In subsequent centuries, scholars vacillated between attributing it to Narekacʿi or Sanahnecʿi.[8] Two of his "instructions (*xratkʿ*)" were published in the 1836 four-volume Venice Mkhitʿarist publication of works attributed to Ephrem the Syrian, the instruction "On Humility (*Խրատ վասն խոնարհութեան*)" and "On Attention to Thoughts (*Յաղագս խորհրդոց զգուշութեան*)," without any discussion of the question of authorship.[9] In the mid-nineteenth century, the *Encomium* was again published, this time correctly attributed to Narekacʿi and issued in serial form in the philological and literary monthly *Chŕakʿagh* (Ճռաֆաղ), a periodical that was in publication for less than five years (1858–62) in connection

[7] *Girkʿ or kochʿi zhoghovatsu* (Constantinople, 1747), 441–83. A second, and slightly modified edition of this volume, appeared at the end of the century: *Girkʿ kochʿetsʿeal zhoghovatsu*, Constantinople (1793), 403–42.
[8] See the discussion below.
[9] *Srboyn Epʿremi matenagrutʿiwnkʿ* (Venice, 1836), 4:215–223.

with the Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages (***Լազարեան ճեմարան***) in Moscow.[10] The end of the century saw the publication of two more works by Anania. In 1892, his "Letter of Confession (***Գիր խոստովանութեան***)" was published by Galust Tēr-Mkrtchʿean (writing under the pen name *Miaban* ['Monk']) in *Ararat*, a monthly periodical under the auspices of the Mother See of the Armenian Church in Vałaršapat (Ējmiacin / Ējmiatsin).[11] The "Letter of Confession" was accompanied by a brief introduction on the significance of the Tʿondrakian heresy both within the Armenian realm and in relation to the broader history of Christian heretical movements. Tēr-Mkrtchʿean, however, supposed the "Letter of Confession" was Anania's lost work *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians*, and thereby introduced further confusion. In 1898–99, Anania's "On Compunction and Tears [***Յաղագս զղջման եւ արտասուաց***]" was published serially in the Constantinopolitan bi-monthly literary journal *Patker* (Պատկեր).[12] In the accompanying introduction, Grigor Ashěgean discussed the question of authorship and presented his view that the work should be ascribed to Anania of Narek and that "Gregory the Monk" (***Գրիգոր միայնակեաց***), who requested the work and to whom it is addressed, was none other than Anania's famous pupil, Grigor of Narek.[13] A fragment of Anania's *Refutation* was discovered in a fourteenth-century manuscript of the works of Yovhannēs Erznkacʿi (M 2173) and published in *Ararat* in 1914.[14] This is the only surviving fragment of this work that is otherwise no longer extant. *For an Explanation of Numbers* [Սակս բացայայտութեան թուոց]

[10]Ayuazean and Msereantsʿ, "Anania Narekatsʿi: *Nerboghean*."
[11] Tēr-Mkrtchʿean (Miaban), "Anania Narekatsʿi 10-rd dar."
[12] Ashěgean, "Anania Narekatsʿi."
[13] Ashěgean, "Anania Narekatsʿi,"177. The other figures considered by Ashěgean were Anania Anecʿi, Anania Širakacʿi, Anania Sanahnecʿi, Anania Tʿargmaničʿ, and Catholicos Anania Mokacʿi.
[14] Garegin Yovsepʿean, "Hayagitakan ayl ew aylkʿ."

was published in a collection of Anania Širakacʿi's works in 1944, and attributed to the latter figure, by Ashot Abrahamyan.[15]

Publication of Anania's literary oeuvre did not commence again until the turn of the millenium. In 2000, the *Encomium* was again published, this time attributed to Anania Sanahnecʿi in a collection of texts devoted to that author.[16] In this same collection, *The Root of Faith* was published in the form it was transmitted via Sanahnecʿi's later compilation *Refutation of the Dyophysites* (**Հակաճառութիւն ընդդէմ երկաբնակաց**), but without acknowledgment that the latter text is essentially Narekacʿi's *Root of Faith* with some minor editorial adjustments and additions.[17] In 2010, a diplomatic edition along with a brief introduction and translation into Eastern Armenian of "On Humility" was published in the Mkhitʿarist periodical *Handēs Amsōreay*.[18] Finally, in 2011, thanks to the aforementioned Tʿamrazyan, the complete extant works of Anania Narekatsʿi were published in the tenth volume of the *Armenian Classical Authors* series (**Մատենագիրք Հայոց** [hereafter *MH*]), with introductions dealing primarily with questions pertaining to authorship and attribution.[19] Thanks to this publication, Anania's complete extant works have now been made available. His works are outlined below with the corresponding page numbers in *MH* 10, along with a few additional details pertaining to their date of composition:[20]

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[15] Abrahamyan, *Anania Shirakatsʿu matenagrutʿyunĕ*, 237–50.
[16] Kʿyoseyan, H. H., *Anania Sanahnetsʿi*, 117–56.
[17] Kʿyoseyan, H. H., *Anania Sanahnetsʿi*, 192–337.
[18] Iwzbashean, Ashkhēn, "Ananiayi vardapeti khrat."
[19] *MH* 10:309–657. The series is a collaborative project between the Armenian Catholicate of Cilicia (Antelias, Lebanon) and the Matenadaran Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (Yerevan, Armenia), funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon, Portugal) that aims to publish the complete works of native Armenian authors from the fifth to eighteenth centuries. It currently comprises twenty-one large volumes and has reached the twelfth century. See the series homepage on the website of the Matenadaran: https://matenadaran.am/.
[20] It bears mentioining that in various writings of his on Anania, Tʿamrazyan has argued that Anania composed a *History of Armenia* (**Պատմութիւն Հայոց**). See Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 177–191; idem, *Grigor Narekatsʿin*

1. *Book of Instruction* (***Խրատագիրք***), *MH* 10:328–427.
   The *Book of Instruction* consists of nine texts, of which the first six form a core collection that was commissioned by Bishop Xačʿik, future Catholicos Xačʿik I Aršaruni. The seventh is a lengthy text in the same ascetic, didactic genre (*xrat*), but was written at the request of one "Grigor the Monk" (***Գրիգոր միայնակեաց***), who some have supposed to be Grigor of Narek. The eighth systematizes some of the earlier works — along with additional material — into an ethics based on the Scriptures (especially the Gospels). The ninth recapitulates the previous material, but reworks it into the 'chapters' (*kephalaia*, *capita*) genre known from Byzantine ascetic literature, likely in order to facilitate its memorization.[21] Because of their relation to the original six instructions, the latter three have been added to the *Book of Instruction* and are treated in the *MH* edition as a single book. This is useful so long as one realizes that all nine probably never circulated as a single collection in the premodern period, whether in Anania's lifetime or afterwards.[22] The instructions have a *terminus ante quem* of 972 (the date at which Bishop Xačʿik was elected catholicos).[23] The nine individual texts are the following:
   i. "To Priests" (***Խրատ քահանայից***). *MH* 10:328–336.
   ii. "On Patience and Peace" (***Խրատ վասն համբերութեան եւ խաղաղութեան***). *MH* 10:337–341.
   iii. "On Humility" (***Խրատ վասն խոնարհութեան***). *MH* 10:342–46.
   iv. "Counsel on Prayer" (***Բանք աղաւթից***). *MH* 10:348–355.

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ev narekyan dprotsʿĕ, 1:30–40, 2:131–32, 145. This comes from what is in my view a mistaken reading of one passage of Uxtanēs' dedicatory letter to Anania, where the former says:
Արդ քանզի լուեալ էր մեր յաղագս պատմութեան ք՝ սակաւ հատուածով առնել յսկզբան թագաւորացն հայոց մինչեւ ի մեզ, եւ զքո բանիբուն Պուեհիկոս դասատաչարժիդ վարժս ի ստադդիս ասպարէզ առ քո խաղաղութիւն, եւ զընթացս լեզուիդ՝ որ քնար է Հոգւոյն, եւ որպէս կամի չարժէ զդա. եւ զուրախարար դիր պատմութեան Հայոց փոքր հատուածաւք՝ որպէս վերագոյն ասացաք, զոր արարեալ առ ի մխիթարութիւն ընթերցաւղաց՝ եւ ի լուսաւորութիւն լսաւղաց՝ եւ ի պայծառութիւն սրբոյ եկեղեցւոյ յիշատակել զայս եւս պատմութիւն, հայցէի փորք ի չատէ գրով իմով՝ որ բերաւ առ քեզ սակաւ ինչ յայտարարութեամբ ի ճեռն Փիլիպպոսի քահանայի՝ որպէս ի սկզբան ճառիս ասացաք. վասն զի եւ այսմ եւս ակն ոչ ունէի՝ եթէ ինձ հաւատալոց է ի քէն վիճակ պատմութեան։* Uxtanēs of Sebasteia, *History of Armenia* 1, *MH* 15:453–54.58. Tʿamrazyan interpreted the ***պատմութեան քո ("your history") in the first quoted line as "the history (written by) you" instead of "the history (commissioned) by you" or "the history you (wanted written)," i.e., Uxtanēs' own *History*. Earlier in the letter, Uxtanēs notes that Anania had commissioned him with the task of writing the three-part *History*, the contents and outline of which they had planned and discussed together in multiple epistolary exchanges, as well as during a meeting in person at Argina. It is clear from Uxtanēs' description that Anania was the mastermind behind the compositional plan and outline of the *History*, and for this reason Uxtanēs refers to it as Anania's own, and himself as his master's mouthpiece, playing the role of Aaron to Anania's Moses (*MH* 15:447.4). Tʿamrazyan's claim, based on Uxtanēs' (at times, self-effacing) rhetoric, that Anania had himself written a *History* upon which Uxtanēs then based his own seems to me a misinterpretation of the information provided in Uxtanēs' preface. For the full text of this prefatory letter, see Uxtanēs, *History of Armenia* 1, *MH*:15:446–55.1–74, tr. Arzoumanian, 11–20.

[21] See Géhin, "Les collections de *kephalaia* monastiques;" Kalvesmaki, "Evagrius in the Byzantine Genre of Chapters."

[22] I am currently making an annotated translation and study of these texts and will treat these issues, as well as the manuscript tradition and other related issues, in more detail as part of that study.

[23] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿĕ*, 2:132–34, 144. It is possible that the latter three were written sometime after this date.

v. "On this Transitory World" (***Վասն անցաւոր աշխարհիս***). *MH* 10:348–355.
vi. "On Attention to Thoughts" (***Յաղագս խորհրդոց զգուշութեան***). *MH* 10:356–359.
vii. "On Compunction and Tears" (***Յաղագս զղջման եւ արտասուաց***). *MH* 10:360–395.
viii. "Evangelical, Apostolic, and Prophetic Speech and Instructions Which Lead Us to Eternal Life and Do Not Lead Us Astray to the Right or to the Left" (***Խաւսք եւ խրատք աւետարանական, առաքելական եւ մարգարէական, որ տանին զմեզ ի կեանսն յաւիտենական եւ ոչ տան խոտորել յաջ կամ յահեակ***). *MH* 10:396–420.
ix. "Recapitulated and Condensed Sentences on the Things Said to You Before" (***Գլխաւորեալ եւ համառաւտ բանք վասն յառաջ ասացելոցդ***). *MH* 10:421–427.

2. *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians* (Հակաճառութիւն ընդդէմ Թոնդրակեցւոց), *MH* 10:436–38 (fragment).
The *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians* was commissioned by Catholicos Anania Mokacʿi and thus has a *terminus ante quem* of ca. 963–966 (the date of Catholicos Anania's death).[24] Unfortunately, it is no longer extant. Only a small fragment survives in a fourteenth-century manuscript of the works of Yovhannēs Erznkacʿi (ca. 1240–1293), who had himself extracted the fragment from Anania's *Refutation*.[25]
The title in the manuscript is: "Summary Discourse of the Same Yovhannēs Erznkacʿi Extracted from the Book Against the Tʿondrakites by *Vardapet* Anania (***Նորին Յովհաննիսի վարդապետի Եզնկայեցւոյ[յ] բան համառաւտ քաղեալ յԱնանիայի վարդապետին գրոցն, որ ընդդէմ Թոնտրակեցոցն***)."

3. *For an Explanation of Numbers* (Սակս բացայայտութեան թուոց), *MH* 10:440–455.
For an Explanation of Numbers explains number symbolism and issues from the monastic academic environment. It was likely employed didactically by Anania in his teaching role at Narek.[26]

4. *Root of Faith* (Հաւատարմարտ), *MH* 10:480–598.[27]
The *Root of Faith* was commissioned by Catholicos Xačʿik and has a *terminus ante quem* of 980 or 987.[28] Uxtanēs, in his dedicatory letter to Anania that precedes his *History of Armenia*, notes that Anania handed over the work in person to Catholicos Xačʿik at the catholicosal residence at Argina, a meeting which took place in either 980 or 987 and at

[24] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:144.
[25] M 2173, ff. 255r–257r.
[26] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:145. I have not made much use of this text for the purposes of the present study, but I plan to study and perhaps translate it in the future.
[27] The *MH* edition includes a lengthy subtitle, under which the *Root of Faith* is known in the manuscript tradition: "Explanation of the dispute with the dyophysites, who under the guise of truth improperly profess duality when introducing the one nature, who is God the Word, the God-man Jesus Christ (***Լուծումն մաքառման երկաբնակացն, որք ի կարծիս ճշմարտութեան անյարմար դաւանեն երկակս ի միոնն մուծանել բնութիւն, որ է Աստուած Բանն, Աստուած մարդն Յիսուս Քրիստոս***)." See, for example, M 2174, 185r; M 568, 2r.
[28] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:145.

which Uxtanēs was also present.[29] Unfortunately, the *Root of Faith* does not survive in its original form, but thanks to the investigations of Tʿamrazyan, the majority of the work has been recovered. Based on a careful study of the manuscript tradition, Tʿamrazyan was able to extract the portions belonging to Narekacʿi's original composition from Sanahnecʿi's *Refutation of the Dyophysites* (Հակաճառութիւն ընդդէմ երկաբնակաց), and to publish those portions, which comprise the bulk of the work, in *MH* 10.[30]

5. *Encomium on the Holy Universal Church* (Ներբողեան ասացեալ ի սուրբն կաթողիկէ եկեղեցի), *MH* 10:619–646.
   Subtitle: "Which is in New City, Which Now is Called Vałaršapat, Where the Miraculous Vision was Revealed to the Grand First Combatant S. Grigor the Illuminator" (***Որ է ի Նոր Քաղաք, որ այժմ կոչի Վաղարշապատ, յորում տեղւոջ ցուցաւ հրաշալի տեսիլն մեծի նահատակի սրբոյն Գրիգորի Լուսաւորչի***).
   Tʿamrazyan argues that the *Encomium* has a *terminus ante quem* of 977 (the date of the writing of Grigor of Narek's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, which, according to Tʿamrazyan, was influenced by the *Encomium*).[31]

6. "Letter of Confession" (***Գիր խոստովանութեան***), *MH* 10:649–57.
   Subtitle: "Concerning the false opinions about him" (***Յաղագս սուտ կարծեացն որ վասն նորա***).
   The *Letter of Confession* was written in Anania's later life, and most likely addressed to Catholicos Xačʿik, in order to defend himself against accusations some had made that he was a "Tʿondrakecʿi."[32]

Scholarship on Anania's Life and Literary Works

There has been little research conducted on the life and works of Anania Narekacʿi. He was covered in a cursory manner in several of the standard histories and surveys of Armenian

[29] For a discussion of the details surrounding this meeting and the date in question, see Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 39–43; Greenwood, *Universal History*, 7.
[30] For the discussion of the complicated relationship between these two works, see Tʿamrazyan, "Anania Narekatsʿu 'Hawatarmat' dawanabanakan erkě," in *MH* 10:456–479.
[31] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:145; idem, "Anania Narekatsʿu 'Nerboghean asatsʿeal i surbn katʿughikē ekeghetsʿi' erkě," in *MH* 10:599–618.
[32] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:144–145. I will explore this issue in the fourth chapter.

literature[33] and history.[34] Such works, inspired by the *testimonia* of his students and other subsequent writers who heaped praise upon him, particularly Uxtanēs and Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, generally recognized him as a renowned theological doctor and teacher (*վարդապետ*), great philosopher (*փիլիսոփայ մեծ*), learned one (*գիտուն*), and rhetorician (*հռետոր*), with little analysis apart from stating his importance as founder of the monastery of Narek and the influence he had on the lives and works of subsequent Armenian figures, particularly Grigor of Narek and Uxtanēs. Many also noted Anania's role in the Tʿondrakian controversy and Chalcedonian conflicts of the era, since he composed influential works against both of these groups that were cited and praised by later writers, such as Grigor of Narek, Grigor Magistros (ca. 990–1059), and Nersēs Šnorhali (ca. 1102 – 1173). However, since the majority of Anania's works had not yet been published, while others were lost or incorrectly attributed, the coverage in such surveys could never have been anything but shallow, incomplete, and misleading.

Some particular attention has been paid to the importance of Anania Narekacʿi's lost *Refutation* by scholars who have studied the Tʿondrakian controversy or Paulician heresy, in particular its influence upon Grigor of Narek's later work about the Tʿondrakians.[35] It has long been recognized that Grigor's "Letter" provides an outline sketch of the contents of Anania's lost

[33] Representative examples include: Somal, *Quadro della storia letteraria*, 60–61; Neumann, *Versuch einer Geschichte*, 127–28; Durean, *Patmutʿiwn hay matenagrutʿean*, 40–41 (first edition), 168–70 (second edition); Zarphanalean, *Haykakan hin dprutʿean*, 515–16 (first edition), 532–34 (second edition); Zaminean, *Hay grakanutʿean patmutʿiwn*, 145; Abeghyan, *Hayotsʿ hin grakanutʿyan patmutʿyun*, 1:517–18, 520; Anasyan, *Haykakan matenagitutʿyun* 1:726–30; Inglisian, "Die Armenische Literatur," 182–83, 185–86, 189; Pogharean, *Hay groghner,* 150–53; Kʿiparean, *Patmutʿiwn hay hin grakanutʿean*, 312, 328–29, 335, 366.
[34] Representative examples include: Chʿamchʿean, *Patmutʿiwn Hayotsʿ*, 2:824; M. Murateantsʿ, *Patmutʿiwn Hayastaneaytsʿ aṙakʿelakan*, 400–01; Alishan, *Hayapatum: patmichʿkʿew patmutʿiwnkʿ hayotsʿ*, 209–11; Ōrmanean, *Azgapatum*, vol. 1, §761, §791, §814; Arpee, *A History of Armenian Christianity*, 98, 110, 138–39; Grousset, *Histoire de l'Arménie*, 468–70.
[35] Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery."

treatise.[36] Similarly, although somewhat less frequently, scholars considering Christological and ecclesiastical conflicts between the Byzantine and Armenian churches in the late tenth century have noted the role of Anania and his *Root of Faith*.[37] Others have considered Anania's role as founder and abbot of the monastery of Narek and his direction of its educational, liturgical, and musical programs, as well as his literary, spiritual, and theological influence upon Grigor of Narek.[38]

Tʿamrazyan's contribution to our knowledge of Anania and his literary oeuvre deserves to be singled out from other research.[39] As mentioned above, it is thanks primarily to his philological, lexical, and thematic investigations that the correct attribution of Anania's works has been established.[40] He then compiled, edited, and published (in 2011) Anania's extant literary oeuvre.[41] He wrote the only biography, gathering together the relevant *testimonia* from medieval Armenian writers, and ascertaining what details can be established about Anania's early life before he became founder of Narek monastery.[42] He provided some of the only lengthy

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[36] See Muratsʿan, "Tʿontraketsʿineri aghandĕ;" Tēr-Mkrtchʿean, *Die Paulikianer*, 83–84; Sargisean, *Usumnasirutʿiwn Manikʿēa-Pawlikean*, 5–8, 108 n. 2, 117 n. 1; Conybeare, *Key of Truth*, lxii, 126 n. 4, 130 n. 1; Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 96; Ter-Minasyan, *Mijnadaryan aghandneri tsagman*, 150–53; Nersessian, *Tondrakian Movement*, 38, 55–56; Mahé, "L'église arménienne," 518–20; idem, "Le rôle et la fonction du Catholicos," 91; Mardirossian, "Lettre à la splendide," 100–02, 105; Krikorian, "The Letter of St. Gregory," 169–70; Dadoyan, *Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World*, 1:119, 136, 2:200–01; Terian, "Gregory of Narek," 285–86.

[37] See Tēr-Mkrtchʿean, *Knikʿ Hawatoy*, cviii-cx; Mécérian, "Préface" in *Grégoire de Narek*, *Le livre de prières*, 18–24; Cowe, "Impact of Time and Place," 88–90; Mahé, "Confession religieuse et identité nationale," 66 n. 19; Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*, *Tragédie*, 56–59; Augé, *Églises en dialogue*, 255–56 n. 33; Nakada, "Uxtanēs of Sebasteia," 177.

[38] Tʿahmizyan, "Anania Narekatsʿu;" Cowe, "Impact of Time and Place;" Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*, *Tragédie*, 39–69; La Porta, "Monasticism and the Construction," 336, 339; Terian, "Gregory of Narek," 282–86; Papazian, *Doctor of Mercy*, 69–80.

[39] For summary estimations of the contribution of Tʿamrazyan to Narekian studies or the "School of Narek" (i.e., the writers Xosrov Anjewacʿi, Anania of Narek, and Grigor of Narek), see Mahé, "Hrachʿya Tʿamrazyanĕ," 20–29; Muradyan, "Hrachʿya Tʿamrazyani narekatsʿiagitakan," 103–107. An obituary and *curriculum vitae* of Tʿamrazyan may be found in *Banber Matenadarani* 23: Gasparyan, "Hŕachʿya Tʿamrazyani hishatakin," 6–8; Tʿamrazyan, "Hrachʿya Tʿamrazyani kensamatenagitutʿyunĕ," 9–19.

[40] See Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*; idem, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev narekyan dprotsʿĕ*, 1:29–215.

[41] See *MH* 10:309–657.

[42] Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 14–53; idem, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev narekyan dprotsʿĕ*, 2:114–49.

literary analyses of Anania's individual works, situating them in the Armenian literary tradition and citing relevant sources and influences upon Anania's thought.[43] He also problematized the view that Grigor of Narek was the first poet in the Armenian literary tradition[44] by recovering Anania's own rhythmic works and then revealing their influence upon Grigor and via Grigor to later authors of poetic works in the Armenian tradition such as Grigor Tłay (ca. 1133 – 1193) and Nersēs Šnorhali.[45]

Building on Tʿamrazyan's 1986 monograph and the publication of Anania's extant corpus in 2011, some subsequent studies have offered insightful analysis of Anania's life and works, focusing especially on his ascetic and ethical teaching. Annie and Jean-Pierre Mahé devoted a lengthy portion of their introduction to the translation of Grigor of Narek's *Book of Lamentation* to examining various aspects of Anania's thought and wider impact, including the educational, liturgical, and musical program he established at Narek, the school curriculum, his involvement in the Tʿondrakian controversy and Chalcedonian confessional strife, his approach to asceticism, and his poetics.[46] In my estimation, it is the best introduction to Anania available in a western language. Levon Petrosyan (Petrossian) offered some brief yet insightful comments on Anania's ethics, ascetics, and epistemology.[47] Michael Papazian likewise offered a helpful summary of Anania's teaching on spiritual practices and his embroilment in the heretical and doctrinal disputes of the day.[48] Peter Cowe's recent translation of Anania's "On this Transitory World" offers an original approach that reads this work in light of the regional economic boom

[43] See Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*; idem, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:151–443.
[44] Abeghyan, for example, in his history of Armenian literature, writes, "Grigor Narekacʿi is our first great poet (*Գրիգոր Նարեկացին մեր առաջին մեծ բանաստեղծն է*." See Abeghyan, *Hayotsʿ hin grakanutʿyan,* 518.
[45] Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 244–328; idem, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:261–391.
[46] Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*, *Tragédie*, 39–69.
[47] Petrosyan [Petrossian], Levon. "Gregory of Narek and the Narekian Fathers," 28–29.
[48] Papazian, *Doctor of Mercy*, 69–80.

and building activity of the era, setting Anania's monastic ideals that were at home in the new cenobitic institutions of the era in contrast with those voiced by Gagik Arcruni's panegyrist (the Anonymous Continuator of Tʿovma Arcruni's *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ*), who was preoccupied with the splendor of the great constructions of the era.[49] It also contains an excellent summary of various regional trends that shaped Anania's tenth-century context.

Methodology and Goals of The Study

My goal in this dissertation is not to rehash philological or text-critical questions on Anania's corpus. Thanks to Tʿamrazyan's investigations, we may consider the fundamental details relating to the life and works of Anania as established and many of the historical-critical problems solved. The publication of Anania's works has made possible new avenues of inquiry, allowing one to consider his works and activities in the context of the wider region. It is towards this end that the present study aims.

In my approach to this project, I have been inspired by Sebouh Aslanian's application of the methodology of global (or world) history to the study of the early modern Armenian past, which he approaches not through the "narrow optic of the nation(-state)" but through a regional or "global optic" that looks at exchanges across ethnic groups, religious boundaries, languages, political borders, and cultures.[50] Global history has been especially productive in scholarship on the early modern and modern periods, when the interconnectedness of peoples and societies across continents and oceans was put into high relief due to advances in technology and the

[49] Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate."
[50] Aslanian, "From 'Autonomous' to 'Interactive' Histories," 81–125, at 82. Sebouh Aslanian has employed this methodology in most of his studies. See especially Aslanian, "The Marble of Armenian History."

consequent transoceanic mobility that those advances allowed.[51] Growing out of the discourse of global history, Sanjay Subrahmanyam has introduced the term "connected histories" to refer to the histories of regions and peoples that are marked by interrelated developments, including the circulation of ideas across political boundaries, languages, and cultures.[52] Such approaches are now being widely employed in the medieval period as well.[53]

A regional approach that takes a wider purview than any single ethnolinguistic or religious tradition is especially appropriate for the Eastern Mediterranean, Near East, and Caucasus regions, which have been a crossroads and meeting point of different cultures throughout history. There have been many exemplary approaches to this region in the first millenium that make use of sources across confessional and linguistic boundaries. Garth Fowden's contributions to intellectual history and exegetical traditions in the region's ethnolinguistic and religious communities particularly stand out.[54] Another example is Thomas Sizgorich's examination of violence and militancy in late antique Christian Grecophone and early Islamic Arabophone writers from the fifth to eighth centuries. Sizgorich refers to a "semiotic *koinē*" in late antiquity that was common to Christians and Muslims, who shared similar stories, images, symbols, and values and often lived side-by-side with one another.[55] Jack Tannous' recent book reimagines the transformations from the late antique to early Islamic

[51] The following studies are a helpful starting point for an introduction to this field, especially as it pertains to the early modern period: Bentley, "Introduction: The Task of World History;" Subrahmanyam, "Global Intellectual History." For a book-length introduction, one may consult Conrad, *What is Global History?*
[52] Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories."
[53] Hermans, *Companion to the Global Early Middle Ages*; Holmes and Standen, *Global Middle Ages*. There is now an *Encyclopedia of the Global Middle Ages* (*EGMA*) and various research groups and journals that are fostering this approach. This approach is now being brought specifically to medieval Armenian studies in the current project Armenia Entangled: Connectivity and Cultural Encounters in Medieval Eurasia 9th–14th Centuries (ArmEN), led by Zaroui Pogossian. https://www.armen.unifi.it/
[54] Fowden, *Before and After Muḥammad*; idem, *Abraham or Aristotle?*; idem, *Qusayr ʿAmra*; idem, *Empire to Commonwealth*; idem, *Egyptian Hermes*.
[55] Sizgorich, *Violence and Belief in Late* Antiquity, 1–20, 272–82 at 276–78.

period through the eyes of "simple believers," as he brings together Greek, Syriac, and Arabic sources to narrate the transformations that occurred in this region in the second half of the first millenium. In so doing, he refers to the need for "transconfessional histories" of the medieval Middle East in order to tell a more holistic story of the region that bridges the confessional and ethnolinguistic divides separating its communities.[56]

These global, hemispheric, and regional "optics" have inspired my own approach to this project as I seek to situate Anania in a wider context that takes account of developments across the region and considers sources in several different languages. Oscillating between the "macro" and the "micro" has been a particularly challenging aspect of this project, and at this stage I have not yet been able to incorporate as much comparative material as I had originally planned. Nevertheless, in addition to the specific conclusions drawn and insights offered in this study, I hope that this project also demonstrates the possibilities that Armenian sources in general offer to those engaged in integrative historical study of the region and its peoples. It is my hope that through this recovery of Anania's works and legacy, we might gain both a fuller picture of the historical landscape and a unique vantage point from which to view it, that will be of interest to all those engaged in the fascinating history of this region and its peoples.

Order of Chapters

Chapter One sets the scene of the larger political landscape in which Vaspurakan and the other local Armenian kingdoms of the mid-ninth to mid-eleventh centuries formed an integral part, introducing several important trends that are essential to understanding the era in which

[56] Tannous, *Making of the Medieval Middle East*.

Anania lived and the developments and crises he responded to in his literary works. First, I situate the Armenian kingdoms in their regional context as part of a larger movement of smaller semi-autonomous polities emerging on the periphery of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate beginning in the ninth century. I also discuss the internal political structures of contemporary Armenia, including the power relations between Armenian hereditary dynasts, the local Arab emirates, the regional caliphal governor (*ostikan*), the caliphal capital, and the Byzantine Empire. The second part of the chapter turns to a discussion of Armenia vis-à-vis international relations between the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate and the Byzantine Empire. Over the course of the tenth and into the first half of the eleventh century, the Byzantine Empire expanded into Armenia, eventually absorbing the bulk of Armenian territory into its state, which it held briefly until the arrival of the Seljuks. These shifting political borders led to a number of significant demographic and social changes, including population movements and populist revolts. It also led to conflicts in the ecclesiastical realm, as the Armenian church fought to preserve its integrity from the assimilationist agenda of the Byzantine Church and Empire. These developments are taken up in more detail in subsequent chapters, since they constitute the crises to which Anania responded with his pen.

The second chapter discusses Armenia's integration into the larger caliphal economy and the ways in which the Armenian dynasts profited from regional economic boom and Armīniya's facilitation of international, overland trade. This sets the stage for a discussion of the founding of Narek monastery within the larger history of the patronage of local rulers in this period, including their numerous building projects of both a civic and religious nature. The foundation of Narek was part of a regional proliferation of large, cenobitic monastic establishments from the second half of the ninth to the eleventh century. The chapter reviews the role of building projects in the political ambitions and aspirations of the noble dynasts who sponsored them, focusing

especially on the Arcruni family in Vaspurakan. It also reviews the traditional dating for the founding of Narek and other monasteries in the period, contextualizes the foundation of Narek within the overall political ambitions of King Gagik Arcruni, and offers an explanation for why Anania and his companion *vardapet* Petros were chosen to lead the monastery's direction. It concludes with a discussion of what was new about the cenobitic monasteries founded in this period.

Chapter Three picks up where the previous chapter left off, mentioning the various roles that the cenobitic institutions played in Armenian society. It narrows in on the internal intellectual and spiritual life at Narek and attempts a reconstruction of its educational system. Here, I make use of Anania's *Book of Instruction* and other sources to demonstrate how ascetic-mystical education at Narek was not limited to the intellectual realm but aimed at shaping the whole human person, conceived of as body, soul, and spirit. It also examines the way in which Anania's own texts were meant to shape the mind and worldview of young monks and aid them in their ascetic training. The chapter reveals the profound impact of Anania's system of ascetic-mystical and intellectual education established at Narek monastery not just on Grigor and his other pupils but on the subsequent Armenian intellectual tradition. As one of the first — if not the very first — of the major medieval monastic academies of the period, Narek became a model for the later monastic centers founded throughout the broader Armenian *oikoumené*, which remained the intellectual and cultural centers of Armenian life into the early modern period.

The fourth chapter focuses on the complicated issue of Anania's relationship with the Tʿondrakians (*Tʿondrakecʿikʿ*). It offers an explanation for how he both could have written a treatise against the movement and been himself denounced as a "Tʿondrakecʿi" heretic. The chapter first explores how the larger political and economic changes that mark the period sparked

internal unrest that shook the stability of Armenian social and religious order. Dynamism, changes, and crises are notable features of the tenth century. The chapter explores some of these, including populist revolts, clashes and controversies between the catholicos and bishops, clashes between the church of the establishment and local, fringe Christian communities such as the Tʿondrakites, and clashes between the church hierarchy and ascetic, spiritualist leaders of monasteries like Anania. Through a careful reexamination of the sources and their contextualization within the larger developments of the period, I present a new perspective on the relationship between the Tʿondrakites and ascetic, monastic figures such as Anania and their conflict with the official church hierarchy. I explain the development of the Tʿondrakecʿi label as a new heretical type and offer an interpretation as to how and why it was applied to multiple ascetic figures of the period.

The fifth chapter turns to conflicts between the Armenian, Syriac, and Byzantine churches, prompted by the Byzantine Empire's expansion and attempt to integrate its newly conquered regions politically and ecclesiastically into its state. It contextualizes the confessional tensions we hear of in the period as a result of the influx of Armenian and Syriac non-Chalcedonian immigrants into the Byzantine state's newly conquered territories. This soon led to confessional tensions and other ecclesiastical issues between the imperial church and the Syrian and Armenian churches over matters of Christology, Ecclesiology and the validity of sacraments, and episcopal jurisdiction. While the miaphysite Armenian Church sought to administer its flock in imperial territory, the Byzantine Church sought to integrate the non-Chalcedonian communities into its own structure by making them accept Chalcedonian theology. This chapter reconstructs the literary defense crafted by Anania and the leading *vardapets* of the period in response to attacks from polemical letters sent by Byzantine bishops in the newly conquered

eastern portions of the empire, situating the perspective and activities of the *vardapets* alongside other Armenian responses to the political dynamism that defined the age.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO ANANIA OF NAREK'S LIFE AND WORKS: AN OVERVIEW OF MAJOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

All mankinde is of one Author, and is one volume; when one Man dies, one Chapter is not torne out of the booke, but translated into a better language; and every Chapter must be so translated...
No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine.

— John Donne, "Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions, Meditation 17"

Anania was born near the beginning of the tenth century, at a time when the political scene in Armenia was characterized by the resurgence of local kingship within the overarching caliphal structure. This began with the Bagratuni kingdom in the late ninth century, which throughout the course of the tenth fragmented internally, both in the form of break-away kingdoms (the Arcruni and Siwni) and by itself dividing into smaller kingdoms. The monastery where Anania lived and wrote, Narekavankʿ, located near the southern shores of Lake Van, was founded by one such Armenian king in this period, Gagik Arcruni (r. 908 – ca. 943/4), nearby the twin Arcruni capitals of Ałtʿamar and Ostan. Anania was appointed the monastery's first abbot and was responsible for the regulation of its internal life. Unlike some medieval monks, who resolutely renounced involvement in secular affairs in order to pursue the internal life of the spirit, Anania emerges as a figure who was not only well aware of the world outside his monastery's walls, but who actively participated in it. Certain of Anania's books were written to address specific challenges facing the Armenian confessional community.

The ninth to eleventh centuries was a period of great change and upheaval in the political, social-demographic, and ecclesiastical realms. Without an understanding of these developments,

it is not possible to properly understand Anania's works. Therefore, the survey in this chapter is meant to provide a rich contextual backdrop to a closer examination of Anania's works in relation to these developments. Furthermore, Anania's own voice and significant role has not been adequately integrated into the historiography of this period, and therefore one of the goals of this study is also to place his perspective in conversation with those of his contemporaries, in order to provide a more holistic view of the broader period (while also contextualizing Anania within it). This first chapter thus surveys the major regional developments manifest in the era in which Anania of Narek lived, in order to provide a contextual background to his life and works.

A Bird's-Eye View of the Mid-Ninth to Mid-Eleventh Centuries

By the time Anania was born, Greater Armenia had been administratively integrated into the caliphate for over two centuries. More recently, Armenia had been granted an increased measure of local autonomy with the establishment of the Bagratid kingdom in the late ninth century, which followed trends observable throughout the provinces of the caliphate. The second half of the ninth century was the beginning of a general period of disintegration and fragmentation of centralized political rule, with centrifugal tendencies discernible across the Caliphate. The assassination of Caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847 – 861) marked the dramatic turning point, ushering in a decade of crisis known as the anarchy of Sāmarrāʾ (861 – 870), after which the ʿAbbāsid caliphs no longer maintained the same level of control over the provinces that they had previously.[1] Beginning in the periphery of the caliphate, smaller dynastic polities emerged that exercised local autonomy, in most cases still recognizing the unique position and primacy of

[1] Bonner, "The waning of empire," 305–09; Kennedy, *Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 169–73; Gordon, *Breaking of a Thousand Swords,* 80–104.

the caliph and maintaining formal and economic integration with the rest of the caliphate.[2] In line with this pattern, locally autonomous Armenian and Georgian (Iberian) kingdoms were formed, which, like the other polities emerging throughout the Caliphate, still remained under the caliph's suzerainty. The formation of the Bagratuni kingdom is also connected with the growing independence of the caliphal governor (Arm. *ostikan*; Ar. *amīr*) of the North, a position that had begun to be handed down dynastically in this period. By investing the Bagratunis of Armenia and then Iberia as local kings, the caliph was seeking to provide a counterbalance to the separatist tendencies of the *ostikan*, a 'divide and rule' strategy that was also of benefit to the local Armenian ruling élite. Whether foreseen at the time or not, from the perspective of the caliphal center, it was probably a welcome development when the *ostikan* and Armenian king went to war with one another not many years later, and then also when the Armenian kingdom itself fragmented into smaller and more easily manageable units in the tenth century.

In this same period, the Byzantine Empire under the militaristic Macedonian dynasty (867–1056) took advantage of the weakened caliphal center and the pattern of disintegration across the Caliphate, in order to expand eastwards across Armenian territory and southwards into Syria and Mesopotamia. The emperors of the era soon harbored the goal of recovering the territory that the Eastern Roman Empire had held in its heyday in the days of Emperor Justinian I (527–565). Imperial propaganda likewise proclaimed that the Macedonian dynasty's founder, Basil I (867–886), was not only of Armenian ancestry but was of direct descent from the line of the Parthian Arsacids, the royal house that had ruled over Armenia until AD 428. His advent —

[2] Provincial governors would symbolically indicate their loyalty to the caliph in two primary ways: first by having the caliph's name inscribed on coins struck in their provincial mints and secondly by invoking his name during the sermon delivered on the occasion of the Friday gathering for prayer. See Bonner, "The waning of empire," 316.

and expansion across Armenia — was therefore heralded as fulfillment of the prediction of the fifth-century Catholicos Sahak's vision recorded in the *History* of Łazar Pʿarpecʿi that announced the future restoration of kingship in Armenia via a descendant of the Arsacid family.[3] Despite this fictive Arsacid lineage, the family did have Armenian connections, as did several of the important generals and high-ranking military officers, such as John Kourkouas (Gurgen), who led the imperial expansion against the Arab armies in this period. This expansion began gradually with western and southern Armenian provinces in the tenth century and reached its apogee in the eleventh. By the mid-eleventh century, the empire had conquered, or been granted through wills from Armenian nobility, the bulk of Armenian territory, which it held for only a couple decades until it was lost again to the invading Seljuk armies. Let us now circle back to review some of these developments in more detail and explore the effect they had on those internal conditions of Armenia to which Anania responded with his pen.

Armenia amid Centrifugal Political Trends in the Caliphate

While explaining the disintegration of the caliphate, Michael Bonner has identified three types of polities that began to emerge across the Islamic world at this time. First, there were dynastic states that resulted from the operations of a military adventurer who seized control over a territory and then sought to legitimize his rule vis-à-vis the local population, the caliph, and other centers of power.[4] The second type were those that formed in frontier areas and bore the characteristics of frontier societies, marked by the movement and mixing of peoples, including

[3] Greenwood, "Basil I," 455–56. For the text of the vision and prophecy, see Łazar Pʿarpecʿi, *History of Armenia* I.17, *MH* 2:2225–34.1–75 at 55; trans. Thomson, 64–72 at 69.
[4] As an example of this type, he gives the Būyids. See Bonner, "The waning of empire," 358.

volunteer fighters, ascetics, and men of religious learning, who were also engaged in combat against non-Muslims in the borderlands.[5] Iterations of this second type were present in the caliphal North, such as the Qaysid emirate of Minasjird (Manazkert) along the border with the Byzantine empire or later the Sharwān shāhs, who ruled in Caucasian Albania (Ałuankʿ) over Bāb al-Abwāb/Darband in the provinces of Sharwān and Layzān with their capital at Shamākhiyya in the far reaches of the caliphal North on the frontier with the northern Caucasus.[6] The third type were those states that formed out of a combination of tribal group feeling and the propagation of a new religious message.[7] These models are restricted to Muslim polities and none of them quite fit the situation of the Christian kingdoms of the Caucasus.

It has long been observed that from Khurāsān in the East to the Caucasus in the North, most of the small kingdoms and states that emerged beginning in the second half of the ninth century shared in a general Iranian *oikoumené* or commonwealth.[8] Vladimir Minorsky therefore dubbed this period from the second half of the ninth to the first half of the eleventh centuries the Iranian *intermezzo*, because of the number of discrete Iranian dynasties that ruled over this wide stretch of territory.[9] Examples in the East include the Ṭāhirids (821 – 873) of Khurāsān with their

[5] Examples are the Ṣaffārids and Sāmānids in the East and the Ḥamdānids in Northern Mesopotamia and Syria. See Bonner, "The waning of empire," 358.
[6] On the Qaysid emirate, see Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 109–111; Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 51–53. On the Sharwān shahs, see Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 7; Bowsorth, "Šervānšahs;" idem, *New Islamic Dynasties*, s.v. "The Sharwān Shāhs."
[7] The examples given are the Fāṭimids in North Africa and the Qarāmiṭa in Baḥrayn. See Bonner, "The waning of empire," 358.
[8] See the helpful map provided in Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 6. The centrifugal pattern had its beginnings much earlier in the non-Iranian, western portions of the Caliphate, notably in al-Andalus, which emerged independent from the ʿAbbāsids shortly after they took over in the 750s and then declared a restored Umayyad Caliphate in 929. Likewise, the province of Ifrīqiya was governed in a largely autonomous fashion by *amīr*s of the Aghlabid dynasty since 800. In the wake of the decade of anarchy, the same pattern prevailed in Egypt, first with the Ṭūlūnids (868 – 905) — who went on to control Syria as well — and then eventually with the Fāṭimids, who came to power in North Africa in 909 and then ruled Egypt as caliphs from 969 onwards. See Bonner, "The waning of empire," 318–322, 331, 338–343.
[9] See Minorsky, *La Domination des Dailamites*; idem, *Studies in Caucasian History*, 110–16.

capital at Nīshāpūr,[10] the Ṣaffārids, whose rule was centered in Sīstān with their capital at Zaranj (Zarang) from 861 to 1003,[11] and the Sāmānids, who ruled Khurāsān with their capital in Bukhārā from 875 to 1005. Persianate Islamic dynasties in the North include the Sājids (889 – 929), governors (*ostikans*) in Azerbaijan (Ādharbayjān) and Armenia (Armīniya), who engaged in military conflict — about which more will be said below — with Armenian Bagratid and Arcruni kings.[12] Iranian Daylamī dynasties include the Musāfirids (also known as the Sallārids or Kangarids, ca. 916 – ca. 1090), who governed Ādharbayjān, Arrān, and portions of Armenia in the tenth and into the eleventh century[13] and, most famously, the Būyids (932 – 1062), who took over control of the lands in Iraq and western Iran that formed the core territories of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate.[14] Minor Kurdish dynasties that arose in various locales of the Islamic North also form a part of the broader Iranian resurgence in this period. These include the Kurdicized Rawwādids of Azerbaijan in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the Marwānids (983–1085) in Diyār Bakr, and the Shāddādids (ca. 951 – 1174) in Arrān and eastern Armenia.[15]

While Minorsky focused on Muslim polities of the period, recent work by Alison Vacca has extended the pattern to include the Armenian and Georgian Christian kingdoms of the North, since they also shared in the Iranian commonwealth broadly conceived.[16] Viewed through the

[10] Bonner, "The waning of empire," 314–15; Bosworth, "The Ṭāhirids and Ṣaffārids," 90; Daniel, "Taherids;" Bosworth, *New Islamic Dynasties*, s.v. "The Ṭāhirids and Muṣʿabids."
[11] Bonner, "The waning of empire," 315–18; Bosworth, "The Ṭāhirids and Ṣaffārids;" Bosworth, "Saffarids;" Bosworth, *New Islamic Dynasties*, s.v. "The Ṣaffārids."
[12] Bosworth, *New Islamic Dynasties*, s.v. "The Sājids;" idem, "Sādjids;" Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 7.
[13] Minorsky, "Musāfirids;" Bosworth, *New Islamic Dynasties*, s.v. "The Musāfirids or Sallārids;" Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 7.
[14] Kennedy, "The late ʿAbbāsid pattern," 364; Bosworth, *New Islamic Dynasties*, s.v. "The Būyids or Buwayhids;" Cahen, "Buwayhids or Būyids."
[15] Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 7. Minorsky, *Studies in Caucasian History*, 115–16; Bosworth, "Rawwādids;" idem, *New Islamic Dynasties*, s.v. "The Rawwādids;" idem, *New Islamic Dynasties*, s.v. "The Marwānids;" Hillenbrand, "Marwānids;" Bosworth, *New Islamic Dynasties*, s.v. "The Shāddādids;" idem, "Shaddādids."
[16] See Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*.

prism of Islamic history, the term Iranian *intermezzo* was used by Minorsky and adopted by Vacca to distinguish this period from that of Arab rule that preceded it and the rise of the Seljuks that marked its end. However, taking a wider temporal purview, it can be seen as the return or reemergence of Iranian rule over that portion of the Near East — a return back to what had began already in the sixth century BC with the rise of the Achaemenid Empire and lasted up until to the fall of the Sasanian Empire in the seventh century AD. Thus, the period might more accurately be termed the Iranian *resurgence* or *reemergence*. One could argue, in fact, that this process was already underway with the ʿAbbāsid overthrow of the Umayyads, since the former drew much of their support from the Iranian Khurāsāniyyah, made their capital in Baghdad not far from the old Sasanian capital of Ctesiphon, and populated their court with a significant proportion of Iranians, in contrast to the largely Arab court of the Umayyads in Damascus.[17]

The fragmentation of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate into smaller autonomous polities during what has been termed the Iranian *intermezzo* was a return to a typically Iranian form of governance that was marked by decentralization, as a result of the traditional Iranian social structure. Traditional Iranian, as also Armenian societal structure (which had become increasingly influenced by Parthian norms in antiquity), was fiercely local in its loyalties and identity, being comprised of agnatic family groups, i.e., communities of kinsmen that traced themselves through the paternal line to a common ancestor.[18] Agnatic groups were the most important structure of the civic community, defining the economic and political systems, religious beliefs and practices, and social obligations of various locales and those who lived

[17] On some of these details, see Kennedy, *Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 132–36.
[18] Perikhanian, "Iranian Society and Law," 642; Pourshariati, *Decline and Fall*, 27–28.

within them.[19] During the Parthian and Sasanian periods, agnatic groups of nobility ruled over their territory in hereditary fashion, exercising largely autonomous rule in their domains, while acknowledging the primacy of the king or shah.

In the Armenian context, this is known as the *naxarar* social structure, and one recalls that many of the Armenian noble houses were themselves of Iranian, and more directly Parthian, stock.[20] In this system, territorial possessions were hereditary, as were offices of state, being passed down the paternal line within the great noble (*naxarar*) families, each of which led by its chief or senior member (called *tēr, tanutēr*, or *nahapet*).[21] Such a social structure naturally resisted strong centralized rule.

It has long been acknowledged that Parthian rule was largely decentralized, and recent work by Parvaneh Pourshariati has further argued that despite attempts at centralization, Sasanian shahs ruled their empire through a decentralized dynastic system that she terms the "Sasanian-Parthian confederacy," and not in the highly centralized fashion that had long been widely assumed to be the case by previous generations of scholars.[22] This social structure in Armenia continued into Anania's time, although during his lifetime it had already become significantly attenuated, with many of the lesser noble families having been destroyed or displaced, with their places taken both by Arab emirates, who settled in Armenia from the late eighth century onward (on which, see below) and by the expansion of three major Armenian *naxarar* families — namely, the Bagratuni, Siwni, and Arcruni — to fill the gaps left by the lesser ones.

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[19] Perikhanian, "Iranian Society and Law," 641–43, Pourshariati, *Decline and Fall*, 27–29.
[20] Garsoïan, "Naxarar;" Adontz, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian*.
[21] Garsoïan, "Naxarar."
[22] Pourshariati, *Decline and Fall*, 2.

Armenia Between the Conflicting Poles of Caliphal Integration and Separatism

The Iranian polities that ruled over their various territories in the caliphal North and East from the second half of the ninth to the eleventh century were generally not new actors on the scene, but rather many were led by — or claimed to be led by — the same noble, often Parthian, families that had been in those lands before the Arab conquests and continued to exhibit the centrifugal tendencies that they had previously exhibited during the Sasanian period. Indeed, the relationship of Armenian noble families with the caliphal center beginning in the seventh century and extending into this period can be understood as a dynamic process of reaction and counterreaction, as Armenian revolt and centrifugal tendencies clashed with the centralizing efforts of the caliphs, a relationship that shared much in common with the one they had with their previous suzerain, the Sasanian shah.[23] During this time, the Byzantine Empire also vied for control of Armenia and eventually made a significant expansion eastwards. The Byzantine expansion is another vital element of this political matrix that hearkens back to the Roman-Sasanian wars of late antiquity in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, and, going even further back, the Roman-Parthian wars, beginning in the first century BC.[24]

The caliphs attempted to integrate Armenia more closely into the caliphate both in response to Armenian centrifugal tendencies and perhaps also as a way of preemptively mitigating Byzantine ambitions to itself possess Armenia. It will therefore be helpful to refer back to some of the political power structures and dynamic relations at play between Armenia

[23] This is also true in the Artaxiad period of the growth of Parthian power. Alison Vacca traces in great detail many of the continuities, real and perceived, between Sasanian and caliphal rule over Armenia. See Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*.

[24] On Armenia as a contested space in late antiquity between the Roman-Sasanian / Byzantine-Arab worlds, see Greenwood, "A Contested Jurisdiction;" idem, "Armenian Space."

and the Roman and Sasanian Empires in late antiquity, as a way of understanding the fluid and complex situation of Armenia vis-à-vis the Caliphate and Byzantine Empire from the second half of the ninth to the first half of the eleventh century.

Periodic Arab raids into Armenia from Syria and Mesopotamia began in 640 and continued for the next decade and a half until terms were arranged in 653/54, when Theodore Ṙštuni, then prince of Armenia (*išxan Hayocʿ*), signed an agreement with the Arab governor of Syria, Muʿāwiyah (who later became caliph, r. 661–680).[25] By the terms of the agreement, Armenia was recognized as an autonomous state that was subject to a moderate annual tribute and a contribution of troops to the Arab army, an arrangement that was the first of its kind in the caliphate.[26] One wonders whether conditions may have continued under this rather harmonious arrangement, had the Byzantine Empire relinquished its ambition to control Armenia. But the memory of control over significant portions of Armenia in the late sixth and early seventh century (before the coming of the Arabs) was fresh and its strategic and material advantages not soon forgotten. From 689–693, taking advantage of unstable conditions in the Umayyad Caliphate during the second *fitna* (680–692), the Byzantines temporarily gained the upper hand and enjoyed a very brief occupation of Armenia.[27] In response, Muḥammad b. Marwān, half-brother of caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (685–705), undertook a series of military campaigns into Armenia in order to regain the region and integrate it more fully into the caliphate, so that such an aberrant situation would not be repeated in the future.[28] Following his successes, a large administrative province in the South Caucasus, known as al-Armīniya, was created for this

[25] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 20; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 105; Garsoïan, "Arab Invasions," 120–21.
[26] Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 105; Garsoïan, "Arab Invasions," 120–21.
[27] Martin-Hisard, "Domination arabe," 219–22.
[28] Garsoïan, "Arab Invasions," 125–26.

purpose. Armīniya consisted of Greater Armenia, Eastern Iberia (Kʿartʿli), and Caucasian Albania (Ałuankʿ).[29] Some have suggested that this administrative structure was modeled on the previous Sasanian administrative unit of the *Kʿust-i Kapkoh* (the *kustak* of Caucasia), which was composed of a similar configuration.[30] A governor was appointed to administer the province, defend it from external invasion, and collect taxes. His seat was positioned at Duin/Dabīl, the capital of Armenia from the second half of the fifth century.[31] In Armenian sources, this figure was generally called an *ostikan* (an Iranian word meaning 'sure,' 'faithful,' or 'loyal) and in Arab sources an *amīr* ('military commander' or 'governor').

The effort to more fully integrate Armenia into the caliphate as a result of Armenian separatist tendencies and contestation from Byzantium hearkens back to similar attempts by the Sasanian Empire, prompted by Roman attempts to control Armenia and the threat posed by Christianity as a unifying factor between Armenia and the Roman Empire.[32] Rome's contestation for control of Armenia gained pace in the late fourth century, and after a series of battles a treaty between the two empires was arranged by Emperor Theodosius I (r. 379–395) and Shah Shapur III (r. 383–388) in 387 known as the Peace of Ekełeacʿ (Gk., Akilisēnē). Under this agreement, around four fifths of Armenian territory remained under Sasanian jurisdiction, while about a fifth passed into Roman control.[33] Threatened by Roman ambitions in Armenia and fearful that the

[29] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 11. During certain periods, al-Armīniya was also united with Ādharbayjān (Atrpatakan) or with the Jazīra under a single governance. See Canard, Cahen, and Deny, "Armīniya."
[30] Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 105; Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 11; Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 65–67.
[31] Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 105; Canard, Cahen, and Deny, "Armīniya." In the late ninth century, the *ostikan* ceased to reside solely at Duin, setting up another capital to the east in Partaw (Bardhaʿa) in Arrān (Albania), in which he resided when conditions were unfavorable at Duin. See Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 36; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 107.
[32] On the Roman and Sasanian struggle for control over Armenia in late antiquity, see Greenwood, "A Contested Jurisdiction."
[33] Garsoïan, "The Aršakuni Dynasty," 92; Nersessian, "Armenia, partitions of." The dividing border line ran north to south from the shore of the Black Sea coast east of Trebizond (modern Trabzon in Turkey), passing by the city of

spread of Christianity in Persarmenia might undermine that region's fealty to the state, the Sasanian Empire advanced a policy that sought to draw the region more firmly into its own orbit. A concerted effort was thus made to undermine its distinctive institutions. The first casualty was the already weakened Parthian Aršakuni (Arsacid) dynasty — long sworn enemies of the Sasanian rulers since the latter's overthrow of the Parthian house ruling Iran in 224 — which fell in 428 with the joint cooperation of the centrifugal and locally autonomous Armenian *naxarars* who at this stage preferred the suzerainty of a distant liege lord in the figure of the Sasanian shah to the local Arsacid king ruling in Persarmenia itself.[34] Persarmenia then came under the direct rule of a *marzpan* (Pahlavi/Middle Persian, *marzbān*), a military and civil governor, appointed by the shah.[35] At times the office of *marzbān* was held by the patriarch (*nahapet*) of an Armenian *naxarar* house, but more commonly it was filled by an élite Persian military aristocrat appointed by the shah to be the representative of his power (like the later *ostikan*, his seat was at Duin).[36] There is thus a noticeable parallel between the *ostikan* in the caliphal period and the *marzbān* during the Sasanian period. In fact, Łewond, an Armenian historian active during the early period of Arab rule, continued using the term *marzbān* to designate the caliphal governor of Armīniya, signifying the perceived continuity between Sasanian and caliphal governance over Armenia in the eyes of the local populace.[37]

Karin (Gk., Theodosioupolis [modern Erzerum]) in the north down to Mesopotamia west of Nisibis in the south. See Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 65, p. 85; Hewsen, Map 7, "The Partitions of Armenia, 387 and 591 A.D.," in Hovannisian, *Armenian People*, 1:97.

[34] Garsoïan, "The Aršakuni Dynasty," 93.

[35] As the etymology of the word indicates (*marz*, 'border, boundary, frontier' with suffix *-bān*, 'guardian, protector' from Old Iranian *marza-panā*), Sasanian *marzbān*s had the important military function of protecting and governing the border regions of the empire. See Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 117–18; Pourshariati, *Decline and Fall of the Sasanian Empire*, 503; Kramers, "Marzubān;" Gignoux, "L'Organisation administrative Sasanide," 4.

[36] On the period in general, see Garsoïan, "The *Marzpanate*."

[37] Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 114–24 at 116.

After the fall of the Aršakuni dynasty, Sasanian shahs then made an effort to undermine first the catholicate and then Christianity in Armenia. In the mid-fifth century, Shah Yazdgard II (r. 438–457) attempted to bring Armenia into conformity with the official Zurvanite Zoroastrianism of the empire.[38] This, in turn, sparked a series of Armenian revolts led by the prominent Mamikonean *naxarar* family, until Armenia was granted the right to religious self-determination in 484. The Mamikonean family, which consistently maintained a pro-Roman position, also took the Byzantine side in its wars with the Sasanian Empire in the late sixth and early seventh century. This general policy continued into the caliphal period, when the Mamikonean house took the leading role in a series of revolts against the caliphate in the eighth century (with devastating results for the Mamikoneans, who were largely decimated at this time), after the formation of Armīniya and caliphal attempts to integrate the North more fully into the caliphate.

Armenian Revolts of the Eighth Century and Changes to the *Naxarar* Social Structure

The Armenian revolts of the eighth century, and the caliphal suppressions of them, led to profound changes in the *naxarar* structure of Armenian society, in part as a result of retaliatory measures from the center. The eighth and ninth centuries witnessed the demise, disappearance, or destruction of lesser families as well as certain great families, like the Mamikonean, who had taken part in the revolts. Filling the resulting vacuum, three major families came to dominate Armenia during the ninth and tenth centuries, namely the Bagratuni, Siwni, and Arcruni, who greatly expanded their domains, incorporating those territories that had formerly belonged to

[38] Garsoïan, "The *Marzpan*ate," 98–101.

lesser *naxarar* families. Arcruni expansion soon encompassed Vaspurakan in the south, and it is here that Anania was appointed abbot of Narek monastery, founded at the height of Arcrunid power in the second quarter of the tenth century.

One of the reasons that the Bagratids emerged in the ninth century as the dominant Armenian family of the era was that they generally took a neutral or pro-caliphal stance when certain *naxarar* families, generally led by the Mamikoneans, organized revolts against caliphal taxation or rule.[39] While the fortunes of the Bagratunis rose often through studied neutrality, by contrast successive scions of the Mamikonean and other *naxarar* houses were executed following caliphal suppression of the revolts. The insurrection with the most devastating consequences took place in 774–75, led by Mamikonean scions Artawazd and Mušeł. It began with the execution of caliphal tax collectors and erupted into war.[40] The caliphal armies were victorious and executed the leading males of the Mamikonean house and those of many other houses that had joined with them. As a result, the male line of the Mamikonean and several other houses disappeared altogether.[41] At this point, the caliphal center was at the height of its power vis-à-vis the Armenian *naxarars* and took advantage of its position to seek further political integration of Armīniya.

The Migration of Arab Tribes and the Establishment of Emirates

One of the significant actions taken by the center to strengthen its hold on the region in the aftermath of the eighth century revolts was the settling of Arab tribes in the North. This had a

[39] On these revolts, see Garsoïan, "Arab Invasions," 125–32.
[40] Łewond, *History*, XL–XLI (34), *MH* 6:828–34, tr. Martin-Hisard, 160–72, tr. Arzoumanian, 129–38. See Garsoïan, "The Arab Invasions," 131–32.
[41] Garsoïan, "The Arab Invasions," 133.

deep and long-lasting impact on the local social structure. As mentioned above, in this period prominent noble houses such as the Mamikoneans and Kamsarakans, as well as many lesser houses, were decimated and disappeared or abandoned their estates and migrated to the Byzantine empire, where they were generally settled along the Arab-Byzantine border and employed by the empire in its border wars with the caliphate.[42] In addition to enabling the expansion of the Bagratuni, Arcruni, and Siwni *naxarar* houses, another fundamental change to the internal make-up of Armenian society was initiated: the settling of Arab colonists in Armenia to take up permanent residence there. The arrival of Arab emirates in Armenia profoundly altered the traditional and exclusive hereditary rule of Armenian *naxarars* over their domains. This deliberate disruption to the integrity of the native Armenian social structure strengthened the caliph's hold over the region. The Arab emirates that were established in the ninth and tenth centuries marked a watershed change to the centuries-old status quo of the *naxarar* social system, since the emirates were a foreign element permanently settled in Armenian territory.[43] This unprecedented development became more common in the following centuries.

The Arab migrations into Armenia began in earnest during the reign of Hārūn al-Rashīd (786–809).[44] From the perspective of the caliphate, settling Muslim Arab contingents in the North was a way of helping to subdue the local Christian populations with their centrifugal tendencies. As the prominence of the Bagratuni, Arcruni, and Siwni houses grew in the ninth and tenth centuries, emirates were settled strategically in places in-between the borders of the three dominant houses in order to cut them off from one another and disrupt their ability to unite

[42] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 21–22, 32–33.
[43] This is one of the principal observations in Ter-Ghewondyan's *Arab Emirates in Bagratid Armenia*.
[44] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 31; Garsoïan, "Arab Invasions," 134.

against the caliphal center. Thus, the emirate of Duin and Gołtʿn were strategically placed beside the Bagratid realm and Siwnikʿ, while also separating Siwnikʿ from Arcruni Vaspurakan; the Qaysite emirate separated the Bagratid realm from Tarōn, while also bordering Vaspurakan.[45] These locations also had the strategic geographical advantage of being close to river valleys or shoreline where the urban centers were located and connected to one another by roads along which supplies or troops could be transported. However, once the emirates became land owners and woven to a certain degree into the *naxarar* structure, they often became autonomous elements in their own right that did not necessarily align with the policies of the caliphal center.[46] Their integration into local Armenian society is exemplified by several cases of intermarriage between emirs with the daughters of prominent Armenian houses, including both the Mamikonean and Arcruni in the eighth and ninth centuries.[47]

The emirates also enabled the establishment of a permanent military presence along the borders of the caliphate with Byzantium in the West and with the Khazars in the North, especially important since the latter often joined forces with the Byzantines in their attacks against the caliphate.[48] Skirmishes, raids, and battles between Arab and Byzantine armies are a defining feature of the seventh and eighth centuries, and the near constant warfare between the Arab and Byzantine armies led to the development of a fortified frontier zone along the border between the two realms, known in Arabic as the *thughūr*, that stretched from the Tarsus mountains in Cilicia through Malaṭya/Melintēnē and on to Karin/Theodosiopolis/Qālīqalā.[49] While the Byzantine agenda was to create a neutral wasteland, a no-man's land that would act as

[45] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 88. See *Hewsen, Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 87, p. 111.
[46] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 49.
[47] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 33–34, 45–50, 56.
[48] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 29, 49.
[49] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 22; Bowsorth and Latham, "al-Thughūr."

a protective uninhabitable barrier between their realm and the caliphate, the Arabs, on the other hand, built fortified castles in the *thughūr* in which they housed armies in order to conduct their annual raids into Byzantine territory.[50] The constant military activity in the *thughūr* was disruptive to the native population and led to the introduction of new demographic elements there, such as Turkic tribes. It also became home to "heretical" Christian communities such as the Paulicians, and later the Tʿondrakeans, who generally sided with the Arabs in the hostilities that stretched across the borderlands.[51] The Tʿondrakean community became more prominent in Armenian ecclesiastical history in the tenth and eleventh centuries, ceasing to be a solely fringe movement and becoming associated with certain monasteries and clerics of the church. Anania of Narek was commissioned to write a refutation against this movement that was circulated and cited by many of his contemporaries and subsequent figures, including Grigor of Narek, Grigor Magistros, and Nersēs Shnorhali. Despite this treatise, he, like many other monks and ascetic figures of the time, was himself denounced as a Tʿondrakite, and was required to write a statement in his defense. The fourth chapter will look more closely at the social and religious dimensions of this and other ecclesiastical crises in the period, focusing especially on explaining the application of the "Tʿondrakecʿi" heretical label to monks and ascetics like Anania and his protégé Grigor.

[50] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 23.
[51] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 24. On these religious groups, which will be discussed more in the fourth chapter, see Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*; Nersessian, *Tondrakian Movement*.

Contextual Factors Related to the Establishment of Armenian Kingship

Another important factor that preceded the establishment of the Bagratid kingdom of Greater Armenia in the second half of the ninth century was the rise of autonomous, centrifugal tendencies in the Arab emirates and then also the governor (*ostikan*) of the North. We hear, for example, of cases where emirs led revolts, or military expeditions, against the *ostikan* (the caliphal representative in the North) in the ninth century. One prominent example was the twenty-year period of unrest known as the revolt of Bābak (816–837), in which this Persian chief rebelled against the caliph and made himself master of a large domain in the regions of Caucasian Albania and Ādharbayjān.[52] Another example is the emīr Jaḥḥāf who married the daughter of a Mamikonean prince and seized the former Mamikonean domain of Tarōn as well as Širak and Aršarunikʿ from the Kamsarakans.[53] Jaḥḥāf also conquered and briefly held Duin, the traditional capital and seat of the *ostikan*, who recently had set up an alternate residence in Partaw (Bardhaʿa) in Arrān (Caucasian Albania). Such activity destabilized the official power structure of the region, and was also threatening to the caliphal center, since the caliph was represented in the North in the person of the *ostikan*. Such centrifugal activity, initiated especially by Iranian elements in the caliphate breaking against the centralized rule of the caliphs, picked up momentum in the ninth century and continued into the tenth, benefitting from the economic troubles and political instability that plagued the caliphal captial.[54]

Other challenges to the caliphal center came from the *ostikan* itself. In the Umayyad period, there was no hereditary succession to the office of *ostikan* of Armīniya.[55] The constant

[52] Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 107; Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 37–38.
[53] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 33–35.
[54] On the economic troubles and instability of the caliphal center, see Waines, "Third Century Internal Crisis."
[55] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 43.

changing of the position assured the loyalty of the *ostikan* to the caliph. But during the ʿAbbāsid period, this dynamic changed. With the settling of an Arab population in Armīniya, certain of the dominant emirates that had established hereditary domains in the North came to control the position of *ostikan* in hereditary fashion. Examples include the Shaybānī and Sulamī *ostikans*.[56] In line with centrifugal tendencies observable across the caliphate and the caliph's own desire for the North to be fragmented into smaller, more manageable polities, the *ostikan*ate of Armīniya also transitioned into a hereditary office that could better balance the dominant *naxarar* families of the period.[57] However, the *ostikan*ate itself then often ran counter to the interests of the caliphal center, and acted in its own autonomous interests, leading to many cases of conflict between the caliph and the *ostikan*.[58]

The Making of Armenian Kings

By the second half of the ninth century, then, the position and authority of the caliphs was threatened by crisis at the center and centrifugal forces within the caliphate, i.e. the *ostikan* of the North and the other autonomous emirates and dynastic polities emerging during the so-called Iranian *intermezzo*. Complicating matters further, they were threatened by a resurgent Byzantium to the West, which under Basil I was attacking the western border of Armenia, and making overtures to the Bagratuni prince to seek to secure his loyalty against the caliph.[59] In an effort to ensure the loyalty of the Armenians amidst these internal and external threats, in 862 the caliph

[56] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 43–44.
[57] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 43.
[58] A good example is the early tenth-century Sājid *ostikan* Yūsuf, who was imprisoned for three years by the caliph al-Muqtadir on grounds of insubordination. See Bosworth, "Sādjids."
[59] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 143–44.

ordered the *ostikan* of Armīniya, then seated in Partaw/Bardhaʿa to invest Bagratuni prince Ašot with robes and insignia, confer on him the title "prince of princes (*išxan išxanacʿ*)," and grant him the authority to collect taxes in his realm and send the required tribute directly to the caliph.[60] This officially acknowledged his position over the local Muslim emirates and Christian *naxarars* of the North and meant that in several respects, such as taxation and tribute, he could deal directly with the caliph and no longer had to work through the intermediary of the *ostikan*.[61] The *ostikan* of Armīniya still retained formal authority over Ašot, and in the coming years the Bagratid ruler and the *ostikan* often clashed with one another, perhaps a positive development as seen from the perspective of the weakened caliph, who sought to set the autonomous polities against one another in a 'divide and rule' strategy. In 884, a crown was sent by Caliph al-Muʿtamid (870 – 892) and brought to Ašot by the *ostikan* in order for him to be crowned king of Armenia by the catholicos. While this ceremony held great significance for the local Armenian population, who hailed it as the return of Armenian kingship, it seems to have brought little appreciable change to the power dynamic between Ašot, the *ostikan*, and the caliph.[62] Shortly after this coronation ceremony, Byzantine Emperor Basil I (867 – 886), competing for Bagratuni loyalty, offered gestures of friendship, honor, and peace, referring to Ašot in a letter as his "beloved son (*որդի սիրելի*)," thereby seeking, albeit ineffectually at the time, to assert his own suzerainty over the Bagatuni king.[63]

[60] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 147.
[61] Garsoïan, "The Independent Kingdoms," 147–48; Laurent and Canard, "*L'Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam*," 323.
[62] Bagratuni kings never struck their own coins and remained tributary to the caliphate throughout the length of their kingdom. Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 148.
[63] Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi, *History of Armenia* XXIX, *MH* 11:444.10.

During the reign of Ašot (prince of princes, 862 – 884; king, 884 – 890), there was a brief period of unity in Greater Armenia, with marriage ties uniting the three great Armenian houses with one another under the Bagratuni king. However, in line with precedent well established in earlier eras, centrifugal tendencies among the other leading *naxarar* families led to the establishment of break-away rival and minor kingdoms by first the Arcruni and then the Siwni, and the subsequent internal fragmentation of the Bagratuni realm itself into smaller kingdoms. This was a welcome development from the perspective of the caliphal center as well as the Byzantine Empire, both of which could more easily manage a fractured Armenia than one strong and unified.[64]

By the late ninth century, Vaspurakan, the southern portion of Greater Armenia where Anania was active, had largely come under the unified control of the Arcruni family after a number of successful military campaigns against the ʿUthmānids.[65] The ʿUthmānids were a Muslim emirate that had expanded their domains in the south by taking advantage of the devastating military campaigns (851 – 852, 855 – 856) in Armenia ordered by Calpih al-Mutawakkil and carried out by (Turkish) general Bughā al-Kabīr after a rebellion led by an Armenian northern and southern alliance between Bagarat Bagratuni and Ašot Arcruni.[66] While there was rivalry among the scions of the Arcruni family over the dominant position, a marriage

[64] It is worth mentioning as well that initially the Kʿartʿvelized branch of the Bagratid house, known in Georgian as the Bagrationis, who had reigned as princes in Iberia since 813, accepted the suzerainty of the Armenian king, but soon established an autonomous kingdom of their own in 888, with a similar relation to the caliph as the Armenian Bagratuni king. See Rapp, "Georgia before the Mongols;" Vacca, *Non-Muslim Province*s, 9. By the early eleventh century, they had brought eastern and western Georgia into a unified whole (Sakʿartʿvelo), which began an era that has been deemed a "golden age" by modern historians, in which the Bagrationis reigned as the dominant Christian power in the Caucasus. See Metreveli, *Golden Age*.

[65] The details of the military battles and campaigns that eventually led to the extension of the borders of the ruling Arcruni noblemen across all of Vaspurakan in the second half of the ninth century are detailed in the *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* by Tʿovma Arcruni and his Anonymous Continuators, as well as in the *History of Armenia* of Catholicos Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi.

[66] On the rebellion and military campaigns of Bughā l-Kabīr, see Garsoïan, "Arab Invasions," 140–42.

alliance between *išxan* Grigor-Derenik Arcruni (r. 857 – 868, 874 – 887) and Sopʿi (Sofia), the daughter of Ašot I Bagratuni, strengthened Grigor-Derenik's position among his fellow princes in Vaspurakan, and also contributed to the unity of Greater Armenia under Ašot Bagratuni's leadership.[67]

This unity however was not long-lasting, as Grigor-Derenik's sons looked to the establishment of a separate kingdom of Vaspurakan. Grigor-Derenik's eldest son, Ašot, had ambitions to establish a separatist kingdom, but these were squashed by Smbat I (r. 890 – 914), the son and successor of Ašot Bagratuni.[68] The goal was eventually realized by Grigor-Derenik's younger son Gagik, who through his mother Sopʿi, was the grandson of the first Bagratuni king Ašot I and nephew of then King Smbat I. Upon the death of his brother Ašot Arcruni, Gagik succeeded as the prince of Vaspurakan in 904. Smbat's decision to return the important city of Naxčawan to Siwnikʿ — after having recently granted it to Arcruni Vaspurkan for their help in putting down the revolt of the Qaysite emirs of Manazkert — served as the pretext for Gagik's revolt against the Bagratuni king. In order to advance his own standing, Gagik made an alliance with the Sājid governor (*ostikan*) of Armīniya and Ādharbayjān, Yūsuf b. Abi ʾl Sāj Dīwdād (r. 901 – 919, 922 – 929), who had moved his capital to Ardabīl and was fighting with the Bagratuni King Smbat.[69] Their alliance was made in 908, and in return, the *ostikan* Yūsuf recognized Gagik as "king of Armenia." This marked the beginning of Vaspurakan as a kingdom separate from the Bagratuni realm, and, at least in the *ostikan*'s eyes, as having precedence over it.[70] The two then set out on a military campaign that led to the capture and imprisonment of Smbat. The Bagratuni

[67] See Mahé, *Histoire de l'Arménie*, 130.
[68] Mahé, *Histoire de l'Arménie*, 130.
[69] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 155–58; Bosworth, "Sādjids."
[70] Zuckerman, "Catholicos Anania of Mokkʿ," 847.

king was later put to death along with other members of the Bagratuni royal family, an outcome that Gagik seems not to have anticipated. He subsequently broke off his alliance with Yūsuf and the two went to war against one another.[71]

Gagik Arcruni and the Founding of Narek Monastery

Gagik, under whose initiative Narek monastery was founded, was an ambitious and skillful ruler, through whose machinations and during whose reign the epicenter of Armenian political power temporarily migrated from the Bagratunis in the North to the Arcrunis in the South.[72] At least, this seems to have been the way things were perceived by the Byzantine Empire at the time. A letter from Nicholas I Mystikos (Patriarch of Constantinople, sed. 901 – 907, 912 – 925) written to Gagik ca. 924 addresses Gagik as "ruler of rulers" (τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν ἀρχόντων), a Greek calque on the Armenian "prince of princes" (*išxan išxanacʿ*), most likely signaling the primacy among Armenian kings that Gagik then held in the eyes of the imperial elite.[73] Gagik's son and successor, Grigor-Derenik (Derenik-Ašot, r. ca. 943 – 953/8) seems able to have maintained this status into the 950s, as evidenced by another Greek text from that time — the *De ceremoniis aulae byzantinae*, commissioned by Emperor Constantine VII

[71] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 156–59; Mahé
, *Histoire de l'Arménie*, 136–37.
[72] It was not until after Gagik's death, during the reign of Bagratuni King Ašot III *Oł*ormac ('the Merciful') that scholars see the balance of power having shifted decisively back to the northern Bagratid kingdom. See Zuckerman, "Catholicos Anania of Mokkʿ," 847; Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 164; Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 354–55.
[73] Nicholas Mystikos, *Letters*, no. 139, pp. 446–51. See Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 355; Maksoudian, "Biography" in Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi, *History of Armenia*, 21–23.

Porphyrogenitus (r. 945 – 959) — that maintains the same terminology for the king of Vaspurakan (ἄρχων τῶν ἀρχόντων).[74]

Gagik was also able to bring the central institution of ecclesiastical power, the catholicate, to Vaspurakan. In the beginning of the 920s, Catholicos Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi 'the Historian' (sed. 898 – 924/5) fled from the traditional residence at Duin — where catholicoi had resided since the middle of the fifth century — due to unstable conditions brought about by the military expeditions of the *ostikan* Yūsuf. The final destination of the catholicos' flight in the

[74] Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae* II.48. For an updated Greek edition of this section, see Martin-Hisard, "Constantinople et les *archontes*," 359–530 at 368. The passage in question relating to the Bagratuni and Arcruni kings reads as follows:
Εἰς τὸν ἄρχοντα τῶν ἀρχόντων τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας. βούλλα χρυσῆ τρισολδία.
"Κωνσταντῖνος καὶ Ῥωμανὸς, πιστοὶ ἐν Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ αὐτοκράτορες αὔγουστοι μεγάλοι βασιλεῖς Ῥωμαίων, πρὸς ὁ δεῖνα τὸν περιφανέστατον πρῶτον τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας καὶ πνευματικὸν ἡμῶν τέκνον."
Εἰς τὸν ἄρχοντα τοῦ Ἀσπουρακᾶν, ἤγουν Βασπαρακᾶν, ὁ νῦν τιμηθεὶς ἄρχων τῶν ἀρχόντων. βούλλα χρυσῆ τρισολδία.
"Κωνσταντῖνος καὶ Ῥωμανὸς, πιστοὶ ἐν Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ αὐτοκράτορες αὔγουστοι βασιλεῖς Ῥωμαίων, πρὸς ὁ δεῖνα περιφανέστατον ἄρχοντα τῶν ἀρχόντων."
It does not seem possible from this passage alone to conclude that the king of Vaspurakan was held in higher honor than that of the king of Bagratuni, although this text does have indications in that regard. The honor accorded to each in terms of titulature is nearly identical. Both are referred to as "ruler of rulers" (εἰς τὸν ἄρχοντα τῶν ἀρχόντων). The Bagratuni king is listed first, which could perhaps indicate primacy, although this may have more to do with the fact that it was the Bagratuni who were first crowned kings. The other question then revolves around their domain. What are they deemed "king of kings" of? The Bagratuni king is addressed as τὸν ἄρχοντα τῶν ἀρχόντων τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας ("the ruler of rulers of Greater Armenia, i.e. ԱՐԵՎ ՀԱՅՔ"). Does this mean that in the eyes of the Byzantine emperor, he is king over all other kings throughout Armenian lands, or just limited to those in Greater Armenia (i.e. the current Bagratuni realm)? The grammar and context seems to favor the latter, more limited interpretation, although leaving it ambiguous would be good for diplomatic relations. The Bagratuni king is also addressed as πνευματικὸν ἡμῶν τέκνον ("our beloved son/child"), a way of address that as we saw above goes back at least as far to the way Emperor Basil I addressed Ašot I. The Arcruni king is first addressed as τὸν ἄρχοντα τοῦ Ἀσπουρακᾶν, ἤγουν Βασπαρακᾶν ("the ruler of Vaspurakan"), but then there is an additional clause indicating his recent elevated status: ὁ νῦν τιμηθεὶς ἄρχων τῶν ἀρχόντων ("who is now honored as ruler of rulers"). Significantly, the title "ruler of rulers" is not limited to the realm of Vaspurakan (that would be: τὸν ἄρχοντα τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ Ἀσπουρακᾶν, which is not what we have here) but rather seems to apply more universally (i.e. ruler over all other Armenian rulers). Would this then imply that he is also king over the king of Greater Armenia? It is difficult to say, but the text could be read that way. In all likelihood, given that this manual is concerned with proper titulature for diplomatic relations, the text is probably more concerned with addressing the Bagratuni and Arcruni kings as they would want to be addressed, i.e. consonant with the claims they are making about themselves, and not attempting to assert primacy of one over the other. To further complicate matters, the date of the text is not certain. While sections of the text go back to earlier centuries, it was compiled and revised into its present form by Constantine VII Prophyrogenitus in the 950s. We do not always know with certainty which portions derive from earlier material and which were subject to revisions. Nor can we be certain that there were not later interpolations, additions, or adjustments after the 950s. On the dating of the different portions of the *De ceremoniis*, see McCormick, "De Ceremoniis;" Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme*, 274–78.

winter of 923/4 was Gagik's newly built palatial residence on the island of Ałtʿamar located about 3 km from the shoreline in the southern portion of Lake Van.[75] Catholicos Yovhannēs died shortly thereafter, and King Gagik played a leading role in the election of the next four catholicoi, with the result that all four hailed from southern houses of Vaspurakan and maintained their residence beside him at Ałtʿamar until his death.[76] Therefore, during the bulk of Gagik's reign from the 920s to the 940s, the island of Ałtʿamar and the city of Ostan on the adjacent shore of Lake Van where Gagik had constructed his first palace[77] marked themselves out not just as the capital of Vaspurakan, but as the epicenter of Armenian political and ecclesiastical power.[78]

It is in precisely this period that nearby the Arcruni capital of Ostan and the island of Ałtʿamar, a short distance removed from the southwestern shore of Lake Van, the monastery of Narek was founded ca. 930s–940s.[79] As I will discuss in the next chapter, Gagik seems to have

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[75] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 161–62.

[76] These are Stepʿanos II Ṙštuni (sed. ca. 924/5 – 925), Tʿēodoros I Ṙštuni (sed. 925 – 934/5), Ełišē Ṙštuni (sed. 934/5 – 941/2, and Anania Mokacʿi (941/2 – ca. 965/6). See Greenwood, *Universal History*, 222 n. 89 and 91–92, 232 n. 155. Although there is not a great deal of information on the election of catholicoi in this period, with the return of kingship in Armenia in the ninth century, the king (and then kings, in the tenth century) appears to have begun to take a leading role in the election of catholicoi. See Hatsʿuni, *Katʿoghikosakan ĕntrutʿiwn*, 33. Referencing his own election to the catholicate, Anania Mokacʿi first lists "Lord Gagik Arcruni, King of Armenia (***տեառնն Գագկայ Արծրունոյ Հայոց թագաւորի***)" and then "Lord Abas Bagratuni…King of Greater Armenia (***տեառնն Աբասայ Բագրատունոյ…Մեծի Հայոց արքայի***)," followed by "their royal scions as well as all the bishops, monastics, and other ascetic solitaries, and the requests and unanimous appeals of priors (***սոցին թագազան զարմիցն եւ համաւրէն եպիսկոպոսաց եւ վանականաց եւ այլ ճգնաւոր մեհնաւորաց, առաջնորդից հայցմանց եւ միաձայն բողոքանաց***)." See Anania Mokacʿi, "Concerning the Rebellion of the House of the Albanians," *MH* 10:256.6–7. This seems to indicate that King Gagik took the leading role in the election of Anania, and by implication, his three predecessors. See Hatsʿuni, *Katʿoghikosakan ĕntrutʿiwn*, 33–34; Maksoudian, *Chosen of God*, 37.

[77] Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* IV.6, *MH* 11:285–87, trans. Thomson, 352–54.

[78] It was Catholicos Anania Mokacʿi (941/2 – ca. 965/6) — a powerful ecclesiastical figure about whom more will be said later — who relocated the catholicosal residence north to Argina in Bagratuni territory seven years into his catholicate at the end of the 940s. See Mahé, *Histoire de l'Arménie*, 145–46; Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 163–64, 171.

[79] The date of its founding will be discussed in the next chapter.

funded and built the monastery in order to have a spiritual and intellectual center near his capital to further heighten his prestige and win the backing of the monastic contingent. This foundation expressed Gagik's sponsorship of the spiritual/monstic sphere of society, in addition to his growing influence in the political and ecclesiastical (episcopal/hierarchical) spheres. Just as he had wrested political and catholicosal prestige from the Bagratuni realm and relocated it to Vaspurakan, so also did Gagik convince Anania and Petros, two renowned young *vardapets* who dwelt in monasteries located in the Bagratuni realm, to relocate to Vaspurakan in order to head up the newly founded monastery of Narek.[80] Anania was made abbot and charged with regulating the monastery's internal life, which will be the subject of Chapter Three.

Narek and New Trends in Armenian Monastic Life

The foundation of Narek was part of a regional proliferation of large, cenobitic monastic establishments in the period from the second half of the ninth to the eleventh century. After a review of the foundation dates of the 200 monastic institutions that can be firmly established as having predated the Battle of Manazkert (1071), Sergio La Porta notes that intense building activity "began at the end of the ninth, climaxed during the tenth, and then slowed down slightly during the eleventh. The majority of monasteries known to have been established during the pre-Seljuk era date from this period."[81] The late tenth/early eleventh-century historian Stepʿanos

[80] Anania's contemporary Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi (ca. 940 – ca. 1010) reports that the *vardapets* Petros and Anania first dwelt in Antakʿ and then in Xawarajor before they dwelt in Narek (***Պետրոս եւ Անանիա վարդապետք, որ յառաջադոյն յԱնտաք եւ ապա ի Խաւարաձոր եւ յետոյ ի Նարեկ բնակեցան***). See Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi, *Explanation of Feasts*, *MH* 10:718–22 at 720.20. See Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 22–26; idem, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:114–18. Antakʿ was a monastery located to the far southwest of the Bagratid realm close to the frontier in the district of Hawnunikʿ, about 100 km north of Lake Van and just south of the Araxes river. Xawarajor is thought to be located to the east of Antakʿ in the Bagratid district of Aršarunikʿ. See Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 91, page 115; *HHSHTB*, s.v. Antakʿ; Xavarajor.

[81] La Porta, Review of *Répertoire*, 160.

Tarōnecʿi singles out the tenth century as a resplendent period of building activity.[82] It was also a period marked by the building of significant civil infrastructure and public works projects. The intense building activity was a product of the booming economy in this period in the caliphate, into which Armenia was tightly integrated, and more broadly across the Mediterranean. From 750–1000, the Islamic world witnessed expansion across nearly every realm of the economy, including extraction of natural resources, mining, and monetization; agricultural production; manufacturing; higher levels of education, literacy, and specialization in the labor and service sectors; an increase in urbanization, trade, commerce, and markets; and a sophisticated system of centralized taxation.[83] Naturally, most of these trends are also observable in Armenia, and will be examined in more detail in the following chapter in conjunction with a more detailed treatment of the religious and civil building projects of the period.[84] The profit and expendable wealth available to Armenian rulers in this period seems to be particularly connected with the increase of traffic in international trade and mercantile activity through Armenian territory.

One of the main features setting apart the monasteries founded in this period from the earlier one was their scale and size.[85] The contemporary historian Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi Asołik records, for example, that Kamrǰajor monastery housed 300 monks, while Hałbat and Sanahin together contained some 500.[86] It can be assumed that many of those newly entering into the monastic communities in this period were young and inexperienced. Furthermore, monastic

[82] *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:750–54.19–56; III.8, *MH* 15:755.1–8, tr. Greenwood, 224–32; French translation in Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*; *Tragédie*, 9–13.
[83] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth."
[84] The Armenian rulers profited especially from their facilitation of international trade, collecting transit fees for the transport of goods across their territory, as trade routes passed through both the Bagratid realm and Vaspurakan. See Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 129–72.
[85] Cowe, "Armenians in the Era of the Crusades," 411.
[86] See Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:750.22, III.8, *MH* 15:755.7, tr. Greenwood, 224–25, 232.

communities on this scale in the Armenian context were unprecedented and therefore must have presented new challenges to those living within them, as well as abbots like Anania, who were charged with regulating life in the monasteries. This context forms the backdrop for the number of *xrats* (ascetical instructions) written by Anania. They cover a range of topics, including humility, patience and peace, prayer, thoughts, spiritual mourning with tears, the transience of earthly life, how to live according to the precepts of the Scriptures, and admonition for priests. A series was commissioned by Bishop Xačʿik Aršaruni, future Catholicos Xačʿik I (sed. 972/3 – 990/1),[87] and may have circulated among a number of the newly founded cenobitic monasteries in order to inculcate ethical virtues and the monastic worldview. As such, they may have been used as templates to instruct novices on how to live together harmoniously in community and to offer teaching on various ascetic practices and the attainment of virtue. I will cover this topic in the third chapter.

Armenia Amid Byzantine Expansion

The tenth and early eleventh centuries are marked by further fragmentation of the Armenian kingdoms and the advance of the Byzantine Empire across the Armenian plateau. The principality of Siwnikʿ in the southeast of Greater Armenia, a region which had for long exhibited separatist tendencies, broke off from the Bagratid kingdom and established a separate kingdom in the second half of the tenth century. A number of other minor kingdoms and principalities followed suit in Caucasian Albania and the eastern portions of Armīniya.[88] This movement had its parallel in the ecclesiastical sphere, with the bishop of Siwnikʿ clashing with

[87] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:132–34, 144; idem, *Anania Narekatsʿi,* 192–222.
[88] Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 119–23.

catholicos Anania Mokacʿi when the centralizing policies of the latter encountered the secessionist tendencies of the former. Such a dynamic had occurred in previous periods, most notably in the second half of the sixth to early seventh centuries, as will be discussed further in the fourth and fifth chapters. In the latter tenth century and into the eleventh, the Bagratid kingdom itself fractured into smaller units. A separate Bagratid kingdom was established in Kars in 982 and then another in Loṙi-Tašir (Tašir-Joraget).[89]

The weakening of the central power of the caliphate combined with the centrifugal tendencies of the Armenian royal houses, their fragmentation into smaller, separate kingdoms and principalities, and their overall lack of unity, contributed to the success of the Byzantine expansion into Armenia. The Byzantine Empire pushed the border southwards into Cilicia, northern Syria, and Mesopotamia and eastwards across Anatolia into Lesser and Greater Armenia from the late ninth to early eleventh centuries.[90] This expansion brought with it certain demographic changes that raised ecclesiastical issues in which Anania played a vocal and pivotal role. A brief survey of these developments will set the stage for a more detailed examination of Anania's role in these issues in the fifth chapter.

The Byzantine expansion southwards into Cilicia and northern Syria and eastwards into Lesser and Greater Armenia was achieved by the militaristic Macedonian dynasty (867–1056). The dynasty's founder, Basil I (867–886), undertook campaigns in eastern Cappadocia, northern Syria, and western Armenia against the emirates that controlled those territories.[91] Under Basil I,

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[89] Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 114–15; Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 166–67.
[90] On the Byzantine expansion in this period and the empire's relations with Armenia, see Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours;" Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 109–24; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 124–26; For maps, see Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 350; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 105, p. 125. For an overview of the Byzantine Empire during this period in general, see Shepard, "Equilibrium to Expansion;" Treadgold, *Byzantine State and Society*, 446–611.
[91] Treadgold, *Byzantine State and Society*, 455–61;

Sebasteia was reconquered, and by 911, during the reign of Leo VI (886–912), it became a Byzantine theme (frontier military province).[92]

As mentioned above, the Arab-Byzantine frontier zone had been abandoned by much of its civilian population due to the annual warfare conducted there. Before the Byzantine conquests, the inhabitants were sparsely populated and comprised of Paulicians, Arab military units, and many of mixed background with complex identites.[93] After the empire conquered and gained control over territory in a more lasting fashion beginning in the tenth century, it needed to populate it with permanent civilian residents. Unsurprisingly, there was little interest among Byzantine communities to move east into the newly reconquered territories. Thus, Armenian and Syriac non-Chalcedonian Christians formed the majority of those who were encouraged to resettle in these territories.[94] This in turn led to confessional tensions and ecclesiastical controversies between imperial and Syriac and Armenian church hierarchs over matters of Christology and Ecclesiology, the validity of sacraments, and episcopal jurisdiction. The imperial church expected the non-Chalcedonian communities to conform to their norms, as had been the case with previous waves of Armenians that had settled in Byzantine lands in earlier eras.[95] When Armenian and Syriac leaders offered resistance, relations soured and took a hostile and then violent turn.

The next major military advance occurred during the reign of Romanos I Lekapenos (920–944), led by the able Armeno-Byzantine general John Kourkouas (Gurgen).[96] Kourkouas

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[92] Treadgold, *Byzantine State and Society*, 466–470; Hild and Restle, *Kappadokien*, 85, 274; Cowe, "Armenian Immigration," 116;
[93] See Eger, *Islamic-Byzantine Frontier*, 290–94.
[94] On Syrian and Armenian immigration to the Byzantine reconquered territories, see Cowe, "Armenian Immigration."
[95] See Kaldellis, *Romanland*, 155–95.
[96] See Treadgold, *Byzantine State and Society*, 476–86.

led raids deep into Muslim territory, reaching as far as Duin on two occasions (in 922 and 928/9).[97] Under his command and with the assistance of Armenian troops, the Byzantines captured Melitenē in 934 and took control of eastern Cappadocia.[98] Here Syrians were encouraged to settle, Melitenē having already been the seat of a Syrian bishopric since 793.[99] The repeated raids of John Kourkouas into the territory of the Qaysite emirs eventually reduced the latter to vassals. In 949, during the reign of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (945–959), the strategic military outpost and capital of the Qaysite emirate, Qālīqalā (Gk. Theodosioupolis, Arm. Karin), was captured.[100]

During the reign of Nikephoros Phocas (963–969), the frontier was pushed further eastwards and southwards. Under his command, the Byzantine army defeated the emir of Tarsus and in 969 captured Antioch.[101] In 966/967, the Bagratid principality of Tarōn was annexed and incorporated into the empire.[102] Karin and Basean were also taken and then Manazkert (Manzikert) in 969.[103] By means of these conquests, Cappadocia was no longer a frontier province and enjoined a period of relative peace and stability from 965 to 1065.[104] These victories and the stability of eastern Cappadocia ushered in a vast Armenian immigration into the theme of Sebasteia, as well as an influx of Syrians settling particularly in and around Melitenē.[105]

The settlement of non-Chalcedonian Christian communities of Armenians and Syrians into the borders of the empire naturally raised a number of issues. First of all, non-Chalcedonian

[97] Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 75–77; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 124.
[98] Shepard, "Equilibrium to Expansion," 509.
[99] Cowe, "Armenian Immigration," 113.
[100] Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 356; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 124.
[101] Treadgold, *Byznatine State and Society*, 504–05; Shepard, "Expansion to Equilibrium," 520.
[102] Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 357.
[103] Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 124; Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 357; Treadgold, *Byznatine State and Society*, 504.
[104] Cowe, "Armenian Immigration," 116; Hild and Restle, *Kappadokien*, 91.
[105] Cowe, "Armenian Immigration," 113–16.

and Chalcedonian episcopal hierarchies overlapped in these areas. Newly founded or expanded or relocated Armenian and Syrian bishops shared jurisdiction with newly founded imperial Chalcedonian ones.[106] Confessional tensions seem to have rapidly escalated in this unprecedented situation, with the denial of the validity of the other church's sacraments issued by clerics on both sides.[107] Influential Armenian churchmen of the period, including Anania of Narek, argued that the Armenian Church should adopt the same policy as the Byzantines took towards Armenians, so that those who had received baptism at the hands of Chalcedonians and wanted to participate in Armenian sacraments must be rebaptized according to the Armenian rite. These tensions soon escalated from hostile polemics to violence. The Syrian patriarch was brought to Constantinople for discussions ca. 966 and detained for three years. Matters grew worse in the second half of the tenth century, with Chalcedonian attempts to interfere in patriarchal elections and force bishops to adopt the Chalcedonian creed.[108] In the 980s, we hear of the torture of Armenian priests and of the Armenian bishops of Sebasteia and Larissa being compelled to accept the Council of Chalcedon under force by the Byzantine metropolitan of Sebasteia.[109] The imperial metropolitans of Sebasteia and Melintenē sent polemical letters to the Armenian catholicos, denying the Armenian church's right to autocephaly and accusing it of Christological heresy.

Anania of Narek was one among a cluster of *vardapets* who played a significant role in these dire contemporary ecclesiastical issues facing the Armenian church, by engaging in the confessional battle with their pens and advising the catholicos as to actions to take on the ground.

[106] Cowe, "Armenian Immigration," 117–18; Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 358–59.
[107] Cowe, "Armenian Immigration," 117–18; Dagron, "Minorités ethniques et religieuses," 211.
[108] Cowe, "Armenian Immigration," 114–15; Hild and Restle, *Kappadokien*, 118–19.
[109] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.20; Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 358–59.

At the request of the catholicos, he composed/compiled the *Root of Faith*, which he presented to Catholicos Xačʿik Aršaruni in the 980s, to defend the Christological, apostolic, and liturgical validity of the Armenian church vis-à-vis the polemical attacks sent by imperial bishops.[110] He likewise commissioned his former student Uxtanēs to compose a tripartite history in order to address, among other topics, the contemporary clashes with the Chalcedonian imperial church. Uxtanēs had been educated by Anania at the monastery of Narek and became bishop of Sebasteia, where he carried on Anania's mission in person in the area most under threat from Chalcedonian pressure. Finally, Anania's *Nerboł* reformulates some of the dialectical argumentation of the *Root of Faith* into rhetorical and poetic form, celebrating the Armenian church as the tradition which has clung most faithfully to the faith of the fathers of the early Church, claiming by implication that the imperial church had gone astray in introducing new and heretical doctrines, a point that is made explicit in the *Root of Faith* and the letters of other *vardapets* that issue from the same period. The fifth chapter will look more closely at these works and the contemporary issues that they responded to, setting Anania's voice in conversation with other contemporaries, who were also responding to the new situation vis-à-vis the expanding Byzantine Empire.

After the death of Anania in the late tenth century, Basil II (976–1025) continued the expansion of the Byzantine Empire eastwards into Greater Armenia.[111] Whereas the empire had won territory from the caliphate through military engagement with the emirates, Basil II won Armenian territory primarily through diplomacy and/or coercion, gaining control of the reduced and fragmented realms of Greater Armenia by having it bequeathed to the empire in wills written

[110] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:130.
[111] On this process, see Garsoïan, "Byzantine Annexation;" Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 124–26.

up by Armenian dynasts. While Anania of Narek and others of the period looked with hostility upon the imperialistic advances of the Byzantine church and state into Armenia, other Armenians seem to have looked upon it more favorably or more readilyl accepted it as the new norm.[112] Notably, Anania's own protégé, Grigor of Narek praised the conquests of Basil II and the expansion of the Christian Byzantine Empire.[113] While his praise is often interpreted as reflective of Grigor's supposedly pro-Byzantine feeling, one suspects his approach may have been more pragmatic and subtle. At this later stage, one could see the writing on the wall, and perhaps Grigor was hoping that by greeting the emperor with panegyric, he could inspire a return of reciprocally friendly and tolerant church policies. Basil II, in fact, did bring about an end to the hostile and intolerant ecclesiastical policies that had been enacted by the imperial bishops in the eastern territories of the empire when he visited the region in person, and for this reason he is lauded as a good emperor in Armenian sources.

We should also recall that the *Vita Basilii*, written in the mid-tenth century, proclaimed that Basil I, founder of the Macedonian dynasty and ancestor of Basil II, was ethnically Armenian from the line of the royal Arsacid house.[114] It further claimed that he was fulfilling the vision of Sahak from Łazar Pʿarpecʿi's *History*, which predicted the future restoration of the Armenian kingdom by a member of the Arsacid family.[115] With ambitions to restore the empire to the geographical extent in the East it had attained in the late sixth and early seventh centuries,

[112] A valuable article by Tim Greenwood examines three such perspectives from the Armenian historical tradition, comparing the positive representation of Armenian-Byzantine engagement by the anonymous author of the *History of Tarōn* (written ca. 966/967–980/989) with the antagonistic representation of Byzantine-Armenian relations by the *History* of Uxtanēs (written in the 980s and commissioned by Anania of Narek) and the *Universal History* of Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi Asołik (completed 1004/1005). See Greenwood, "Negotiating the Roman Past."
[113] See the opening of Grigor's "History of the Holy Cross of Aparankʿ" and his colophon to the *Book of Lamentation*. Both are translated in Terian, *Festal Works*, 223–43, 371–72.
[114] Greenwood, "Basil I," 455–56.
[115] Greenwood, "Basil I," 458.

such imperial propaganda was a tool in the arsenal of the Byzantine emperor, who meant to represent himself as the rightful king over the other Armenian dynasts. For the Armenian audience to whom it was directed, this indication that he issued from an Armenian royal line meant he had the legitimacy to rule. Such strategies, among other measures taken by the Byzantine emperors, facilitated their annexation of the realms of Greater Armenia in this period. The now isolated and fragmented Armenian states, realizing they could not win against the full Byzantine army, presumably determined that ceding their rule was preferable to the great loss of life that would likely have incurred in what would have probably been failed resistance anyway. Meanwhile, they were relocated to lands west (principally in Cappadocia and Sebasteia), and could take solace in the fact that their abandoned territories were to remain in Christian hands.

When the Armeno-Georgian curopalate David of Taykʿ (Tao) died in 1000, he named the emperor Basil II as his heir, and the territory along with other surrounding ones was soon incorporated into the empire as the Theme of Iberia (by 1021).[116] The historian Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi reports that on hearing of David of Tao's death, Basil II set out to Armenia in the year 1000. First, he granted religious concessions to the Armenian orthodox in Sebasteia, who as mentioned above had been persecuted in the 980s by the local Byzantine hierarchy there. Then, he set out through the districts of Armenia, meeting with Bagratuni and Arcruni royalty and bestowing upon them honors and gifts.[117] As future events would make plain, this diplomatic mission paved the way for the Byzantine annexation of the Armenian realms. King Senekʿerim-Yovhannēs of Vaspurakan (972 – 1021), one of the dynasts with whom Basil II had met, did just

[116] Garsoïan, "Byzantine Annexation," 189; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 124.
[117] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.43, *MH* 15:822–24. See Greenwood, "Negotiating the Roman Past," 146.

that in 1021. Senekʿerim-Yovhannēs, whose rule in Vaspurakan was precarious since he was a usurper of the throne and since the realm was also subject to plundering raids of Turkmen groups, agreed to terms by which the empire took control of Vaspurakan and in exchange, Senekʿerim-Yovhannēs received a vast domain in Sebasteia, where he moved along with his family, court, high-ranking clergy and some 14,000 retainers.[118] Many of the monks of Narek also relocated and founded a new, relocated Narekavankʿ (later Arekavankʿ) in Cappadocia, with some traditions claiming that they took the remains of Grigor with them.[119] Vaspurakan was then transformed into a Byzantine theme.[120] Later, the Bagratid kingdoms of Ani and Kars were ceded to the empire in 1045 and 1064 respectively, and their dynasts were also transferred west to Cappadocia and given domains there.[121]

The Byzantine Empire held these territories for only a couple of decades, since they were soon all lost to the Seljuks. The relocation of the local Armenian nobility out of the western portions of Greater Armenia had enormous implications for later history, as it deprived those western regions of Greater Armenia of the continuity of *naxarar* rule. The area eventually became dominated by various Turkmen dynasties, until their incorporation into the Ottoman Empire in the1520s. The situation in the eastern portions of Greater Armenia, which the Byzantines never reached, was very different. There, Armenian dynasts continued into at least the fifteenth century. Meanwhile, when the Seljuks arrived all the way to Cappadocia, some of the leading families who had been resettled there relocated further south and west into Cilicia,

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[118] Garsoïan, "Byzantine Annexation," 189–90; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 116. It is interesting to note however that when he died in 1024, his body was later taken back to Vaspurakan and buried in the ancestral resting place of Arcruni dynasts at the monastery of Varag. His queen Xošuš was later buried there as well. See Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 116.
[119] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères*, no. 410, p. 76.
[120] Garsoïan, "Byzantine Annexation," 190; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 126.
[121] Garsoïan, "Byzantine Annexation," 190–93; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 126.

and formed the core of the ruling élite that in time formed the kingdom of Cilicia. But that story belongs to another chapter of Armenian history.

CHAPTER 2

THE FOUNDATION OF THE MONASTERY OF NAREK IN THE CONTEXT OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC BOOM AND THE AMBITIONS OF ARMENIAN DYNASTS

Շինեաց արարս բազմածախս եւ վայելուչս,
Յետոյ վախճանեալ՝ եթող աւերակ։
Անցանեն ընդ այն մարդիկ եւ ասեն.
«Ո՞ւր արդեաւք իցեն շինողք սորա»։

He built elegant structures at much expense,
Then after death left behind a ruin.
People pass one of them by and say,
"Where could those who built and enjoyed this now be?"

— Anania of Narek, "On this Transitory World"

The two hundred years between the mid-ninth to mid-eleventh centuries marks itself out as one of the major periods of building activity in Armenian history. Bearing witness to this fecund activity of construction are some of the structures, which, erected in this period, stand to the present day. Coming readily to mind are such striking examples as the monasteries of Sanahin and Hałbat in the Loṙi province and Tatʿew in the Siwnikʿ province of the Republic of Armenia, the Church of the Holy Cross on Ałtʿamar Island in Lake Van, and the many skeletal-like structures in the now deserted city of Ani, located near the northeastern border of the Republic of Turkey, which, despite their largely destroyed condition, still manage to enthrall contemporary visitors, prompting them to imagine the splendor of the lost civilization that once peopled them.

Thanks to a booming regional economy and, especially, Armenia's role in the facilitation of international trade between Byzantium and the caliphate, considerable wealth was accrued by

the major Armenian dynasts of the period, the Bagratuni, Arcruni, and Siwni. One of the principal — and certainly one of the most temporally enduring — ends to which they directed their accrued wealth was construction projects. These ranged from fortresses and palaces to city infrastructure and development to churches and monastic foundations. As part of this broader building activity, Narek monastery (*Narekavankʿ*)[1] was founded in the 930s–940s as a spiritual and intellectual center near the twin Arcruni capitals of Ostan and Ałtʿamar at the apogee of Arcruni power. The *vardapets* Anania and Petros were invited to lead the direction of the monastery, the former known for his musical abilities and as a great scholar and philosopher (in the monastic sense) and the latter as a skilled Scriptural exegete and commentator.[2] Anania became the monastery's first abbot, and over the next half century under his leadership, Narek developed a reputation as a vibrant center of liturgical performance, ascetic-mystical spirituality, and as a center of learning.

In order to properly contextualize the foundation of Narekavankʿ and understand its significance as part of the larger Arcruni project in Vaspurakan, especially during the reign of Gagik I (prince, 903/4 – 908; king 908 – ca. 943/4), in this chapter I will highlight some of the main elements of the larger boom in the Islamicate economy into which Armenia was integrated, the many building projects which came about as a result, with particular attention to the cenobitic monastic foundations of which Narek is an example, and their interrelation with the power politics at play between the major Armenian dynastic families of the era.

[1] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 544, p. 98.
[2] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:751.27; 51–52, tr. Greenwood, *Universal History*, 225, 229.

Regional Economic Boom

It has been argued that the Umayyad Caliphate had an unhealthy reliance on income generated from the spoils of conquest and military expansion, as opposed to a more sustainable source of income, namely, one generated from a robust system of provincial taxation, and that this weakness in their state economy contributed to their premature downfall in the mid-eighth century.[3] The Arab conquerors had no prior experience of large imperial government, and therefore it is not surprising that this aspect of their state was underdeveloped. By contrast, the organization and structure of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate that took over from 750 onwards fit into the typical pattern of land-based tributary empires that have successfully exerted hegemony over vast portions of the Eurasian landmass beginning with the Akkadian Empire ca. 2300 BC and continuing down into the modern era.[4] The ʿAbbāsid Caliphate, which drew upon memories of Sasanian administrative structures, was "based on the conquest of wide agrarian domains and the taxation of peasant surplus production"[5] and operated by redistributing the vast and diverse resources of its provinces via the administering hub of the caliphal center.[6]

Economic historians of the caliphate have identified the period between ca. 750–1100 as one of extended economic growth and expansion.[7] Summarizing the results of scholarship on the early Islamic economy in comparison to the period of late antiquity that preceded it, Michael Morony writes that early Islam "saw more intensive and extensive exploitation of mineral and water resources, of land for agriculture and domestic animals, and of animal and human labor,

[3] Blankinship, *The End of the Jihād State*; Bonner, "In Search of the Early Islamic Economy," 21–22.
[4] Bang and Bayly, *Tributary Empires*; Bonner, "In Search of the Early Islamic Economy," 20.
[5] Bang and Bayly, "Tributary Empires," 6.
[6] On redistribution, its relation to a society's economy, and the dependence upon it in premodern western societies, see Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 50–58; on its application to the Islamic Caliphate, see Bonner, "In Search of the Early Islamic Economy," 20.
[7] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth."

increased specialization in manufacturing and services, and a greater commercialization of production."[8]

The caliphal North was no exception to this larger, regional trend. The second half of the ninth to the end of the tenth century has been described as "one of the most splendid periods of cultural and economic flourishing in medieval Armenian history."[9] This is in stark contrast to the situation of the period preceding it in the eighth century, which was marked by near constant Arab-Byzantine warfare and a series of revolts by the Armenian *naxarars*, which were met with increasingly punitive measures by the caliphal armies. Obviously, this had deleterious effects on the Armenian population and economy, since, in addition to the retributive measures and heavy taxation of Armenia in the eighth century, there was also the discontinuance of the international overland trade route through Armenia to the Black Sea ports in Byzantium.[10]

As far as Armenia was concerned, the situation changed for the better in the second half of the ninth century. The two most important factors seem to have been lower taxation and increased trade. The first factor was related to the increased autonomy of the Armenian dynasts and the implications this autonomy had for taxation. One of the main prerogatives gained by Ašot I Bagratuni in the 860s was the right to collect taxes in his own realm and send them directly to the caliph. This meant that he could benefit economically from the tax collection, rather than the proceeds from tax collection going only to the caliph and his tax representative in the North. There is also indication that the amount of taxes sent to the caliph may have decreased in the ninth and tenth centuries, and this despite the fact that there was increased wealth being

[8] Morony, "Early Islamic Mining Boom," 166.
[9] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 181.
[10] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 129–33.

produced. The second main factor was the reopening of the international overland trade routes running through Armenia, thanks to which the Armenian dynasts could profit due to their facilitation of international trade and the other benefits this brought, such as the collection of toll and transit fees and income from urban centers that were built up to support the activity along the trade route.

Let us now turn in more detail both to these principal factors and some of the other areas in which Armenia developed economically as a result of keeping step with and benefitting from broader regional development, all of which then contributed to the vast amounts of disposable wealth available to the dynasts of the period, some of which they funneled into the building projects that mark the age.

Taxation

As mentioned above, the early Umayyad Caliphate derived much of its income from spoils and booty taken in war. The beginning of a more stable and sophisticated administrative system involving provincial taxation and resource redistribution began with the Marwānid reforms in the late seventh/early eighth century and continued into the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate.[11] It is also during this period that Armenia became more directly tied to the caliphate with the creation of the province of Armīniya to administer the caliphal North, which entailed more centralized control over the new province, including regular collection of taxes.[12]

[11] On the Marwānid reforms and the beginnings of more centralized administration in the caliphate, see Kennedy, *Prophet and the Age*, 99–103; Robinson, "The rise of Islam," 215–21.
[12] In the early Umayyad period, Armenian tribute in cash was often waved in return for military service. See Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 186–200.

Due to a lack of data or conflicting data, it is impossible to reconstruct the exact amount of tax collected from Armīniya over individual years. Nevertheless, a general picture can be formed. Extant tax lists reveal the vast fiscal and material resources at the disposal of the early ʿAbbāsid Caliphate.[13] The majority of taxes were collected in cash rather than in kind and financial institutions and innovative methods for long distance currency exchange such as *suftājas* — checks to be cashed in banks located in both the capital and throughout the provinces — developed in order to ensure the safe transfer of large sums of money.[14] As discussed in the previous chapter, from the early eighth through the second half of the ninth century, there was a series of Armenian revolts against the centralized administration of the caliphate in the North that were often prompted by what was perceived by the Armenian nobility as unfair levels of taxation. Complaints about high taxation are a regular occurrence both in the histories of the period, principally that of Łewond, as well as in popular tales such as the oral epic *Sasna crer* (*The Daredevils of Sasun*), which has its origins in this period.[15]

Total caliphal revenues seem to have reached a peak in the second half of the eighth and first half of the ninth centuries, and then declined in the second half of the ninth and into the tenth centuries.[16] The decline in revenue has been explained as owing to a gradual collapse of the centralized caliphal system of public taxation.[17] The disintegration of the caliphate seems directly tied to economic collapse at the center and the inability of caliphs to fund the military and their luxurious lifestyle.[18] As taxation became privatized and provincial leaders began to

[13] Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddima*, 1:362–63. See Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 147–48.
[14] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 170.
[15] Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 180–82; Cowe, "Relations Between the Kingdoms," 77–78.
[16] Waines, "Third Century Internal Crisis," 284.
[17] Kennedy, "The Middle East," 400–01.
[18] Kennedy, "The Middle East," 400–01; idem, *Prophet and the Age*, 187–95, 203; Waines, "Third Century Internal Crisis," 282–87.

exercise more autonomy, they withheld larger amounts of cash and as a result were able to increase their own wealth to the detriment of the center.[19] This seems also to have been the case during the period of the locally autonomous Armenian dynasties, although there is frustratingly little reliable evidence concerning the amounts of tax paid to the caliphal center by Armenian dynasts during the second half of the ninth and the tenth centuries (or in general during the period of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate).[20]

One recalls that it was the Armenian refusal to allow the *ostikan* to collect the annual tribute in 850 that was the immediate precursor to the military campaigns of Bughā al-Kabīr in Armenia. This does not mean, of course, that taxes were not paid that year. The "prince of princes" Bagarat Bagratuni sent an embassy to the *ostikan* with gifts and the tribute that he had collected. The critical issue was that he refused to allow the *ostikan* himself or his tax collectors to enter the country in order to collect taxes.[21] Thus, it was a dispute regarding territory and jurisdiction over taxation rather than the payment of taxation in and of itself. The leading Bagratuni prince wanted to secure the right to oversee taxes himself, by which he might be able to profit from tax collection as opposed to the *ostikan*. One of the principal rights granted to Ašot in 862, as noted by the historian Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi, was to collect the taxes of Armenia and send the royal tribute directly to the caliph without going through the intermediary of the *ostikan*.[22] It seems that subsequent dynasts were able to maintain this prerogative throughout the tenth century. In the early tenth century, when Gagik I Arcruni broke faith with his Bagratid

[19] Waines, "Third Century Internal Crisis," 285. Waines gives the example of the Ṭulūnids in Egypt and the Sāmānids in Khurāsān.
[20] Vacca, *Non-Muslim Provinces*, 200–03.
[21] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 140.
[22] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 147.

liege lord and established the kingdom of Vaspurakan where Narekavankʿ was to be built a few decades later, he likewise would have controlled taxation in his own realm.

As time went on and the grip of the caliphal center weakened over the provinces, it is likely that the Bagratuni, Arcruni, and Siwni dynasts were sending less tribute to the center than had been the case in the previous period and thereby keeping more profits for themselves, which would be in line with trends observable across the caliphate in this period. It is difficult to otherwise give an adequate account for the vast amount of wealth at their disposal in the tenth century. One seems obliged to conclude not only that they were both generating more income through the facilitation of international trade (on which, see below) but that they were also sending less in tribute to the caliphal center.

Trade

The period between 700–1000 saw increased trade between the caliphate and neighboring lands, including the Khazars, Rus, Eastern Romans (Byzantines), Bulghars, Scandinavian Norsemen (Vikings), and others.[23] The activity is illustrated by the finds of Islamic silver[24] and by a detailed list compiled by the tenth-century geographer al-Muqaddasī of items produced and exported from the cities and towns of Khurāsān-Transoxiana.[25] The cities and trading posts founded throughout the Islamicate world in this period to facilitate international trade reveal that the trading networks and the spatial integration they fostered were more typically overland than maritime.[26] However, merchants also made use of networks along the Mediterranean for

[23] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 162, 173–74.
[24] Milwright, "Archaeology and Material Culture," 681; Kovalev, "Mint Output."
[25] For a translation of this list, see Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 166.
[26] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 167–69.

interchange with Europe and North Africa and those issuing from the Persian Gulf to engage in trade as far East as Sri Lanka and Thailand, as revealed, for example, by the archaeological record for eighth- to tenth-century Iraqi glazed pottery.[27]

The increased participation in international trade in this period by Armenian merchants has long been recognized as an important source of income for the *naxarar* dynasts of the age. The fact that most trade was conducted overland was of benefit to the Armenian rulers, since Armenia had no direct access to major sea networks of the time. One of the most important trade routes from the Armenian perspective was one running from Dabīl/Duin (the former Arsacid capital and residence of the *ostikan*) to Trebizond on the southeastern Black Sea coast, by means of which commerce between the East Roman Empire and the caliphate was conducted to the profit of Bagratid Armenia, which acted as an important intermediary zone through which trade between the two hostile polities could take place, and in so doing profited from tariffs and other sources of income associated with the increased traffic.[28] New cities, a result of the increased trade activity, were founded or expanded along this trade route, in particular Kars, Arcn, and Ani. Ani is an illustrative example of the kind of rapid development new cities underwent in the period. Naturally fortified on three sides, it began as a Kamsarakan fortress that housed the family treasury. As international trade picked up, it became a key node on the trade route, and this catalyzed its transformation from a stronghold at the beginning of Bagratid rule into a city and then eventually into the Bagratid permanent royal residence and capital in the late tenth century. From there, its position on the trade route facilitated its development into one of the

[27] Milwright, "Archaeology and Material Culture," 678–81.
[28] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 136–50; Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 183. For more on the trade routes in this period, including maps and the major cities involved, see Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 155–72.

most cosmopolitan and populated cities in the Near East in the late tenth and early eleventh century.[29] Duin also connected with Gełakunikʿ around Lake Sewan en route to Partaw, Ganja and north to Tbilisi. By means of this route, Bagratid Armenia facilitated trade to Iberia, Abkhazia, and other Northern realms.[30]

Other important nodes and offshoots form this main route included Naxiǰewan and Xoy, which connected with a southern route through Arcruni Vaspurakan and into the neighboring emirates to the west. Some of the important commercial cities along this route were Van, Ostan (Gagik's capital nearby which Narek monastery was built), Berkri, Arčes, Xlatʿ, and Bałeš around Lake Van, and on to Manazkert, Arzan, Miyafarkin, Amida, Karin, Erznka, and west as far as Sebasteia.[31] Thus, both the Bagratid and Arcruni kings increased their wealth in this period largely as a result of their realm's continued integration into the caliphal economy and the profit gained from their realms' role in facilitating international trade between the caliphate and neighboring peoples.

Urbanization

In general, this period is marked by the foundation of new cities and increased urbanization. Cities developed in tandem with the increase in international trade, since they were nodes on the overland mercantile networks.[32] While agricultural labor remained the norm in rural areas, a skilled workforce developed in cities.[33] The Islamicate world was ahead of the hemispheric norms of the day. A quantitative study of comparative urban development in Europe

[29] See, as a starting point, Cowe, *Ani*.
[30] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 146.
[31] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 148; 155. Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 81, p. 106; map 87, p. 111.
[32] Denoix, "Founded Cities."
[33] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 159.

and the Near East from 800–1800 has estimated that by the tenth century, the urbanization rate in the Islamic world was between 7–8 percent, whereas in Europe it was only between 4–5 percent.[34] By the year 1000, estimates for the total urban population in cities in the Islamic world range upwards of 10 million, with about forty to fifty cities with populations greater than 20,000, six to eight of which had over 100,000.[35] This was something like double the total population of the cities of Europe at the time, which was 5–6 million, despite the fact that Europe may have had more total population at the time than the Islamic world.[36]

The situation in Armenia aligned with these macro developments. Being on trade routes, city infrastructure was built up to provide services such as hostels, inns, and markets for merchants. As would be expected, Armenian cities resembled the structure and internal organization of other cities in the Islamicate world, many of them being founded or developed in territory controlled by the emirates. This has led scholars to associate Armenian urbanization directly with the greater integration of Armenians into the caliphal world beginning with the settling of Arab emirates in Armenia in the late eighth century.[37] The traditional environment of *naxarar* society was mountain fastnesses and agricultural domains. The *naxarar* lords of the previous era did not build cities — nor were Armenians significantly involved in trade — preferring instead the safety and isolation of their fortified castles in the highlands. This gradually began to change in this period as both Bagratid and Arcrunid dynasts engaged directly in the development of cities and urban infrastructure. The founding and development of cities in

[34] Bosker, Buringh, and van Zanden, "From Baghdad to London," 1424.
[35] Bosker, Buringh, and van Zanden, "From Baghdad to London," 1424; Bairoch, *Cities and Economic Development*, 374–75; Shatzmiller, "Recent trends (part two)."
[36] Bosker, Buringh, and van Zanden, "From Baghdad to London," 1424; Bairoch, *Cities and Economic Development*, 374–75; Shatzmiller, "Recent trends (part two)."
[37] Raymond, "Spatial Organization;" Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 148–50, 154–55; Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 81–82; Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 181.

the emirates and subsequently in the Bagratuni, Arcruni, and Siwni principalities naturally had a marked impact on Armenian society. Due to their capacity as nodes on international trade routes, cities such as Naxiǰewan, Duin, Arčeš, Karin, Arcn, Kars, and Ani became hubs of interchange for the movement of people and objects. This naturally led to the influx of new ideas and new socioeconomic actors. It is no surprise then that the period is also marked by an unstable social order, some aspects of which will be examined in the fourth chapter.

Division of Labor, Manufacturing, Artisanal Crafts, and Merchants

The Islamicate economy in this period was also marked by a high degree of division of labor within manufacturing, which led to higher quality items being produced at increased capacity and with heightened efficiency.[38] Similar developments occurred in the service sector.[39] By analyzing trade names as an indication of division of labor, a quantitative study revealed 418 separate occupations in the manufacturing industries and 522 in the service industries, very high numbers, comparatively speaking, for premodern economies, and a strong indication of a flourishing economy.[40]

While the traditional Armenian social class divisions with their prescribed labor roles persisted into this period, new opportunities presented themselves for laypersons as a result of trade and urban development, and the period marks the beginning of both an artisanal and merchant middle class in Armenian society.[41] As mentioned above, Armenians began to engage

[38] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 157; eadem, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World*, 11–99.
[39] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 157–58.
[40] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 158.
[41] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 148. Traditional Armenian society was tripartite, the highest class being comprised of the *naxarars* or *išxans*, followed by the lower nobility of *azats* and the hierarchy of the clergy in the Christian period. The great majority fell into the lowest, taxable class of *ṙamiks* or *šinakans*. These classes still remained

more in crafts, and artisanal guilds were formed in urban environments.[42] More trade meant more cities and increased urban development meant more of the local population participating in crafts. Some of Anania's works, in particular the metaphors he draws on in his ascetical instructions (*xratkʿ*) in order to illustrate his ethical teaching, seem to attest to the increased engagement in urban, artisanal crafts in the Armenian sphere.[43] This is also evidenced by the archaeological remains of sites that have been excavated, such as Ani.[44] Following trends observable across the Islamicate world, the archaeological record in Armenia attests to the increasing specialization in trades and labor in the manufacturing industry in this period. Archaeological digs have uncovered items produced by potters, smiths, armorers, jewelers, and weavers, among other craftsmen.[45] In Armenia, increased specialization is perhaps most observable in the textile industry, which was particularly well developed. Inhabitants of Armīniya are singled out in Arab sources as skilled makers of rugs and carpets, belts, turbans, covers, pillow cases, cushions, saddle blankets, curtains, and cloth for sofas, the most high quality items employing both silk and wool.[46] Increased Armenian participation in trade begins in this period and is an occupation that would become more prevalent in centuries to come.[47] New opportunities such as these must had a significant impact on the mentality of laypersons and relates to the social and religious populist movements associated with the era, a subject that will be taken up in more detail in the next chapter.

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during the period in question, even as new opportunities began to present themselves in the arenas of craft and trade. See Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 176.

[42] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 182.

[43] See Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate."

[44] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 151–52.

[45] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 151–52.

[46] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 152–53; Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 183–84; Der Manuelian, Eiland, and Sano, *Weavers, Merchants, and Kings*.

[47] On the later phase, in the early modern period, see Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean*.

Literacy and Training

Towards the end of the period, there was a significant increase in literacy and education across all sectors of society in the caliphate, in both Arabic and gradually in New Persian.[48] While training in the workforce had long been based on oral transmission from master to apprentice, the latter end of the period in question is marked by the appearance of technical manuals for all sorts of trades, crafts, and skills.[49] These manuals emerged in the diverse social and intellectual milieux of society. They include first of all the *adāb* model, covering the administrative bureaucracy of the ʿAbbāsid court but also extending to manuals on such diverse topics as calligraphy, Qurʾānic recitation, as well as manuals relating to administration of the caliphate's finances, monies, and tax systems.[50] Secondarily, manuals were composed in the legal and religious milieux by *qāḍīs*, notaries, *muḥtasibs*, and others.[51] Thirdly, the composition of technical manuals emerged in the manufacturing trades as well, at least one manual extant — and sometimes several — from nearly every known trade from the period, from bookbinding and ink-making to minting, construction, soap-making, cooking, and many others.[52]

Armenian society was traditionally oral, the alphabet and writing being invented as tools in the service of evangelization and Christianization in the early fifth century.[53] During the period in question, writing remained by and large restricted to the religious class. Nevertheless, literacy seems also to have been making inroads among other spheres of society towards the end

[48] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 158–59.
[49] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 159.
[50] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 159.
[51] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 159.
[52] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 159–60; eadem, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World*, 200–54.
[53] Russell, "On the Origin and Invention;" idem, "Alphabets."

of this period and into the following. In the late Bagratid and early Cilician period, new genres developed in Armenia in the lay sphere in a literary form of the vernacular known as middle Armenian. The first medical handbook (*bžškaran*) was written during the reign of Gagik I Bagratuni (r. 989/90 – 1017/20) and the genre developed further in the Cilician period, especially thanks to Mxitʿar Heracʿi.[54] The development of state administration, secular bureaucracies, and the beginning of written lawcodes beyond the customary, oral law of the *naxarar* lords is also associated with the later Bagratid period and like the medicine genre was carried over and developed further in the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia.[55] This attests to a slow and gradual trend toward increased literacy in the lay professional fields.[56] Unfortunately, very little written material survives from these spheres. Most manuscripts were preserved in monastic scriptoria and for centuries Armenians lacked a state and civil bureaucracy for the preservation of non-religious texts, which meant that there has been a marked bias in the preservation of religious texts to the present day. Thus, one is left mostly to wonder at what might have been contained in the royal library at Ani, for example.

Among segments of Armenian society, there was also a knowledge of Arabic and Greek, and often Armenians made free use of manuals in these languages instead of composing their own. For example, an Armenian version of the Greek *Geoponica*, a technical work on agriculture in its various aspects known in Armenian as the *Girkʿ Vastakocʿ*, was not made until the thirteenth century from an Arabic intermediary. But it has been suggested that during this period, Armenians may have had knowledge of and been making use of the Greek version (either the

[54] Vardanyan, "Medicine in Armenia, 190–91.
[55] Langlois, *Le trésor*.
[56] Cowe, "Medieval Armenian Literary and Cultural Trends."

later Greek version composed in this period or an earlier version from the sixth century).[57] Scribal and book arts were naturally well developed in Armenia. Recipes pertaining to inkmaking, pigments, paper polishing, and related activity survive in Armenian manuscripts, and Armenians developed a unique tradition of bookbinding.[58]

The creation of new textbooks for the teaching curriculum of the monastic academies founded in this period also relates to the increased literacy of the period. Narek was perhaps the first of the great medieval monastic academies and Anania's *Book of Instruction* can be understood as an introductory manual for young monks. Traces of the spoken vernacular and a trend towards what would become the grammatical norms of middle Armenian are discernible in the language and style of his instructions. Written in his capacity as abbot of Narek monastery and treating a range of topics, including humility, patience and peace, prayer, the transience of earthly life, caution for thoughts, spiritual mourning with tears, and counsel for priests, it seems likely that it was written as a guide for regulating life among monks living together in the hundreds in the new, large cenobitic complexes that began to appear in Armenia at this time. While much monastic teaching would have been conducted orally, Anania's written *xratkʿ* may have circulated among abbots and monastic teachers to serve as a basis for oral teaching. The new conditions of large-scale cenobitic life called for new instructional material and topics, and Anania gives a great deal of attention to promoting harmonious, communal living, a crucial area of concern considering the large number of monks settled at many of the new monasteries. In line with the philosophical tradition of late antiquity, he understood the cultivation of any virtue or ascetic exercise to be similar to the process of learning a secular craft, trade, or art (արուեստ)

[57] Greppin, "The Armenians and the Greek *Geoponica*," 48–49.
[58] Abrahamyan, *Hayotʿ gir ev grchʿutʿyun*, 280–90; Merian, "The Structure of Armenian Bookbinding."

and as mentioned above employs metaphors from the artisanal word to advance his ascetic teaching. Anania's ethical and ascetic instruction will be the topic of the next chapter.

Agricultural Innovation

In addition to urbanization and the development of artisanal crafts, innovation in the agricultural sphere is also a notable feature of this period.[59] This entailed not only the introduction of new food crops but also development in the means of cultivation as well as new principles of land tenure and human relations that led to increased efficiency and output in agricultural production.[60] Arab geographers and historians attest to the importance of Armenian forests as sources of timber, and also the export of nuts, including walnuts, almonds, and filberts.[61] In terms of fauna, horses and mules were also exported from Armenia, as were falcons.[62] In the arena of agricultural production and foodstuffs, Armenia is noted in Arab sources as an important source of wheat and fish, especially the *taṙex* from Lake Van.[63] While the harvesting of most of these resources was not new in the period in question, the scale of their exploitation was. Additionally, the fact that certain items, such as wheat and fish, were exported in large quantities demonstrates how the local, traditionally agricultural economy of Armenia had begun to be integrated into the wider network of international commerce.[64] This would likely have increased profited for the *naxarar* dynasts, in whose hands the bulk of the rural lands remained.

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[59] Watson, *Agricultural Innovation*.
[60] Watson, *Agricultural Innovation*.
[61] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 150–51; Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 183.
[62] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 150–51.
[63] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 150–51; Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 183.
[64] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 150.

Mining, Minting, and Monetization

Certain sites for the mining of metallic ore in the caliphal lands were naturally inherited from the East Roman and Sasanian empires of late antiquity, but new sites were also discovered and old ones expanded, leading to a substantial increase in the output of gold, silver, copper, iron, and lead.[65] The development of new techniques and technologies of extraction led to the exploitation of more — and previously unexploitable — resources.[66] In addition to the aforementioned, there was also increased extraction of mercury, zinc, tin, precious and semi-precious gems, ochres, natron, sal ammoniac, alum, and salt, as well as coral and pearls harvested from the sea, to name only the most important items.[67] The peak of production for the mining and extraction of most resources occurred in the ninth and tenth centuries, the period most relevant to the present study.[68]

The increase in mining led naturally to an increase in the minting of coins and thus monetization of the economy.[69] One way this can tangibly be seen is by the examination of dirham (silver coin) hoards, which show a marked increase from the eighth century to the tenth, until they begin to dramatically fall as a result of the so-called 'silver famine' in the eleventh century.[70] Another piece of evidence for monetization of the economy are tax lists preserved by Arab historians and geographers. While in the early years of caliphal rule, wages were often paid

[65] Morony, "Early Islamic Mining Boom," 172–210.
[66] Morony, "Early Islamic Mining Boom," 212–13.
[67] Morony, "Early Islamic Mining Boom," 210–11.
[68] Morony, "Early Islamic Mining Boom," 212.
[69] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 144–49.
[70] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 144–46; Kovalev and Kaelin, "Circulation of Arab Silver."

— and taxes collected — in kind in rural areas, as time went on there was a discernible trend towards payments being made and taxes collected increasingly in cash.[71]

Since late antiquity, Armenia had been a contested site of mining between the East Romans and Sasanians, and in the Islamic period it served as a source of gold, silver, iron, copper, lead, borax, red and yellow arsenic, mountain resin, mercury, salt, and mineral, animal, and vegetable dyes, especially cobalt blue and *ordan karmir* (a red cochineal dye).[72] The mining of ore also led to the establishment of mints in Armenian lands. However, these mints were not established in Armenian-ruled territory. The principal mints, which predated the creation of the Armenian monarchies, were generally located at the capitals of the caliphal administrative provinces and under the control of the caliphal governors residing there: Dabīl/Duin (Arminīya), Bardhʿa/Partaw (Arrān, Ałuankʿ), Bāb al-Abwāb/Darband (Daghastān), Shamākhiyyah (Sharwān), and Hārūnābād/al-Hārūniyyah/Maʿdin Bājunays/Muḥammadiyyah (Bājunays/Apahunikʿ).[73] Minting coins remained the prerogative of the caliphal governors. The number of coins found in the North from the eighth to eleventh centuries parallel the finds in other regions, indicating that there was an increased coin supply as time went on until a peak in the tenth century, whence begins a decline thereafter, corresponding with the Byzantine expansion into Armenia and then the Seljuk invasions in the eleventh century.[74] The

[71] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 146.
[72] Morony, "Early Islamic Mining Boom," 172, 210; Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 151–53; Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 183.
[73] Bates, "Dirham Mint of the Northern Provinces;" idem, "A Second Muḥammadiyya;" Vardanyan, "The Administration of the ʿAbbāsid North." The Bagratuni and Arcruni kings did not mint their own coins, presumably because they were not granted the right to do so. The sole exception was the lesser Bagratid kingdom of Tašir-Joraget. See Grierson, "Kiurikē I or Kiurikē II;" Hovhannisyan, "Hayagir aṙajin dramnerě." It was also not in their interest to mind their own coins, as the Islamicate world followed the silver dirham.
[74] Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 144–46; Kovalev and Kaelin, "Circulation of Arab Silver."

monetization of the economy and an increased wealth disparity between rich and poor also seems to have made an impact on some of the religious and populist movements that will be the subject of the fourth chapter.

The Economy and Building Projects

As historian Hugh Kennedy notes, although the ninth to tenth centuries are marked by centrifugal tendencies observable across the caliphate and general political fragmentation, socially and economically the Muslim world maintained a unity.[75] As this review of various aspects of the caliphal economy between 700–1100 has shown, political crisis at the center and the fragmentation of the caliphate did not have a disruptive effect on the general economic expansion of the period. The economy maintained its stability regardless of internal administration. The local Armenian dynasts supported the transit trade because of the advantages it brought them. Rather than primarily funneled to the center, wealth seems to have been diffused more evenly across the various realms of the Islamicate world and thus available in increased measure to local rulers in the various polities that made up the Islamicate lands. It is in this politically centrifugal and economically booming context that the Armenian dynasts undertook the great civil and religious building projects that mark out this period.

One striking indication of the way in which the trends in (religious) building projects of Armenian dynasts closely followed the trends of the wider Islamicate economy is found by a quantitative comparison of monastic foundations with the number of coins in circulation. By far the largest number of Islamic coins found in hoards in Armenia and the larger Caucasus region

[75] Kennedy, *Prophet and the Age*, 203.

date to the tenth century and the same holds true for hoards found in Europe, the Near East, North Africa, and Central Asia.[76] Likewise, by examining the foundation date of the approximately 200 hundred monastic institutions that can be firmly established as having predated the Battle of Manazkert (1071), the period between the late ninth to eleventh century stands out from previous centuries. After a review of the relevant data, Sergio La Porta noted that intense building activity "began at the end of the ninth, climaxed during the tenth, and then slowed down slightly during the eleventh. The majority of monasteries known to have been established during the pre-Seljuk era date from this period."[77] This corresponds almost precisely to the number of datable Islamic coins in the same period as well as the period of the autonomous kingdoms of Bagratid Armenia, Vaspurakan, and later the kingdoms in Siwnikʿ, attesting to the fact that rulers in this period had the most disposable wealth at this time with which to engage in building and other public works projects.[78] In Armenia, greater wealth at the disposal of the local dynasts is also well evidenced in the archaeological record by the great civil and religious building projects that define the period, many of which survive to the present day.

The Building Activity of Armenian Dynasts Amid Internal Competition

We may now turn to the building activity of the Armenian dynasts. These include fortified castles and palaces as centers for governing, such as Bagratid Ani and Arcrunid Ostan and Ałtʿamar among others, with large hunting preserves to facilitate the favored pastime of royal figures of the region. The dynasts also developed and renovated the civic infrastructure in

[76] Kovalev and Kaelin, "Circulation of Arab Silver;" Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth," 145.
[77] La Porta, Review of *Répertoire*, 160.
[78] La Porta, Review of *Répertoire*, 160.

their realms, including roads, bridges, hostels and caravanasaries, as well as urban infrastructure in order to support and capitalize on the rise in overland trade and the growing productive powers in the realms of labor and industry.[79] The uptick in religious building projects, especially monastic churches and foundations, in this period was part of this wider trend in building activity. Several studies have been devoted to the dynasts' patronage of religious building projects as a way of both bolstering their image and prestige in the eyes of the spiritual (i.e., ascetic/monastic) and religious (i.e., ecclesiastical hierarchy) elite and the local population, and demonstrating their power and wealth as they vied with one another for glory and preeminence.[80] Monastic churches also often served as the family mausoleums for *naxarar* houses, such as the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Ałbag for the Arcruni.[81] They also served a legal function, securing family property and domains by means of endowments.[82] Several studies have also been devoted to a detailed examination of individual monasteries or churches founded in this period.[83] While making use of this previous scholarship, my focus will naturally fall on Arcruni Vaspurakan, especially under Gagik I, in order to provide a contextual backdrop to the founding of Narek monastery and Anania's appointment there as abbot.

The building projects undertaken by Arcruni rulers from the second half of the ninth to the first half of the tenth century were tied to their expansion across Vaspurakan and their aim to establish their control and mark their newly won territory as their own, as well as — particularly

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[79] Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 140.
[80] See Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan;" eadem, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory;" eadem, "Relics, Rulers, Patronage;" Jones, *Between Islam and Byzantium*, 97–123; Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek, Tragédie*, 8–33; Donabédian, "La renaissance de l'architecture."
[81] For this and other examples, see Greenwood, "Corpus of Early Medieval Armenian Inscriptions," 58–59.
[82] For examples, see Greenwood, "Historical Tradition, Memory and Law," 43–44.
[83] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan;" Vardanyan, *Hoṙomos Monastery*; Pogossian and Vardanyan, *The Church of the Holy Cross of Ałtʿamar*; Der Nersessian, *Aghtʿamar*; Jones, *Between Islam and Byzantium*; Mnatsʿakanyan, *Aghtʿamar*. See also several volumes in the series Documenti di Architettura Armena/Documents of Armenian Architecture.

in the case of Gagik — compete for regional prestige with the Bagratuni kings to the North.[84] This process culminated in Gagik's usurpation from the Bagratunis of the position of preeminent king of Armenia in popular perception. While he never underwent a formal coronation ceremony, he compensated for that fact by successfully orchestrating the relocation of political, ecclesiastical, and spiritual power around his person and domain, centered at his palatial residences of Ostan and Ałtʿamar in Vaspurakan, which he seems able to have maintained until the end of his life in the early 940s.

From Apostasy to Pious Patronage: Arcruni Expansion Across Vaspurakan

The Arcruni expansion across Vaspurakan and their building projects and patronage of religious foundations and relics was memorialized in an Arcruni-sponsored history known as the *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* by Tʿovma Arcruni and his Anonymous Continuators.[85] The core of the text provides an account of the history of that house from mythological and prehistorical beginnings up to the late ninth and early tenth century, the period in which the bulk of it was composed.[86] Tʿovma's account ends shortly after 904 — presumably he died around that year — and the anonymous continuators recapitulate some of the material covered by Tʿovma and continue the story through Gagik's reign. Later additions provide material covering events as late as the thirteenth century.

[84] This process has been well studied in Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory."
[85] Tʿovma seems to have been sponsored first by Grigor-Derenik (r. 857–868, 874–887) and then by his son Gagik, (r. prince 903/4 – 908; king 908 – ca. 943/4). See Greenwood, "Historical Tradition," 30. For the text, see Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ*, *MH* 11:15–316, trans. Thomson.
[86] The depiction of many of the early elements in the narrative were redacted from Tʿovma's perspective and therefore provide fertile ground for examining the contemporary concerns and historical memory of the ninth/tenth-century historian. See Greenwood, "Historical Tradition."

In fact, the first anonymous continuation is more properly considered a separate composition because it offers a "proximate but separate version of events to that in Tʿovma's own composition," while also continuing the narrative past where Tʿovma's ended.[87] The first continuation covers the period from the birth of Gurgēn, Grigor-Derenik's third son, in 882 and goes up until the death of Gagik in 943. It is particularly focused on praising the deeds and activities of Gagik and in so doing provides a great deal of information on his building activities, especially in Ostan and Ałtʿamar, concluding with a poetic eulogy to the recently deceased king. It has been suggested that it was likely commissioned by a relative of Gagik shortly after the latter's death, containing as it does panegyrical and eulogistic elements.[88]

Two phases can be distinguished in the expansion of Arcruni influence across Vaspurakan. Phase One involves Gagik's grandfather Ašot I 'the Senior' (r. prince 836 – 852, 868 – 874) and father Grigor-Derenik (r. prince 857 – 868, 874 – 887) followed by an interlude when Gagik's older brother Ašot II 'the Junior' reigned (r. prince 887 – 903/4). Phase Two involves Gagik himself (r. prince, 903/4 – 908; king 908 – ca. 943/4). Phase One is marked by the bolstering of Gagik's branch of the Arcruni family in Vaspurakan vis-à-vis other Arcruni princes and Arab emirates in the region. During the second phase, Gagik extended the position of the Arcruni dynasty to encompass all of Vaspurakan and then eclipsed the Bagratuni dynasty to the North, creating a new center of Armenian political, ecclesiastical, and spiritual power in the historic district of Ṙštunikʿ in the vicinity of his new twin capitals of Ostan and Ałtʿamar. There, he built palaces for himself, a stately church on the island of Ałtʿamar, established a temporary

[87] Greenwood, "Historical Tradition," 33.
[88] Greenwood, "Historical Tradition," 33.

seat for the catholicos, and, as I will argue, sponsored the foundation of a new monastery, Narek, to operate as a spiritual and intellectual monastic center.

Along with the Ṙštunikʿ, Gnunikʿ, and Anjewacʿikʿ, the Arcrunikʿ were historically one of the major *naxarar* houses of southern Armenia. The ancestral territory of the Arcruni clan was the province of Ałbak in southeastern Vaspurakan with their *ostan* (capital town, nuclear domain) at Hadamakert.[89] The traditional burial place of Arcruni princes and princesses remained into the tenth century at the monastery of the Holy Cross (S. Xačʿ) at Soradir.[90] The Arcruni expansion beyond their traditional domains seems to have begun in earnest in the late eighth and ninth centuries, following the Armenian rebellion of 774/5 and the devastating backlash inflicted by the caliphal forces, after which several of the major *naxarar* houses — such as the Ṙštuni, whose domains centered on the southern shore of Lake Van and included the important settlements of Ałtʿamar, Van, and Ostan (their capital/nuclear domain) — were diminished or decimated.[91] As mentioned in the previous chapter, other princely houses, in particular the Arcruni, as well as the newly arrived Arab settlers and emirates being established in this period, began to fill the vacuum left behind by the *naxarar* houses in decline. Ṙštunikʿ eventually became the center of Gagik's kingdom of Vaspurakan in the early tenth century.

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[89] For a map, see Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 93, p. 117. In early Armenian authors, the term *ostan*, meaning 'royal domain,' was typically reserved for the royal domain of the Aršakuni kings of Armenia. In later authors such as Tʿovma, it was used to refer to the capital or nuclear domain of any of the great *naxarar* houses. See Garsoïan, *Epic Histories*, 551; Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ*, tr. Thomson, 183, n. 2; Hübschmann, *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen*, 442, 460–61.

[90] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ*, trans. Thomson, 150, 263 n. 1, 268, 281, 291, 292. On the monastery, which was later called Čṙpay vankʿ and since the seventeenth century S. Ējmiacin, see Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 513, p. 93; idem, *Monuments arméniens du Vaspurakan*, 465–70.

[91] Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 178; Laurent and Canard, *L'Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam*, 124–25.

Another major disruptive force in the region was the punitive military campaigns of Bughā l-Kabīr in the North (851 – 852, 855 – 856), to which Tʿovma devoted considerable space in the third book of his *History*. In the course of these campaigns, several princes and high-profile clergy of Vaspurakan were captured and imprisoned in the caliphal capital at Sāmarrāʾ, among them the grandfather and father of Gagik, Ašot 'the Senior' and Grigor-Derenik.[92] During their imprisonment, they were pressured to convert to Islam as a show of loyalty to the caliph. Some refused, notably Yovhannēs Bishop of Arcrunikʿ, an ascetic priest named Grigor, and Grigor Arcruni, who were chained in a dungeon for three years as a result of their defiance. The former two were ultimately released and hailed as confessors for enduring torture for their Christian faith, while the latter was put to death and hailed as a martyr.[93] In Tʿovma's *History*, the perseverance of these three personages stands in vivid contrast to the capitulation of Ašot 'the Senior' and Grigor-Derenik. The same chapter narrates how these two, along with the majority of the other captured nobility, made a conversion to Islam, even becoming circumcised on the spot, although, as Tʿovma claims, they inwardly held onto their Christian faith and later, upon their release and return to Vaspurakan, claimed that their conversion was feigned.[94] The episode in Tʿovma's *History* recalls the feigned conversion to Mazdeism of Vardan Mamikonian and his companion princes under the compulsion of Shah Yazdgard II (r. 438–457) in the mid-fifth century, as narrated in the histories by Łazar and Ełišē, with which works Tʿovma was conversant.[95] Given that the sponsor of Tʿovma's *History* was Grigor-Derenik (and then Gagik),

[92] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.3 *MH* 11:166–67, trans. Thomson, 205–06.
[93] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.6 *MH* 11:178–85, trans. Thomson, 219–27.
[94] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.6 *MH* 11:181–82.27–30, trans. Thomson, 223–24.
[95] On Tʿovma's use of these sources, see Thomson's introduction to his translation.

one deduces that Tʿovma was attempting to salvage the image of his patron's family by means of this literary allusion.

According to the military-aristocratic ethos of *naxarar* princes like Ašot and Grigor-Derenik, religious affiliation seems to have been of secondary importance. Political expediency sometimes necessitated making concessions on the religious plane in order to secure one's political standing. Later, one could patch up one's image with the local Armenian audience back home through patronage of relics and religious institutions and the commissioning of a *History* such as Tʿovma's to record one's generous deeds and piety. Tʿovma goes to great length to exonerate his patron and that patron's father. This seems to account both for the extended attention given to religious building projects and patronage of monasteries and relics in the text of Tʿovma and his continuators as well as, more directly, for the dramatic and lengthy narrative portrayal of Ašot's death-bed confession, in which he laments and weeps over his past sins and expresses doubt that they can ever be forgiven, chief of which must, of course, have been the apostasy to Islam.[96] It reveals the Arcruni princes' effort to win back the loyalty of the ecclesiastical establishment and local population by projecting their image as defenders and sponsors of the Christian faith, in an attempt to erase their apostasy at the caliphal capital and rewrite a family tale of pious patronage.[97] Another motivation, identified by Pogossian, was their concerted effort to mark their possession and personalize their hold over their newly-won territory, especially that won back from Muslim emirates, as well as territories formerly belonging to other prominent southern houses such as the Ṙštuni and Anjewacʿi.[98] We may look

[96] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, *MH* 11:252–54.1–18, trans. Thomson, 310–13.
[97] Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 184–85.
[98] Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 178–79.

at this process in more detail as it provides a contextual background to the founding of Narekavankʿ.

During the captivity of Ašot and Grigor-Derenik in Sāmarrāʾ, their kinsman and rival, Gurgēn Apupelč, who had not capitulated to Islam, had led military campaigns against Arab tribes and taken control of key provinces of Vaspurakan, such as Anjewacʿikʿ, which Tʿovma devotes a few chapters to detailing and eulogizing.[99] The returning princes therefore had first to contend with him upon their return. Grigor-Derenik, who returned first, attempted to seize Anjewacʿikʿ from Gurgēn but failed.[100] Later, Ašot returned and likewise set himself to seeking to wrest control of Anjewacʿikʿ from Gurgēn.

Arriving with his troops, Ašot sent as intermediary a junior Arcruni prince Vahan and a priest named Tʿēodoros, the abbot of a prominent monastery in Anjewacʿikʿ, Hogeacʿ vankʿ,[101] with the message that he was charged with the caliph to rule Vaspurakan and thus had a right to oust Gurgēn from his hold over Anjewacʿikʿ: "I have come in peace at an order from court and not, like you, to engage in rebellion. So give over half of Anjewacʿikʿ to my son Derenik, and do not continue to act in opposition."[102] That Tʿēodoros went as intermediary for Ašot reveals that very soon after his return from captivity, the latter had been able to patch up his image and standing with élite clergymen of the church.[103] While Tʿovma does not detail how he was able to do so, one can conclude that he offered to patronize the monastery in some significant way in order to win the abbot Tʿēodoros over to his side. The episode also may indicate that their loyalty

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[99] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.13–15, *MH* 11:209–23, trans. Thomson, 256–74.
[100] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.15, *MH* 11:222.13–16, trans. Thomson, 272–73.
[101] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 579, p. 104.
[102] ***Ես եկի խաղաղութեամբ յարքունուստ հրամանէ, եւ ո՛չ նման քեզ զապստամբութիւն ի գործ արկեալ. արդ, թողացոյ զերկրորդ մասն Անձաւացեաց որդւոյ իմ Դերանկիդ, եւ այլ մի՛ յաւելուր ընդ հակառակս ինչ ձեռն ի գործ արկանել։*** Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.15, *MH* 11:224.1, trans. Thomson, 276.
[103] For a lengthy discussion of this episode, see Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 179–85.

to the caliph and conversion at the court had granted them the right to rule in the territory over rival princes, including family members such as Gurgēn, whose property he likely would have had a legal right to after his conversion to Islam. Eventually, Ašot and Gurgēn were able to arrange a peace treaty.[104]

The Arcruni princes had also to contend with Arab emirates in the region. The ʿUthmānids were one of the early Arab tribes to settle in Armenia in the late eighth century and centered themselves around the key commercial city of Berkri to the northeast of Lake Van. From there, they expanded southwards into territory along the eastern shores of Lake Van, taking the fortress of Amiwk and the important monastery of the Holy Cross on the mountain of Varag.[105] About the monastery, which housed a relic of the True Cross and was considered one of the stations at which the Hřipʿsimeankʿ virgin saints stopped in their flight through Armenia and for these two reasons was thus an important pilgrimage site,[106] Tʿovma writes that the ʿUthmānids "had seized it and subjected to taxation the monks of the Holy Cross, and had even captured the abbot of the monastery who was called Grigor, and put him in a deep and gloomy dungeon."[107] For an Armenian Christian readership, this of course hearkens back to Agatʿangełos' depiction of the cruel treatment of Trdat, the unbelieving monarch, against S. Grigor the Illuminator, the righteous servant of God. The parallel is all the more obvious since the abbot of Varag monastery was named after S. Grigor. Ašot managed to take control of the

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[104] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.15, *MH* 11:225.12, trans. Thomson, 277.
[105] Laurent and Canard, *L'Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam*, 389–91 ; Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 56–7 ; Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.18, *MH* 11:225–26.1–5, trans. Thomson, 277–78.
[106] See Pogossian, "Relics, Rulers, Patronage;" eadem, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 185–93.
[107] *զի յինքեանս գրաւեալ ընդ հարկաւ ծառայեցուցանէին զպաշտաւնեայս Սրբոյ Խաչին, մանաւանդ զի եւ զգլխաւորն՝ զվանացն զհայրն, որում Գրիգոր անուանէր՝ զնա կալեալ, եդեալ ի խորափոր խաւարային բանտի։* Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.18, *MH* 11:226.3, trans. Thomson, 278. See Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 191.

monastery and bring it under his own protection, restoring its tax-exempt status. This afforded Ašot, who had earlier capitulated to Islam, the opportunity to present himself as a stalwart defender of the Christian religion, its institutions and relics, against the Muslim enemy.[108]

When Gagik came to power in the beginning of the tenth century, he and his wife continued the pattern established by his father and grandfather by continuing to patronize the monastery. He and his wife sponsored the construction of new religious buildings, endowed it with villages and estates to promote its economic flourishing, and commissioned a luxurious reliquary to house the fragment of the True Cross.[109] To his wife is also ascribed the donation to Varag monastery of a lavishly illuminated Gospel manuscript known as the Queen Mlkʿē Gospels, one of the most famous and significant early gospel manuscripts to survive to the present day and the only one from the Kingdom of Vaspurakan.[110] Gagik may also have been responsible for further elevating the status of the True Cross of Varag and its cult beyond the region of Vaspurakan.[111] The Feast of the Cross of Varag was eventually enshrined in the liturgical calendar of the Armenian Church —with a one-week fast preceding it which indicates the significance and solemnity of the Feast — the only such feast in the Armenian Church calendar to be dedicated to a local relic of the True Cross.[112]

Through negotiations with the governor of Diyār Bakr, ʿĪsā b. al-Shaykh b. al-Salīl al-Shaybānī, who was the caliphal representative (*ostikan*) of Armenia at the time and had

[108] Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 192.
[109] Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 212; eadem, "Relics, Rulers, Patronage," 179–85 at 182.
[110] On this manuscript and early Armenian gospel manuscripts in general, see Kouymjian, "Evolution of Armenian Gospel Illumination;" idem, "An Interpretation of Bagratid and Artsruni Art;" Mathews, "The Classic Phase of Bagratid and Artsruni Illumination;" Jones, *Between Islam and Byzantium*, 107–09; Maranci, *Art of Armenia*, 80–91.
[111] See Pogossian, "Relics, Rulers, Patronage," 179–90.
[112] Pogossian suggests that the entry of the feast into the Armenian church calendar may date to the reign of Gagik, when the catholicate was situated at Ałtʿamar. See Pogossian, "Relics, Rulers, Patronage," 188–89.

intervened in the conflict between the Arcruni princes and the ʿUthmānids, Ašot and Grigor-Derenik were also able to take control of the strategically and economically important city of Van, which was situated near a trade route that passed through southern Armenia.[113] After Gagik became prince, he sponsored significant religious construction projects in Van, which underlined his reign as one marked by the defense of the Christian religion and the re-sacralization (or re-Christianization) of Armenian space recently held by Muslim rulers. The first church he sponsored there was built on the summit of the Rock of Van, the most important defensive location in the city and, as such, was aptly dedicated to the renowned military saint, St. George.[114] The immediate significance of dedicating the church to St. George would obviously have borne reference to the recent victories of the Christian Arcrunis against the Muslim ʿUthmānids, and signaled their ongoing defense of Christian land.[115] Even more significant was his construction of a complex of buildings on the Rock of Van meant to be a New Jerusalem in the heart of Vaspurakan.[116] The New Jerusalem complex included a church dedicated to Holy Sion, a chapel to commemorate the Crucifixion at Golgotha, a chapel dedicated to the Upper Room to commemorate the Last Supper/First Eucharist, a chapel to commemorate the Resurrection from the Tomb, and finally a chapel dedicated to the Ascension.[117]

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[113] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.18.226–27.6–13, trans. Thomson, 278–79; Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 208; Laurent and Canard, *L'Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam*, 449–51; Canard, "ʿĪsā b. al-Shaykh;" Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 155–56.
[114] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29.256.28, trans. Thomson, 315.
[115] Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 209.
[116] Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 209–10.
[117] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, MH 11:256–57.27–34; trans. Thomson, 315–16. See Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 210.

Creating a replica of Jerusalem's important holy sites in one's local territory through a religious building program is not an uncommon phenomenon in the history of Christianity.[118] A similar process was underway in Constantinople, in what one scholar has termed the long history of the "Jerusalemization" of Constantinople, one of the most important periods of which was that of the contemporaneous Macedonian dynasty (867–1056), who patronized similar building programs and collected relics associated with the earthly ministry of Christ.[119] Jerusalem held a privileged place for Armenians since the beginning of Christianity, and Armenian pilgrimage to, and presence in, the Holy City is attested from the fourth century onwards.[120] Gagik's patronage of a New Jerusalem in Vaspurakan naturally made it a pilgrimage center, and brought him all the spiritual and economic advantages that such centers garner. For a local unable to travel all the way to Jerusalem, whether for economic reasons or reasons of danger due to political unrest, pilgrimage to the New Jerusalem in Vaspurakan could have served as a substitute. For Gagik, the building of a New Jerusalem on the Rock of Van, carried further significance. It displayed in vivid visual and architectural form, his royal ideology that projected him as a powerful Christian ruler sanctioned by God to sponsor and protect holy places. This held special significance given the capitulation of his father and grandfather to Islam in the middle of the ninth century. The religious building projects in general, and the construction of a New Jerusalem in particular, played into Gagik's self-stylization as a new King David, a royal image that was a direct challenge to the Bagratuni kings to the North, to whom Gagik was related.[121] It has been

[118] For an overview of the phenomenon in general and case studies of individual New Jerusalems, see Lidov, *New Jerusalems*; Erdeljan, *Chosen Places*; Symcox, *Jerusalem in the Alps*; Mercier and Lepage, *Lalibela*; Phillipson, *Ancient Churches of Ethiopia*.
[119] See Erdeljan, *Chosen Places*, 72–143 at 101–18.
[120] See Bonfiglio and Preiser-Kappeler, "From Ararat to Mount Zion."
[121] While the Bagratid claim to Jewish ancestry goes back at least to the *History* of Movsēs Xorenacʿi, the Georgian branch of the family claimed descent from King David since the end of the eighth century. See Toumanoff, *Studies*

suggested that the iconography of the scene of David and Goliath on the east end of the southern façade of Gagik's most famous extant religious building project, the church of the Holy Cross of Ałtʿamar, may contain an allusion to the transference of political power and divine blessing from the Bagratuni to the Arcruni, the former represented in the scene by the still crowned but lesser, discredited figure of Saul, while Gagik is represented by the youthful, warrior King David, whose martial victories led to his popular appeal.[122] Gagik's religious building projects thus were intimately connected with his quest to shore up political authority in his own realm and person, projecting himself as the divinely sanctioned ruler not just of Vaspurakan but of all of Armenia.

Gagik made Ṙštunikʿ the center of his kingdom, the province that had formed the core of his political career since the death of his father Grigor-Derenik in 887 and the division of Arcruni holdings in Vaspurakan into three parts shared between the three sons.[123] On the death of his brother Ašot, Gagik and his brother Gurgēn divided the provinces of Vaspurakan between themselves.[124] Ṙštunikʿ remained the core province of Gagik's half of the territory and naturally his most prominent building projects were centered there.

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in Christian Caucasian History, 327–29. The Armenian Bagratid connection to Kind David seems to have penetrated Armenian Bagratid royal ideology by the late ninth century, and is attested by Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi, *History of Armenia* 4, *MH* 11:370.9, tr. Boisson-Chenorhokian, 78, tr. Maksoudian, 73. Tʿovma introduces Gagik as bearing claim thus to dual royal lineage, through his Arcruni father Grigor-Derenik to the Assyrian King Sennacherim (Senekʿerim) and through his Bagratuni mother Sopʿi to King David: "Gagik…descended from the noble and high-ranking stocks of Senekʿerim and David (***Գագիկ…յերկուց քաջատոհմիկ գահակալութենէ՝ Սենեքերիմայ եւ Դաւթի***)." See Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, *MH* 11:254–55.19; tr. Thomson, 315.

[122] See Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate," 246. For the image, see Der Nersessian, *Aghtʿamar*, figures 23, 26–27.

[123] "Gagik [had] the area of Ṙštunikʿ with the neighbouring provinces and as much as he could obtain by force of the land of Mokkʿ (***Իսկ Գագիկ զկողմանս Ռշտունեաց այլովք մասամբ գաւառաւք, եւ որքան ինչ հասուսն ուժոյ՝ անդր եւս յաշխարհն Մոկաց***։)." Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.22, *MH* 11:240.14; tr. Thomson, 295.

[124] On the division, see Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, *MH* 11:255.21–24, tr. Thomson, 314.

More Building Activity Amid the Centralizing Efforts of Gagik Arcruni

Tʿovma goes to great length in describing the many building projects undertaken by the two brothers, especially Gagik. Among a number of civil infrastructure projects, Tʿovma highlights the construction of an aqueduct that provided water to the plain below Mount Varag allowing for greater settlement and population growth in the area.[125] In emphasizing this point, he may have had in mind Movsēs Xorenacʿi's discussion of the aqueduct attributed to Queen Šamiram (Semiramis),[126] also located near Van, implying a comparison with a great monarch of antiquity and the implication that King Gagik's accomplishments surpass that of the former. Such comparisons wherein a contemporary Armenian figure surpasses the deeds of a biblical or other character of antiquity is a common trope in Armenian histories and panegyric. This precise comparison is made explicit by the anonymous continuator, who, when writing about Gagik's aqueduct, says:

> In my opinion it surpassed in wonder the excavated chambers of Semiramis [in the rock of Van] and the aqueduct at the foot of Mount Varag. For the latter at least is on dry land, whereas this, built in the depths of the lake, transcends all the concepts and accomplishments of wise men previously achieved.[127]

Gagik naturally focused first on fortifications, rebuilding walls and strongholds, and then erecting palatial residences in different parts of his territory to suit his royal ambitions. Near the eastern border of Vaspurakan, where the river Karmir runs into the Araxes, he had a stronghold constructed to secure the town of Mřakan, which was then built up with streets, dwellings, and

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[125] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, *MH* 11:256–57.33–34; tr. Thomson, 316.

[126] Movsēs Xorenacʿi, *History of Armenia* I.16.

[127] ***Որպէս ինձ թուի՝ զանցոյց զարմանալեաւք զչամիրամեան փորուածոյ սենեկեաւքն եւ զամբարտակաւ գետոյն որ առ ստորոտով լերինն Վարագայ։ Զի նորայն գոնեայ ի վերայ ցամաքի, իսկ սա ի մեծ խորոց ծովուս արուեստակեալ՝ հարստահարէ զամենայն միտս եւ զգործս առ ի քան զիւնքն եղելոց։*** Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* IV.7, *MH* 11:288.7–8; tr. Thomson, 356.

other buildings, including another palace.[128] About a different palatial residence built near the northeastern limits of Vaspurakan, Tʿovma writes:

> Furthermore, looking to the east in the direction of Čuašřot and the city of Getkʿ,[129] he constructed a splendid palace of pleasure, surrounding with palatial buildings a hill from which one could look down onto the plain to the banks of the river Araxes. There herds of deer gamboled; there were lairs of boars and lions and herds of onagers, all ready for the pleasures of the chase—facing the mountains of Ayrarat, noble Masis, where Artawazd, son of Artašēs, fell headlong on the rough slopes.[130]

Hunting was the preferred pastime of aristocratic and royal figures in the wider region going back to antiquity and is well illustrated in the Armenian past by the example of the Arsacids. More than just a pastime, in Arsacid Armenia the royal hunt and royal banquet that followed it was a key feature of traditional and ceremonial royal activity, which derived from Iranian royal customs among others in the region, as seen, for example, in texts such as the *Šāhnāma* and in other material remains, such as the reliefs at Taq-ī Bostan and in the scenes on the luxurious Sasanian silver plates that are extant.[131] Tʿovma's short excursus on the pleasure palace with its lush hunting grounds thus carried royal overtones, signaling a connection between Gagik and the former Aršakuni royal dynasty in Armenia. More immediate to Gagik's own day, such activities placed him on a comparable footing with the aristocratic life of leisure enjoyed by caliphal amīrs, and the description of the pleasure palace also suggests ʿAbbāsid models. The reference to the legend about the Artaxiad king Artawazd at the end of the passage, reinforces the connection

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[128] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, *MH* 11:257.36; tr. Thomson, 316.
[129] For the location, see Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 93, p. 117.
[130] ***Դարձեալ վերակնեալ յառաւաւտինս կոյս խաղացեալ ի ճուաչռոտ ի Գետս աւան, չինէ անդ զվայելչական տեղի խրախից՝ բլուր մի պարսպեալ տաճարախիտ չինուածովք, որոյ հայեցածն առ դաշտակողմն ի վայր կոյս բերի, ի խաղս գեռոյն Երասխայ, ուր հոյլքն էրէոցն խայտան եւ վայրենեացն խոզից եւ առեւծուցն մորիքն եւ երամակք ցռոց պատրաստական առ որսոյն հրճուանք առ ձեռն պատրաստ հոլովին, ընդդէմ նայելով լերանցն Այրարատեան ազատն Մասեաց, ուր Արտաւազդն Արտաչէսեան քարավիժեալ խոհամանայր ի կոչն կոհակին։***
Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, *MH* 11:257.35; tr. Thomson, 316.
[131] On this, see Garsoïan, "Prolegomena," 183–84.

between Gagik and the Armenian royal past.[132] Once again, we see the panegyrical trope of the present figure surpassing the former at play. Gagik emerges as a more illustrious and successful dynast in that he first of all built his own hunting preserve rather than simply going out into the countryside like Artawazd, and secondly, he is safe and successful, whereas the former figure erred in desecrating a holy mountain and suffered a dire penalty for doing so.

Gagik's most prominent building projects were located in Ostan and Ałtʿamar, the heart of the province formerly belonging to the Ṙštunik, which he made into the center of Vaspurakan. The former city was located on the southern shore of Lake Van and the latter was a small island located in view of Ostan, about three kilometers from the southern shore. Control of the area gave Gagik access to profits from the fishing and exportation of the *tarėx* fish from Lake Van, one of the chief exports of Armenia in this period, as previously mentioned.[133] Naturally, he first built up defenses, fortifying the walls in Ostan.[134] He then rebuilt the city's church dedicated to the Holy Mother of God and in addition to other valuable liturgical vessels,[135] deposited there a cross that had been associated with a miraculous event and that he had had repaired by a goldsmith and "covered with pure silver more splendidly than before to the glory of the Christians and to the shame and ignominy of the enemies of Christ's cross."[136] As Pogossian notes, along with his earlier patronage of the True Cross of Varag and his subsequent building of

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[132] On Artawazd, see Russell, *Zoroastrianism in Armenia*, 400–07. Tʿovma's source may have been Movsēs Xorenacʿi, *History of Armenia* II.61, *MH* 2:1940–42, tr. Thomson, 199–201.

[133] Manandian, *Trade and Citeis*, 147, 150. This is also mentioned by the anonymous continuator as one of the benefits of the town of Ostan. See Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ*, IV.6, *MH* 11:286.7, tr. Thomson, 353.

[134] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, *MH* 11:256.27; tr. Thomson, 315.

[135] Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, *MH* 11:256.27; tr. Thomson, 315.

[136] ***Պատեալ մաքուր արծաթիով, վայելչագոյն քան զառաջինն, ի պարծանս քրիստոնէից եւ յամաւթ եւ ի նախատինս թշնամեաց խաչին Քրիստոսի:*** Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.27, *MH* 11:250.6, tr. Thomson, 307. See Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 196–206.

the Church of the Holy Cross at Ałtʿamar, Tʿovma here highlights Gagik and his family's loyalty and devotion to the cross — as both symbol and object — and the Armenian Church in the face of its opponents, which included both external ones (namely, the Muslim emirates) and internal ones (especially the Tʿondrakeans — about whom more will be said in the next chapter — who were notable for their iconoclastic destruction of crosses and other ritual objects).[137]

The principal building projects in Ostan and Ałtʿamar took place after the death of Tʿovma, and therefore it is the anonymous continuator who writes about them. These took place after Gagik's alliance with the *ostikan* Yūsuf in 908 (against the Bagratuni King Smbat), who in return dubbed him "king of Armenia." Perhaps as a physical manifestation of his elevated position as king of Vaspurakan, Gagik made Ostan and Ałtʿamar into twin capitals, complete with newly constructed splendid royal palaces.[138] Composed just after the death of Gagik to eulogize his great deeds, it is clear that it was his constructions in Ostan and Ałtʿamar that stood out most to those who could look back on Gagik's lifelong accomplishments: "Of the many castles fortified in his name, [Gagik] was especially pleased with two places and watched over them personally. One was at the edge of the lake; its name was Ostan in the province of Ṙštunikʿ."[139] As we learn shortly, the next was Ałtʿamar. In addition to their strategic defensive location, their proximity to the southern trade route, and the profitable natural resources they gave access to (especially the *taṙex* fish of Lake Van), the anonymous continuator waxes

[137] See Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 196–206. Gagik's own name was a local variant of the name Xačʿik ('little cross' from *xačʿ*, 'cross'), and it has been noted that this may have influenced his particular devotion to the quintessential Christian symbol. See, recently, Pogossian, "Relics, Rulers, Patronage," 195.

[138] For the territory inherited by Gagik, see Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, *MH* 11:255.22–23, tr. Thomson, 314. The building projects at Ostan and Ałtʿamar are especially highlighted by the anonymous continuator.

[139] ***Յորոց ի բազում ամրոցաց պարսպելոց յիւր անուն՝ յերկուս տեղիս կարի իմն յոյժ հաճեալ նուաճէ ակնակառոյց լինելով. մինն առ եզերբ ծովուն, որ է Ոստան ի գաւառին Ռշտունեաց։*** Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* , IV.6, *MH* 11:286.5, tr. Thomson, 353.

eloquent about the beauty of the natural environment, the pleasant weather, and picturesque location of the lakeside town of Ostan and island of Ałtʿamar. The splendid palace and pavilions at Ostan seem to have made special use of the natural environment and lighting, and the anonymous continuator notes the way the exterior gold decorations and various colors glittered in the sun and the dazzling way in which light passed through the windows at different times of day in order to illuminate "the multicolored images, pictures, and various decorations," housed within.[140] Thus, the palace would have equally dazzled the viewer from afar as it would the visitor who entered inside the gates.

For the anonymous continuator, the greatest of Gagik's building projects were on the island of Ałtʿamar, the palace and church of the Holy Cross.[141] One of the reasons for Gagik's choice of Ałtʿamar island for his grand palace and new church was its defensive and inaccessible location, in addition of course to its natural beauty: "In [Gagik's] excellent wisdom, seeing the pleasantness of the spot and recognizing that it was a refuge from enemy raids, he undertook to

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[140] *զդրաւչեալ պատկերատիպն եւ զզանազան յաւրինուածսն*. Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ*, IV.6, *MH* 11:286.11, tr. Thomson, 354.

[141] "From the beginning of the settlement of Armenia many buildings and constructions were raised in our land by Hayk the Archer and his descendants, and by the amorous and lascivious Semiramis, queen of Assyria, [which have been described] by others with unerring indications. These we have visited in person and seen with our own eyes, travelling to distant parts: as far as Kłarjkʿ and the Šušetacʿikʿ and the foot of the Caucasus mountain, and to Ahiz as far as the entrance to Gał, across Tayastan and all the norther regions and the East. Travelling on foot, we have seen the works of valiant men and [our] ancestors. But our mind and sight were struck most of all by the splendid, marvellous, and wonderful Ałtʿamar (*եւ անվրէպ յայտարարութեամբք որ ինչ ի սկզբանց անտի չինուածեան աշխարհիս Հայոց ի Հայկայ աղեղնաւորէ եւ ի նորուն զարմից եւ զկաթոտ եւ վաւաչոտ Շամիրամն՝ տիկնին Ասորեստանեայց, եւ ի նմանէ յայլս եւ յայլոց եւս յաւէտ ճեռակերտք եւ չինուածք յիւրաքանչիւրոցն յերկրիս մերում եղեն։ Մեր առ ամենայնն անճամբ հասեալ եւ աչալք, ճկտեալ եւ ի հեռաւոր աշխարհս՝ մինչեւ ցկղարչս եւ Շուչեթացիս եւ առ լերամբն Կաւկոսայ եւ յԱհիզ, մինչեւ ի մուտն ի Գաղայ, եւ ընդ Տայաստան եւ ընդ ամենայն հիւսիսականս եւ ընդ արեւելս ի հետիոտս գնալով՝ տեսաք զգործ քաջաց եւ նախնեաց։ Միայն զմերս գրաւեաց զմիտս եւ զտեսութիւն՝ հրաշակերտն եւ քան զքաղումս նորանշանն եւ զարմանալին Աղթամար։*)." Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ*, IV.7, *MH* 11:287.1–3, trans. Thomson, 354–55.

build on it in a fearsome and amazing fashion."[142] The natural security of the island meant that any attack upon it would have had to be naval, and since there was no sizable naval force nearby nor a means to easily ferry troops to the island, one could feel reasonably secure about the safety of the site. Gagik had a foundation laid that descended into the lake, which facilitated the construction of a defensive wall with towers and bastions and an accompanying harbor for shipping and supplies.[143] Then on the island were made streets, pleasure gardens and parks, and residences for princes and other dignitaries.[144] Gagik then arranged for an international team of artisans to work on these building projects, and charged one of them with the architectural design of a palace. The anonymous continuator finds language inadequate to express the sublimity of the royal palace that was constructed forty cubits in length, depth, and width:

> The construction of the palace, from its foundations to its summit, took the form of a bird in flight, without the support of any pillar. It was truly worthy of admiration surpassing understanding. It had vaulted domes and niches and beautifully decorated surroundings, innumerable and incomprehensible to the mind and eye. It also had domes like heaven, ornamented with gold and shining with light. If anyone wished to look at them, as if honouring a king first he must remove his head covering, and then twisting his neck he will scarcely be able to distinguish the various beautiful representations. The structure of the palace is extraordinary and astonishing, and so surpassing and incomprehensible to the imagination that if an intelligent man were to examine only one section of one dome for many hours, on coming out he would be unable to tell anyone anything of what he had seen.[145]

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[142] *Գագկայ…քաջակորով դիտութեամբ նայեցեալ ի տեղւոյն զբաւսանս եւ ծանուցեալ զնա ապաստան լինել աշխարհի ի հինից թշնամեաց՝ ձեռն արկէ հիմնարկել զնա ահեղ իմն եւ զարմանալի հիացմամբ։* Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* , IV.7, *MH* 11:287.3, tr. Thomson, 355.

[143] Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* , IV.7, *MH* 11:287–88.4–8, tr. Thomson, 355–56.

[144] Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* , IV.7, *MH* 11:288.11–12, trans. Thomson, 356.

[145] *Եւ չինուած տաճարին ի հիմանց անտի մինչեւ ցգլուխ նորին ի թռիչս կազմեալ՝ առանց սեանց ունի զհաստատութիւն. եւ է որ արդարեւ արժանի զարմանալոյ ի վեր քան զմիտս։ Ունի եւ խորանն կամարակից եւ անկիւնս եւ չրջապատս գեղապաճոյճս, անթիւ մատց եւ անզննելի աչաց։ Ունիս եւ գումբէթս երկնահարթս ոսկեզարդս եւ լուսաճաճանչս, յոր թէ նայել ոք կամիցի՝ իբր թագաւոր իմն պատիւ առնելով, նախ ի բաց առցէ զխոյր գլխոյն, եւ ապա տանջէալ զպարանոցն՝ հազիւ թէ նշմարել կարիցէ զզանազան դեղոցն կերպագրութիւնս։ Եւ է կարդ չինուածոյ տաճարին ահեղ իմն եւ զարմանալի, եւ այնքան բարձրագոյն եւ անհաս է մտաց, զոր աւրինակ թէ իմաստուն ոք այր ընդ մի կարգ խորանի միոյ զբազում ժամս նայեսցի, արտաքս ելեալ՝ ոչ ինչ յորոց նայեցաւն պատմել ումեք կարասցէ։* Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ*, IV.7, *MH* 11:289.15–18, tr. Thomson, 357.

The continuator goes on to give a brief description of the palace's frescoed paintings, which included scenes to delight the king: a court room with a splendid depiction of the king enthroned and surrounded by dignitaries; scenes of courtly entertainment such as minstrel singers and young female dancers; scenes of sport, of warfare, of nature with wild and exotic animals, and of warfare.[146] These reveal something of Gagik's personal taste, which emerges as a typical example of the Armeno-Iranian military-aristocratic ethos of *naxarar* dynasts and also align well with the contemporary rulers of the wider ʿAbbāsid Islamicate world. Unfortunately, nothing of the palace survives to the present day, so we have only the anonymous continuator's panegyrical description.[147]

Gagik's second great building project on Ałtʿamar island was the Church of the Holy Cross. It took some seven years to complete, being constructed between 915–921. The Church of the Holy Cross of Ałtamar is the only major religious building project of Gagik's to survive relatively intact to the present day. Neither the palace nor the other churches or monasteries in Vaspurakan mentioned in this chapter survive in anything like their earlier form. For that reason, and also its architectural brilliance, the Church of the Holy Cross has merited the attention of many art historians and other scholars.[148] However, in its own time, it would have been dwarfed

[146] Tʿovma Arcruni [and Anonymous Continuators], *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ*, IV.7, *MH* 11:289.18–20, tr. Thomson, 357–58.
[147] It was intentionally destroyed, since no symbols of secular power were tolerated under later Islamic rule. Presumably, the destruction dates from Ottoman times, perhaps the campaigns of Selim I in the early sixteenth century, if not before. Only the cathedral and monastic buildings were spared, on the basis of which the catholicate continued until 1896.
[148] As a starting point, see Pogossian and Vardanyan, *Church of the Holy Cross*; Der Nersessian, *Aghtʿamar*; Jones, *Between Islam and Byzantium*; Mnatsʿakanyan, *Aghtʿamar*.

by the palace, much like the image of Gagik on the west façade of the Church of the Holy Cross surpasses in size the image of Christ.[149]

Among several notable features of the church is the series of over 200 sculptural reliefs decorating the exterior of the church, depicting biblical and other scenes and natural vegetation and animals. The reliefs on the west façade mentioned just previously feature a visual depiction of King Gagik presenting a model of the church to Christ and the upper register of the east façade has a smaller portrait of Gagik, seated cross-legged on a cushion throne (*taxt* or *gah*).[150] In both, it has been noted how the visual expression of his royalty "was modeled after the current symbol of Islamic authority," the larger political structure of which his local polity formed a part.[151] At the same time, however, it should be emphasized that the ʿAbbāsid caliphate itself drew heavily upon Sasanian models, which draw on even earlier Iranian precedent. For example, the depiction of Gagik seated on a cushion throne, while it parallels depictions of ʿAbbāsid caliphs, such as that preserved on a medallion issued by caliph al-Moqtadir,[152] this was the customary regnal posture of the Arsacid kings of Armenia as well.[153] Furthermore, the use of a crown in the depiction of Gagik on the west façade — and this despite the fact that he never even had an actual coronation ceremony — is clearly non-Islamic and intended particularly for the Armenian Christian viewer, for whom the crown is the mark of legitimate kingship in the Christian context.

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[149] Grigoryan, "King Gagik Arcruni's Portrait," 417, figure 15.2.
[150] On the portraits of Gagik, see Grigoryan, "King Gagik Arcruni's Portrait;" Eastmond and Jones, "Robing, Power, and Legitimacy," 159–63; Jones, *Between Islam and Byzantium*, 57–63.
[151] Eastmond and Jones, "Robing, Power, and Legitimacy," 161.
[152] Jones, *Between Byzantium and Islam*, 57–59.
[153] On the cushion throne (called either *taxt* or *gah*) of royal figures in the Arsacid era, see, for example, Garsoïan, *Epic Histories* IV.16, V.24. See also in Garsoïan's translation the (third) appendix of technical terms, s.v. "barj;'" "bazmakan/bazmocʿkʿ;" "gah/gahoykʿ."

The palace and church at Ałtʿamar proclaimed in vivid visual and architectural language the goal that Gagik was able to shortly realize: the convergence of pan-Armenian political and religious power in this new center of Vaspurakan.[154] The new palace served as a fit royal residence of this newly minted Armenian "king of kings," and was intended to match in its architectural scale, artistry, and luxurious entertainment, the ʿAbbāsid palaces at Partaw (Bardhaʿa) and Sāmarrāʾ.[155] The construction of the Church of the Holy Cross served as a fit place to celebrate not just a royal liturgy, but also a patriarchal one. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Catholicos Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi (sed. 898 – 924/5) left the traditional catholicosal residence at Duin in the midst of Yūsuf's military campaigns against the Bagratids in the 920s and took refuge under Gagik's protection in Vaspurakan. Gagik was then able to successfully orchestrate to the catholicate the next four catholicoi all from nearby southern houses of Vaspurakan — three from Ṙštunikʿ and one from Mokkʿ — and maintain their ongoing residence beside him on Ałtʿamar Island. Obviously, this would have ensured that these catholicoi would be more beholden to King Gagik and pursue policies that aligned with his interests. While the traditional way a catholicos was elected was primarily through the participation of bishops called together in council for that purpose, a recent precedent had been set by the first Bagratid king — then "prince of princes (*իշխան իշխանաց*)" — Ašot, by which the preeminent prince or king took a leading role in the catholicosal election. In his *History*, Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi relates that Ašot was the principal agent in choosing Gēorg II of Gaṙni (sed. 877 – 897): "Then the prince of princes Ašot chose an honorable man from the household of the catholicate named Gēorg, who was from the town of Gaṙni, and ordered him to

[154] Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory," 215–16.
[155] Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate," 246.

be ordained to the prelacy of the house of Tʿorgom (Togarmah)."[156] The Bagratuni kings succeeding Ašot did not however enjoy the kind of undivided loyalty that Ašot did and thus were usually not in a position to claim the prerogative of making a catholicosal appointment.[157] Upon Catholicos Gēorg's death, King Smbat I Bagratuni thus returned to the traditional method of calling a council to choose the next catholicos. This much broader participation in choosing the next catholicos, Maštocʿ (sed. 897 – 898) is represented by Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi in the following way: "the king, the most senior princes, and the most honorable freemen…appointed him to the throne of the Holy Illuminator, Grigor."[158] The same procedure was followed for the appointment of the next catholicos, Yovhannēs himself (sed. 898 – ca. 924). Commenting on his own election, Yovhannēs writes, "After Maštocʿ, I, Yovhannēs, who wrote this book…was led to the holy throne, not because of my worthiness, but because I could not refuse the order of the king and the multitude of other *naxarars*."[159] While Yovhannēs does not mention the presence of bishops or other clergy in either of these two elections, Krikor Maksoudian comments that they must have taken part in the council. The lack of reference to clerics is likely due to the fact that his *History* is addressed to the rulers of Armenia and is meant to highlight their role in events.[160]

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[156] ***Ապա իշխանն իշխանաց Աչոտ ընտրեալ զայր մի պատուական յընտանաց տան կաթողիկոսարանին Գէորգ անուն, որ էր ի գիւղաքաղաքէն Գառնոյ, հրամայէ ձեռնադրել զնա յառաջնորդութիւն տանս Թորգոմայ։*** Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi, *History of Armenia* 28, *MH* 11:442.13.

[157] Maksoudian, *Chosen of God*, 36.

[158] ***Թագաւորն եւ գահամեծար իշխանքն եւ պատուական արք ազատք…կացուցին զնա յաթոռ սուրբ Լուսաւորչին Գրիգորի։*** Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi, *History of Armenia* 36, *MH* 11:470.6.

[159] ***Զկնի սորա…ես…Յովհաննէս, որ զսոյն զայս գրեցի գիրս, ոչ ըստ արժանեաց ածայ յաթոռ սրբութեան, թերեւս ոչ կարացեալ դիմակ դոյ հրամանի արքային եւ կամ այլոց եւս նախարարակոյտ բազմութեանն։*** Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi, *History of Armenia* 36, *MH* 11:470.8.

[160] "Hovhannēs' silence about the presence of bishops and clergy in general at these two elections—one of them his own—raises serious problems. We must look for an answer in his *History*. Unlike other medieval historical works in Armenian, Hovhannēs' treatise is addressed to the rulers of Armenia and contains a specific political message about cooperation, peace, and unity in Christian Caucasia. In the *History* there is almost no information given about contemporary church life. Hovhannēs mentions by name only one Armenian bishop, and mentions him only as a martyr. He refrains from referring to ecclesiastical issues, ceremonies and problems that have no bearing on the design and message of his treatise. We know nothing about even his own activities from the History, but rather from other historians and epigraphical evidence. This approach to the events suggests that Hovhannēs was trying to

While we have little direct evidence for the manner in which the next three catholicoi — Stepʿanos II Ṙštuni (sed. ca. 925), Tʿēodoros I Ṙštuni (sed. 925 – 934/5), Ełišē Ṙštuni (sed. 934/5 – 941/2) — were elected, we may infer the importance of King Gagik Arcruni's role by information given by Anania Mokacʿi on his own election (sed. 941/2 – ca. 963/4 or 965/6). Referencing those involved in his own election to the catholicate, Anania Mokacʿi mentions first "Lord Gagik Arcruni, King of Armenia" and then "Lord Abas Bagratuni…King of Greater Armenia," followed by "their royal scions as well as all the bishops, monastics, and other ascetic solitaries, and the requests and unanimous appeals of abbots."[161] This, along with the fact that all four were from southern houses close to King Gagik's capitals at Ostan and Ałtʿamar and kept their residence there until Gagik's death, indicates the leading role he took in the election of Anania, and by implication, his three predecessors.[162] This highlights the way in which Gagik made Vaspurakan the concrete center of Armenian political and ecclesiastical power throughout his reign. Thus, from the early 920s, when Yovhannēs relocated to Ałtʿamar, to the late 940s after Gagik's death, when Anania Mokacʿi moved the residence back to the Bagratid realm in the North (at Argina), the center of political and ecclesiastical power in Armenia had migrated south from the Bagratid realm and Duin to be centered in Ṙštunikʿ of Vaspurakan, at the twin capitals

impress the contemporary kings and princes with the fact that they and their predecessors were the ones who elected him and his predecessors to the highest office of catholicos of Greater Armenia, and that despite their divisiveness, they owed respect to his office and authority as an arbitrator and high justice. In a context of this nature, any mention of participating bishops would weaken Hovhannēs' argument. We must also add that the participation of feudal lords in both elections indicates that councils indeed took place. It is impossible to imagine that a council of feudal lords or *nakharar*s would convene to elect a catholicos without any bishops participating." Maksoudian, *Chosen of God*, 36–37.

[161] ***Տեառնն Գագկայ Արծրունոյ Հայոց Թագաւորի… տեառնն Աբասայ Բագրատունոյ…Մեծի Հայոց արքայի… սոցին թագազան զարմիցն եւ համաւրէն եպիսկոպոսաց եւ վանականաց եւ այլ ճգնաւոր մենաւորաց, առաջնորդից հայցմանց եւ միաձայն բողոքանաց*** Anania Mokacʿi, "Concerning the Rebellion of the House of the Albanians," *MH* 10:256.6–7.

[162] See also Hatsʿuni, *Katʿoghikosakan ĕntrutʿiwn*, 33–34; Maksoudian, *Chosen of God*, 37.

of Ostan and Ałtʿamar, represented in the persons of King Gagik and the catholicoi from southern houses.

Narekavankʿ: Making a Spiritual-Intellectual Center at the Ecclesiastical and Political Capital

Gagik's efforts at centralization around Ostan and Ałtʿamar island still lacked one major source of societal power: the charismatic, spiritual, and intellectual authority of a major monastery. My view is that the founding of Narek monastery during this period formed part of Gagik's larger effort to centralize Armenian power and influence around Ostan and the island of Ałtʿamar, but this time targeting the spiritual-intellectual-monastic realm and involving another southern migration, this time of two locally famous *vardapets*, Anania and his companion Petros.

The founding of Narek is not mentioned in the *History* of Tʿovma or the anonymous continuator. Why? As I will discuss below, the founding occurred at the end of Gagik's reign — or at the very beginning of that of his immediate successor, Derenik-Ašot (ca. 943 – 953/8) — and thus it could not have been mentioned by Tʿovma, whose narrative cuts off in the first decade of the 900s. Further, we have seen that the anonymous continuator is not a continuator in the sense that he was picking up Tʿovma's *History* and continuing the narrative. Rather, it is a panegyrically-infused account written shortly after the death of Gagik in order to eulogize his greatest deeds. Naturally, in such an account it is no surprise that many building projects are overlooked, as the writer focuses his attention on the most impressive ones, like the palace and church of Ałtʿamar. The last building project he mentions is that of the church of the Holy Cross at Ałtʿamar (completed in 921). Narek monastery was famous not so much for its architectural

brilliance — the main criterion for the anonymous continuator's selection of subject matter to eulogize — but for its spiritual and intellectual brilliance, which even so was still in the early years of its development at the time of the anonymous continuator's eulogy. It is thus understandable why the anonymous continuator overlooked mentioning the founding of Narek monastery in his composition.[163]

Had Tʿovma lived until the founding of Narek monastery, we would likely have had a description of it from him. One may surmise the kind of thing he would have written from the description of a monastery founded in an earlier period of Gagik's building activity, the monastery of St. Peter's (S. Petrosi vankʿ) at Mahṙast.[164] Tʿovma writes:

> At the time that Gagik was general [i.e., 895–904] he had begun his constructions. He built a high embankment at the village of Mahṙast on the eastern bank of the river facing Ostan of Ṙštunikʿ, where there had previously been the walled palace of the Patrician Vard Ṙštuni, descendant of Hayk. He appointed as abbot a certain priest named Yovhannēs from the province of Boguni and the village of Anstan. Here he instituted a settlement of monks and entrusted their direction to the above-mentioned priest, who was a gentle man, humble and honorable in his way of life, most appropriate for [the position] to which he had been called. The general set aside for the monastery sufficient villages for the reception of pilgrims and the care of the poor. There he built a splendid and glorious church dedicated to Saint Peter the apostle, the invincible custodian of hell, and to the right and left of the altar another two churches.[165]

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[163] And also why the foundation of Narekavankʿ is left out of Zaroui Pogossian's otherwise thorough study of the Arcruni royal rise to power through political accession of territory and their religious patronage and sacralization of newly won territory through religious building projects. See Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory." It likely was left outside the scope of her study because Narekavankʿ is nowhere mentioned by Tʿovma Arcruni or the Anonymous Continuators in the *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ*, on which her study largely depends.

[164] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 546, p. 98; Oskean, *Vaspurakan-Vani vankʿerě*, 187. NB: Thierry references incorrect page numbers to Oskean in the bibliography section on this monastery.

[165] ***Իսկ ի տիրական զաւրավարութեանն Գագկայ սկզբնաւորեալ ձեռակերտ իւր՝ չինեաց զհողաբլուր բարդաւանդակն ի Մահուաչտ գեաւղ՝ յափն գետոյն յելս կոյս, որ հայի յՈստանն Ռշտունեաց, յորում տեղւոջ յառաջագոյն ապարանք պարսպաւորք եղեալ էր Վարդ պատրկի Ռշտունւոյ հայկազնոյ, եւ վերակացու նմա թողեալ զՅովաննէս ումն քահանայ ի Բոգունի գաւառէ, ի յԱնստան գեղջէ։ Ցորում տեղւոջ բանակ կրաւնաւորաց կարգեաց, եւ հաւատաց զառաջնորդութիւնն նախասացեալ քահանային, որ էր այր հեզ, ցածուն եւ պատուական վարուք եւ պաշաճագոյն յոր կոչեցաւն. եւ զատուցանէ զաւրավարն վանից գեաւղս՝ բաւական առ ընկալումն հիւրոցն եւ ի տեսչութիւն աղքատացն։ Շինէ անդ եկեղեցի վայելչապէս պայծառութեամբ եւ անուանէ զնա յանուն Սուրբ Պետրոսի առաքելոյն՝ անպարտելի դժոխական առաջնորդի։ Եւ յաջմէ եւ յահեկէ սեղանոյն այլ եւս Բ. եկեղեցիս։*** Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.29, *MH* 11:258.43–46; tr. Thomson, 317–18 (slightly modified).

By this, we may deduce a pattern of building a monastery nearby an important city (in this case, Ostan), appointing a respected abbot to regulate its life, and providing for its means through endowed villages. We can infer a similar arrangement for the founding of Narek.

Nevertheless, there were some crucial differences that signal the different *raisons d'être* for the two monasteries. Since St. Peter's monastery at Mahṙast was located near the capital of Ostan and not far from the southern trade route, part of its role was to provide lodging for the reception of pilgrims or other wayfarers as well as social services for the poor, in addition to being a place of prayer. One notes the parallel with Hoṙomos monastery, founded not far from the future Bagratid capital of Ani, which was known, among other things, for its hospitality in providing lodging and other sustenance to travelers, merchants, and wayfarers.[166] Narekavankʿ, on the other hand, was founded on the less traveled side of Ostan not far from the southern shore of Lake Van facing Ałtʿamar island and closer to the latter than the former. Its more remote geographical location, away from the hustle and bustle of the highly trafficked trade route, signals its focus on spiritual, intellectual, and liturgical/musical activity. Likewise, nearby — about an hour's walk away — were caves on a small mountain were monks could go out to spend time in solitary ascetic or contemplative activity.[167]

The selection of such high-powered scholars as Anania and Petros to lead the direction of the monastery also indicates that Narek was conceived with the purpose of charting new territory, by creating a major monastic school for the region. If not the very first of its kind in this regard, it was one of the very first, which, along with major centers like Hałbat and Sanahin

[166] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:751.25–26, tr. Greenwood, 225. On the monastery, see Vardanyan, *Hoṙomos Monastery*.
[167] For a description of these caves and with photos of the site in its contemporary state, see Hakobyan, "Surb Grigor Narekatsʿu chgnaranĕ."

founded later in the century, became the model for the subsequent monastic academies that were the producers and transmitters of Armenian high culture into the early modern period. The *vardapets* Anania and Petros had made a name for themselves in monasteries in southern Bagratid Armenia near the border with Vaspurakan before they were invited to lead Narek monastery.[168] As noted in an earlier chapter, their contemporary, Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi, who belonged to the monastery of Kamrǰajor in Aršarunikʿ also in southern Bagratid territory, mentions that they had dwelt at monasteries in Antakʿ in Hawnunikʿ and Xawarajor in Aršarunikʿ before being called to Narek.[169] That they held something of local celebrity status among religious figures of the time is noted by another piece of evidence, namely their being singled out — as is Narek monastery itself — in the chapter of Stepʿanos Tarōneci's *Universal History* that otherwise focuses on monasteries and monastics/hermits/*vardapets* in the northern, western, and eastern portions of Armenia, i.e. those with Bagratid connections. In his list of monasteries founded in this period, Narek is the only one in Vaspurakan to be mentioned: "Also at this time, Narek was built, in the district of Ṙštunikʿ, under the same regulation, with multi-talented singers who added brilliance to worship, and learned scholars."[170] Likewise, among the hermits and *vardapets* mentioned in the chapter, Petros and Anania are the only who are known to have been active in a monastery in Vaspurakan. In a section praising *vardapets* of the day, Tarōnecʿi singles out among a short list of clerics, "Petros, true commentator of the holy Scriptures; and Anania, a great scholar, who was a monk of Narek. His book was directed

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[168] Anania's selection may also have had to do with his familial ties to Xosrov Anjewacʿi, although the latter was not yet bishop at the time of Anania's appointment to abbot of Narek.

[169] Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi, *Explanation of Feasts*, *MH* 10:718–22 at 720.20.

[170] ***Այսպէս եւ յայսմ ժամանակիս չինեցաւ Նարեկ ի Ռշտունեաց գաւառին նոյն կարգաւորութեամբ, բազմազարդ պաշտաւնապայծառ երգեցողովք եւ գրական գիտողաւք։*** Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:751.27, tr. Greenwood, 225.

against the sect of Tʿondrakacʿikʿ and other heresies."[171] Their renown must have been so great that even after they went south to Vaspurakan, Stepʿanos could not fail to mention them. It is possible that he had met one or both of them himself, since he mentions that he had seen and spoken in his youth with some of the *vardapets* he wrote about.[172] Undoubtedly too, Anania's and Petros' renown grew exponentially through their activity at Narek, which will be explored in future chapters. The only surviving *varkʿ* ('life, biography') of Anania, which is contained in a lone synaxarion (*Yaysmawurkʿ*) from Isfahan in 1719, singles out precisely this notable fact, namely, that Anania's and Narek's fame extended beyond the confines of Vaspurakan, even into Bagratid Armenia:

> He became even more learned in the philosophical arts to the point that the unattainable spirituality of his knowledge became proclaimed abroad in every place, even in the kingdom of Armenia of the pious Abas Bagratuni, from the land of Ṙštunikʿ where the very renowned monastery called Narek was built.[173]

Monastic Foundations and Armenian Dynastic Rivalry

The *naxarar* dynasts' monastic foundations in this period were, among other things, used as a means of gaining regional influence and thus formed part of the way in which they competed with rival rulers for prestige and control over an area. The monastery of Sewan (Sewanay vankʿ[174]), founded between 871–874, was the earliest of the new cenobitic foundations begun after Ašot Bagratuni's rise and marks the beginning of two centuries of major monastic

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[171] ***Եւ Պետրոս, հաւասար մեկնիչ Գրոց սրբոց. եւ Անանիա, փիլիսոփայն մեծ, որ եւ վանական Նարեկի։ Սորա եւ դիրս է ասացեալ ընդդէմ աղանդոյն Թոնդրակաց եւ այլոց հերձուածոց։*** Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:753.51–52, tr. Greenwood, 229.

[172] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:754.53.

[173] ***Եւ առաւել եւս հմուտ լեալ փիլիսոփայական արհեստից, մինչ զի յամ[ենայն] տեղիս տարածեալ հռչակեցաւ անհաս ոգե[ւորու]թի[ւն] գիտուե[ան] նորին՝ եւ ի թագաւորութե[ան] Հայոց բարեպաշտին աբասայ բագրատունւոյն յերկրէն ռշտունեաց. իբրեւ չինեցաւ մեծահռչակ վանն որ կոչի Նարեկ։*** *Yaysmawurkʿ*, M 7359, 183r. For the full text of the *varkʿ*, see Appendix A.

[174] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 728, p. 129.

building activity.[175] Monastic foundations soon dotted the landscape of all three of the major domains controlled by the Siwni, Bagratuni, and Arcruni.

Siwnikʿ became a particularly fecund place for cenobitic foundations in the late ninth and early tenth century, as the local princes vied to bolster their prestige in competition with one another and the newly crowned Bagratuni monarchs. Among the monasteries established, refounded, or enlarged in Siwnikʿ in this period, mention could be made of Šołagay vankʿ,[176] founded ca. 885 on the southwestern shore of Lake Sewan in Gełakʿunikʿ and Vanevanay vankʿ,[177] founded — or, perhaps, expanded/refounded — in 903 in the same district on the southern shore of Lake Sewan.[178] Tatʿewi vankʿ, enlarged already in 839, had its spiritual prestige bolstered even more with the discovery of a piece of the True Cross and a reliquary commissioned to house it bestowed upon the monastery in 881.[179] A number of important relics were also housed there contributing to its unparalleled prestige in the region established by the late ninth/early tenth century.[180] The construction of the main church, the *katʿołikē*, was begun in 895 and completed in 906 in grand ceremony,[181] and expansion of its estate holdings increased throughout the tenth century, as Siwni princes lavishly endowed it in an effort to make it their new spiritual center to compete with the rising influence of the monastery of Sewan (and in the

[175] Maksoudian, "A Note on the Monasteries," 213–14; Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*; *Tragédie*, 8–9; Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 185–86.
[176] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 809, p. 143.
[177] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 712, p. 126.
[178] Maksoudian, "A Note on the Monasteries," 213. For the location of these two monasteries, see Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 91, p. 115.
[179] This actually became the third piece of the True Cross owned by the monastery. See Pogossian, "Relics, Rulers, Patronage," 161.
[180] Pogossian, "Relics, Rulers, Patronage," 159–62.
[181] The list of attendees reads like a who's who of early tenth century political and religious nobility. See Pogossian, "Relics, Rulers, Patronage," 161–62.

wake of the decline of Makʿenocʿ), which was under Bagratuni patronage.[182] Also in Siwnikʿ, Xotakeracʿ (Kʿarkopʿi vankʿ[183]) was founded in the late ninth or early tenth century, Vahannavankʿ[184] in 911, Gndevankʿ[185] in 936, and Cʿaxacʿkʿari vankʿ[186] in the second quarter of the tenth century in the district of Vayocʿ Jor.[187]

After Sewanay vankʿ, monastic foundations and building activity continued apace in the Bagratid realm. Mention could be made of Kamrǰajor vankʿ (Zōra vankʿ),[188] founded in the seventh century and refounded/enlarged in the second quarter of the tenth century, and Kapoytakʿari vankʿ,[189] founded ca. 950, both of them in the district of Aršarunikʿ in the south of Bagratid Armenia during the reign of Abas I Bagratuni (r. 929 – 953).[190] Also during the reign of Abas, in the district of Širak in the heart of Bagratid Armenia, Hoṙomos Monastery[191] was founded ca. 930 not far from the future Bagratid capital of Ani and in the same district Dprevankʿ[192] was enlarged in the same period.[193] The significant foundations in the western spheres of Bagratid influence include S. Grigor of Xlajor[194] ca. 930 in the district of Derǰan,

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[182] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 209–11; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 94, p. 118.
[183] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 644, p. 115.
[184] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 704, p. 125.
[185] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 638, p. 114.
[186] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 640, p. 115. See Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi Asołik, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:752.34, tr. Greenwood, 22. French translation in Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*; *Tragédie*, 12.
[187] Maksoudian, "A Note on the Monasteries," 213; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 94, p. 118.
[188] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 317, p. 59.
[189] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 318, p. 60.
[190] See *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:750–54.19–56, tr.Greenwood, 224–30. French translation in Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*; *Tragédie*, 9–13.
[191] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 313, p. 59. On this monastery, see Vardanyan, *Hoṙomos Monastery*.
[192] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 975, p. 173. A monastic community had existed there at least as early as the seventh century.
[193] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi Asołik, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:751–52.25–3, tr. Greenwood, *Universal History*, 225–27. French translation in Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*; *Tragédie*, 9–12.
[194] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 199, p. 38.

Karmir Vankʿ,[195] in 936 in the village of Hinjkʿ in the district of Karin, and Movsisavankʿ[196] (S. Gēorg of Xulē, Xulēvankʿ) refounded around the same time in the district of Karberd (Xarberd).[197] Abas' successor, Ašot III *Ołormac* 'The Merciful' (r. 953 – 977), continued the ambitious program of religious building, notably with two important monastic centers founded in the northeastern region of Bagratid Armenia in the district of Loṙi, Sanahin[198] in 965 and Hałbat[199] in 966.[200] Not far to the south, Hałarjin[201] was established in 966. In the late tenth and throughout the eleventh century, Sanahin and Hałbat formed the spiritual center of the Kiwrikeans, a Bagratid line that established and ruled over the kingdom of Loṙi-Tašir (Tašir-Joraget).[202] This pattern of heightened building activity continued until the later stages of the Byzantine expansion and Seljuk invasions of the eleventh century.

A recent study by Zaroui Pogossian has drawn attention to several of the factors at play in the foundation of Sewanavankʿ and how it is paradigmatic of the way in which monasteries in the period were used to bolster a family's regional prestige.[203] Thus, a closer look will be helpful for understanding the foundation of Narekavankʿ in light of these broader regional processes.

The project was a joint venture between the Bagratuni house — with the involvement of Ašot and his daughter Mariam, widow of the Siwni prince of Gełakʿunikʿ (also spelled

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[195] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 212, p. 40; Oskean, *Bardzr Haykʿi Vankʿerĕ*, 125–40.
[196] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 119, p. 24.
[197] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:751–52.28–34, tr. Greenwood, 226–27. French translation in Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*; *Tragédie*, 11–12. This monastery was in fact in the confines of the Byzantine Empire at the time of its founding. See Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 209. But since its founder Movsēs was from the district of Tarōn, which was then still a Bagratid principality, it is appropriate to consider it here.
[198] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 758, p. 134. See Ghalpakhtchian, *Il complesso monastic di Sanahin*.
[199] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 760, p. 135. See Mnatsʿakanyan, *Il complesso monastic di Haghbat*.
[200] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.8, *MH* 15:755.1–8, tr. Greenwood, 231–32.
[201] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 681, p. 121.
[202] Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, p. 114, map 95, p. 119.
[203] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan."

Gełarkʿunikʿ) Vasak Gabuṙ — and the Siwni nobility of Gełakʿunikʿ.[204] The Siwni, as mentioned, were one of the most prominent *naxarar*doms of the late ninth to early eleventh centuries, of third importance in the period after the Bagratuni and Arcruni. Long known for secessionist tendencies, an autonomous Siwni kingdom would be established about a century later. In the current phase of relations, the Bagratuni were seeking to make ties with Siwni nobility, while also looking to extend their influence across the Armenian realm. In this regard, there was a geographic importance to the location of the monastery (the northwestern portion of Lake Sewan) in light of the power politics at play in the period. Gełakʿunikʿ, which included Lake Sewan, was the Siwni border district separating the Siwni heartland located to the South and East from Bagratid territory to the North and West.[205] A monastic foundation was one among other soft power strategies, including relic patronage and marriage alliances with other prominent Armenian noble families, especially the Siwni and Arcruni, that the Bagratids employed in an effort to extend their influence.[206]

Siwnikʿ, as mentioned, already had its own important monastic centers, including the renowned monastery of Makʿenocʿ (Makʿenocʿacʿ vankʿ)[207] also located in Gełakʿunikʿ to the southeast of Lake Sewan and so further from the Bagratuni realm, and the rising monastic center of Tatʿew (Tatʿew vankʿ),[208] even further to the South and East in Siwnikʿ.[209] Such spiritual centers brought prestige and were sources of soft power for the Siwni nobles who patronized

[204] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 185–86.
[205] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 186–87; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 87, p. 111.
[206] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 187–91.
[207] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 768, p. 136.
[208] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 666, p. 119.
[209] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 193; 208–13; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 105, p. 125.

them, helping to bolster their rule and legitimacy vis-à-vis their competitive peers. Founding the monastery at Sewan was a way for the Bagratunis to compete with these other religious centers in Siwnikʿ, which could only work effectively if Sewanay vankʿ became a renowned center in its own right, to rival the prestige of Makʿenocʿ and later Tatʿew. The motivation for the local Siwni prince of Gełakʿunikʿ to have such an illustrious monastery in one's own district, was of course that it would give him a boost in his more local competition with rival Siwni princes to the South and East.

In order to bolster the prestige of the monastery of Sewan vis-à-vis the monasteries of Makʿenocʿ and Tatʿew, the Bagratuni sought to enhance it through both economic and spiritual means. The Bagratunis provided for the economic security of the monastery by making significant endowments to it. These donations included five villages on the banks of Lake Sewan, privileges to the prime hunting location of Kŕakcin, and vineyards in Gaṙni, Erevan, and elsewhere.[210] Furthermore, the monastery was located not far from one of the important trade routes of this period, the one connecting Dabīl/Duin with Bardhʿa/Partaw, and thus its own positioning as well as that of its endowed holdings likely meant that it benefited economically from the increased traffic and business in the area.[211] Perhaps just as significant was its location on an island, which would have protected it from plundering and attacks, like how Gagik chose Ałtʿamar to build his great palace and church. The remote nature of the island monastery also of course made it a fit venue for spiritual activity.

They bestowed spiritual prestige upon it in a number of ways, first of all through the donation of relics and precious objects. During a visit in 882, the prince of princes Ašot

[210] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 203.
[211] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 204–08.

bestowed upon the monastery a Byzantine cross luxuriously clad in gold and precious stones, which had been given to him by Emperor Basil I.[212] As with the Arcruni examples mentioned above, precious objects such as these as well as relics of saints or fragments of the True Cross were important tools in heightening the spiritual prestige of a church or monastery. This would in turn reflect positively on the ruler who bestowed the gift and could be used to secure or assert political influence over a territory. It also promoted pilgrimage and thus would generate income, for example in the form of pilgrim donations for prayers or the sponsorship of liturgies to be said in their name at the site.

Next, they convinced one of the most celebrated holy men of the day, an ascetic named Maštocʿ, to become the monastery's first abbot.[213] Maštocʿ was from a family of priestly pedigree, and was himself educated in the renowned monastery of Makʿenocʿ, who had then lived an ascetic life of the prestigious anchoretic variety for thirty-three years, becoming renowned after the Near Eastern pattern of eremitic holy men,[214] before becoming abbot of the monastery of Sewan at age sixty.[215] This is the same Maštocʿ who became catholicos at the end of his life (897–898), through the influence of Bagratuni King Smbat. Apart from the interlude of Arcruni influence, it is striking how connected the monastery of Sewanavankʿ was to the catholical throne in this period. Three more monks issuing from the monastery of Sewan or with close connection to Maštocʿ attained the position of catholicos after him: Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi "the Historian" (sed. 898 – 924), who was probably educated by Maštocʿ himself, Stepʿanos III Sewancʿi (sed. 970 – 972/3), who was one-time abbot of the monastery of

[212] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 186, 197, 203.
[213] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 192–201.
[214] See the classic article on the topic, Brown, "Rise and Function of the Holy Man."
[215] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 193.

Sewan, and Sargis Sewancʿi (sed. 992 –1019).[216] Other prominent clerics and bishops also issued from the monastery.[217]

The spiritual prestige of a monastery was thus manifested not only in precious objects and relics of the holy dead but in the bodies of the holy men associated with the monastery. One of the features that marks Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi's description of religious life in this period is the close association he makes between ascetics, virtuous abbots, and learned *vardapets* with each of the monastic foundations he describes, such as Yovhannēs, Polykarpos, and Samuēl with Kamrǰajor, Yovhannēs with Hoṙomos, and Sion with S. Grigor of Xlajor, to cite just a few examples.[218] In a striking passage, after detailing the famous holy men, ascetics, and *vardapets* of the age, Stepʿanos gives a glimpse of the profound impression they left upon him personally: "In our youth we saw some of these in their old age with our own eyes, tasting the sweet delights of their words."[219] Stepʿanos had personally met some of the men of the age he chronicles and the great monasteries in which they lived, and also heard tales about their founding from older monastics he knew. In this passage, we get a glimpse of the kind of spiritual influence and power that was located in the bodies of the holy men that populated the new cenobitic structures, transferring their sanctity to those spaces.

Returning to Narek in light of these paradigmatic exempla, one can see how King Gagik's arranging for the relocation of Anania and Petros from monasteries in Bagratid Armenia to the newly established Narekavankʿ in Vaspurakan nearby the political and ecclesiastical

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[216] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 199.
[217] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 199–200.
[218] See *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:750–54.19–56, tr. Greenwood, 224–30. French translation in Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*; *Tragédie*, 9–13.
[219] ***Զոմանս ի սոցանէ ի ծերուխթեան իւրեանց՝ ի տղայուխթեան մերում տեսաք աչաւք մերովք՝ ճաշակելով ի քաղցր ճաշակաց բանից նոցա։*** *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:754.53, tr. Greenwood, 229.

capital of Ostan and Ałtʿamar, could have been perceived as a kind of spiritual theft from the Bagratids. It is also of course possible that Anania was encouraged or persuaded to come to Vaspurakan because of his family connection with the influential tenth-century bishop of Anjewacʿikʿ in Vaspurakan, Xosrov. Anania's paternal cousin was married to Xosrov, before he was ordained bishop. Moving to Narek, of course, must also have been an appealing advancement or promotion for two early career *vardapets* such as Petros and Anania. Coming to lead a newly established monastery right near the current ecclesiastical and political capital of Armenia would have meant access to unparalleled resources put at their disposal in order to build up the monastery into a flourishing center of intellectual and spiritual activity. This would have involved the ability to acquire or arrange for the copying of many manuscripts to fill the monastery's library. Judging from the works available to Anania and Grigor, who was sent as a child to the monastery shortly after his mother's death, the library was soon built up to include all the most important philosophical and patristic works available in Armenian.[220]

The Foundation of Narekavankʿ: The Agents and the Date

It is sometimes stated in contemporary scholarly discourse on the topic that Anania founded Narek monastery.[221] It is important to distinguish two types of founding — arranging the financial backing and endowment for the monastery and building its infrastructure on the one hand and instituting and directing its material, spiritual, liturgical, and intellectual affairs on the other. The former belongs to the *naxarar* dynasts and the latter to the abbots. As for Narek, as I have attempted to demonstrate in this study, the idea to found Narek monastery likely came from

[220] For an idea of the kind of texts available to Anania's protégé Grigor, see, Terian, "Gregory of Narek," 280–83.
[221] See, for example, Mahé, "L'église arménienne," 515.

King Gagik himself and was funded and built at his order to be a spiritual center near his political and ecclesiastical capital. Responsibility for the latter, like in the case above with Yovhannēs at Mahṙast, fell to Anania in his role as the monastery's first abbot. The *varkʿ* corroborates this latter point: "And when many monks had gathered into the monastery, then they constrained him and appointed him as leader of the holy congregation to regulate the brothers according to his knowledge and prudence."[222] In this sense, he was the monastery's spiritual founder, but it is important to also note that he was likely not the one who made the decision to have it built. That was most likely accomplished through the vision and resources of the Arcruni king, Gagik.

The foundation of Narekavankʿ can thus be interpreted as part of a coordinated effort of Gagik Arcruni to consolidate Armenian political, ecclesiastical, and cultural capital around the domain of Ṙštunikʿ in Vaspurakan, representing the spiritual and intellectual side of this matrix. Narek was founded after the building of the palace and Church of the Holy Cross and the relocation of the catholicate to Ałtʿamar, which events took place in the 910s–920s. Founding Narek meant establishing a major new monastic and spiritual center near Ałtʿamar — not just building up and expanding ones formerly founded and patronized by other southern houses as was the case with Hogeacʿ Vankʿ in Anjewacʿikʿ or Varag monastery in Ṙštunikʿ — and thus in the heart of Arcruni Vaspurakan to add spiritual prestige and influence to the political and ecclesiastical capital. The building of a new spiritual center just a few kilometers from Ałtʿamar Island by two prestigious *vardapets* would have united a powerful spiritual center to the ecclesiastical and political center already established on Ałtʿamar in the persons of the catholicoi

[222] ***Եւ ի ժողովիլ բազմաց միանձանց. ի վանսն հարկեալ զնա կացուցին առաջնորդ ս[ուր]բ ուխտին կարկաւորել զեղբարսն ըստ գիտութե[ան] եւ ըստ խոհեմութե[ան] իւրոյ։*** *Yaysmawurkʿ*, M 7359, 183r.

and King Gagik. Inviting two famous *vardapets*, Anania and Petros, who before were residing southern Bagratid districts, is a further example of the way in which Gagik co-opted resources and institutions from the Bagratid realm and patronized or sponsored their relocation and residence in close proximity to his political center.

I emphasize this at length because a strand of previous scholarship has ascribed the agency of founding Narek monastery not to the joint cooperation of King Gagik with Anania and Petros but instead to Armenian monks fleeing Byzantine anti-miaphysite persecution during the reign of Romanos I Lekapenos (r. 920–944). These monks are then said to have fled into the Bagratid and Arcrunid realms and founded a numer of monasteries during the reign of Abas I Bagratuni (r. 929–953), the most famous of which are listed by Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi. As observed in a study by Krikor Maksoudian, the dubious correlation between persecutions during the reign of the Byzantine emperor and the founding of the monasteries mentioned in Tarōnecʿi's *History* seems to have its origin in the works of two thirteenth-century historians, Kirakos Ganjakecʿi and Vardan Arewelcʿi, through a misreading of Tarōnecʿi.[223]

The locus classicus for the foundation of monasteries in the tenth century is the *Universal History* of Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi (Asołik). Tarōnecʿi's *History* was completed in the year 1004/5 and presented to its commissioner, Catholicos Sargis Sewancʿi (sed. 992/3 – 1019).[224] It is the only contemporary history to provide details about the monastic foundations and famous monks and *vardapets* of the period. In fact, Tarōnecʿi devotes a great deal of attention to such subjects. He was educated in a monastic community in his youth,[225] and makes much of his personal

[223] Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries."
[224] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 1–7.
[225] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 3–4.

acquaintance with many of the famous monks and *vardapets* of the era.[226] He also visited and stayed in different monasteries in order to conduct the research necessary to compose his history. The information he provides on monastic foundations of the period is thus generally reliable, in many cases being based on first-hand experience.

The seventh and eighth chapters of his *History* include detailed information about a number of monasteries founded in Armenia during the reigns of Bagratuni kings Abas I (929–953) and Ašot III *Ołormac* 'The Merciful' (953 – 977).[227] In the chapters, Tarōnecʿi mentions twelve different monasteries founded in the period, most of them in northern, western, and eastern Armenia, Narek being the sole example from Vaspurakan. When it comes to narrating events of the tenth century, Tarōnecʿi tends to focus on events that concern the Bagratuni realms and organizes his chronology based on the reigns of Bagratuni kings as well as the reigns of catholicoi and Byzantine emperors. Therefore, it is not surprising that monasteries in Vaspurakan are mostly absent, with Narekavankʿ alone receiving light coverage. The fact that Narekavankʿ was the only southern monastery mentioned by him signals its wide renown and also perhaps the memory of Anania and Petros as monks who dwelt in monasteries in the Bagratuni realm before they went south to Narek.

Nowhere in these chapters or elsewhere in his history does Tarōnecʿi mention a persecution of Armenian monks having taken place in the Byzantine Empire during the reign of Emperor Romanos Lekapenos. In fact, one of the monasteries mentioned by Tarōnecʿi, Movsisavankʿ (S. Gēorg of Xulē, Xulēvankʿ)[228] was refounded in Karberd (Xarberd), which at

[226] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:754.53, tr. Greenwood, 229.
[227] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7–8, *MH* 15:749–58, tr. Greenwood, 222–36.
[228] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 119, p. 24.

the time was within the confines of the Byzantine Empire, something that would seemingly have been impossible if there was a policy of persecution of non-Chalcedonian Armenian monks instituted at that time.[229] As Maksoudian noted, had there been a multitude of Armenian clergy fleeing religious persecution in the 930s or 940s from the Byzantine Empire and involved in the founding of the monasteries, Tarōnecʿi, "a staunch anti-Chalcedonian historian" would certainly have mentioned it.[230] In later sections of his history, he spares no ink in discussing theological controversies and ecclesiastical conflicts between the imperial and Armenian churches. As the English translator of his history, historian Tim Greenwood has noted, Tarōnecʿi's history reveals "a clear antipathy to Byzantium," writing as he is in the wake of the ecclesiastical persecutions of the late tenth century and the Byzantine expansion into western and central Armenia, where Tarōnecʿi, as his *nisbah* indicates, came from.[231] Nor is there any mention of such persecutions during the reign of Lekapenos in any other Byzantine or Armenian historian or other source from the period.[232]

In fact, the period following the synod of Širakawan in 862/3, up until the renewal of Byzantine political expansion into Armenian territory in the second half of the tenth century has been noted by modern scholars as one of those rare periods of history that was generally marked by positive relations between the Byzantine and Armenian churches.[233] Evidence may be found in the correspondence of King Gagik with the Patriarch of Constantinople Nicholas Mystikos and Emperor Romanos Lekapenos, showing cooperative activity at the very time that such

[229] Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 209.
[230] Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 210.
[231] Greenwood, *Universal History*, vii.
[232] Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 204.
[233] On this council and its aftermath, see Maksoudian, "The Chalcedonian Issue;" Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Christ in Armenian Tradition*, 293–313; idem, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius*; Mahé, "L'église arménienne," 490. See further the fifth chapter of the present study.

persecutions were supposed to have taken place, as well as later evidence from the *De ceremoniis*, revealing diplomatic relations between the Roman Emperor with the Armenian kingdoms and princedoms up through the mid-tenth century.[234] The Syrian and Armenian immigrants welcomed into the newly acquired territory of Cappadocia in this period, discussed in the last chapter, is also indicative of the generally peaceable relations of the time. It is only in the latter part of the tenth century that the sources indicate confessional tension in those regions, which will be discussed in the fifth chapter.

As Maksoudian observed, the confusion seems to have arisen from Tarōnecʿi's description of the founding of the first monastery he mentioned, that of Kamrǰajor in the district of Aršarunikʿ "[whose] leader was father Yovhannēs who had been expelled from the western country, from the district of Egeracʿikʿ, by Chalcedonian man-confessing heretics who accepted only the humanity of Christ."[235] It seems that the thirteenth-century historians mentioned above, Kirakos Ganjakecʿi and Vardan Arewelcʿi, were unfamiliar with the location Egeracʿikʿ, and taking their clues from the phrase "western country" had supposed it to be a province of the Byzantine Empire. Thus, Kirakos writes:

> And after him Romanos [became emperor]. He persecuted all the Armenian clergy and priests who were in the land of the Greeks, since they did not accept the doctrine of Chalcedon. And coming to the land of Armenia at the time of Abas son of Smbat, they established monasteries: Kamrǰajor, Kaputkʿar in the district of Aršarunikʿ, and the renowned monastery called Hoṙomos, and Dprevankʿ in the district of Širak. They also built a church in the name of the All Holy Theotokos in the monastery called Sanahin within the confines of the city of Lōṙē. And since the elders were called hoṙomocʿ erecʿ

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[234] Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbors," 354–55; Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 204. For the correspondence, see Nicholas Mystikos, *Letters*, no. 139, pp. 446–51, *Book of Letters–1*, 295–301; *Book of Letters–2*, 540–49. For the relevant passage in the *De ceremoniis*, see Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae* II.48. For an updated Greek edition and extensive analysis, see Martin-Hisard, "Constantinople et les *archontes*."

[235] *որոյ առաջնորդ հայր Յովհաննէս, որ հալածեալ յարեւմտեայ աշխարհէն, յեգերացւոց գաւառէն, ի քաղկեդոնական մարդադաւան աղանդից։* Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:750.19, tr. Greenwood, *Universal History*, 224.

> ["elders of the Greeks"], the one monastery in Širak was named Hoṙomocʿ monastery, which is still to this day called Hoṙomecʿi monastery.[236]

Vardan Arewelcʿi's passage is similar and reads as follows:

> At his [King Abas's] time a large multitude of clerics who were driven out of the land of the Greeks for their orthodoxy came to our land [where] they built many monasteries: first Kamrǰajor, and then the monastery called Hoṙomos, presumably because they came from the regions of the Greeks, and the Dpravankʿ. The Holy Theotokos [Church] at Sanahin is said to have been built by them.[237]

The two historians were contemporaries and schoolmates, and thus likely familiar with one another's work — it seems Vardan's was completed prior to that of Kirakos' — which explains the close correlation between these two passages.[238] All these monasteries were among those mentioned above by the tenth/eleventh-century historian Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, and so it is evident that they are using Tarōnecʿi's history as their source here, especially since no other known source of the time includes such details about the foundation of monasteries. Egeracʿikʿ, which the two historians seem to have presumed was located in Byzantine territory, in fact is in western Iberia, which at the time was part of the kingdom of Abasgia/Abkhazia, where Christological conflicts took place between Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians during the reign of King Abas Bagratuni and the Abasgian prince Bēr, as mentioned in an earlier part of the same chapter

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[236] Translation modified from Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 205–06. [*Ռոմանոս*] *հալածեաց զամենայն կրօնաւորս եւ զքահանայս հայոց, որք էին յաչխարհին Հոռոմոց, զի ո՛չ հաւանեցան դաւանութեանն Քաղկեդոնի։ Եւ եկեալ յաչխարհս Հայոց յաւուրս Աբասայ, որդւոյ Սմբատայ, հաստատեցին վանորայս՝ զկամրջաձոր, եւ զկապուտքարն ի գաւառին Արչարունեաց, եւ զհռչականունն Հոռոմոսին կոչեցեալ վանք, եւ զԴպրէվանք ի Շիրակ գաւառին. չինեցին եւ եկեղեցի մի յանուն ամենասուրբ Աստուածածնին ի վանքն, որ կոչի Սանահին, ի սահմանս Լօռէ քաղաքին, եւ զի կոչէին զերիցունսն հոռոմոց երէց, անուանեցին զմի վանքն, որ ի Շիրակ՝ Հոռոմոց վանք, որ ցարդ եւս ասի Հոռոմեցի վանք։* Kirakos Ganjakecʿi, *History of Armenia*, 84–85.

[237] Translated in Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 206. *Ի սորա աւուրս յոյժ բազմութիւնք կրօնաւորաց հալածեալք ՚ի Հոռոմոց աչխարհէն սակս ուղղափառութեան, եկեալ յաչխարհս մեր չինեցին յոլով վանորայս։ Նախ զկամրջաձոր, եւ ապա զՀոռոմոսին կոչեցեալ վանք, որպէս թէ ՚ի Հոռոմոց կողմանցն եկին, եւ զԴպրավանքն. ՚ի նոցանէ ասեն չինեալ զԱնահնին սուրբ Աստուածածինն։* Vardan Arewelcʿi, *Compilation of Armenian History*, 88

[238] One of them was likely dependent upon the other or they may have had a shared source for the passage in question. See Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 205–06.

of Tarōnecʿi's *History* that describes the foundation of monasteries.[239] It seems then that due to Kirakos and Vardan's unfamiliarity with the region of Egeracʿikʿ and their misunderstanding of the reference of "western country" coupled with the fact that ecclesiastical conflict between the Armenian and imperial church surfaced in the latter half of the tenth century — on which more in chapter five — they assumed that Yovhannēs, abbot of Kamrǰajor, had fled from Byzantine territory due to anti-miaphysite persecutions there. Then they must have assumed the same circumstances were at play in the founding of the other monasteries in the period. Kirakos and Vardan likewise claimed that the origin of the name of the renowned Hoṙomos monastery was due to the fact that its founders were Roman priests/elders (*hoṙomocʿ ericʿunkʿ*). This view was questioned by Maksoudian, who called it a folk etymology.[240]

Vardan and Kirakos' misinterpretation entered modern historiography first in the monumental three-volume *History of Armenia*, written by the Mkhitʿarist monk and father of modern Armenian history Mikʿayēl Chʿamchʿean, published between 1774–1776, and modern scholarship has frequently repeated this view.[241] As Maksoudian notes, Chʿamchʿean sometimes failed to distinguish premodern primary from secondary sources, and thus, in some cases, instead of favoring the most reliable primary source (in this case Tarōnecʿi's *History*) attempted to synthesize the different and at times contradictory information arising in historians of later periods (in this case, Vardan's and Kirakos' histories) with earlier, more reliable ones.[242] In the section of his *History* that treats the foundation of monasteries during the reign of King Abas,

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[239] Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 211–12.

[240] ***եւ զի կոչէին զերկրացունան Հոռոմոց երէց, անուանեցին զմի վանքն, որ ի Շիրակ՝ Հոռոմոց վանք:*** Kirakos Ganjakecʿi, *History of Armenia*, 85. See Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 206.

[241] I will mention some of the most significant studies that played a part in the general acceptance of Kirakos' and Vardan's erroneous claim.

[242] Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 205. For a critical assessment of Chʿamchʿean's historiographical methodology, see Nichanian, "Enlightenment and Historical Thoughts."

Chʿamchʿean thus includes the thirteenth-century claim that monks persecuted by the Byzantines came to Armenia and built the monasteries, likewise singling out Hoṙomos in this regard, and repeating the etymology mentioned above.[243] Motivated either by the same source — or perhaps by the evidence that there seems to have been knowledge of Greek at the monastery, as evidenced in the works of Anania and Grigor[244] — Chʿamchʿean makes the claim that some of the monks who gathered at Narek had been educated in the eastern regions of the Byzantine Empire and trained in (Greek) philosophy.[245] This seems to be a compelling possibility, to which I will return below.

One of the characteristics of Chʿamchʿean's *History* is to include in the margin of each section a date as to when the events he is describing occurs. In many cases, this is little more than a general approximation. As for the founding of Narek monastery, there is a marginal date of 935. This date became a mainstay in the literature on the founding of Narek monastery, even though the date has never been justified or argued for. It seems to have been an estimation due to the dates of Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos' reign (920–944) and that of King Abas I (929–953),

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[243] *Կային զայսու ժամանակաւ եւ այլ բազում կրօնաւորք յ[աշխարհ]ին եգերացւոց յազգէն հայոց՝ ո՛չ իբր փախստեայք, այլ՝ իբր բնակք ՚ի նախնեաց իւրեանց։ Եւ ս[ո]ք[ա] յայնմ ժ[ա]մ[անա]կի վ[ա]ս[ն] իրիք դիպուածոյ պատճառաւ ս[ուր]ք ժողովոյն քաղկեդոնի հալածե[ա]լք ՚ի հոռոմոց՝ եկին ՚ի հայս, եւ չինեցին զվանորայս։…Մոյնպէս եւ այլ ոմն յովհաննէս վ[ար]դ[ա]պ[ետ], որ բազում կրօնաւորօք վարեալ էր յ[աշխարհ]էն հոռոմոց, եկեալ ՚ի չիրակ գաւառ՝ չինեաց զվանն կոչեցեալ հոռոմոսին։…Զայսմ վանաց ասէ կիրակոս, թէ վ[ա]ս[ն] այն կոչեցաւ հոռոմոսին, զի բնակիչքն կոչէին երիցունք հոռոմոց այ[սինքն] եկեալք ՚ի հոռոմոց։ Իսկ այլք ասեն, թէ վ[ա]ս[ն] զի փախուցեալ ՚ի հոռոմոց հասին ն[ո]ք[ա] անդ, վ[ա]ս[ն] այն՝ եւ վանքն հոռոմոսին կոչեցաւ, իբր թէ հոռոմհասին։* Chʿamchʿean, *Patmutʿiwn Hayotsʿ*, 2:823–24.

[244] On knowledge of Greek at the monastery, specifically regarding Anania and Grigor, see Yarnley, "Armenian Philhellenes;" Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate," 250–51. On Xosrov Anjewacʿi's (Grigor's father's) knowledge of Greek, see Cowe, "Introduction" in Xosrov Anjewacʿi, *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, 6–9, 71.

[245] *՚Ի սմին ժ[ա]մ[անա]կի չինեցաւ եւ վանքն նարեկայ ՚ի գաւառին ուշտունեաց. յորում ժողովեցան բազմութի[ւն]ք ճգնազգեաց արանց, եւս եւ ուսելոց ոմանց յ[աշխարհ]ին յունաց, եւ վարժելոց յիմաստս փիլիսոփայութե[ան]։* Chʿamchʿean, *Patmutʿiwn Hayotsʿ*, 2:824. Neither Kirakos nor Vardan mentioned the founding of Narek monastery in their brief summaries of the monastic foundations in this period.

and perhaps also because Narek monastery is mentioned rather early (third) in the sequence of monasteries mentioned by Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi in his *History*.[246]

From Chʿamchʿean onwards, the connection of the founding of Narek (and the other monasteries mentioned by Asołik in this period) with Byzantine persecution and non-Chalcedonian monks fleeing into the Armenian realm and also the date of the founding of Narek monastery at 935 came generally to be repeated unquestioned in most subsequent secondary literature on the topic. I will mention some of the most significant and oft-cited studies in this regard. In 1819, Jean Saint-Martin, provided 935 as the date of the founding of Narek monastery, likely plucking the date out of the margin of Chʿamchʿean's *History*, and without providing any explanation or justification for so doing.[247] The Mkhitʿarist monk Ghukas Inchichean in his *Description of Ancient Armenia* published in 1822, associated the founding of Narek monastery with the relocation of monks persecuted by the Byzantines.[248]

In the early twentieth century, Maghakʿia Ōrmanean, in his monumental *National History*, cited the alleged Chalcedonian persecutions ordered by Emperor Romanos Lekapenos and the subsequent fleeing of monks from the Empire into Armenian territory as a primary cause for the new monastic foundations and general monastic flourishing of that era.[249] Ōrmanean does

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[246] It is possible that Chʿamchʿean supposed Asołik's list was roughly chronological. For the founding of the first and second monasteries listed by Asołik, Kamrǰajor and Hoṙomos, the date in the margin is 934. For Narek and some of the following ones, the date moves to 935. See Chʿamchʿean, *Patmutʿiwn Hayotsʿ*, 2:823–24.

[247] Saint-Martin, *Mémoires historiques et géographiques*, 2:428–49, 466, n. 93.

[248] ***Շինեցաւ այս մենաստան*** [sc. ***Նարեկ***] ***՚ի նմին ժ. դարու ՚ի կրօնաւորաց հայոց բնակելոց ՚ի փոքր հայս, ուստի հալածեալ ՚ի յունաց՝ աստ եւ անդ ՚ի մեծն հայս չինեցին միայնարանս։*** Inchichean, *Storagrutʿiwn hin hayastaneaytsʿ*, 171.

[249] ***Ինչ որ մեր պատմութեան հետ կապ ունի, Ռոմանոսի կրօնական նախանձայուզութիւնն է, որ Ասիոյ մէջ ունեցած յաջողութիւններէն խրոխտացած, սկսաւ կայսերութեան սահմանին մէջ եղող Հայերը քաղկեդոնականութեան ստիպել, մասնաւորապէս իւր խստութիւնը եկեղեցականներու վրայ ծանրացնելով։ Այս պատճառաւ բազմութիւնիբ կրօնաւորաց հալածեալբ ի Հոռոմոց աշխարհէն սակս ուղղափառութեան՝ պարտաւորուեցան գլխաւորապէս Արարատի հայկական թագաւորութեան սահմանները գաղթել*** (***ՎԱՐ***. 88), ***եւ Շիրակի եւ Սիւնիքի եւ ուրիշ չրջակայ գաւառներու մէջ վանքեր հիմնել կամ եղածները չէնցնել։*** Ōrmanean, *Azgapatum*, 1:1084, §746. ***Ռոմանոս Ա Լեկաբենոսի մոլեռանդ հալածումը քաղկեդոնիկ չեղողներու դէմ՝ առիթ***

not give hard and fast dates for the founding of most of the monasteries in this era — including Narek — because dates are absent in the relevant ancient sources (Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi's *Universal History*), but he suggests that most were probably (re)founded and expanded during the active catholical reign of Anania Mokacʿi (941/2 – ca. 965/6), as opposed to his more reclusive Ṙštuni predecessors.[250] Ōrmanean organized his *History* according to the reigns of catholicoi, and in some cases gave excessive agency to catholicoi in the development of historic events. There is in fact no evidence that catholicoi were major actors in the foundation of monasteries in this period. Thus, whether they are remembered in history as strong figures or less active ones has no bearing on the question. As regards the founding and regulation of the monasteries, the primary sources mention *naxarar* dynasts on the one hand and monastics on the other. Therefore, agency for the founding of most monasteries of the period should be looked for from these classes of society and not in the person of or through the initiative of the catholicos.

In his translation of the *Universal History* of Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, Frédéric Macler also gave the date 935, citing the work of Saint-Martin mentioned above.[251] Hamazasp Oskean likewise mentions the persecutions of Armenian monks by the Byzantines as a precipitating cause for the foundation of Narek monastery, as also others founded in the same period.[252]

եղաւ այդ վանականներուն խմբովին Յունական բաժինէն ելլելու եւ Հայազգի մանր թագաւորութեանց սահմաններուն մէջ ցրուելու, որով յանկարծ Հայաստան հասան բազմութիւնք կրօնաւորաց հալածեալք ի Հոռոմոց աշխարհէն սակս ուղղափառութեան (***ՎԱՐ***. 88), զի ոչ հաւանեցան դաւանութեան Քաղկեդոնի (***ԿԻՐ***. 47)։ ***Ասոնց գալուստը գրկաբաց ընդունուեցաւ Արարատի եւ Վասպուրականի եւ ուրիշ կողմերու Հայազգի թագաւորներէն եւ իշխաններէն, որոնք չափազանց եռանդեամբ փարած էին եկեղեցիներ ու վանքեր հիմնելու եւ պայծառացնելու գործին։*** Ōrmanean, *Azgapatum*, 1:1100, §759.

[250] Ōrmanean, *Azgapatum*, 1:1084, §746, 1:1101, §759.

[251] Macler, *Étienne Asolik*, 30 n. 7.

[252] ***Նարեկայ վանքի չինուիլեան առիթ ու պատճառ եղած են հալածանքներ։ Փոքր Հայքի մէջ բնակող հայ կրօնաւորները Յոյներէն իրենց կրօնական համոզումներուն համար հալածուելով Ժ. դարուն կու գան Հայաստան եւ հոն քանի մը վանք հիմնելով կը բնակին անոնց մէջ։ Այս վանքերէն մէկն ալ է Նարեկ գիւղի մէջ հիմնուած վանքը, որ գիւղին անունովը դարէ դար այդպէս կոչուած է, մինչ իսկական անունը, ինչպէս կը թուի, եղած ըլլալու է՝ Ս. Սանդուխտ կամ Դրուց։*** Oskean, *Vaspurakan-Vani vankʿerě*, 194–95.

Hrachʿya Tʿamrazyan, in the only monograph dedicated to Anania's life and works, repeats the above information, asserting that the founding of Narek monastery — as also the other monasteries cited by Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi — was linked to the persecutions of Emperor Romanos Lekapenos and the immigration of non-Chalcedonian monks to Armenia, and likewise estimated that Narekavankʿ was founded in the 930s, citing Saint-Martin for the 935 date.[253] In 1989, Jean-Michel Thierry also attributed the founding of Narek monastery to monks fleeing Byzantine territory due to persecutions, and said that the monastery was founded in the second half of the tenth century, citing Macler as well as Saint-Martin's date of 935.[254] The oft-cited date of 935 for the foundation of Narek monastery has not otherwise been investigated or justified, even when it has been recognized that it is an approximation.[255]

Most scholarship after Maksoudian has followed him in his suggestion that rather than a result of monks fleeing persecution from Byzantine territory, the foundation of the monasteries mentioned by Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi was part of a lengthier process that begins with the founding of the monastery of Sewan in 874, and that agency for the founding of these monasteries belongs

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[253] ***Նարեկայ վանքը կառուցուել է X դ. առաջին կէսին, հաւանաբար 30-ական թթ. վերջերին (Ֆրանսիացի հայագէտ Սէն-Մարտէնը կառուցման տարեթիւը համարում է 935 թուականը)։ Այն կապուած է մի նշանաւոր պատմական իրադարձութեան հետ, որն, ընդհանրապէս, կարեւոր դեր է խաղացել X դարի հայ մշակոյթի պատմութեան մէջ։ Յօսքը Ռոմանոս Ա Լեկապենոս կայսեր օրօք Բիւզանդական կայսրութեան տարածքում եղած հայադաւան հոգեւորականների հալածման մասին է, որի հետեւանքով հոգեւորականների մեծ ներգաղթ տեղի ունեցաւ Հայաստան։ Բագրատունեաց եւ Արծրունեաց թագաւորութիւնները իրենց հովանաւորութեան տակ առան այդ չարժումը։ Կառուցուեցին բազմաթիւ վանքեր, հիմնուեցին մեծ թուով միաբանութիւններ, որոնք այդ ժամանակից ի վեր հայ գրչութեան եւ մատենագրութեան կենտրոններ դարձան։ Այդ նշանաւոր վանքերի թուին են պատկանում Կամրջաձորի, Հոռոմոսի վանքերը, Դպրեվանքը, Նարեկայ, Սանահնի, Հաղբատի վանքերը։*** Tʿamrazyan, "Anania Narekatsʿi," in *MH* 10:313. In his 1986 monograph, Tʿamrazyan had said it was likely founded in the 940s (Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekacʿi*, 26), which was apparently a typo, because that date was corrected to the 930s in his later publications that essentially reproduced the same material from the monograph, as cited here and in Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:118.

[254] La foundation du couvent de Narek est le fait d'un groupe de moines fuyant les terres byzantines où sévissaient les persécutions chalcédoniennes. Cette migration eut lieu dans le second quart du X^e^ s. Thierry, *Monuments arméniens*, 327. In note 146 on the same page, he cites Macler and Saint-Martin for the 935 date.

[255] Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek, Tragédie*, 40; Mahé, *Histoire de l'Arménie*, 160; Greenwood, *Universal History*, 225 n. 111; Papazian, *Doctor of Mercy*, 70.

to "local *vardapets* and priests who established new monasteries with the help of members of the royal house and feudal clans," beginning with the monastery of Sewan (Sewanay vankʿ) between 871–874,[256] a joint Bagratuni and Siwni venture, and continuing through the tenth and into the mid-eleventh century.[257] As such, it correlates with the period of the autonomous Armenian princedoms and kingdoms during a period of greater economic flourishing in Armenia. The foundation of the monasteries are closely tied to the activities of the primary princely families of the era, the Bagratuni, Arcruni, and Siwni. This view has been advanced in multiple recent studies.[258]

Nevertheless, the idea of Armenian monks fleeing Byzantine persecution in Cappadocia and founding the monasteries mentioned by Tarōnecʿi has persisted in some recent studies.[259] For example, in a recent book devoted to Hoṙomos monastery, Karen Matevosyan claims that the etymology of the monastery, which Maksoudian claimed was nothing more than a folk etymology, is probably valid and thus indeed would attest to the fact that monks did come from Byzantine (East Roman) territory.[260] This view is not without merit, and I would like to propose a modified version of it.

As argued above, the evidence points against the idea that miaphysite monks fled anti-miaphysite persecution and founded monasteries (the agency for the founding should be left to

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[256] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 728, p. 129. On the circumstances surrounding the foundation of this monastery, see Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan."
[257] Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 212–14.
[258] Mahé, "L'église arménienne," 514; Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek, Tragédie*, 8–13; Garsoïan and Thierry, "L'indépendance retrouvée," 257; Pogossian, "Foundation of the Moanstery of Sevan;" Pogossian, "Locating Religion, Controlling Territory;" Greenwood, *Universal History*, 224 n. 103. An exception is Terian, "Gregory of Narek," 281.
[259] See, for example, this view asserted by Karen Matevosyan in regard to Hoṙomos monastery in Vardanyan, *Hoṙomos Monastery*, 20–21 and a similar view expressed by Terian in regard to Narek monastery in Terian, *Festal Works*, xviii, n. 4; idem, "Gregory of Narek," 281. Both scholars are aware of Maksoudian's study.
[260] Vardanyan, *Hoṙomos Monastery*, 21.

the local lords and *vardapets*). That, however, does not mean that monks did not come from the Byzantine Empire into Armenia in this period. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this was a time of shifting borders and population movements. The Byzantine expansion eastwards in this period entailed the movement of peoples and the intermingling of Byzantines, Armenians, and Syrians in the eastern portions of the expanding Byzantine empire. As discussed in the previous chapter, Basil I reconquered Sebasteia in 911 and during the reign of Leo VI (886–912), it was incorporated into the empire as a theme. During the reign of Romanos Lekapenos (920–944), the Byzantines captured Melitenē and took control of eastern Cappadocia. Two of the raids of Emperor Romanos' Armeno-Byzantine general John Kourkouas reached as far as Duin, in 922 and 928/9. Armenians and Syrians formed a major part of those who settled these newly reconquered territories and thus contact and communication between Armenians and Byzantines picked up in this period. It is not hard to imagine, or at all unlikely, that with the increased mixing of peoples due to the moving populations, shifting borders, and reopened trade routes connecting Armenia with the Byzantine empire, that monks would have gone from the eastern Byzantine Empire to Armenia or vice versa. Such monks, whether or not they were involved in some way in founding — at least would have contributed to the flourishing of monasteries in this period, perhaps bringing with them Greek texts to enrich the monastic libraries and intellectual-spiritual life. They may have been attracted to the vibrant monastic life and building activity in the Armenian realms in this period, or even have been invited to join certain monasteries. The memory of this could indeed be transmitted in the name of Hoṙomos monastery and perhaps even in the thirteenth-century histories of Kirakos and Vardan.[261] Another possibility, which is

[261] Vardanyan, *Hoṙomos Monastery*, 21.

not mutually exclusive with the point just mentioned, is that miaphysite monks fled from Sebasteia/Cappadocia during the 960s–980s, during the Chalcedonian persecutions that took place there in that time, mentioned in the previous chapter and in the context of which Anania penned his *Root of Faith*. Such monks may indeed have taken refuge in monasteries under the patronage of Bagratuni, Arcruni, or Siwni dynasts. It is possible as well that some came to Narek. Anania and Grigor's familiarity with Greek and Greek works never known to have been translated to Armenian, if not evidence for the presence of such monks, would at least have made Narek a welcome place for them.

As for the date of Narek's founding, precision does not seem possible. Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi mentions its founding during the period covering the reign of Abas I (929–953).[262] Therefore, this is a preliminary range for the founding of Kamrǰajor, Hoŕomos, Narek, and the others that he mentions. If Tarōnecʿi lists the monasteries in chronological order by founding date — he certainly does not list them according to any kind of geographical scheme[263] — then Narek would be third on a list of nine. However, it is unclear whether the list is meant to be comprehensive or simply representative — i.e., mentioning only the most famous monasteries — and also whether it is arranged chronologically or by means of some other order, or none at all. One might suggest that it is chronological based on the fact that Tarōnecʿi seems to signal out Kamrǰajor as the first to be built, and the rest then followed after it in chronological order.[264] But this is mere conjecture. It is in fact common to not have precise details about the founding date

[262] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:749–64, tr. Greenwood, 222–31.
[263] See Greenwood, *Universal History*, 227 n. 124.
[264] ***Նախ առաջին՝ մեծահռչակ ուխտն Կամրջաձորոյ ի գաւառին Արշարունեաց:*** "The first [was] the very renowned community of Kamrǰajor in the district of Aršarunikʿ." [264] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:750.19, tr. Greenwood, 224. However, it may be that he is simply rhetorically saying that it is first of those he is going to list, and not the first to be founded chronologically.

of monasteries from this period. When precise dates do exist, they are usually found as epigraphs engraved on the building in question, or from colophons commemorating the donation of some gift or endowment to the monastery.[265] No such source is forthcoming as regards Narek monastery. In cases like this, where no inscription or work is devoted to the purpose, then dates can only be approximate. In most cases, the specific date of a monastery's foundation was not perceived to be as important as the identity of the founder or first abbot and the authority and prestige accrued to the monastery by him as well as subsequent generations of holy men and intellectual leaders.

Just before Stepʿanos begins the section dedicated to monastic foundations, he signals that Anania Mokacʿi (941/2 – ca. 965/6) was catholicos at the time.[266] This may refer first of all to what happened earlier in the chapter — the Chalcedonian conflicts involving Bēr and the Abkhazians — but it may also be meant to signal the time of the monastic foundations. Right after mentioning the reign of Anania Mokacʿi, Stepʿanos continues, "In this time the order of monastic institutions flourished and shone in this country of Armenia, and in several places monasteries were built and those united in their love for Christ came together."[267] Does the "in this time" refer to Abas' reign, to Anania's Mokacʿi's catholical reign, or perhaps to those years of Abas' reign that overlapped with the years Anania was catholicos? It seems impossible to say with certainty. If the latter, then this would provide a more limited range of 941/2–953. Some

[265] Both kinds of sources exist in the case of Sevan. See Pogossian, "The Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 185 n. 12.

[266] ***Զայսու ժամանակաւ էր յաթոռ հայրապետութեանն Տէր Անանիա, ամեներջանիկ սրբութեամբ գերապատուեալ, բարեչնորհ իւրոց վիճակելոցն:*** "At this time lord Anania was on the throne of the patriarchate, revered for his holiness and cherished for his grace by his flock." Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:750.16, tr. Greenwood, 224.

[267] ***Ցայսմ ժամանակի ծաղկեալ պայծառանայր կարգ կրաւնաւորական հանդիսից յաշխարհիս Հայոց: Եւ ի յոլով տեղիս չինեցան եղբայրանոցք, եւ ժողովեցան միաբանակեացք հաւասարականք սիրովն Քրիստոսի:*** Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:750.17–18, tr. Greenwood, 224.

scholars have taken it this way, supposing that Stepʿanos means to say that the monasteries were founded not only in Abas' reign, but specifically in those years of his reign when Anania was catholicos.[268] While I do not think that this can be proven with certainty from the evidence at hand, it also seems impossible to disprove. Nevertheless, as I have mentioned, the foundation of monasteries was an act carried out through the joint collaboration of monastics and the feudal lords/princes/kings, and not so much the catholicos. From the above, one might suggest a possible terminus post quem of 941/2 (the beginning of Anania Mokacʿi's reign), but one should not rule out an earlier terminus post quem of 929 (the beginning of Abas' reign).

As for the terminus ante quem of the founding of Narek monastery, we know it pre-dated 950, the date that Xosrov's *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* was completed, shortly after his election to bishop of the see of Anjewacʿikʿ.[269] This is because after the death of his wife, Xosrov was elected bishop and sent his two younger sons — Yovhannēs and Grigor — to Narek monastery in the charge of his wife's cousin, Anania.[270] This must have taken place in the middle to late 940s, providing a definite terminus ante quem for the founding of Narek monastery and Anania's appointment there as first abbot. In light of the present evidence then, we can estimate a broad date in which Narek was founded, 929 – late 940s, with a possible more narrow date between 941/2–late 940s (if it was indeed founded while Anania Mokacʿi was catholicos).

What we can say with certainty is that Narek monastery was founded and Anania appointed its first abbot when the catholicosal see was still at Ałtʿamar, before Anania Mokacʿi relocated from there seven years into his reign, ca. 949, in order to return to the Bagratid realm,

[268] See, for example, Maksoudian, "Note on the Monasteries," 207. Ōrmanean also thought this for the reason that I discussed above. See Ōrmanean, *Azgapatum*, 1:1084, §746, 1:1101, §759.
[269] See Cowe, "Biographical Sketch of the Author," in Xosrov Anjewacʿi, *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, 4.
[270] See Cowe, "Biographical Sketch of the Author," in Xosrov Anjewacʿi, *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, 4.

which was resolidifying its position as the center of Armenian political power after the death of Gagik.[271] If, as I have suggested in this chapter, the decision to found Narek as a spiritual center near Ałtʿamar came from King Gagik himself, then we may be able to suggest an even earlier terminus post quem, since King Gagik died in 943/4. It is, of course, possible that the idea was his and construction of the monastery began during his reign and was not completed until after his death, in the beginning of the reign of his son and successor Derenik-Ašot (943–953/8), or that the idea to found and sponsor the monastery was entirely that of Derenik-Ašot. But in my view, it seems more likely that it was through the initiative of King Gagik. While a definite date for the founding of the monastery cannot be established, this investigation has at least recovered the essential factors in question and eschewed an irrelevant/fictitious one (the supposed persecutions of Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos). At present, it seems the best one can offer for an approximate date is 930s–940s, as Edda Vardanyan has done in regard to Hoṙomos monastery in her recent edited volume on the monastery.[272]

The New Cenobitic Monastic Foundations

It is worth highlighting at the end of this chapter what was new about this new phase of monastic foundations of which Narekavankʿ formed a part. While cenobitic monastic circles with disciples numbering in the tens who gathered around a charismatic leader had long been a feature of religious life in Armenia since late antiquity, the cenobitic institutions founded in this period are distinguished from the earlier ones by their size and scale.[273] They were endowed,

[271] Mahé, *Histoire de l'Arménie*, 145.
[272] Vardanyan, *Hoṙomos Monastery*, 9.
[273] Cowe, "Armenians in the Era of the Crusades," 411.

permanent foundations many of which, based on textual and archaeological data, are known to have numbered monks in the hundreds.[274] These foundations over the centuries turned into monastic complexes that were much larger with many more buildings and a more elaborate structure and populated by many more monks than the rather simple cells (*kellia*) of an earlier period, which were often marked by circles of followers congregating around a charismatic leader in a simple architectural structure.[275] Over the centuries, the monastic complexes often included more than one church, with imposing structures called *gawitʿs* or *žamatuns* later added to the western façade and often larger than the church to which it was attached.[276] Resembling native domestic house architecture, the *žamatun* served a variety of functions for the cenobium.[277] These spaces were the site of the performance of the liturgical hours, the resting place of significant monastics, as well as the place to which penitents would be sent during the eucharistic liturgy, and also functioned as a place for other gatherings and meetings, including lectures.[278] In addition to churches and chapels, monastic complexes included other buildings to support the physical and intellectual life of the monks living there, including refectories, cells for lodging, schools, libraries, and scriptoria.[279] They were thus architecturally and structurally endowed with the means to become centers of both intellectual and spiritual activity, which facilitated their becoming the key venues for cultural production and spiritual experience in medieval Armenia.

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[274] Cowe, "Armenians in the Era of the Crusades," 411. Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi records, for example, that Kamrǰajor monastery housed 300 monks, while Hałbat and Sanahin together contained some 500. See Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:750.22, III.8, *MH* 15:755.7, tr. Greenwood, 224–25, 232.
[275] Garsoïan, "Introduction to the Problem."
[276] Garsoïan, "Introduction to the Problem," 177–78; Thierry, *Monuments arméniens*, 97–98.
[277] For a recent treatment of the *žamatun*, its architectural features and its function, see Vardanyan, *Hoṙomos Monastery*, 207–236.
[278] Thierry, *Monuments arméniens*, 97–98; Cowe, "Armenians in the Era of the Crusades," 411.
[279] Garsoïan, "Introduction to the Problem," 178; Thierry, *Monuments arméniens*.

As mentioned above, many monasteries — such as Sewanay vankʿ and Tatʿewi vankʿ — were endowed with extensive land holdings including both agricultural fields and orchards as well as villages, which served as sources of income to support the physical needs and intellectual and spiritual pursuits of the monks residing there. These endowments made by the ruling elite to monastic complexes were made in perpetuity and therefore were of the same type as those known as *waqf* in the Islamic context.[280] In fact, the use of the Arabic word *waqf* even begins to appear in the late twelfth century on inscriptions detailing endowments to monasteries made by Armeno-Georgian Bagrationi rulers. The first such instance is dated to an inscription at Sanahin in 1173.[281] Other monasteries benefited from being located in close proximity to the international trade routes of the period and in turn supplied services to those passing by, such as Hoṙomos monastery, which was known for its hospitality in providing lodging and other sustenance to travelers, merchants, and wayfarers.[282] Some monastic centers prospered so greatly in the tenth century in comparison to the lives of the villagers supporting them that we hear of peasant revolts, such as the well-known ones in Siwnikʿ in different times in the tenth century in connection with Tatʿewi vankʿ. These were motivated in large part by the increased wealth disparity between those working the land and the monks in the complexes benefitting from their labor and will be discussed in the fourth chapter in connection with the discussion of the Tʿondrakite movement.[283] For now, let us turn to an examination of the educational system that Anania founded at Narek, which was one of the first monstic academies in medieval Armenia.

[280] Peters, Behrens-Abouseif, et al., "Waḳf."
[281] La Porta, "Kingdom and Sultanate," 96–97.
[282] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:751.25–26, tr. Greenwood, 225.
[283] Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, p. 122.

CHAPTER 3

THE MAKING OF A MONASTIC ACADEMY:

INTELLECTUAL AND ASCETIC-MYSTICAL EDUCATION AT NAREK MONASTERY

Դու զաւրացիր եւ լեր լոյս եւ լուսաւորիչ:

Arm yourself, become a light and an enlightener.

— Anania of Narek, "To Priests"

When Anania was appointed abbot of Narekavankʿ, it became his responsibility to order the monastery's daily life, liturgical cycle, educational program, and other intellectual and spiritual activities. In this chapter, I will attempt a reconstruction of the system of intellectual and ascetic-mystical education that he initiated at Narek, which was one of the first — if not the first — of the major monastic academies in the Armenian *oikoumené* and became a model for subsequent ones.

Unlike their Greek and Latin counterparts, Armenian abbots were not in the habit of writing monastic rules or *typika*. There is nothing equivalent in the Armenian milieu to the foundation documents known from the Byzantine Greek monastic tradition.[1] Nor is there the Armenian equivalent to the various Orders that define Latin monasticism, each with their own particular rule, well-defined organizational structure, and differently articulated mission and

[1] On these, see Thomas and Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*. The sole known exception is the eleventh-century *typikon* of Gregory Pakourianos for the Monastery of the Mother of God (*Petritzonitissa*) in Bačkovo, which was made in three languages: Armenian, Georgian, and Greek. Issuing from a Chalcedonian context, it is the kind of exception that proves the rule. On this *typikon*, see Thomas and Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents* 2:507–563.

lifestyle.[2] The nearest one comes to such a document in Armenian is the *Book of Questioners* (Գիրք հարցողաց / *Girkʿ harcʿołacʿ*), an anthology of questions and answers on the monastic life, compiled from the ascetic writings of Basil of Caesarea and translated into Armenian in the late fifth/early sixth century.[3] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi refers to the role of this book in guiding and ordering the communal life at Sewan monastery and the other major *cenoebia* founded in this period (that were discussed in chapter two), including Narek.[4] But the *Book of Questioners*, as its name implies was not a rule, *typikon*, or foundation document, and therefore it is unclear just what exactly its role was in the internal regulation of medieval monasteries. Certainly, it would have formed part of many a monastic library, been read and referred to by abbots, and probably even became part of the monastic school curriculum to help train monks in ascetic practices as well as educate them on the monastic lifestyle and worldview.

But the specific details of a monastery's system of education, liturgical cycle, daily life, and other activities would have been based in part on the purpose for which a monastery was founded, in part on the leadership of its abbot, and in part on the individual traditions that each monastery formed over time. As to the first, all monasteries were spiritual centers of prayer, but they served a number of different purposes as well, and as such each had different emphases. Some, like Arcrunid Mahŗast and Bagratid Hoŗomos mentioned in the previous chapter, being located near trade routes, served as places of lodging for travelers, wayfarers, and merchants.

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[2] On Latin monasticism, see Beach and Cochelin, *Cambridge History of Medieval Monasticism*. The first example of western-style monastic orders in the Armenian context came in the fourteenth century with the Franciscan and Dominican *Fratres Unitores* (Unitor Brothers). See discussion and bibliography in La Porta, "Armeno-Latin Intellectual Exchange." A prominent example from the early modern period is the Armenian-Catholic Mkhitʿarist congregation in Venice (with a second congregation established later at Trieste, then relocated to Vienna), which adopted the Benedictine Rule. See Awgerean, *A Brief Account of the Mechitaristican Society*, 35; Mattʿēos Ewdokiatsʿi, *Hamaŗōtutʿiwn varutsʿ*, 350.

[3] Basil of Caesarea, *Book of Questioners*.

[4] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.3, 7, 8; *MH* 15:741–42.5, 750.22, 755.7, tr. Greenwood, 213, 225, 232.

Others, endowed with particularly prominent relics of saints, precious objects, or fragments of the True Cross, became places of pilgrimage, and thus generated income. Some, like Tatʿew, served as episcopal residences in addition to being places of spirituality and learning. Others served as the burial place of *naxarar* family members, like the monastery of the Holy Cross at Soradir for the Arcruni family.[5] Of the many hundreds of monasteries that dotted the medieval and early modern landscapes of the Armenian *oikoumené*, a small number became academies and centers of learning, with libraries and scriptoria for the copying and illuminating of manuscripts. They are some of the same ones whose names became most prominent, in part because of the way in which they produced and housed men of learning and came to be the principal transmitters of Armenian literary and artistic culture into the early modern period. Examples include Hałbatʿ and Sanahin, Tatʿew, and a few dozen others. Narekavankʿ was one of the earliest if not the very earliest such monastic academy to be established. As such, Anania's impact as the first abbot and main founder of the monastery's intellectual and spiritual program of education shaped not just the future generations at Narek — including Anania's famous pupils Grigor and Uxtanēs — but also served as a model for the other major monastic academies that were founded after it. Therefore, a reconstruction of the system of education and spiritual life established by Anania at Narekavankʿ will also provide a picture of one of the earliest — if not the earliest — of the major medieval monastic academies that were the chief educational and cultural institutions of Armenian culture from the tenth to (at least) the sixteenth centuries.

[5] See Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens* no. 513, p. 93; Thierry, *Monuments arméniens du Vaspurakan*, 465–70.

Scripture and Liturgy

Of course, the beginning and end of a monk's education was the Scriptures. The use of the Psalms, as well as Proverbs, in the earliest elementary exercises to learn reading and writing in monastic settings is attested since at least the fifth century. In one of his epistles, Jerome (347 – 419) recommends the use of the Psalms and Proverbs of Solomon in elementary writing exercises.[6] The same was true in Armenian monastic school settings and the particular connection between the book of Proverbs and literacy can be seen in it being the first book chosen to be translated into Armenian and immediately employed in spreading literacy in the new alphabet.[7] From the manuscript tradition, we know that of the Old Testament portions of the Bible, it was the wisdom books that were most frequently copied by medieval scribes, and along with the Gospels, were one of the earliest forms of part-Bibles attested in the Armenian manuscript tradition.[8] A monk would have encountered the corpus of Solomonic wisdom books from his earliest years of monastic education, inasmuch as they formed one of the core elements of the religious curriculum.[9]

In addition to literary instruction and exposure through reading and study, the monks also performed the Scripturally drenched liturgical services on a daily basis. The services of the daily hours with their core elements had already coalesced by the eighth century.[10] A monk at Narek would have engaged on a daily basis in communal celebration of the night (*գիշերայինն*), morning (*առաւաւտեան*), and sunrise (*արեւագալ*) hours; the little offices of the third (*երրորդ*), sixth

[6] See *Epistle* 107.12; Larsen, "'Excavating the Excavations,'" 104.
[7] See Koriwn, *Life of Maštocʿ* VIII, *MH* 1:238.7–8; Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate," 249.
[8] Cowe, "Typology of Armenian Biblical Manuscripts," 65.
[9] Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate," 249.
[10] See Findikyan, *Commentary on the Armenian Daily Office*.

(*վեցերորդ*), and ninth (*իններորդ*) hours; and the evening (*երեկոյեան*) and peace (*խաղաղականն*) offices.[11] The Psalms formed the core element of the daily office, or liturgy of the hours (*ժամերգութիւն*, literally "Songs of the Hours" or "Singing the Hours.").[12] The entire Psalter was sung through in order in eight days during the night office (*գիշերային ժամ*), and numerous individual psalms were chanted in the course of the other hours.[13] It was thus usual practice for the entire Psalter to be memorized.[14] A monk was therefore immersed not just in the reading but in the chanting and performance of Scripture as well as texts such as prayers, litanies (*քարոզք*), and hymns (*չարականք*) based upon them.

In addition to the Psalms and wisdom literature, one could single out the Gospels as the most important portions of Scripture for the monks of Narek. Most of these texts would have been known by heart. The chanting of the Gospel formed the climax of the Sunday synaxis, as well as several other liturgical services a monk engaged in on a weekly basis. The Gospel would also be meditated on and memorized in solitude through various strategies of intensive reading and reflection (*lectio divina*). *Imitatio Christi*, based on the life of Jesus presented in the Gospels, was one of the central concerns motivating the self-disciplinary practices established in monastic settings, and a pious monk was ever mindful of his individual journey towards conformity into the likeness of Christ. This approach is well exemplified in Anania's "Evangelical, Apostolic, and Prophetic Speech and Instructions," which recapitulates and represents in more systematic form some of the teaching on individual virtues and practices found in some of his shorter

[11] The service known today as rest or compline (*հանգստեան*) was unknown until the thirteenth century and did not become fixed until the fifteenth century, at the earliest. See Findikyan, *Commentary on the Armenian Daily Office*, 499–502.
[12] Jeffery, "Psalmody and Prayer."
[13] Winkler, "Armenian Night Office II," 474–75.
[14] On the centrality of the Psalms to monastic life and prayer in general, see McKinnon, "The Book of Psalms;" Dyer, "The Psalms in Monastic Prayer."

instructions.[15] In this work, Anania promotes a program of moral teaching that is shaped by the ethical teaching of Christ both in structure and content, bearing particular influence from the "sermon on the mount" of Matthew 5–7 and the "sermon on the plain" of Luke 6, in combination with the special emphasis upon love found in the Gospel of John. This form of lengthy ethical teaching framed as discourse has deeper roots as well, stretching back to the speeches of Moses in Deuteronomy, particularly chapters 28–30. One of the chief purposes of this work, as well as the other instructions, was to systematize the ethical teachings of Christ, as well as those found in other portions of Scripture, into a programmatic guide that would shape the way of life of monks living together at Narek.

In addition to the rest of the canonical biblical corpus, monks also read from a panoply of intertestamental, pseudepigraphal, and apocryphal literature, such as the *Protoevangelium of James* and the *Armenian Infancy Gospel*, as well as extra-canonical acts of various apostles, which were not always sharply distinguished from canonical Scripture.[16] The monks of Narek received particularly good training in Scriptural exegesis under the guidance of Petros, who as mentioned previously was one of the most skilled Scriptural exegetes and commentators of the period.[17]

Narek was well known in Anania's day for its vibrant liturgy, and in the tenth and early eleventh century, it became a center for liturgical performance of the highest quality as well as a site for the composition of new liturgical works. Anania's pupil Uxtanēs mentions that his teacher Anania far surpassed others in regard to the melodic modulation of his voice when

[15] *MH* 10:396–420.
[16] On apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature in Armenian, see Stone, "Armenian Apocryphal Literature;" Calzolari, "The Editing of Christian Apocrypha."
[17] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7; *MH* 15:753.51, tr. Greenwood, 229.

chanting (*հոգեւորական երգով գեղգեղմամբ գեր ի վերոյ քան զամենեսեան*).[18] Anania was particularly gifted in music and directed a robust program at Narek for both liturgical performance and the composition of original works.[19] Anania's pupil Grigor composed a number of works in different genres — including encomia, litanies, and hymnic odes — for performance in liturgical services and feasts in order to enrich their celebration.[20] Thus, Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, writing in the early eleventh century, singles out Narek among the cenobitic monasteries of the age in particular for its "magnificently endowed singers who were radiant in the performance of worship (*բազմազարդ պաշտաւնապայծառ երգեցողովք*)."[21]

Anania trained the monks of Narek not only in the highest quality performance of liturgical services, but equally in the spiritual understanding of the rites. To aid in the latter project, he would have had available the two recently composed liturgical commentaries of Grigor's father, Xosrov Anjewacʿi: the *Commentary on the Liturgy of the Hours*[22] and the *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*.[23] The mystical approach to liturgical theology is manifest across Grigor of Narek's corpus, attesting to the approach taken by Anania in his direction of the liturgical education of the Narekian monks.

[18] Uxtanēs, *History of Armenia* I.1, *MH* 15:451.38.
[19] On the musical and liturgical side of Anania and Narek monastery, see Tʿahmizyan, "Anania Narekacʿu ev Nareka vankʿi."
[20] On the liturgical compositions of Grigor Narekacʿi, see Terian, *Festal Works*; Arevshatyan, "La proclamation mélodisée (*Kʿaroz*);" idem, "Ganj."
[21] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:751.27.
[22] *MH* 10:35–227. On the use of this work in the curriculum at Narek, see Tʿamrazyan, *Narekyan dprotsʿĕ*, 43–51.
[23] Text and translation by Cowe, *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*.

‘External’ Writings: The Trivium

The subjects of the trivium — grammar, rhetoric, and logic — formed the intellectual core curriculum of the medieval monastic academies.[24] Since the textbooks for these subjects were composed by pre-Christian Greek authors, they were referred to as ***արտաքին գրեանք*** (‘external writings’) as opposed to Patristic texts, which were called ***նուրբ գրեանք*** (‘subtle writings’).[25] For teaching each of the subjects of the trivium, Anania would have had at his disposal works available in Armenian, translated or based on Greek originals, often along with commentaries.[26]

For grammar, Anania had available the Armenian translation of the *Ars grammatica* of Dionysius Thrax (ca. 170 – ca. 90 BC),[27] along with a number of original Armenian commentaries on it. Already by Anania’s time, five commentaries on the *Ars grammatica* had been made by: a certain Movsēs (ca. 470 – ca. 530?),[28] an anonymous grammarian,[29] a certain

[24] See La Porta, “Monasticism and the Construction;” Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek, Tragédie*, 51–53; Calzolari, “Sciences sacrées et sciences profanes.” As for what in the Roman empire was known as the quadrivium — arithmetic, music, geometry, astronomy — such subjects, when studied at all, were generally done so at an elementary level in Armenian monastic settings and did not form part of the core curriculum. On the subjects of the quadrivium and their pursuit in Armenian school settings, see Mahé, “Quadrivium et cursus d’études;” Greenwood, “Reassessment of the Life.” One may also consult the recently published papers in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 86 no 1 (2020), which published the resulting papers from a 2018 AIEA conference entitled “Sciences and Learning in Armenia between Anania Širakacʿi and Grigor Magistros.” I have not yet had an opportunity to view this volume.
[25] Shirinian, “‘Artakʿin ew ‘nurb’ greankʿ;” The term ‘external’ was used in reference to a religious identity boundary and parallels Greek οἱ ἔξωθεν, ‘those of outside,’ or ἡ ἔξωθεν, ‘the [παίδευσις] of outside,’ the former already used by Paul in 1 Timothy 3:7: δεῖ δὲ καὶ μαρτυρίαν καλὴν ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξωθεν, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὀνειδισμὸν ἐμπέσῃ καὶ παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου. ***Այլ պարտ է նմա վկայութիւն բարի եւ յարտաքնոցն ունել. զի մի ի նախատինս անկանիցի եւ յորոգայթս Սատանայի:*** See Calzolari, “Transmission and Reception,” 48.
[26] Many of these translations owe their existence to the extensive translational activity of the so-called “Hellenizing School” (***Յունաբան դպրոց***). On the “Hellenizing School,” its translations and translation technique, see Manandean, *Yunaban dprotsʿĕ*; Akinean and Tēr-Pōghosean, “Matenagrakan hetazōtutʿiwnner;” Terian, “The Hellenizing School;” Muradyan, *Grecisms*.
[27] See Adontz, *Denys de Thrace*.
[28] *MH* 5:1195–1208.
[29] *MH* 5:1219–38.

Dawitʿ,[30] Stepʿanos Siwnecʿi (ca. 680 – 735),[31] and Hamam Arewelcʿi (ca. 825 – ca. 890).[32] A deep knowledge of the grammatical tradition is evident in the works of both Anania and Grigor.[33]

As for rhetoric, two main instructional works were available in Armenian. The first was the *Progymnasmata* of Aelius Theon (active 1st c.), the earliest text of its kind extant in Greek.[34] The second was a modified version of the *Progymnasmata* of Aphthonius, the most popular rhetorical handbook in East Roman educational settings.[35] A Christianized translation/adaptation of this text was known in Armenian as the *Book of Chreia* (Գիրք պիտոյից).[36] It is likely from the latter text that the monks of Narek learned the art of rhetoric. Anania's own mastery of the art of rhetoric is noted by his pupil Uxtanēs, who calls him a "renowned rhetorician (*հռչակաւոր հռետոր*)," and thus the monks of Narek were in particularly good hands when it came to learning rhetoric.[37] Anania emerges as a sought-after writer in a number of different genres thanks to his rhetorical mastery, being commissioned to write disputatious,[38] instructional,[39] and panegyrical[40] works.

There were numerous texts available in the realm of logic, or dialectics, including Aristotle's *Categories* and *De Interpretatione* and Porphyry's *Isagogē*. Along with these were

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[30] *MH* 5:1167–87.
[31] *MH* 6:571–93.
[32] *MH* 9:534–54. For an overview of these commentaries, see Adontz, *Denys de Thrace*; Ervine, "Yohannēs Erznkacʿi Pluz's *Compilation.*"
[33] On Anania's familiarity with the grammatical tradition in Armenian, as evidenced even in the small fragment preserved from the *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians*, see Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 58–72.
[34] See Russell and Moore "progymnasmata" and "Theon (3) (RE 5), Aelius." The Armenian translation of this work preserves a more complete text than the mangled extant Greek form.
[35] See Russell and Moore, "progymnasmata" and Webb, "Aphthonius."
[36] On this work, see Cowe, "Review of *Book of Chries*;" Muradyan, "The Rhetorical Exercises."
[37] Uxtanēs, *History of Armenia* I.1, *MH* 15:455.71.
[38] *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians*; *Root of Faith*.
[39] *Book of Instruction*; *For an Explanation of Numbers*.
[40] *Encomium on the Holy Universal Church*.

four important works by the Neoplatonist philosopher Dawitʿ Anyałt (David the Invincible, *fl*. late 6th c.), three of which were commentaries on the works of Aristotle and Porphyry: 1. *Definitions and Divisions of Philosophy*; 2. *Commentary on Porphyry's* Isagogē; 3. *Interpretation of Aristotle's* Categories;[41] 4. *Interpretation of Aristotle's* Prior Analytics.[42] As will be made apparent in the next two chapters, the tenth century was marked by significant ecclesiastical controversies, both external and internal to the Armenian Church, and the deployment of logic and argumentation in the service of defending Theology and doctrine is a marked feature of Anania's and also some of Grigor's works. Anania makes use of the philosophical works of David the Invincible in *For an Explanation of Numbers*[43] as well as the *Root of Faith*.[44] This latter work, particularly its first half,[45] reveals Anania's mastery of dialectical argumentation, particularly as pertains to theological disputation.

Many other Greek philosophical texts were available in Armenian translation in Anania's time, including the pseudo-Aristotelian *De mundo* and *De virtutibus*, and *On Nature* attributed to Zeno,[46] and it is clear that Anania read deeply from this literature and transmitted that learning to his students.[47] The works of Anania, like those of several of his contemporaries and near contemporaries, such as Xosrov Anjewacʿi (ca. 900 – ca. 963)[48] — his relative through the

[41] The authorship of this work is disputed. Some scholars favor the view that it was composed by David's contemporary Elias, who also hailed from the school of Olympiodorus in Alexandria. See Wildberg, "David;" idem, "Elias."
[42] See Calzolari, "Sciences sacrées et sciences profanes," 380–83; eadem, "Transmission and Reception." On David the Invincible, see Sanjian, *David Anhaghtʿ*; Calzolari et Barnes, *L'œuvre de David l'Invincible*; Contin, *David l'Arménien*.
[43] See Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 93–109.
[44] See Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 162–177.
[45] *MH* 10:480–539.
[46] [Pseudo-]Zeno, *Anonymous Philosophical Treatise*.
[47] Calzolari, "Sciences sacrées et sciences profanes," 382; Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek, Tragédie*, 52, n. 199.
[48] On Xosrov's knowledge of Greek, see Cowe, "Introduction" in Xosrov Anjewacʿi, *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, 6–9, 71.

latter's marriage — and Grigor Magistros,[49] also reveal a knowledge of the Greek language, at least substantial familiarity, if not fluency.[50] There are works of Greek that Anania, Xosrov, and Grigor drew from, of which there was no Armenian translation known to have been made in their time. For example, Anania seems to have been familiar with Plato's *Republic*, which was not translated into Armenian until modern times.[51] With the opening of the *thughūr*, and the shifting of the borders between Byzantium and the Islamicate world, the reintroduction of overland trade and increased traffic through Armenian territory between the two states, and the population movements that mark the era, it is likely that along with the exchange of goods and resources, texts were also exchanged. Some were likely brought from Byzantium to enrich the library at the newly founded monastery of Narek, perhaps thanks to Armenian monks coming from the Byzantine side of the border that we hear of in some of the sources (discussed in chapter two) and whose memory remains in the name of Hoṙomos monastery, or through the intermediary of Syriac monasteries in the area, many of which also housed Greek manuscripts. The period was a fertile one for cultural interchange between Syriac, Byzantine, and Armenian communities in the region.[52]

'Subtle' Writings: Patristics

The works of Anania and Grigor are filled with references to the full panoply of Patristic works available in Armenian in the tenth century. Thus, the monks of Narek must have had

[49] Grigor Magistros' profound knowledge of Greek is evidenced in his letters, on which see van Lint, "Among Others." He also may have translated Plato into Armenian, on which see Tinti, "On the Chronology and Attribution."
[50] Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate," 250.
[51] Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate," 250–51.
[52] See Palmer, "Charting Undercurrents," 54.

access to a nearly complete library of the works of Greek and Syriac patristic authors in Armenian translation as well as native Armenian patristic texts.

An important early model for combining pagan philosophy with biblical exegesis and theological reflection was Philo (ca. 20 BC – 50 AD), whose works belonged to the category of 'subtle' writings.[53] Anania's knowledge of Philo is attested to in *For an Explanation of Numbers*, which contains multiple references to the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher and exegete's works and reveals the latter's overall impact on Anania's thought.[54] *For an Explanation of Numbers* also contains references to Plato and Pythagorean thought.[55]

Anania's instructions (***խրատք***) contain direct citations of John Chrysostom (ca. 350 – 407),[56] Basil of Caesarea (ca. 330 – 378),[57] Ephrem of Nisibis (the Syrian, ca. 306 – 373),[58] Evagrius of Pontus (ca. 345 – 399),[59] Gregory of Nazianzus (the Theologian, ca. 329 – ca. 390),[60] and Nilus of Ancyra (the Ascetic, *fl*. ca. 390 – 430).[61] A few of them contain a phrase, located near the end of the treatise, indicating that there exists "immeasurable testimony (***անչափ վկայութիւն***)" from the church fathers relating to the topic being treated, which implies that

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[53] Terian, "Hellenizing School," 42.
[54] Anania of Narek, *For an Explanation of Numbers*, *MH* 10:441.14, 443.27, 443.31, 444.48. For further on Philo's impact on the content of this work and Anania's thought as a whole, see Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 84–93, 173–76.
[55] Anania of Narek, *For an Explanation of Numbers*, *MH* 10:442.20, 442.23,
[56] Anania of Narek, "To Priests," *MH* 10:332.55; idem, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:395.242.
[57] Anania of Narek, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:362.16, 394.240.
[58] Anania of Narek, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:394.241.
[59] Anania of Narek, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:394.243.
[60] Anania of Narek, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:394.239. Gregory of Nazianzus is also referenced in *For an Explanation of Numbers*, *MH* 10:442.21–22. Additionally, I believe the reference to the "father of Theologians" (***հայրն Աստուածաբանից***) in the same work (at *MH* 10:442.54) is also to Gregory of Nazianzus. A similar passage to the citation referenced there may be found in the latter's *Oration* 38 (section 9), "On the Theophany of Christ" (*In Theophonia*, ***ի ծնունդն Քրիստոսի***). This was a popular text in Armenian, transmitted in the *Homiliary* (***ճառընտիր***), and is quoted multiple times by Anania in the *Root of Faith* (see, for example, *MH* 10:488.87, 497.229). For the Armenian text of *Oration* 38, see *Homiliary*, P 120, ff. 3v–8r and for the portion of text in question, see 5r–5v.
[61] Anania of Narek, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:395.244.

Anania was well versed in the patristic authorities concerning the topic he was addressing.[62] Surely, the reading of, and instruction based upon, patristic writers was employed in the educational program at Narek in order to teach ascetic practices and ethics.

The *Root of Faith*, as expected, contains numerous quotations from church fathers that Anania drew from in order to defend the theology and liturgical practices of the Armenian church vis-à-vis the imperial church. Much of this material is drawn from earlier florilegia, such as the *Seal of Faith*. In the *Root of Faith*, Anania refers to, or quotes directly from the works of Philo,[63] Ignatius of Antioch (ca. 35 – ca. 107),[64] Irenaeus (ca. 130 – ca. 202),[65] Origen (184/5 – 253/5),[66] Gregory Thaumaturgus (the Wonderworker, ca. 213 – ca. 270),[67] Julius I (Patriarch [Pope] of Rome, d. 352),[68] Athanasius of Alexandria (ca. 295/9 – 373),[69] Ephrem of Nisibis,[70] Macarius of Jerusalem (s*ed*. 314 – 335/6),[71] Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 315 – 387),[72] Apollinarius of

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[62] An illustrative example may be provided from the "On Humility:" ***Եւ ի վարդապետաց անչափ կայ վկայութիւն վասն խոնարհութեան։*** "And from the *vardapets* there is immeasurable testimony concerning humility." *MH* 10:345.64. A similar phrase occurs at the end of the "On Patience and Peace" (*MH* 10:341.55) and the "On Compunction and Tears" (*MH* 10:394.238).

[63] *MH* 10:481.11, 519.546, 552.1011. I include Philo among the church fathers, because he is essentially treated as one by Anania and the Armenian tradition in general.

[64] *MH* 10:574.1273–77, 575.1292, 590.1476–78.

[65] *MH* 10:547.942–44, 571.1244.

[66] *MH* 10:589.1467.

[67] *MH* 10:539–40.810–16, 540.821–25.

[68] *MH* 10:548–50.959–79.

[69] *MH* 10:482.23, 483.25, 507.373, 542–43.862–78, 545–46.915–17, 546–47.930–33, 548.955–58, 571.1244, 572.1249–52, 572–73.1260, 573.1267, 581.1369–72, 590.1472.

[70] *MH* 10:507.372, 507.380, 528.659, 530.686, 532.718, 534.738, 535.750, 541–42.844–61, 546.920–25, 561.1121, 572.1244, 581–82.1378–80.

[71] *MH* 10:563–64.1142–47. This quotation of Macarius of Jerusalem is significant since it is the very portion of the *Letter* until now known only from a quotation of Anania Širakacʿi (and not in the abbreviated version that became canonized in the *Book of Canons* (Կանոնագիրք) and the *Book of Letters* (Գիրք թղթոց). It thus provides another witness to this significant portion of the *Letter*. On this *Letter* and its textual history, see Terian, *Macarius of Jerusalem*.

[72] *MH* 10:532.719–720, 533.725–26, 547–48.945–49, 564–65.1148–65, 570.1225, 570.1229–30, 572.1244, 572.1247–48.

Laodicaea (ca. 310/13 – ca. 390),[73] Basil of Caesarea,[74] Gregory of Nazianzus,[75] Gregory of Nyssa (331/340 – ca. 395),[76] John Chrysostom,[77] Epiphanius of Salamis (ca. 310/20 – 403),[78] Nemesius of Emesa (*fl*. ca. 400),[79] Amphilochius of Iconium (d. after 394),[80] Severianus of Gabala (d. after 408),[81] Cyril of Alexandria (ca. 376 – 444),[82] Socrates of Constantinople (Scholasticus, ca. 380 – 439),[83] Juvenal (Patriarch of Jerusalem, *sed*. ca. 422 – 458), [84] Acacius (Bishop of Melitene in Lesser Armenia, *sed*. ca. 430 – ca. 439),[85] Proclus (Patriarch of Constantinople, *sed*. 434 – 447),[86] Dioscorus of Alexandria (*sed*. 444 – 451),[87] Timothy II Aelurus (the Cat, Patriarch of Alexandria, *sed*. 457 – 477),[88] Philoxenus of Mabbug (ca. 445 – 523),[89] and (Pseudo-)Dionysius the Areopagite (*fl*. ca. fifth to sixth centuries).[90]

Preference in this work is naturally given to early Greek writers and texts, both because his presumed interlocutors are pro-Chalcedonians and because the early writers could be cited as witnesses to the initial period of unbroken communion of the universal Church. From all this,

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[73] *MH* 10:540.822–25.
[74] *MH* 10:544.887–88, 547.934–36, 551.991, 552.1003, 566.1174–75.
[75] *MH* 10:481.10, 481.11, 483.26, 488.87, 490.124–31, 497.229, 503.315, 504.329, 505.350, 518.534–36, 518.539, 520.554, 526.632–33, 529.678–79, 530.686, 533.727, 536.753–57, 544.891–92, 551.990–91, 557.1057, 566–67.1174–91, 581.1373–75.
[76] *MH* 10:527.644, 541.830–43, 544.885–86.
[77] *MH* 10:492.149, 505.344, 518.533, 528.660, 534.734, 534–35.740–41, 535.743–44, 535.745–46, 544.893–95, 545.910–14, 553–54.1020–29, 572.1244, 572.1253–60, 573.1267, 573.1270–71, 581.1376–78, 589.1467.
[78] *MH* 10: 543–44.881–82, 544.889–90, 548.950–54.
[79] *MH* 10: 541.830–43.
[80] *MH* 10: 544–44.883–84.
[81] *MH* 10:545.899–902.
[82] *MH* 10:523.591, 528.658, 537.778, 540.826–29, 544–45.896–98, 574–75.1278–85, 575.1288, 577.1319, 585.1414, 590.1468.
[83] *MH* 10:537.772, 559.1090, 573–74.1268–77, 590.1474–75.
[84] *MH* 10:575.1293.
[85] *MH* 10:577.1321.
[86] *MH* 10:540.817–20, 545.903–05, 577.1319.
[87] *MH* 10:575.1288.
[88] *MH* 10:540.822–25.
[89] *MH* 10:547.937–41. I believe this is who is being referred to (***Փիլիքսխմայ Բաքա եպիսկոպոս***).
[90] *MH* 10:533.728–30, 546.918–19, 551.991, 562.1129, 571.1244, 572.1245–46, 578.1334.

Anania emerges as a deep reader of the Greek and Syriac fathers of the church, who was well versed in the theological and liturgical traditions of the Armenian church and its differences with the imperial church. He clearly had a command of the Greek patristic tradition, and passed that on to his students, which is apparent in the works of his pupils who became writers and whose works survive (Grigor and Uxtanēs).

Among Armenian texts and authors referenced in the *Root of Faith* are Grigor the Illuminator (Lusaworičʿ, d. ca. 328), i.e. the *History* of Agatʿangełos / *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*,[91] Koriwn (ca. 390 – 447),[92] Maštocʿ (d. 441),[93] Movsēs Kʿertʿoł (ca. 470 – ca. 530),[94] David the Invincible,[95] Yovhan Mandakuni (catholicos, *sed*. 478 – 490),[96] Nersēs II (catholicos, *sed*. 548 – 557),[97] Neršapuh (Bishop of Mamikoneankʿ and Tarōn, 6th c.),[98] Movsēs II (catholicos, *sed*. 574 – 604),[99] Abraham I (catholicos, *sed*. 607 – 615),[100] Komitas I (catholicos, *sed*. 615 – 628),[101] Petros (Bishop of Siwnikʿ, ca. 500 – 557),[102] John the Ascetic (Yovhannēs Mayravanecʿi, *fl*. 7th c.),[103] Yovhan Ōjnecʿi (catholicos, *sed*. 717 – 728),[104] Stepʿanos Siwnecʿi

[91] *MH* 10:531.704, 537.778, 543.879–80, 546.926–29, 582.1381, 583.1389, 583.1392–93, 588–89.1450–57, 593–94.1515–25. Anania also references Grigor the Illuminator in *For an Explanation of Numbers* (*MH* 10:440.7).
[92] *MH* 10:577.1320.
[93] *MH* 10:560.1103, 577.1319–20.
[94] *MH* 10:582.1382.
[95] *MH* 10:582.1383, 585.1416, 585.1418, 586.1424, 588–89.1453.
[96] *MH* 10:569.1213
[97] *MH* 10:577.1321.
[98] *MH* 10:577.1321.
[99] *MH* 10:577.1321.
[100] *MH* 10:577.1321.
[101] *MH* 10:589.1458.
[102] *MH* 10:578.1327.
[103] *MH* 10:545.906–09. See Stepʿanos Siwnecʿi, *On the Incorruptibility of the Body of Christ*, *MH* 6:455–56.1–3.
[104] *MH* 10:578.1329–32.

(ca. 680 – 735),[105] the *Book of Letters*,[106] and the *Seal of Faith*.[107] While Anania mostly referred to the works of Greek fathers, since they would be more credible in the eyes of his pro-Chalcedonian interlocutors, the references to Armenian fathers, councils, and collections of theological texts also reveal his profound knowledge of the Armenian theological tradition. There can be no doubt that Anania presided over a robust educational program in patristics at Narekavankʿ.

Ascetic Training, Spiritual Exercises, and Virtue Ethics

Intellectual work comprised only one facet of a monk's training. Monastic education involved a holistic approach to the human person, aimed at shaping body, spirit, and soul, in addition to mind and intellect. Unfortunately, we are on less sure footing in regard to the specifics of spiritual and ascetic training in Armenian monasteries, because much of it took place in a one-on-one relationship between spiritual father and son.[108] Naturally, such direction was conducted on an oral basis and personally adapted to the needs of each individual monk.

In the case of Narek, we can recover some of the basic training that Anania may have provided young monks from his *Book of Instruction* (Խրատագիրք).[109] The core of the work was commissioned by bishop Xačʿik, future Catholicos Xačʿik I Aršaruni (sed. 972 – 992),[110] and

[105] *MH* 10: 541–42.844–61, 542–43.862–78, 590.1468, 544.885–86, 544.889–90, 544.893–95, 544–45.896–98, 545.903–05, 545.906–09, 547.937–41. Most of the passages are quotations from those collected by Stepʿanos Siwnecʿi in his *On the Incorruptibility of the Body of Christ.*
[106] *MH* 10:577.1321.
[107] *MH* 10:483.27, 540.821–25, 540–41.826–29, 541–42.844–61, 542–43.862–78, 545–46.915–17, 546.918–19, 546.920–25, 546.926–29, 546–47.930–33, 547.942–44, 547–48.945–49, 548.950–54, 548–53.959–1000.
[108] For a study of spiritual fatherhood in a near contemporary of Anania, see Turner, *St. Symeon the New Theologian and Spiritual Fatherhood*.
[109] *MH* 10:328–427. On the work in general, see Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev narekyan dprotsʿě*, 1:163–212, 2:306–84.
[110] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev narekyan dprotsʿě*, 1:184–88, 2:145.

one of its purposes was likely to provide guidance for shaping the worldview and regulating the behavior of the hundreds of new monks entering the many large *coenobia* founded in this period. The work thus focuses heavily on the initial stages of training: ascetic disciplines, ethical instruction in the virtues, and how to live harmoniously in community. Thus, "On Patience and Peace" focuses primarily on how to live peacefully with the brethren in one's monastic community, how not to offend them, how to bear slights and return good when offended instead of retaliating. Another, "On Humility," focuses on acquiring this virtue, which in the monastic setting is regularly placed at the beginning stage of virtue training. Thus, Anania writes, "Humility is the foundation of every virtue, and all the holy ones became pleasing to God through humility."[111] Likewise, his contemporary in Byzantium, Symeon Eulabes — abbot of the Studite monastery and spiritual father of Symeon the New Theologian — in his only extant treatise, a manual on the ascetic life, gives one of his first instructions on the importance of doing everything with humility: "Perform every deed that is good with humility, recalling to mind the saying: 'When you have done everything, say "we are useless servants, we have only done what we ought to do."'"[112] Anania also refers to this same verse near the beginning of his "On Humility."[113] The acquisition and cultivation of humility was pivotal in the monastic setting, which required both obedience to one's superior, the abbot, and service to the fellow monks in one's community. Thus, Anania writes, "Humility is also obedience, to regard oneself at the rank of a servant and serve one's companion, as the apostle says, 'Be obedient to one another out of

[111] ***Հիմն ամենայն առաքինութեան է խոնարհութիւն, եւ ամենայն սուրբք խոնարհութեամբ եղեն հաճոյ Աստուծոյ:*** "On Humility," *MH* 10:345.47.
[112] Τὸ ποιεῖν πᾶν πρᾶγμα ὅπερ ἐστὶ καλὸν μετὰ ταπεινώσεως, ἐννοούμενον τὸν εἰπόντα· «Ὅταν πάντα ποιήσητε, λέγετε ὅτι ἀχρεῖοι δοῦλοι ἐσμέν, ὃ ὠφείλομεν ποιῆσαι πεποιήκαμεν.» Symeon the Studite, *Discours ascétique* 7.
[113] *MH* 10:342.8.

reverence for God [Eph. 5:21].'"[114] Another of his instructions, "On this Transitory World," focuses on convincing the reader that all earthly glory, riches, grandeur, and pleasure quickly fades and passes away, and that one should thus seek heavenly goods.[115] Such instruction would have been useful in providing a sense of vision and purpose to monks who lived from their youth in monasteries, having been separated from secular life and compelled to live under rules of obedience and chastity.

In one of his lengthier instructions, "On Compunction and Tears," Anania describes the cultivation virtue to be akin to the process of learning a secular craft, trade, or art (*արուեստ*). In order to acquire a virtue, one must be engaged in a particular exercise in a regulated and disciplined fashion with all the time and devotion one gives to learning any trade or skill. He writes, "the gift of compunction is a craft and one must obtain it by all means and with effort."[116] And just like any trade, it is learned best not through theoretical teaching on the subject matter, but by practicing the craft itself. Anania puts it this way:

> When someone learns a trade from someone and after a while sets out to work in that trade, it is then that one better understands the particulars from the trade itself, rather than what was learned from the master. So then employ yourself in the trade of implorations, and the trade itself will teach you, as also the grace of our Master.[117]

As any musician well knows, the only way to make progress in learning an instrument is through regulated and disciplined practice. Likewise, in the cultivation of virtue. And so Anania gives the sage advice of developing a disciplined plan of action:

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[114] *Խոնարհութիւն է եւ հնազանդութիւն, որ զինքն ի ծառայի կարգի ունի եւ սպասաւորէ ընկերին, որպէս ասէ առաքեալ «Հնազանդ լերուք միմեանց երկիւղիւն Աստուծոյ»։* "On Humility," *MH* 10:342.6.

[115] See Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate."

[116] *Այլ արդ, զղջման չնորհ արուեստ է, եւ բազում հնարիւք եւ ջանիւ պարտ է ստանալ զնա։ MH* 10.368.54.

[117] *Զոր աւրինակ ուսանի ոք արուեստ յումեքէ եւ զարուեստան ժամանակ ինչ ի գործ արկանէ, յայնժամ յարուեստէն առաւել իմանայ զհանգամանսն, քան զոր ի վարդապետէն ուսաւ։ Այսպէս եւ դու զարտասուալք պաղատանս քեզ գործ արա, եւ նա ինքն ուսուցանէ զքեզ, եւ ի չնորհէն վարդապետիս։ MH* 10:361.14–15.

> Set for yourself an order and rule and intentionally designate a time for tears and request of God success in the gift and compel your nature, then God will look with favor and give the gift that you long for.[118]

Anania, attuned to the differences in individual human beings — how different approaches, experiences, and input affect people in different ways — recognized that there is no one-size-fits-all method to cultivating the art of tears. And thus, he says:

> Test your nature, to see from what kind of reason compunction comes, and frequently have recourse to that. And also, observe from what kind of reason it diminishes, and cast that away from yourself, so that God looks upon you with favor and gives the gift.[119]

If one wants to excel in the art of tears, and the cultivation of virtue in general, one must know how to say no to lesser goods, just as the pianist must marry themselves to their instrument and say no to so many other things in order to devote time to practice and rehearsal. And so, Anania counsels, "Separate yourself from earthly diversions so that you occupy yourself with compunction and tears, and the gift will take root in you."[120]

Such an approach to virtue ethics had its origins in the philosophical schools of antiquity. Here it is instructive to recall Pierre Hadot's emphasis upon the centrality of spiritual exercises (*exercices spirituels*) to ancient philosophical education in general in the ancient world, which was then adopted by and further developed in monastic settings.[121] Hadot brought into focus the way in which ancient philosophy was not concerned exclusively with abstract intellectual pursuits — as is the case, by and large, within the academic discipline of philosophy today —

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[118] ***Եւ կարգ դիր եւ սահման եւ խորհրդեամբ արա զարտասուացն ժամանակն, եւ յԱստուծոյ խնդրեա գյաջողութիւն չնորհին, եւ բռնադատեա զբնութիւնդ, յայնժամ Աստուած ի փոյթն հայի եւ տայ չնորհս, որոյ ցանկաս։*** *MH* 10:363.22.

[119] ***Եւ փորձեա զբնութիւնդ, թէ յորպիսի պատճառէ գայ զղջումն, եւ յայն յաճախեա, եւ դարձեալ՝ միտ դիր, թէ յորպիսի պատճառէ չիջանի, եւ զայն ի բաց ընկեա, որ Աստուած ի փոյթն տեսանէ եւ չնորհն տայ։*** *MH* 10:364.31.

[120] ***Ձերկրաւոր զբաւսանաց որոչեա զքեզ, որ զղջման եւ արտասուաց պարապես, եւ չնորհն արմատանայ առ քեզ։*** *MH* 10:365.36.

[121] See Hadot, *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique* (English translation by Michael Chase: *Philosophy as a Way of Life*); idem, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie antique?* (English translation by Michael Chase: *What is Ancient Philosophy?*); Sharpe, "Pierre Hadot (1922–2010)."

but was first and foremost a *bios*, a way of life (*manière de vivre*). This observation holds true even more with regard to monasticism, which adopted many of the models and practices of the late antique philosophical schools.

One of the pivotal figures in this regard was Evagrius of Pontus, who was trained both in Christian Neoplatonist philosophy with the Cappadocian fathers and ascetic spirituality with the desert monks of Egypt. His works present a synthesis of these two spheres. Nearly all his writings are addressed to fellow monastics to explain and aid them in the ascetic path, including the psychological and psychosomatic phenomena that confront the one travelling it, and to assist them in the quest for spiritual knowledge (*gnosis*) and union with the divine (*theōsis*). Evagrius' ascetic-mystical system is well known from his trilogy *Praktikos* (cpg2430), *Gnostikos* (cpg2431), and the *Kephalaia Gnostika* (cpg2432).[122] The overarching goal was intensive training of body, mind, soul, and spirit, which would result in the transformation of the human person into one who is unmoved by bodily passions and thus endowed with the mental clarity to access spiritual knowledge and insight (*gnosis*) and achieve ever closer union with the divine (*theōsis*).[123] This training of course takes place in stages and in a determined order. Thus, *Praktikos* focuses upon the preliminary stages of ascetic discipline, training the body and desires through practices of denial and engagement, in combat with bad thoughts and demons. *Gnostikos* lays more emphasis on the deep, inner self, aiming to guide the mind into deeper spiritual insight. The cryptic sayings in the *Kephalaia Gnostika* is meant only for the well advanced, to be

[122] See bibliography for editions of these works. I also have included in parentheses the number of each work of Evagrius according to that of the *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, since sometimes his works are known under different titles. Further bibliography may be found in Kalvesmaki, *Guide to Evagrius Ponticus*.
[123] For further on Evagrius' understanding of ascetic-mysticism, see Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*; Guillaumont, *Un philosophe au désert*.

used in conjunction with contemplation in quest of the higher stages of spiritual *gnosis* or enlightenment.

Anania's *Book of Instruction* bears much influence from Evagrius, bringing the same goals to the cenobitic setting. To help them achieve this lofty aim, Anania provided the monks under his charge with intensive training in ascetic or spiritual exercises, which taught them both how to regulate their thoughts and emotions and how to redirect and transform their desires and appetites. This made them capable of accessing the higher stages of *gnosis* and brought them further along the path of *theōsis*.

Like Evagrius, Anania's ascetic-mystical program also targeted the inner and outer self with strategic practices intended to facilitate the self's transformation. In the early stages (the equivalent of Evagrius' *Praktikos*), to which the extant instructions of Anania are mostly devoted, he, like the desert philosopher before him, focused not just on ascetic disciplines targeting outward behavior, but on the reformation of the inner, unseen self. He taught that just as one must direct one's outward conduct with disciplined fasting, prayer, labors, poverty, and the like, so one must cultivate the inward virtues of gentleness, humility, compassion, patience, peacefulness, and the like. He writes:

> And just as you direct your outward conduct (***զերեւելի վարսդ***), i.e. [with] fasting, prayer, labors, and poverty, so also direct your inward disposition (***զաներեւոյթ բարս***), i.e. [be] gentle, humble, pleasant, merciful, without rancor, patient, peace-making, forbearing, because one must in every way be pleasing to God, be cleansed of outward faults as well as inward, spiritual vices, since the Pharisee and the foolish virgins rectified only their outward conduct and were found unworthy [see Luke 18:9–14 and Matthew 25:1–13].[124]

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[124] ***Եւ որպէս զերեւելի վարսդ ուղես՝ զպահս եւ զաղաւթս, զաշխատութիւնս եւ զանընչութիւնս, այսպէս եւ զաներեւոյթ բարս ուղեա՝ հեզ, խոնարհ, քաղցր, ողորմած, անոխակալ, համբերող, խաղաղարար, երկայնամիտ, քանզի պարտ է ամենայնիւ հաճոյ լինել Աստուծոյ, յերեւելի սխալանաց մաքրիլ եւ յաներեւոյթ՝ ի չնչական ախտից, քանզի փարիսեցին եւ յիմար կուսանքն զերեւելիս միայն ուղղեցին զվարան եւ խոտան գտան։*** Anania of Narek, "To Priests," *MH* 10:330.30.

Since outward conduct is observable by others and thus easier to manage in the setting of regulated monastic living, Anania placed the focus of his teaching on the inward disposition and its reformation, teaching how practically to uproot the negative emotions of anger, hatred, greed, and lust, and cultivate in their place love, compassion, gentleness, and humility.[125]

Such ascetic or spiritual exercises were pursued communally and individually. In addition to participation in the public, communal liturgical services mentioned above, at Narek even greater emphasis was laid upon a monk's solitary prayer before God and individual practice, which also was seen, in liturgical terminology, as a sacrifice (*պատարագ*).[126] Speaking about private prayer, Anania writes, "your prayer is a sacrifice to God; offer it before God with purity of heart."[127] A monk thus was trained to engage in mental and spiritual exercises, such as meditation upon and memorization of Scripture, imageless and wordless contemplation,[128] as well as more physically demanding exercises aimed at subduing bodily passions and appetites and monitoring the senses, such as fasting, the sublimation of sexual energy and desire, solitude, and vigil. A couple kilometers from Narek monastery are caves built into a nearby hill where ascetics would take lengthy solitary retreats to engage in such training. We know that Gregory, and other monks of Narek monastery, went there frequently and according to some traditions, he wrote the bulk of his *Book of Lamentation* there.[129]

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[125] He mentions this specifically in his "Evangelical, Apostolic, and Prophetic Speech and Instructions." See *MH* 10:403–04.101–11.

[126] Cowe, "Generic and Methodological Developments," 680.

[127] *քո աղաւթքն պատարագ է Աստուծոյ, սրբութեամբ սրտիւ մատո զնա առաջի Աստուծոյ։* Anania of Narek, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:369.61.

[128] This was a characteristic feature of Evagrian spirituality and the traditions influenced by him. See Stewart, "Imageless Prayer;" Tobon, "Words Spoken in Silence;"

[129] On these caves, see Hakobyan, "Surb Grigor Narekatsʿu chgnaranĕ."

As any clinical psychologist will affirm, the regulation of one's thoughts is critical to self-transformation. Evagrius is well known for his focus upon thoughts and their regulation and was the first to develop a robust theory of the way thoughts operate and how to combat bad ones. Anania likewise devoted a treatise to thoughts that reveals the impact of the desert master.[130] In the following passage, Anania argues that all evil, like good, is first conceived before it is acted upon:

> As a servant waits on the command of his master, in the same way are all the senses governed by thoughts, because first one conceives a good deed, and then performs it. As also the prophet says, "I thought and kept your ways."[131] Also, first one thinks about sin and then commits it. As the prophet again says, "They conceived pains and begot iniquity."[132] And first one loves someone in their thoughts and then gives them gifts, as when first the spirit of Jonathan was bound with David and then he took off his garments and clothed him with them.[133] And first one hates someone in their thoughts and then murders them, as when first Joseph's brothers hated him and then sold him into Egypt.[134] Now, it is evident that all the senses are activated through thoughts. For this reason, exert yourself with all your strength and purify your thoughts from all invisible, sensual passions and be especially on guard against lustful thoughts, about which the Lord also says, "He committed adultery in his heart."[135]

Both good and evil operate from the inside out, being conceived first in the thoughts before being carried out. Anania recognized that the chief struggle lies within the mind, and like Evagrius and many other writers from the ascetic tradition, he made use of what became the

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[130] "On Attention to Thoughts," *MH* 10:356–359.
[131] Psalm 17:22; Isaiah 46:11.
[132] Psalm 7:15(14).
[133] See 1 Kingdoms (1 Samuel) 18:1–4.
[134] See Genesis 37 at v. 4.
[135] Matthew 5:28. *Զոր աւրինակ ծառայ սպասէ հրամանի Տեառն իւրոյ, այսպէս ամենայն սգայարանքն ի ձեռն խորհրդոցն կառավարին, քանզի զբարին նախ խորհի եւ ապայ առնէ: Որպէս եւ մարգարէն ասէ. «Խորհեցայ եւ պահեցի զճանապարհս քո»: Եւ մեղքս յառաջ խորհի եւ ապայ առնէ: Որպէս ասէ դարձեալ մարգարէն. «Ցղացաւ զցաւս եւ ծնաւ զանաւրէնութիւն»: Եւ նախ սիրէ խորհրդովք եւ ապայ տայ պարգեւս, որպէս զայն, որ յառաջ կապեցաւ ոգին Յովնաթանու ընդ Դաւթի եւ ապայ հանեալ զհանդերձս իւր զգեցուցանէր նմա: Եւ նախ ատէ խորհրդովք եւ ապայ սպանանէ, որպէս զայն, որ յառաջ ատեցին եղբարքն Յովսէփու զՅովսէփ եւ ապայ վաճառեցին յԵգիպտոս: Արդ, յայտ է, թէ ամենայն սգայարանքն* [sic] *ի ձեռն խորհրդոցն ներգործին: Վասն այսորիկ դու յամենայն զաւրութենէ ջան դիր եւ զխորհուրդսդ սրբեա յամենայն աներեւոյթ չնչական ախտից, եւ առաւել զգուշացիր ի պոռնկական խորհրդոց: Վասն որոյ եւ Տէրն ասէ. «Շնացաւ ի սրտի իւրում»:* Anania of Narek, "On Attention to Thoughts." *MH* 10:356.4–12.

typical monastic language of battle and combat to describe the interior struggle of the self against the invisible powers that introduce bad thoughts. An example is the following passage from the same treatise:

> And when the [bad] thought comes, be alarmed and combat it, confess and repent, so that you do not welcome it in, grow accustomed to it, and then be conquered by it. About this the apostle says, "We dismantle thoughts and every elevation of thoughts and we take every thought captive into obedience to Christ."[136] Now, as a thief has darkness as his weapon and comes in the night to steal, then when they bring light he is alarmed by the light and driven off, so also Satan is a thief. When he sees your mind darkened, he debilitates you; at that time, shine the light of Christ into your mind and Satan will be driven off and your mind will be illumined…And as they build a wall around a city prior to the coming of the enemy, so you also, fortify in advance your mind with fasting, prayer, and tears, then God will see your diligence and illumine your mind. And do not consider transgression by thoughts to be insignificant, for pride and envy and hatred come about by means of thoughts and they are heinous sins. Just as while enemies are outside of the stronghold, it is possible to easily guard against them, yet if they fight and take the stronghold and enter it, then it is difficult to drive them out from there; so also for you in regard to the war with thoughts. While [a thought] is outside the stronghold of your mind, be on guard against it. For if it [i.e. the thought] makes battle and takes your stronghold and enters inside, then it will bring much trouble upon you.[137]

Anania's approach to thoughts and the battle against invisible powers that lay siege against the one engaged in ascetic struggle is typically Evagrian and broadly in line with what had become

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[136] 2 Corinthians 10:4–5.

[137] *Եւ յորժամ գայ խորհուրդն, դու զարհուրեա՛, մարտի՛ր, խոստովանեա՛ եւ ապաչխարեա՛, որ ոչ ընդելանաս, եւ սովորիս եւ յաղթիս։ Վասն այսորիկ ասէ առաքեալ. «Զխորհուրդս քակեմք եւ զամենայն բարձրութիւն խորհրդոց եւ գերեմք զամենայն միտս ի հնազանդութիւն Քրիստոսի»։ Արդ, զոր աւրինակ գողն զխաւարն իւր զէն ունի եւ գայ ի գիշերի գողանալ, յայնժամ, երբ լոյս բերեն, նա զարհուրի ի լուսոյն եւ հալածի։ Այսպէս եւ սատանայ գող է, յորժամ տեսանէ խաւարեցուցեալ զմիտս քո եւ լքուցանէ, յայնժամ դու զլոյսն Քրիստոսի ի միտս քո ծագեա եւ սատանայ հալածի, եւ միտքդ լուսաւորին...Եւ որպէս պարիսպ ածեն յառաջագոյն նախ քան զգալ թշնամեացն, այսպէս դու յառաջագոյն պարսպեա զմիտս քո պահաւք եւ աղաւթիւք եւ արտասուաւք, նայ Աստուած ի քո փոյթն տեսանէ եւ լուսաւորէ զմիտս քո։ Եւ մի փոքր համարիր զյանցանս խորհրդոցն, քանզի հպարտութիւն եւ նախանձ եւ ատելութիւն խորհրդովք լինին եւ մեղք մեծամեծք են։ Զոր աւրինակ մինչդեռ թշնամին արտաքոյ իցէ ամրոցին, դիւրաւ մարթի զգուշանալ ի նմանէ։ Իսկ եթէ մարտուցեալ առնու զամրոցն եւ մտանէ ի ներքս, յայնժամ դժուարին է հանել զնայ անտի։ Այսպէս եւ դու. զպատերազմ խորհրդոցն, մինչդեռ արտաքոյ իցէ ամրոցի մտացդ քո, զգուշացիր ի նմանէ։ Իսկ եթէ մարտուցեալ առնու զամրոցդ եւ մտանէ ի ներքս, յայնժամ առաւել աշխատութիւն հասուցանէ քեզ։* Anania of Narek, "On Attention to Thoughts." *MH* 10:358–59.30–33, 37–42.

the monastic norm.[138] Anania would have introduced his spiritual children at Narek to this from the first time they began to deal with negative emotions.

So, in addition to intellectual formation, which we associate most closely with education today, spiritual and bodily training was also of central performance to monastic education. This holistic approach to the formation of the human person had as its principal goal the shaping of the whole self into the likeness of Christ, propelling the individual on the path to deification (*theōsis*, ***աստուածացում***), the ultimate goal of a monk.[139]

Writing and the Use of Texts to Aid the Ascetic-Mysticial Quest

Writing and texts were also brought into the service of this chief monastic goal. Anania was likely the primary writing teacher at Narek, overseeing those engaged in literary composition. Two of his pupils went on to become major authors of the era: Grigor and Uxtanēs. As mentioned already, Uxtanēs called Anania a "renowned rhetorician." He also referred to him as a "skilled poet (***բանիբուն պուեթիկոս***)," "spiritual author (***հոգեւոր հեղինակ***)," and as the "harp of the spirit (***քնար հոգւոյն***)."[140] Throughout this study, it has become clear how Anania excelled across a number of different genres: theological disputation and argumentation, ascetical instructions, and panegyric.

Rather than being pursued for the purpose of entertainment or creative expression and aesthetic beauty alone — although it was that too — texts composed for internal use in monastic settings were written and employed to aid the ascetic-mystical quest of monastics.[141] As

[138] See for example, Evagrius of Pontus, *On the Thoughts* (cpg2450) or the *Antirrhetikos* (cpg2434).
[139] Russell, *Doctrine of Deification*.
[140] Uxtanēs, *History of Armenia* I.1, *MH* 15:453.58, 455.71.
[141] I have written about this monastic approach to texts in Arlen, "Texts for Keeping Watch."

mentioned above, Anania's instructions reveal his prominent use of wisdom literature, including modeling his own writings on that tradition. Like Evagrius — who wrote scholia and commentaries on biblical wisdom literature, including one each on Proverbs (cpg2458.4) and Ecclesiastes (cpg2458.5)[142] — and other writers from the monastic tradition, Anania's texts reveal significant impact from the Solomonic corpus and the book of Psalms both in terms of content and genre. The impact of the book of Ecclesiastes upon Anania's "On this Transitory World" and Solomonic literature in general on his corpus has been noted in a recent study.[143] Inspired by the biblical book of Proverbs, Anania also had a predilection for composing proverbs of his own taken from the operation of the natural world in order to draw lessons for, and illustrate teaching about, human reality and ethical behavior. This occurs in many of the instructions. An illustrative example may be taken from "On Patience and Peace:"

> As fire when it finds tinder flares up and burns down places, then when that matter is exhausted it is quickly extinguished, so it is with the hurt feelings of your brother. If you provide tinder by continually harping on the matter, then the problem will be kindled all the more and hatred will be engendered.[144]

Another example from the same work is the following:

> As rain descends drop by drop from above collects and raises a flood, so it is with hurt. When you launch words at your brother, then they mix together with other words and anger grows.[145]

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[142] For editions see the bibliography. He also wrote one on the Psalms (cpg2455). A critical edition of the latter is being prepared by Marie-Josèphe Rondeau. See also Dysinger, *Psalmody and Prayer*.

[143] See Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate," 249–50, which also includes a translation of "On this Transitory World." An examination of the scriptural references and allusions in his *Book of Instruction* reveals biblical wisdom literature's profound impact on that work.

[144] ***Զոր աւրինակ հուրն, յորժամ նիւթ գտանէ, բորբոքեալ՝ զվայրսն հրդեհէ, իսկ ի պակասել նիւթոյն արագապէս չիջանի, այսպէս եւ զտրտմութիւն յեղբաւրէն, եթէ նիւթ տաս յոլովութիւն բանից, նա առաւել բորբոքի չարն եւ ատելութիւն ծնանի։*** *MH* 10:340.43.

[145] ***Զոր աւրինակ անձրեւն ի վերուստ առ սակաւ սակաւ իջեալ՝ բազմանայ եւ հեղեղ յարուցանէ, այսպէս եւ զտրտմութեան բանս, յորժամ առաքես յեղբայրն, յայնժամ եւ այլ բանք ի միասին խառնին, եւ բարկութիւն ածէ։*** *MH* 10:340.46.

Texts like these reveal the prominent influence of the tradition of wisdom literature upon Anania's own writing, revealing how he creatively adapted the genre to the tenth-century setting of large-scale cenobitic monasticism.

The adaptation of wisdom literature to an ascetic setting is also characteristic of Evagrius' corpus. The desert father is credited with the invention of the 'chapters' (*capita*, *kephalaia*) genre, which drew in part from biblical wisdom literature, particularly Proverbs, and became one of the primary genres in subsequent Byzantine monastic literature.[146] To my knowledge, Anania is the first writer in Armenian to have composed *kephalaia* according to the Evagrian model, in a text known under the title "Recapitulated and Condensed Sentences on the Things Said to You Before [*Գլխաւորեալ եւ համառաւտ բանք վասն յառաջ ասացելոցդ*]."[147] As the title indicates, it is composed of sentences (*kephalaia, capita*) that in a very condensed form contain the bulk of Anania's teaching as it is known from the *Book of Instruction*. Unfortunately, the text is not well preserved in the manuscript tradition and breaks off after 128 *capita*, and so it is not possible to determine how lengthy the original was, or whether there were different cycles of *capita*, as for example is the case with Evagrius' *Kephalaia Gnostika*. The pithy nature of the *kephalaia* facilitated their memorization and thus functioned as an *aide-mémoire* for the main contours of Anania's ascetic teaching, which was also one of the reasons Evagrius developed the genre of *kephalaia*.[148]

One of the most striking literary methods employed at Narek was the composition of powerful, rhythmic and alliterative poetic texts meant to be used in conjunction with spiritual

[146] See Géhin, ""Les collections de *kephalaia* monastiques;" Kalvesmaki, "Evagrius in the Byzantine Genre of Chapters;" Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*, 23.
[147] *MH* 10:421–427.
[148] See Stewart, "Evagrius Ponticus on Monastic Pedagogy," 358.

exercises in order to aid the monk's self-transformation. Such works also took the Psalms and wisdom literature of the Bible as their models, adapting them to the aims of monks in the contemplative, monastic setting. Like the *kephalaia* of Evagrius, they were meant to be memorized and meditated upon in order to promote ascetic virtue and to be used in conjunction with the practice of an ascetic discipline such as fasting or keeping watch (vigil).[149] Anania referred to these compositions as "prompts" (*պատճառք*), and included them in his various ascetic instructions, to be used as aids in acquiring virtue or in overcoming obstacles to mystical union. For example, in "On Compunction and Tears," Anania says that the "prompts" he gives are to be employed in order to help spark tears when the heart is hardened and tears are not immediately forthcoming: "So then, whenever you wish to shed tears and your heart is hardened, give yourself prompts before God in this way."[150] An example of such a prompt is the following passage:

> Also make this a prompt (*պատճառ*) and model (*աւրինակ*) for compunction: Who praises a king for having possessions and heaps of treasures? For that is customary for kings. But we marvel when a king inclines to the poor and has mercy on [i.e., gives alms to] the orphan and widow. So also You, oh Creator, it is no marvel that You created the heavens and earth out of nothing, because such is the ability of your creative power. But we marvel that You descended from heaven, took the form of a servant,[151] granted paradise to the thief with a single word,[152] forgave the prostitute at your holy feet,[153] made the prodigal son worthy of a kiss.[154] Now, have mercy also upon me, oh Creator, not according to my worth, but according to Your great mercy.[155]

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[149] For further on memory, texts, and their relationship to asceticism in Evagrius, see Krawiec, "Literacy and Memory." On the use of the Grigor's *Book of Lamentation* in the context of a monk's private vigil, see Arlen, "Texts for Keeping Watch."

[150] *Արդ, յորժամ կամիս արտասուել, եւ սիրտդ քարացեալ լինի, դու այսպէս պատճառս տուր Աստուծոյ։* Anania of Narek, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:376.126.

[151] See Philippians 2:7–8.

[152] See Luke 23:43.

[153] See Luke 7:36–50.

[154] See Luke 15:11–32 at 20.

[155] *Դարձեալ՝ զայս արա պատճառ եւ աւրինակ զղջման. Ջթագաւոր ո՞վ ոք գովէ, եթէ՝ ինչս ունի եւ մթերս գանձուց, զի այն սովորութիւն է թագաւորաց, այլ ընդ այն զարմանամք, որ յաղքատսն խոնարհի եւ որբոյն* [corr. *սրբոյն*] *եւ այրոյն ողորմի։ Այսպէս եւ դու, Արարիչ, Ո՛չ է զարմանք, եթէ զերկինս եւ զերկիր յոչընչէ արարեր, զի այն քո արարչական զաւրութեանդ է կարողութիւն, այլ ընդ այն զարմանամք, որ յերկնից*

Another example, drawn from the same work, is the following passage:

> Just as a king's portrait, painted with colors upon a canvass, when the king sees it grown old and tarnished to the point of ignominy, he orders it to be restored according to the original likeness; likewise I, oh Creator, created in Your image, have made it [i.e., the divine image in me] old through sin. Now, restore it [in me], oh Doer of good, according to Your great mercy.[156]

Another striking example of a prompt, this time from "On this Transitory World," which was meant to help the monk overcome the fleeting temptations of this world, goes as follows:

> Now, meditate on all this and keep it firmly in mind so you can overcome the world:
> Humans also can quickly be changed,
> for although they rise up as the heavens,
> they are reduced to dust like the earth.
> They spread out as a cloud,
> and dissipate like a raindrop.
> They bloom radiant as a flower,
> and wither away like grass.
> They flare up as a flame,
> and fade away like smoke.
> They whirl about as a storm,
> and fall apart like a spiderweb.
> They erupt like a furnace,
> and are extinguished as flickering embers.
> They surge like the sea,
> and sink to the depths like sand.
> They stand stately as a tree,
> and fall away like a leaf.[157]

խոնարհեցար, զկերպարանս ծառայի առեր, աւազակին միով բանիւ դրախտն չնորհեցեր, զպոռնիկն ի քո սուրբ գարշապարդ թողեր, զանառակ որդին համբուրի արժանի արարեր։ Արդ, այժմ եւ ինձ ողորմեա, Արարիչ, ոչ ըստ արժանեաց իմոց, այլ ըստ մեծի ողորմութեան քում։ Anania of Narek, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:363–64.27–29.

[156] *Դարձեալ՝ զոր աւրինակ ի տախտակի նկարեալ դեղովք պատկեր թագաւորի, եւ տեսեալ զպատկերս իւր հնացեալ եւ աղտեղեալ յանարգութիւն՝ վերստին նորոգել հրամայէ թագաւորն ըստ առաջին նմանութեանն։ Այսպէս եւ ես, Արարիչ, ստեղծեալ ի քո պատկերդ հնացուցի մեղաւք։ Արդ, նորոգեա, Բարերար, ըստ մեծի ողորմութեանդ քում։* Anania of Narek, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:377–78.130–32.
Further examples may be found in that work or in "On this Transitory World," a translation of which may be found in Cowe, "Renewal of the Debate."

[157] *Նա եւ մարդն կարի արագապէս փոփոխի / Զի թէպէտ որպէս զերկինս բարձրանայ, / Որպէս զերկիր մոխրանայ, / Որպէս զամպ սփռի / Եւ որպէս կաթիլ պակասէ, / Որպէս ծաղիկ պայծառանայ / Եւ որպէս խոտ չորանայ, / Որպէս բոց բորբոքի / Եւ որպէս ծուխ լուծանի, / Որպէս մրրիկ փոթորկի / Եւ որպէս սարդիոստայն անկանի, / Որպէս հնոց սաստկանայ / Եւ որպէս առկայծեալ չիջանի, / Որպէս ծով յառնէ / Եւ որպէս զաւազ ի խորս ընկղմի / Որպէս ծառ վայելչանայ / Եւ որպէս տերեւ թաւթափի։* Anania of

As Tʿamrazyan has observed, such texts by Anania are the precursor to those that Gregory developed and perfected in the *Discourses* (քաՆԻՔ) that make up his *Book of Lamentation*.[158] And we know that this book was specifically requested by ascetics to be used in conjunction with their solitary spiritual exercises.[159] One may compare, for example, the above passage of Anania's with the following portion from the second discourse of Gregory's *Book of Lamentation*:

> Why have you hardened the heart of my miserable self to not fear You, oh Ineffable and Awful One?
> Let me not be fruitless in my small labor, like a negligent sower of barren land.
> May I not: labor, but not give birth,
> lament, but not shed tears,
> meditate, but not sigh,
> cloud, but not rain,
> run, but not arrive,
> raise my voice, but not be heard by you,
> supplicate, but remain ignored,
> groan, but not be pitied,
> beg, but not be helped at all,
> sacrifice myself, but not be consumed (on the altar),
> see you, but walk away empty.
> Hear me, before I call out to you, who alone are mighty.[160]

This was likely the particular focus of Anania's writing instruction to the monks at Narek. This form was initiated by Anania and brought to fruition by his pupil Grigor: to creatively use

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Narek, "On this Transitory World," *MH* 10:353.42–43. I have included here only the beginning for purposes of space. The full 'prompt' is over two pages long in the large *MH* edition.

[158] Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 253–275.

[159] The opening of the book mentions that it was written "at the request of the father monks and the many hermits (***ի խնդրոյ հայցման հարց միանձանց եւ բազմաց անապատականաց***)." Grigor of Narek, *Book of Lamentation*, *MH* 12:49–50.

[160] ***Ընդէ՞ր կարծրացուցանես զսիրտ եղկելոյս / Զերկնչել ի քէն, անճառ եւ ահաւոր։ / Մի՛ եղէց անպտուղ ի փոքր վաստակոյս՝ / Իբր ապաչան սերմանող անբերրի երկրի։ / Մի՛ լիցի ինձ երկնել, եւ ոչ ծնանել, / Ողբալ, եւ ոչ արտասուել, / Խորհել, եւ ոչ հառաչել, / Ամպել, եւ ոչ անձրեւել, / Ընթանալ, եւ ոչ հասանել, / Ինձ ձայնել, եւ քեզ ոչ լսել, / Պաղատիլ, եւ անտես մնալ, / Կողկողիլ, եւ ոչ ողորմիլ, / Աղաչել, եւ ոչ ինչ աւգտել, / Զոհել, եւ ոչ ճենճերել, / Զքեզ տեսանել, եւ դառարկ ելանել։ / Լո՛ւր ինձ նախ քան զկարդալս իմ առ քեզ, միայնդ հզաւր։*** Grigor of Narek, *Book of Lamentation* 3.C, *MH* 12:59.79–94.

Scripture and examples from the natural and human world to compose texts to be used in conjunction with ascetic practices and the development of virtue.

This reconstruction of the educational system that Anania introduced at the monastic academy of Narek has made it clear that education was not principally or primarily an abstract, intellectual pursuit. Rather, it was an initiation into a *bios* or *manière de vivre*, to use Hadot's terms. In addition to reading and study of the Scriptures, Patristics, and the subjects of the trivium, a monk was also trained in ascetic or spiritual exercises and the cultivation of virtue in order to acquire a second nature and transform the self into the divine likeness. The use of texts, both the communal performance of liturgical services as well as the private use of texts such as Anania's "prompts" or Grigor's "discourses," in conjunction with ascetic exercises and contemplation aided this most lofty of aims. It is thanks to such a well-integrated and holistic system of education targeting the whole human self — intellect and mind, body, soul, and spirit — that Narek monastery, under the leadership of Anania, became such a famous center of learning and spirituality, whose approach influenced the later monastic centers in Cilicia, Greater Armenia, and throughout the broader Armenian *oikoumené* into the early modern period.

CHAPTER 4

UNIFORMITY AND PLURALITY IN AN AGE OF DYNAMIC CHANGE: ANANIA, THE TʿONDRAKITES, AND INTERNAL ECCLESIASTICAL AND SOCIETAL CRISES

Եւ այսմ հաւատոյ եմ որդի եւ ժառանգ ի ծննդենէ մինչեւ ի ծերութիւն, եւ ի մահուանէ մինչեւ ի յարութիւն, յորում աւուր եւ դատաստանն եւ հատուցումն արդար կշռովքն Աստուծոյ բոլոր մարդկութեանս:

I am a child and inheritor of this faith, from birth to old age, from death to resurrection, when both judgment and recompense [will be measured out] on God's just scales to all of us humans.

— Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession"

This chapter centers on the complicated issue of Anania's relationship with the TʿondrakiansThe Tʿondrakians or TʿondrakitesTʿondrakites (Arm. *Tʿondrakecʿikʿ*, ***Թոնդրակեցիք***) as the group was referred to — they called themselves Christians — was a community centered around a village in Apahunikʿ known as TʿondrakTʿondrak (modern-day Töndürek in Turkey)[1] that existed outside the structure of the established Armenian Church.[2] According to extant sources about the community, the TʿondrakitesTʿondrakites rejected the official church's sacramental forms, including baptism, eucharist, marriage, ordination rites, and episcopal hierarchy. They had their own way of performing these rites and their own organizational structure. During the period that relates to this study, the movement, or at least views associated with the community, spread to other parts

[1] A rather desolate and volcanic region, the name of the village may be related to the ancient Near Eastern root for a furnace, *tanur*/*tandur*/*tonir*. Polemicists exploited this connection when they claimed that the heretics were rightly so called, since their inheritance would be the eternal flames of Gehenna. See Russell, "Last of the Paulicians," 686.

[2] In this chapter I will interchangeably use terms such as "established Church," "mainstream Church," "institutional Church," "official Church," "Apostolic Church," "Orthodox Church," or simply "the Church" to refer to the official Armenian Church in distinction to other communities such as the TʿondrakitesTʿondrakites or Paulicians, who did not belong to it.

of the Armenian *oikoumené*, specifically the southern and western portions, including Vaspurakan where Narek was located. In the tenth century, Anania, Grigor, and other monastic figures were either accused of or came under suspicion of being Tʿondrakites.

There are a number of questions that have perplexed scholars about the Tʿondrakian movement and about which scholarly consensus has not been established. What was their origin and relation to previous non-orthodox, dissident, or syncretistic communities that were active in different areas of Armenia, especially the Paulicians, but also earlier groups, such as the Manichaeans, Messalians (and/or Mcłnē/Mcłnēutʿiwn), Borborites, and others?[3] What was the core agenda and motivation of the movement? That is, was it primarily a religious, political, or socio-economic movement, or a combination of one or more of the above?[4] What precisely were the theological and Christological beliefs of the group?[5] What was the afterlife of the community, including its relation to later Christian and Muslim sectarian communities?[6]

Naturally, this chapter does not seek to review all the above issues, fascinating as they are. In my treatment, I would like to focus on exploring two aspects related to the Tʿondrakite controversy and Anania's own entanglement within it. The first is the strong association in some of the sources between monastic/ascetic figures and the Tʿondrakites, beginning with Anania himself. Anania was commissioned by Catholicos Anania Mokacʿi to write a treatise against the movement, in which he defended the official Armenian Church's beliefs and practices (on which

[3] This is addressed in Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*; Nersessian, *Tondrakian Movement*; and Dadoyan, *Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World*, vol. 1.
[4] The standard approach in Soviet Armenia was to interpret it as a socio-economic movement expressed in religious terms. See the studies cited in Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 24 n. 58. Garsoïan chose instead to focus on the doctrinal matters pertaining to the controversy. Vrej Nersessian attempted a synthesis between the two; see especially *Tondrakian Movement*, 73–83.
[5] This is the central question pursued, for example, in Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*.
[6] This question has been taken up in the following studies: Conybeare, *Key of Truth*; Moosa, *Extremist Shiites*, 432–447; Russell, "Last of the Paulicians;" Ohanjanyan, "The *Key of Truth*."

see below), yet despite this, Anania — along with several other monastic and ascetic figures of the tenth and early eleventh century — was accused of being a Tʿondrakite. How could Anania be denounced as a Tʿondrakite despite having written a treatise against the movement? Likewise, how could a bishop, such as Yakobos of Harkʿ, be accused of belonging to an anti-hierarchical and anti-establishment movement?[7] Such data seem at first glance counterintuitive, since, among other things, abbots and bishops were immersed in the established Church's liturgical cycle and rituals and enmeshed within its structure, whereas the Tʿondrakians rejected the same and operated outside of it. How is one to understand this apparent contradiction?

The second issue, related to the first, pertains to the agenda and beliefs of the movement. However, rather than seeking to recover the Tʿondrakian agenda and beliefs, I would like to turn the question around and ask how it was perceived and interpreted as a threat by the established Church. How did the chief representatives of the establishment Church, such as Catholicos Anania Mokacʿi, understand the "Tʿondrakite" label and what did he mean by employing it against ascetic and monastic figures? In shifting this focus of the latter question away from the Tʿondrakites' actual beliefs and towards their perception and representation by the Church establishment and the subsequent use of the term against figures threatening to the hierarchy, we actually move closer to addressing the question that the extant sources allow us to pose.

The central difficulty confronting scholars who have occupied themselves with the question of what the Tʿondrakians actually believed is that no texts issuing directly from the community contemporary to their main period of activity from the ninth to twelfth centuries are

[7] See Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 22.

extant.[8] Therefore, as is often the case with defunct heretical communities, in order to recover some idea of their beliefs one has only the sources of their opponents to work with. In the present case, these sources issue from clerical historians and other figures belonging to the established Church, who thus are writing from a polemical standpoint. Thus, one of course must use extreme caution, since such sources are generally full of invective, fabricated accusations of impure and wicked deeds engaged in by the heretical community in question, and hyperbolic or other distortions of their beliefs, including attributing beliefs or practices to the group that they did not actually believe or practice but which were known to be characteristic of other heretical groups.[9]

Armenian sources are no exception to this general rule. On the contrary, they exemplify it admirably.[10] For this reason, we may never be able to say with confidence what exactly the beliefs and practices of the Tʿondrakians were. However, through careful reading of the polemical texts written against them by their opponents, one may uncover how and why the Tʿondrakians were perceived to be a threat by the establishment church and what the label came to signify when it was employed by such figures against their opponents. Following this line of inquiry, we may gain insight into the first issue and come to understand how it could be the case that ascetic and monastic figures were associated with the Tʿondrakians (i.e., viewed by the establishment as representing the same or a similar threat to that posed by the Tʿondrakites).

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[8] The *Key of Truth* (Բանալի ճշմարտութեան), once held to be a manual of the Paulicians whose original was written between the seventh to ninth centuries, is no longer considered to be so, despite espousing many of the same beliefs as those we hear reported about the pre-modern Tʿondrakians. It seems to have been written in the late eighteenth century and to bear influence from modern European Protestant Theology (suggestions have included Anabaptist, Calvinist, Baptist, and Lutheran). One may read about its origins and the arguments against its medieval provenance in Nersessian, *Tondrakian Movement*, 89–96 and Ohanjanyan, "The *Key of Truth*." For the text of the *Key of Truth*, see Conybeare, *Key of Truth*.

[9] A prime example may be found in Russell, "Mother of All Heresies."

[10] For a survey of the principal Armenian sources, see Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, esp. pp. 80–111; Nersessian, *Tondrakian Movement*, esp. pp. 1–5, 55–72.

In order to understand these issues in their full contextual complexity, it is necessary to take a wide purview and to consider the threat of the Tʿondrakians in light of other societal and ecclesiastical crises that marked the period from the ninth to the eleventh centuries. In so doing, we will be able to set the Tʿondrakian threat to the Church hierarchy in relation to the other factors threatening the Church's position and authority during this period. These include both external (an encroaching, imperialist Byzantine Church, specifically from the second half of the tenth century onwards) as well as internal threats (the Tʿondrakians and other revolt movements; the separatism of the metropolitan of Siwnikʿ and the catholicos of Caucasian Albania, power struggles between the catholicos with *vardapets* and abbots (such as Anania) and ascetically/spiritually-inclined bishops (such as Xosrov Anjewacʿi and Yakobos, bishop of Harkʿ). But first let us introduce the most relevant sources to the Tʿondrakite issues that will be pursued in this chapter before returning to these issues.

The Principal Sources

The following sources are the most important for pursuing the questions posed in this chapter.[11] Anania's *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians* [Հակաճառութիւն ընդդէմ Թոնդրակեցւոց] was the first and most important source relating to the theological aspects of the controversy between the Tʿondrakites and the established church. It is very unfortunate that only a small fragment of the work survives to the present day. Extrapolating from the detailed ecclesiological discussion of various ways of understanding the "church (եկեղեցի)," which comprises the

[11] For a survey of other sources that relate to the Tʿondrakites and also the Paulicians, see Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, esp. pp. 80–111; Nersessian, *Tondrakian Movement*, esp. pp. 1–5, 55–72; Lemerle, "L'histoire des pauliciens;" Hamilton and Hamilton, *Christian Dualist Heresies*. A bibliography is maintained by Carl Dixon on his *Academia.edu* page: https://www.academia.edu/49599147/The_Paulicians_A_Bibliography

fragmentary excerpt of the work preserved by Yovhannēs Erznkacʿi, one may deduce that Anania's original *Refutation* was a rather lengthy and exhaustive treatise that in turn discussed, explained, and defended various issues of ecclesiology, including the sacraments, liturgy, and ritual, and other church practices and doctrine that were rejected by the Tʿondrakites. From Grigor Magistros, we learn that Anania's *Refutation* was commissioned by Catholicos Anania Mokacʿi.[12]

Anania's *Refutation* was referred to by every subsequent writer who had occasion to deal with the doctrinal aspects of the Tʿondrakite controversy and was considered to be the definitive treatment of the matter. The first such writer to express this opinion is Grigor of Narek, who in his letter to Kčaw monastery (on which, see below) refers to Anania and his *Refutation* three times.[13] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, who devotes only a single line of his *Universal History* to Smbat Zarehawan and the Tʿondrakite movement, also notes the significance of Anania's *Refutation*.[14] Grigor Magistros (on whom, see below) likewise refers the Syrian catholicos to Anania's *Refutation* so that the former may gain an accurate understanding of the doctrinal matters

[12] Therefore, its *terminus ante quem* is ca. 963–966 (the date of Anania Mokacʿi's death). On the date of Anania Mokacʿi's catholicosal tenure, see Greenwood, *Universal History*, 222 n. 91, 92 and 232 n. 155. See also Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:144.

[13] Firstly, in the beginning of the letter, he censures the abbot for apparently ignoring Anania's *Refutation* (***եւ զերջանիկ տեառն մերոյ զԱնանիայի զգարմանագիծ հակաճառութիւն նամակին զրաբանականս ասել կամ անպատեհս, կամ ոչ Աստուծով խաւսեցեալ***։ *MH* 12:1087.2). Secondly, after reviewing the erroneous beliefs of the Tʿondrakians, he says that his uncle and teacher (Anania) had already demolished their views (***Արդ, զայսոսիկ հաւրեղբայրն մեր եւ վարդապետ, մեծաւ քննութեամբ խնդիրս արարեալ իբրեւ զԱստուծոյ չատագով եւ անդստին իբր զիմաստուն նախամարտիկ, տապալեաց զառասպելաբան հայհոյութիւն անաւրինելոցն Թոնրակեանցն, թէ ոչ մեք զանուն պղծոցն ի համբաւուց ի սակաւ ինչ լրոյ գիտէաք***։ *MH* 12:1088.21). Finally, at the end of the letter, he admonishes the abbot to order copies of Anania's *Refutation* to be made (***եւ զհաւրն Անանիայի զլիագիտութեամբ զմատեանն, որ ընդդէմ հերձուածողացն հոգս տարեալ գրեաց, եւ դուք գրել հրամայեցէք***։ *MH* 12:1089.37)

[14] *MH* 15.753.52; Greenwood, *Universal History*, 229.

pertaining to the controversy.[15] Finally, in the twelfth century, when referring to the critiques of the Tʿondrakians against the established Church in one of his encyclical letters, Nersēs Shnorhali says that Anania had already given a complete response to all of them in his *Refutation*.[16] Rather than rehash the treatment Anania had already given, most of the writers mentioned above simply refer their readers to Anania's treatise. For modern scholars interested in the movement, it is therefore all the more lamentable that nothing more than a short fragment of this significant work survives today. With so many *testimonia* from pre-modern authors, especially their ordering multiple copies to be made, one may find it surprising that no more than a fragment of Anania's treatise is extant. It is possible that Anania's *Refutation* was intentionally destroyed after the Tʿondrakian movement begun to fade away or move underground in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, on the fear that others could be corrupted by coming across their views in Anania's *Refutation*. Just such a sentiment is expressed by Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi when he writes:

> But we considered it improper to put their foul works into writing because they are so filthy, and, furthermore, because not everyone is unshaken by what they hear. The mention of many sins stimulates those who hear and even leads them to perform such deeds themselves. For this reason, I avoided [mentioning] them.[17]

It is equally possible that the treatise simply ceased to be copied in subsequent centuries, once the Church was no longer occupied with the Tʿondrakite threat.

Despite authoring this treatise, as mentioned before, Anania himself was accused of being a Tʿondrakian later in life, during the catholicosal reign of Xačʿik I Aršaruni (sed. 972/3 –

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[15] ***Այլ դու, ո՛վ քահանայապետ սուրբ եւ Յիսուսի հետեւեալ բոլորն այրական սերտութեան, աղէ ա՛ռ ընթերցիր, եթէ գտցես յայդմ գաւառի, զսրբոյն եւ զերիցս երանելի վարդապետին զդիրս Անանիայի, զոր ի խնդրոյ տեառն Անանիայի կաթուղիկոսին Հայոց։*** *Letters–II* no. 4 (67) *MH* 16:196.32.

[16] There are many printings of these letters. See, for example, Nersēs Šnorhali, *Encyclical Letters*, 269. Translation of the relevant passage may be found in Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*, *Tragédie*, 54, n. 209.

[17] ***Բայց զնոսա մծղնէ զգործն անպատշաճ համարեցաք ընդ գրով արկանել, քանզի կարի աղտեղի է. եւ զի ոչ ամենայն ոք պնդակազմ է լսելեաւք, բազմաց մեղացն յիշատակ ի խոխտանս ճգէ զլսաւղսն եւ ի կատարումն գործոյն իսկ ածէ, վասն այսորիկ եւ ես խոյս եառու յայնմանէ։*** Aristakēs Lastivercʿi, *History* 23, *MH* 16:622.46.

990/1).[18] He was thus compelled to write a "Letter of Confession" (***Գիր խոստովանութեան***) to the catholicos, in which he professed his orthodox beliefs and sought to clear his name, in part by referencing his earlier work that denounced Tʿondrakian views and defended the Church.

The second most important source is Grigor of Narek's "Letter to Kčaw Monastery (***Թուղթ ի հոյակապ եւ յականաւոր ուխտն Կճաւայ***)" preserved in the *Book of Letters* (Գիրք թղթոց). It was written to admonish that monastery and its abbot because of their alleged tolerance towards Tʿondrakites and their beliefs and apparent commerce with the Tʿondrakite community. The letter contains valuable summary information concerning Tʿondrakite beliefs and practices and has also been understood by scholars to be a summation or outline of the main points of Anania's lost *Refutation*. It also gives valuable information on the early phase of the movement in the first half of the ninth century, relating to Smbat of Zarehawan's execution by the Qaysite emir Abū'l-Ward.

Grigor's *Book of Lamentation (***Մատեան ողբերգութեան***)* can also be read within the backdrop of the Tʿondrakite controversy. Certain discourses (***բանք***) focus on aspects relevant to the controversy and as a whole the book emerges as a powerful defense of the institutional church — its creed, sacraments, and liturgy. For example, discourses 33 and 34 articulate the established church's creedal confession of faith, discourse 53 is a profound meditation on the mystery of holy communion, discourse 75 is an encomiastic reflection on creedal ecclesiology, while two of the latter discourses reflect on important ritual items: 92 on the semantron and 93 on the holy chrism (*miwron*).

[18] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:131–32.

From the mid-eleventh century, two letters of Grigor Magistros — who was appointed Dux of Mesopotamia by Emperor Constantine IX *Monomachus* (r. 1042–1055) — also contain important information about the Tʿondrakites. Grigor Magistros actively persecuted and uprooted the Tʿondrakite community which was active in Byzantine Mesopotamia (which at the time also included the districts of Vaspurakan and Tarōn and thus comprised the core territory of the community).[19] He knew of their beliefs and practices from first-hand accounts. He had seen (and then destroyed) some of their own writings during one of his campaigns against them and had learned about their beliefs and practices from two Tʿondrakite leaders that he had interrogated.[20] One of his letters is addressed to the Tʿondrakites themselves (*Letters-II* no. 5 [68]) while another (already referred to above) was sent to the Syriac catholicos (*Letters-II* no. 4 [67]), one of the major ecclesiastical hierarchs in the area. The Tʿondrakites had appealed to the Syriac catholicos to be accepted into his jurisdiction and taken under his protection. The catholicos had then written to Grigor Magistros as the leading Byzantine secular official in the region, and in this letter, which is Grigor Magistros' reply to the catholicos, he attempts to persuade the latter not to accept the Tʿondrakites or provide them refuge because of the danger they pose as a heretical community.

The last important source for our purposes is the *History* of Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, which was written in the 1070s and covers the period from the end of the tenth century until 1071. Written in order to provide an account for the Seljuk conquests and the loss of major cities, Aristakēs' *History* explains these events by following the biblical literary model of depicting foreign invasion and subsequent exile and dispersion as a result of divine punishment for

[19] Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 98.
[20] Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 98.

corporate and communal sin and societal corruption.[21] Aristakēs was also deeply influenced by his older contemporary Yovhannēs of Kozeṙn's millenarian speculation and apocalypticism, which was employed as a lens through which to interpret the real meaning and cause behind the catastrophic events of the period.[22] It is in this context and motivated by such views that Aristakēs devotes two chapters to discussing various examples of Tʿondrakite activity and the way that the "heretical sect" spread throughout various southern and western districts of the Armenian *oikoumené* in the 22nd and 23rd chapters of his *History*. It is telling that these two chapters immediately precede his account of the Seljuk invasion of Ani and slaughter of the local population. By this literary positioning, the reader is led to deduce that the Tʿondrakite heresy was a latent cause for the destruction visited upon the great Bagratid capital.

Dynamism and Societal Upheaval

Political Instability and Charismatic Leaders of Popular Movements: Bābak and the Khurammī; Smbat and the Tʿondrakites

The period from the ninth to eleventh centuries is one of dynamic change in the Armenian *oikoumené*. In the first chapter, we surveyed some of the principal changes and developments that occurred on the political plane. At the start of the ninth century, Armīniya was a large province consisting of Greater Armenia, Eastern Iberia (Kʿartʿli), and Caucasian Albania (Ałuankʿ), governed by a caliphal representative (*ostikan*) who had a seat in Duin and Pʿartaw. Efforts were being made to further integrate Armīniya into the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate, such as the settling of Arab tribes in the caliphal North, some of which established emirates in the region. By

[21] Cowe, "Two Tales of a City," 98–102.
[22] Cowe, "Two Tales of a City," 100–01.

the second half of the ninth century, however, the large administrative entity of Armīniya began to disintegrate into smaller units. The Arab tribes, which were meant to bind the province closer to the caliphate, developed semi-independent trajectories of their own, with some merging into the local *naxarar* structure of Armenian society through intermarriage and alliances. At the same time, the *ostikan*ate became a dynastic position that increasingly began to operate out of its own interest (rather than that of the caliph's). With crisis at the caliphal center during the decade of anarchy and its aftermath, the caliph became less able to exert his control over the dynastic, and increasingly autonomous, provincial governors. To mitigate the growing independence of the *ostikan*, the Bagratuni *nahapet*'s position was elevated to 'prince of princes' (*իշխան իշխանաց*) and then 'king' (*թագաւոր*, *malik*). This 'divide and rule' strategy seemed to have an immediate impact, since by the end of the ninth and early tenth century, the Sajīd *ostikan* and Bagratuni king soon were warring with one another.

Before long, the centrifugal tendencies of other prominent *naxarar* dynasts of the period led to internal fragmentation of the Armenian polity. The elevation of the Bagratuni house's position and their royal honorifics sparked the ambitions of other major houses. At the beginning of the tenth century, a separate Arcruni kingdom was established in Vaspurakan, and then a kingdom in Siwnikʿ in the century's latter half. The Bagratuni realm itself also divided into lesser kingdoms. This fragmentation of the Armenian realm into small, autonomous polities as well as the centrifugal tendencies observable across the caliphate sparked in part by internal crisis at the caliphal court created favorable conditions for the expansion of the Byzantine Empire. The empire expanded eastwards into Armenia and southwards into Syria, Cilicia, and Mesopotamia under the Macedonian dynasty — some of whose leaders stressed their Armenian extraction — and the expertise of several capable Armeno-Byzantine generals. By the tenth

century, the Byzantine empire had regained all of Lesser Armenia and defeated the emirates in the Borderlands. In the first half of the eleventh century, they successively annexed the kingdom of Vaspurakan, then the Bagratuni kingdoms of Ani and Kars. But in the latter half of the century, Turkic Seljuk armies rapidly conquered much of these same territories and began their permanent settlement in the region.

Naturally, all this dynamism and instability on the political plane and the consequent movements of peoples and borders had dramatic impacts on the local population and society. Disruption to the traditional *naxarar* ruling structure and the influx of new power players in the area in the form of the migrating Arab tribes ignited the aspirations of other non-traditional actors to seize power. In addition to the establishment of the emirates, there were populist and revolt movements, some of which gained wide followings and carved out significant, if short-lasting, territorial gains. One of the most notable of those affecting Armīniya was the Khurramī revolt of Bābak, which lasted from 816 until Bābak's death in 838. The revolt was centered in Azerbaijan (Ādharbayjān), part of the province of Armīniya, with allies and connections both in Mesopotamia and among Armenian rulers.[23] Certain lords of Siwnikʿ and Ałuankʿ allied themselves with Bābak, who was even given the daughter of Prince Vasak Siwni in marriage in 821.[24]

The revolt of Bābak appears in hindsight as a movement that contained both ethnic, religious, and perhaps also social/populist motivations. On the one hand, it was composed primarily of local, Iranian/Persianate elements operating in opposition to Arab rule. As Patricia Crone notes, "Bābak certainly craved status as a local king on the model of the Armenian

[23] Crone, "Bābak;" Sourdel, "Bābak;"
[24] Dadoyan, *Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World*, 1:94.

princes" and his revolt was directed against the new Arab colonists in the region.[25] Bābak also promoted messianic claims about his own person, claiming that the spirit of the deceased Jāvīdhān — the former leader of the Khurramī cult who was put to death by Smbat Bagratuni in 816 — had passed onto him and calling himself "the avenging guide" (*al-hādī al-muntaqim*).[26] According to Bar Hebraeus, who compiled his *Chronography* from earlier sources, the leader of the Khurramī sect claimed to be "the [long-]expected *mahdī*" and "called himself 'Christ' and the 'Holy Ghost.'"[27] They seem to have been religiously syncretistic.[28] The revolt was eventually suppressed by al-Afshīn, who had been charged by Caliph al-Muʿtaṣim with the military operation against Bābak, and succeeded in capturing the rebel leader in 837 with the aid of the Siwni prince Sahl Smbat (known as Sahl Ibn Smbāṭ al-Armanī in Arabic sources) and sent him to the ʿAbbāsid capital of Sāmarrāʾ, where he was executed in 838.[29]

There are certain striking similarities between the Khurramī community under Bābak and the first phase of the Tʿondrakite community under Smbat of Zarehawan.[30] The Tʿondrakians were active on the opposite (western) end of the Armenian *oikoumené*, also in the first half of the ninth century. The origin of the community before their radicalization by Smbat in this period is obscure. They seem to have been a geographically remote, Christian community of conservative believers, that remained outside of the institutional Armenian church structure, and who had

[25] Crone, "Bābak."
[26] Crone, "Bābak;" Dadoyan, *Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World*, 1:91.
[27] ܟܬܒ ܟܘܢܝ ܫܒܩ ܟܘܡ ܟܝ ܟܬܒܘ...ܟܘܡ ܟܚܫܒܘ ܘܐ ,ܐܡܪ Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon Syriacum*, 144; tr. Budge, 1:131.
[28] Dadoyan, *Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World*, 1:91–92.
[29] Crone, "Bābak;" Sourdel, "Bābak;" Dadoyan, *Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World*, 1:94.
[30] In the memory of the Armenian figures who speak about Smbat of Zarehawan, the latter's activity is associated with the catholical reign of Yovhannēs V of Ovaykʿ (833–855) and the tenure of *sparapet* Smbat the Confessor (826–855). See Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 140–43.

syncretistic elements drawn from Irano-Armenian traditional folk belief and religion, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and later perhaps also Islam.

In general, the Armenian Church was not as centralized an institution as its Byzantine counterpart. The beginning of the interweaving of Christianity and the church hierarchy into the *naxarar* social structure began with the conversion of the Aršakuni royal court in the early fourth century. Each *naxarar* domain soon had its own bishop, which generally came from one of the noble scions of the ruling family in that domain. The interlocking relationship between the *naxarar* politico-social structure and the church became further entrenched over the course of late antiquity and into the early middle ages. Thus, the interests of the ruling family of a region and the episcopal hierarchy became closely aligned and intermeshed and thus the episcopal hierarchs often exhibited the decentralizing and centrifugal tendencies that characterized Armenian society at large.[31]

Due to the mountainous terrain that made up the Armenian *oikoumené*, some smaller villages and communities remained relatively isolated from the developments and institutional structures of the main ruling party in a domain. The historian of the Arcruni family and Vaspurakan, Tʿovma, who wrote at the end of the ninth and beginning of the tenth century offers a memorable description of a remote community in Sasun, a part of the Armenian *oikoumené* not so very distant from Tʿondrak:

> They dwell in deep gorges, in clefts in the mountains, in deep forests, and on mountaintops. They live separately by families, so distant from each other that if one of their strong men were to shout from a very high place he would hardly be able to make his voice carry anywhere; you would think it a mere echo from the rocks. Half of them lose their native tongue from living so far apart and never greeting each other, and their mutual speech is a patchwork of borrowed words. They are so profoundly ignorant of each other that they even need interpreters…But when enemies reach their land, the

[31] See Adontz, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian*.

> mountain peoples unite to aid their princes, for they are loyal…They are called light-armed and couriers, and dwell in the mountain that divides Ałjnikʿ and Tarōn. Because of their obscure and inscrutable speech and way of life they are called Xutʿ, from which name the mountain is also called Xoytʿ. They know the psalms in the old translation of the Armenian teachers, which they have continually in their mouths. They are the peasants of Syria who followed [to Armenia] Adramelēkʿ and Sanasar, sons of Senekʿerim king of Assyria and Nineveh, from whose name they call themselves Sanasnaykʿ. They are hospitable and respectful to strangers.[32]

The passage is fascinating for a number of reasons, all of which we do not have space to go into now. For present purposes, what is striking about the description is the isolated nature of the community and the primitive practices and texts they were able to maintain due to their never having been fully integrated into the mainstream Armenian church. Tʿovma's reference to the community's "knowledge of the Psalms in the old translation of the Armenian teachers," indicates his impression that the community was an old one with origins in primitive Christianity. Their knowledge of liturgical and scriptural texts, such as the Psalms was likely oral, and as such subject to the natural changes that affect orally transmitted texts over time and for that reason differed from the version of the Psalms familiar to Tʿovma.[33] Tʿovma's linking of their identity with the "peasants of Syria" apparently derives from the community's own origin

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[32] *ԲնակուԹիւն նոցա ի խորաձորս եւ ի վապարս լերանց եւ ի պրակս մայրեաց, ի գագաԹունս լերանց. եւ բնակեն առանձին՝ ըստ տունս ազգաց, եւ այնչափ ի բացեայ են ի միմեանց, մինչ ԹէԹ ոք յարանց զաւրաւորաց ի բարձրաբերձ տեղեաց ուժգին խանչիցէ՝ հազիւ ԹէԹ ուրեք կարիցէ առնուլ զբոմբիւն ձայնին՝ իբրեւ ի վիմաց ինչ արձագան լինելոյ կարծիս բերելով։ Եւ կէսքն վրիպեալք ի բնական հայրենի լեզուէն, յաղագս հեռաբնակն լինելոյ եւ անհամբոյրք միմեանց հանդիպեալք, եւ խաւսս միմեանց եղեալ կարկատուն մուրացածի բանիւք։ Եւ այնքան խրթնի անծանաւԹք պատահեն առ միմեանս, մինչեւ Թարգմանաց անգամ կարաւտանան...Այլ եւ ի ժամանակս հասելոց Ժչնամեաց յերկիրն իւրեանց՝ գան միաբան լեռնայինքն յաւգնուԹիւն իշխանացն, զի են տիրասէրք...Եւ կոչին սոքա մեկնակազէնք սուրհանդակք, բնակեալք ի լերինն, որ բաժանէ ընդ Աղձնիս եւ ընդ Տարաւն։ Եւ յաղագս խրթնի եւ անհետազաւտելի խաւսիցն եւ բարուցն կոչին ԽուԹ, յորոց անուն եւ լեառնն ԽոյԹ անուանի։ Եւ գիտեն զսաղմոսն՝ զհին Թարգմանեալսն վարդապետացն Հայոց, զոր հանապազ ի բերան ունին։ Սոքա են գռեհիկ Ասորոց, որ չուեցին զկնի Ադրամելքայ եւ Սանասարայ որդւոց Սեննեքերիմ արքայի՝ Թագաւորի Ասորեստանի եւ Նինուէի, յորոց անուն ինքեանք Սանասնայք զինքեանս անուանեն. եւ են հիւրասէրք, աւտարընկալք, պատուադիրք։* Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* II.7, *MH* 11:151.12–21, tr. Thomson, 187–88.

[33] It is tempting to connect their version of the Psalms with the earliest, Syriac stratum underlying the Armenian text of many biblical books, including the Psalms, however the differences in their version of the Psalms is probably due in fact to the reason mentioned, that it was an orally transmitted text. On the earliest strata of the Psalms and other Armenian biblical books, see Cowe, "The Bible in Armenian," 150; Cox, "Armenian Version," 246–47.

myth, by which they claimed to be descendants of Adrammelech and Sharezer, the sons of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, who according to 2 Kings 19:37, slew their father and "escaped into the land of Ararat (*գերծան յերկիրն Արարադայ*)."[34] This origin story was a popular one in the region of southern Armenia, with iterations reported in Xorenacʿi and the first cycle of the epic of Sasun.[35] The Christianity of the community may in fact have been derived from early missions associated with the Syriac church, which was active in this region of the Armenian *oikoumené*. Garsoïan argued for such an origin to the (Armenian) Paulicians and Tʿondrakites, as being the "Armenian Old Believers," i.e., followers of the primitive Syriac-influenced form of Christianity that predated the Hellenization of the church in the fourth and fifth centuries.[36] Another community that remained outside the purview of the established church was the *arewortikʿ* ("children of the sun"), who maintained Zoroastrian and Armeno-Iranian folk beliefs and practices, and likewise endured in especially mountainous and remote regions even up until the modern period.[37]

Like these other communities, the Tʿondrakites likely had remained relatively isolated and unknown, until the instability and dynamism of the period sparked the ambitions of Smbat. Located in the Borderlands and as such exposed to a variety of beliefs and peoples including local forms of Islam, the community seems to have adopted certain syncretistic elements and gained aspirations for autonomous political rule.[38] Smbat, the community's leader in this period, is remembered in later Armenian sources as the founder of the Tʿondrakite heresy. Smbat hailed

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[34] 2 Kings 19:37.
[35] See Movsēs Xorenacʿi *History of Armenia*, I.23. On the epic of Sasun, see Yeghiazaryan, *Daredevils of Sasun*; Kouymjian and Der Mugrdechian, *David of Sassoun*.
[36] Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 220–230 at 230.
[37] On this community, see Russell, *Zoroastrianism in Armenia*, 515–39; idem, "Heresies."
[38] Seta Dadoyan argues for understanding the Tʿondrakites as a syncretistic community characteristic of the Borderlands. See Dadoyan, *Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World*, 1:90–107.

from Zarehawan, a village in the province of Całkotn in the region of Ayrarat, not far north from Tʿondrak.[39] Grigor Magistros claims that Smbat learned his erroneous and wicked beliefs from a "Persian doctor, astrologer, and magus" named Mǰusik, which perhaps can be taken as an indication of the syncretistic nature of Smbat's doctrine.[40] Based on this datum, Garsoïan suggested the possibility that Smbat may have been influenced by the messianic Islamic notion of the *mahdī*, like the case of Bābak.[41] Grigor of Narek notes how Smbat referred to himself as "Christ," and relates how when the Qaysite emīr, Abū'l-Ward had Smbat put to death, the former mocked the latter first by saying:

> Christ rose on the third day. Now, since you call yourself 'Christ,' I will kill you and bury you, and you come back to life on the thirtieth day. Then, I'll know that you are Christ, even though it'll be so many more days later that you will be resurrected.[42]

One notes the parallel here to the case of Bābak mentioned above. Although there is much less information on the political aspirations or activity of Smbat and the community that followed him, one may surmise that like Bābak and the Khurramī community, they held political aspirations for local autonomy, though on a much smaller scale than that of the Khurramī. Like Bābak, Smbat was eventually captured and put to death by an Arab emir, in this case the Qaysite Abū'l-Ward. Around this same period, the Qaysites under Abū'l-Ward were solidifying their rule in Apahunikʿ and suppressing rival claimants. After the expeditions of Bughā'l Kabīr, they

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[39] Grigor Magistros, *Letters-II* no. 4 [67], *MH* 16:196.35; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 55, p. 63; map 91, p. 115.

[40] ***Ուսեալ զչար մոլութիւն յումեմնէ պարսկական բժշկէ եւ յաստեղաբաչխէ մոգէ, զոր Մջուսիկդ կոչէք:*** Grigor Magistros, *Letters-II* no. 4 [67], *MH* 16:196.32.

[41] Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 148 n. 169. According to Acharean, the name derives from a form of the Armenian name Mrǰiwnik (***Մրջիւնիկ***), and thus some scholars have supposed that Smbat in fact learned his teachings from an Armenian, who may have been affiliated with Persian magi. See Acharean, *Hayerēn armatakan baṙaran*, s.v. "Mrǰiwnik;" Nersessian, *Tondrakian Movement*, 46.

[42] ***Քրիստոս յերիր աւուր յարեաւ, արդ, մինչ դու զքեզ Քրիստոս անուանես, սպանանեմ զքեզ եւ թաղեմ, եւ դու զկնի Լ. աւուր կենդանացիր. ես գիտեմ, թէ Քրիստոս իցես, թէպէտ այնքան աւուրբք բազմաւք յետոյ յարիցես:*** Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1088.24.

expanded even further, establishing a center at Manazkert, from where they remained a political force for the next century.[43] The T'ondrakites continued to remain in the region, but do not seem to have renewed their aspirations for political autonomy, instead persisting under the radar. The next hundred years contained further political dynamism and societal and ecclesiastical crises, after which the T'ondrakite label reemerges in the sources as a term of opprobrium deployed against ascetic, spiritualist figures. Before we reflect on this evolution, it will be helpful to review some of these major societal and ecclesiastical controversies that provide some of the contextual backdrop to the height of this second phase of the controversy that began in the middle of the tenth century.

Economic Inequality and Revolts in Siwnik'

As reviewed in the second chapter, the boom in the overall economy, fueled largely by the international trade routes running through Armenia, led to increased wealth in the hands of the major noble dynastic families (Bagratuni, Arcruni, Siwni). But the economic, trade, and building boom had its darker side. The wealth disparity between rich and poor seems to have been markedly increased in this period, contributing to feelings of discontent on the part of the lower classes of society, who felt taken advantage of by landholders and landholding institutions. This included ecclesiastical institutions, notably the newly founded and expanding cenobitic monasteries that were discussed in the previous chapter. In general, the Church, aligned with the noble families, became wealthier and more prosperous in this period, the many building projects and endowments made to churches and monasteries bearing witness to this. For example, Sewan

[43] On the Qaysites, see Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 51–53.

monastery (Sewanavankʿ[44]), founded between 871–74, was given five villages on the banks of Lake Sewan, privileges to the prime hunting location of Kŕakcin, and orchards in Gaŕni, Erevan, and elsewhere.[45] A vivid description of the wealth accumulated by members of the hierarchy is given in a passage by Mattʿēos Uŕhayecʿi, who refers to the wealth seized by the Seljuk general Ibrāhīm from the chorepiscopus Dawtʿuk, when the Seljuks captured Arcn, one of the major commercial cities of the period, in the eleventh century: "I have often heard it said by many people that when Abrihim (Ibrāhīm) seized his [the kʿorepiskopos Dawtʿuk's] treasury, forty camels carried away his treasure and eight hundred oxen [yoked together] in sixes went forth from his household."[46] While the exact numbers are no doubt an exaggeration, bearing as the episode does the tell-tale signs of oral, folk tale, it nevertheless vividly illustrates the great wealth that had been accumulated by some hierarchs during this period and the way their wealthy status was perceived by the local population.

The expansion of a business, merchant class in the commercial cities of the Armenian *oikoumené* also contributed to an increased disparity between the well-to-do in urban settings and the poor peasants in rural settings. Sources from the period contain indications of growing discontentment on the part of rural peasants, whose position was unchanged or worsened in comparison to mercantile businessman in the urban centers, who were growing wealthy thanks to increased commercial activity.[47] Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, writing about what precipitated the fall of Arcn, says:

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[44] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 728, p. 129.
[45] Pogossian, "Foundation of the Monastery of Sevan," 203.
[46] ***Բայց զայս բազում անգամ լուեալ է մեր ի բազմաց յաղագս քորեպիսկոպոսին՝ որ ասէին Դաւթուկ, եթէ զգանձատունն նորա Աբրիհիմն էառ եւ քառասուն ուղտ բարձան զգանձարանն նորա, ուր հարիւր վեցկի եզանց ելանէին ի տանէ նորա։*** Mattʿēos Uŕhayecʿi, *Chronicle* I.92, ed. Adamean and Tēr-Mikʿayelean, 103.
[47] On this topic, see Manandian, *Trade and Cities*, 136–43; Greenwood, "Aristakes Lastivertcʿi and Armenian Urban Consciousness."

> Love of silver became more honored than love of God, and *mammon* more than Christ. At that time, all discretion of the orders was subverted and turned to disorder. The princes [of Arcn] became the companions of thieves, nefarious, servants of silver. The city's judges took bribes and robbed the just for the sake of bribes. They did not take up the case of orphans and did not incline to the rights of widows. Usury and speculation became the norm. Wheat was produced in such excess that the land was polluted, its womb blocked from bearing crops at the proper time to feed mankind. He who defrauded his friend boasted that he was wise, and he who seized [the property of others] said, 'I am mighty.' And the wealthy seized the fields and homes of the neighboring poor.[48]

Likewise, after describing the invasion and capture of Ani by the Seljuks, the same historian writes:

> This is the portion of unjust cities, which build themselves upon the blood of strangers, make themselves wealthy by the sweat of the poor, strengthen their homes through usury and injustice, and have no regard for being charitable to the poor and needy.[49]

While the wealth gap must have been a marked feature of the period, one of course cannot take vivid portrayals such as these as straightforward depictions of contemporary reality. Aristakēs and Mattʿēos were both clerical historians with little understanding of economics, migration, or political cause and effect. Instead, they turned to Scriptural paradigms in order to explain the catastrophic events of the mid-eleventh century. As mentioned above, the reason for the invasion and fall of Arcn and Ani given by Aristakēs follows the biblical model outlined in the Deuteronomistic historian and the prophets of attributing the destruction of Jerusalem to social injustice and exploitation of the poor, orphans, and widows on the part of the rulers and

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[48] *Յարգի եղեւ արծաթսիրուԹիւն քան զաստուածսիրուԹիւն, եւ մամոնայ քան զՔրիստոս. յայնժամ ամենայն համեստուԹիւն կարգաց զառաջեալ՝ յանկարգուԹիւն դարձաւ։ Իչխանք սորա գողակիցք եղեն գողոց, վրիժագործք եւ արծաթոյ ծառայք. դատաւորք սորա կաշառառուք եւ վասն կաշառոյ գողանային զիրաւունս. դատաստան որբոց ոչ առնէին, եւ յիրաւունս այրեաց ոչ խոնարհէին։ Վաշխով եւ տոկոսեաց աւրէնք եղան, եւ ցորենոյ բազմապատկուԹիւն, որով երկիր պղծի եւ արգելու զարգանդ առ ի տալոյ զպտուղ ի ժամու իւրում առ ի կերակուր մարդկան։ Որ խաբէր զընկերն, պարծէր իմաստուն գոլ, եւ որ յափշտակէր, ասէր «Ես հզաւր եմ»։ Ջտունս տնակից աղքատացն, եւ զսահմանս անդաստանաց նոցա յափշտակէին մեծատունքն։* Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 12, *MH* 16:572–73.10–14.

[49] *Այս է բաժին անիրաւ քաղաքաց, որ չինեն զինքեանս արեամբ աւտարաց, եւ ի քրտանց տնանկաց փարթամանան, եւ ի վաշխից եւ յանիրաւուԹեանց զտունս իւրեանց ամրացուցանեն. եւ ինքնեանք զմիտս իւրեանց անողորմ ունելով առ աղքատս եւ տնանկս։* Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 12, *MH* 16:625.18.

wealthy.[50] Aristakēs goes on to cite directly Deuteronomy and Isaiah after his description of the corrupt behavior of Arcn's princes, judges, and wealthy businessmen.

Despite this, it seems beyond question that there was an increase in wealth disparity between rich and poor, with great wealth being accumulated by the ruling class, the church, and those benefitting from mercantile and urban activity. That is, despite the booming economy, the condition of the poor seems to have grown worse, at least in relative terms when compared to the wealth accumulated by the upper classes. As sociological and economic research has suggested, increased economic inequality leads to an increase in (violent) crime, especially when that wealth is visibly demonstrated.[51] Along with the political instability of the period, this seems to be one of the major underlying explanations for the series of violent revolts that took place in this period against wealthy institutions. The most striking example is the series of revolts in Siwnikʿ, directed principally against the monastery of Tatʿew, then See of the metropolitan of Siwnikʿ. The monastery had been founded in 839 to be a permanent locale for the prestigious bishop of Siwnikʿ, and over the course of the next century its possessions were greatly enlarged by a series of donations of villages and estates by Siwnid noblemen, as well as costly, sacred paraphernalia, such as a relic of the True Cross.[52]

Disruptions to the social order brought about by conflicts between the Bagratid king and the *ostikan* were another factor that set the stage for the revolts and anarchic period that ensued. During *ostikan* Yūsuf's conflicts with the Bagratunis, the former led a series of military expeditions throughout mostly the eastern portions of Armīniya (Yūsuf then had his main seat at

[50] Cowe, "Two Tales of a City," 98–102.
[51] Fajnzylber, Lederman, and Loayza, "Inequality and Violent Crime;" Hicks and Hicks, "Jealous of the Joneses;" Anser, Yousaf, Nassani, et al. "Dynamic linkages between poverty, inequality, crime, and social expenditures."
[52] Stepʿanos Ōrbelean details these in the thirty-ninth and fortieth chapters of the *History of Siwnikʿ*.

Pʿartaw) and from there into Siwnikʿ and other areas of the Bagratid realm. The thirteenth-century historian and metropolitan of Siwnikʿ, Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, notes the great devastation wrought by the armies of Yūsuf upon the local population and the fact that the princes of Siwnikʿ had fled from their territory in order to protect themselves, leaving the land and local population defenseless.[53] This seems to have exposed the local population to mistreatment by Yūsuf's army. The food supply and agricultural economy was probably disrupted, and villages were likely exposed to food shortages or starvation. Without the local princes to enforce peace, the territory fell into a period of literal anarchy. During this time, villagers from the nearby fortress town of Cʿur, described by Ōrbelean as "godless bandits," invaded the wealthy monastery and episcopal see of Tatʿew and plundered it.[54] As Ōrbelean notes in an earlier chapter, the village and fortress of Cʿur along with its fields had been one of the endowments given to the monastery and episcopal see of Tatʿew.[55] Ōrbelean's labeling of the invaders as "bandits (**հլուզակք**)" should perhaps be taken not merely as a pejorative designation, but perhaps quite literally. Along with the uptick of trade in the region and traffic along the international trade routes, social banditry would naturally have arisen as a means of income for the lower classes and poor in villages.[56] Banditry in this region continued as a way of life and means of economic activity up until the modern period.[57] Ōrbelean recalls as part of the plunder the bandits intentionally breaking the sacred vessels that held the chrism and pouring it out on the ground:

> Those who were godless, immoral bandits brought many and great sorrows upon the holy congregation of Tatʿew. One day they came by night at an unexpected hour and began raiding and looting the church, workshops, and monks' chambers. And they were seeking to kill the bishop, but did not find him. Then they slew with the sword some of the elderly

[53] Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 38.
[54] Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 48.
[55] See Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 42.
[56] On the phenomenon of social banditry, see the classic study by Hobsbawm, *Bandits*.
[57] For later manifestations of the phenomenon in the region, see Bobrovnikov, "Abrek;" Boratov, "Köroghlu."

> and drove others off. Whatever they found they took with them and went back to their fortress [Cʿur]. They also carried off the *meṙon*, contained in a silver vessel, and dumped it out on a rock.[58]

Noting the specific and intentional destruction of liturgical items and sacred vessels, specifically the *miwṙon* (chrism, holy oil), some scholars have connected this activity to influence from the Tʿondrakians, whether being perpetrated by avowed followers of the sect or conducted under the influence of their iconoclastic beliefs.[59] However, neither Ōrbelean nor the contemporary documents he includes in his history mention the Tʿondrakians in connection with the incident, nor do we have any indication from other premodern sources of Tʿondrakian activity extending this far east in Armenia.[60] It is rather more likely that the motivation in this case was socio-economic. The villagers/bandits may have revolted against the monastery due to their own desperation and deprivation and the latter's visible opulence. One may infer the villagers' sense of being taken advantage of by the monastery and monks, who themselves did not engage in agricultural labor, and instead were supported by the work of the villagers. Such feelings could lead to violent crime during periods of desperation or when those guarding the monastery (the local princes) were absent from the scene. In this instance, the destruction of the *miwṙon* could be seen as an act of protest/vengeance/indignation, hitting the monks where it hurt, perhaps akin to the burning of the national flag during a modern, political protest. Alternatively, the villagers/bandits may simply have seen an opportunity for personal advantage with the local

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[58] ***Բազում և մեծամեծ վիշտս հասուցանէին սուրբ ուխտին Տաթեւոյ բնակիչք ցուրայ բերդին, որք էին անաստուածք, ժպիրհք եւ ելուզակք: Եւ յաւուր միում եկեալ ի գիշերի յեղակարծ ժամու, սկսան կողոպտել զեկեղեցին եւ զգործատներն եւ զյարկան կրօնաւորաց. եւ խնդրէին զեպիսկոպոսն զի ապանցեն, եւ ոչ գտին. ապա զոմանս ի ծերոցն սրով հարին և զայլսն վիճաւոր արարին. զոր ինչ գտին ինքեանք՝ առեալ գնացին ի բերդն (ցուրայ). տարան և արծաթի սափորով զմեռոնն եւ վայթեցին ընդ քարն***: Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 48, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 247.

[59] See, for example, Utʿmazean, *Siwnikʿě XI-X darerum*, 258–60.

[60] In fact, Ōrbelean does not mention the Tʿondrakians at all in his *History*.

princes absent. If motivated solely by profit (and acting less immediately out of desperation or a desire for revenge), the *miwṙon* may simply have been emptied out of the costly, silver vessel so that it could then be sold or melted down and repurposed.

Since the princes remained absent, raids on the monastery were repeated a few more times. Once the princes finally returned, they quelled the anarchy and the bishop issued a fierce anathema against the village's perpetrators.[61] Further revolts occurred in connection with other villages owned by Tatʿew monastery in the 930s, namely the villages of Aweldašt and Tamalekkʿ. Ōrbelean relates that the former was "full of bandits (***լի էր ելուզակ մարդովք***)" and the latter was "a lair for rebels (***ապստամբանոց***)," who continued to wreak havoc on the monks of Tatʿew.[62] Finally, at the end of the century, the villagers of Cʿur once again rose up violently against the episcopal see, this time assassinating then Bishop Yakob II. As punishment, the Siwnid ruler Vasak of Bałkʿ attacked and razed the fortress and village, leaving it uninhabitable thereafter.

The historian and catholicos contemporary to this period, Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi, writing about the unrest and anarchy in the same era, likewise provides an indication of the sentiments of the peasants against the ruling class, and the acts of rebellion and anarchy that marked the period throughout Greater Armenia, as there was a scramble to seize political power during the period of dynamic unrest:

> The lowly tried to surpass the wealthy, and the servants, in accordance with Solomon, maneuvered to make their masters crawl on the ground, and mount the fiery steeds of the latter. They defied those who trampled them under foot and became arrogant in a great rebellion.[63]

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[61] Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 48.

[62] Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 49, 51, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 257, 270. See Utʿmazean, *Siwnikʿě XI-X darerum*, 273–75; Dadoyan, *Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World*, 1:120.

[63] ***Նուազունքն քան զմեծամեծսն ձեռներէց լինել ջանային, եւ ծառայքն ըստ Սողոմոնի հնարէին, զի զտեարս տրեխաւորեալ, ի գետնի գնացուսցեն, եւ ինքեանք ելցեն յերիվարս ահապարանոցս եւ առաթուր հարողս՝***

He then goes on to describe the power grabs made by the major noble dynasts to take advantage of the turmoil and expand their own territories at the expense of lesser lords. All the above-cited incidents provide a vivid glimpse into this period of significant social unrest prompted by political upheaval and socio-economic disparity. Such unrest and disorder caused great fear and alarm on the part of the church hierarchy, who as mentioned above in general were aligned with and patronized by the ruling élite and thus benefitted from a stable social order, themselves also liable to attack during instances of anarchic unrest.

Ecclesiastical Crises and Controversies

Separatism and Centrifugal Tendencies in Siwnikʿ and Caucasian Albania

The first chapter discussed the fragmentation of political rule in the Armenian *oikoumené* in the tenth century, as smaller kingdoms were formed first in Vaspurakan then in Siwnikʿ and then when the Bagratid realm itself fragmented into smaller kingdoms. These political tendencies were reflected on the ecclesiastical plane as well, specifically with regard to the metropolitan of Siwnikʿ and the catholicos of Ałuankʿ. Separatist tendencies had a long history in both regions, for instance during the late sixth and early seventh century, a watershed moment in regard to the ecclesiastical relations between the Churches of the Caucasus. The expansion of the Byzantine empire eastwards against the Sasanians in the late sixth century provided an apt opportunity to attempt to draw the Christian communities in the Caucasus more tightly into the imperial orbit and overtures were made to the leading ecclesiasts. The Patriarchate of Jerusalem also played an

խրոխտացեալք եւ սոնքացեալք մեծաւ ապստամբութեամբ: Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi, *History of Armenia* 52, *MH* 11:517.9; tr. Maksoudian, 186 (modified).

active role in supporting the Byzantine pro-Chalcedonian agenda, by, for example, writing letters in support of the imperial church to the leaders of the Caucasian churches.[64] When the Catholicos Movsēs II Ełivardecʿi refused to cooperate with the imperial agenda, an anti-catholicos, Yovhannēs Bagarancʿi, was installed, and Chalcedonianism was imposed on the regions under the Byzantine Empire's expanding borders. Non-Chalcedonians then fled eastwards across the border into Sasanian territory.[65] Vrtʿanēs, the metropolitan of Siwnikʿ — then the foremost episcopacy in Greater Armenia and aspiring for autocephaly — broke with the Armenian catholicos and aligned himself with the catholicos of Albania, being consecrated by him instead. Both hierarchs favored Chalcedonianism, or at least were accused of doing so. The break of the Siwnikʿ episcopacy from the Armenian Catholicos persisted with Vrtʿanēs' successors until 607, when through the intervention of Smbat Bagratuni, Kʿristapʿor, one of the successors of Vrtʿanēs, was compelled to submit to Catholicos Abraham I Ałbatʿanecʿi. In this same period, the permanent break between the Iberian and Armenian churches took place, with the separation of Catholicos Kʿiwrion of Iberia from the Armenian Church, and the former's formal alignment with the Byzantine Church. The patriarchate of Jerusalem continued its active role in promoting Chalcedonianism among the non-Chalcedonian churches of the Caucasus in subsequent centuries, by, for example, translating texts defending dyophysite theology and disseminating them in the region.[66]

The situation reached another climax in the tenth century. Stepʿanos Orbelean reports that the metropolitan of Siwnikʿ, Yakob, had taken advantage of the unstable political conditions in

[64] For one such letter, from the Patriarch John IV to the Albanian Catholicos Abas, see Terian, "Monastic Turmoil."
[65] This schism lasted until 610/11, when the Sasanians arrested the anti-catholicos Yovhannēs and deported him to Hamadhan. Mahé, "L'église arménienne," 462.
[66] Cowe, "Armenian Job Fragment," 156.

the late ninth and early tenth centuries to pull away from the Catholicos of Armenia and, like in the previous era, lean towards Chalcedonianism along with the catholicos of Ałuankʿ, Sahak.[67] Likewise, the Caucasian Albanian catholicos took advantage of the same conditions to operate autonomously. Orbelean notes that since the time of Gēorg II (877–897), the Albanian catholicos had stopped being consecrated by the Armenian catholicos, an abnormal situation that persisted for the next five catholicoi of Caucasian Albania.[68] In 918, Yakob I, nephew of Catholicos Yovhannēs V "the Historian" (sed. 898 – 924) became bishop of Siwnikʿ (sed. 918–958). Due to the turmoil of the period and the move of the Armenian catholicos from Duin to Vaspurakan and thus further away from Siwnikʿ, Yakob began to receive the holy chrism (*miwṙon*) from the neighboring catholicos of Albania, Sahak (sed. ca. 929–949), instead of the catholicos of Armenia.[69] When Anania of Mokkʿ became catholicos, he attempted to put an end to this irregularity and to confirm his preeminence over the bishop of Siwnikʿ and catholicos of Albania by demanding their formal submission to him in person. When the two did not respond to Anania's summons, he decided to go to them. Arriving first in Siwnikʿ, he demanded and received the formal submission of the metropolitan of Siwnikʿ but was prevented from going to Caucasian Albania by other obligations in 947.[70]

When the catholicos of Ałuankʿ, Sahak, died shortly thereafter, his brother and successor, Gagik, was consecrated once again without the consent or participation of the Armenian

[67] The events related to this episode are detailed in Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 52, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 274–87.
[68] Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 52, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 276. See also Mahé, "L'église arménienne," 507.
[69] Used in rites of consecration, anointing, and ordination, only the Catholicos has the right to consecrate the *miwṙon*, which is then distributed to bishops and from them to individual churches/monasteries. It is thus symbolic of the supreme authority of the Catholicos and the dependence of other bishops upon him.
[70] He was called back to conduct a royal funeral, the wife of Abas I Bagratuni (r. 929–953). Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 52, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 276–77; Mahé, "L'église arméniennes," 508.

catholicos. Catholicos Anania ordered the princes of Albania not to recognize him. All but one — named Senekʿerim — followed Catholicos Anania's orders, and they sent to him a certain Yōnan to be consecrated by Anania as catholicos. Catholicos Anania ordained him and dispatched him to Caucasian Albania, but Gagik refused to cede his position. The loyalties of the local nobility were divided between the two. Catholicos Anania again arrived in person and summoned all the bishops and princes of the land to council. Ōrbelean relates that he ordered for a *History of Albania* to be brought to him, and by referring to it, showed how the catholicoi of Ałuankʿ had always been tributaries of the Armenian catholicos, except during scattered instances of schism.[71] The Caucasian Albanians agreed to abide by this ecclesiastical norm and Catholicos Anania then went on to Siwnikʿ to attempt to establish the same.

The metropolitan, Yakob, in order to avoid meeting Catholicos Anania, fled to Bałkʿ and stayed with the prince of the region, Juanšēr, refusing to meet with the catholicos. Enraged, Catholicos Anania had the monastery of Tatʿew, the seat of the bishop, greatly damaged and returned to his See. Once he had left the region, the new catholicos of the Caucasian Albanians, Gagik, violated his earlier promise to remain loyal to the Armenian catholicos, and along with the archbishop of Siwnikʿ, both hierarchs persisted in acting autonomously for another ten years. By chance, both died in the year 958. According to Ōrbelean, Anania took this as an answer to prayer and a divine sign and went to Siwnikʿ in order to reestablish ecclesiastical norms.[72] He had Tatʿew rebuilt and reconstituted as the episcopal see. Prince Juanšēr, who had earlier protected Yakob, made peace with Anania by submitting to him through a public confession, and in return, Anania ordained his son Vahan to be the new archbishop of Siwnikʿ, obtaining the

[71] Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 52, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 278–82.
[72] Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 52, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 283–84.

promise that the bishop of Siwnikʿ would stay loyal and submissive to the catholicos of Armenia.[73] In order to bring down the prestige of the episcopacy and the symbolic authority of the new bishop, Anania removed certain items from Tatʿew, including a luxurious processional cross that was carried before the bishop during services and had been conceded as a token of respect during the earlier period of contention in the seventh century, as well as a costly and precious staff, and a luxurious cushion.[74] Thus, this disciplinary measure implied the symbolic removal of items used to express Siwnian independence and authority. Finally, he proceeded to Caucasian Albania but was again recalled because of the funeral of an important noble dynast.[75] Preempting Anania's return, the leading lords of Caucasian Albania sent Dawitʿ of Xotakeracʿ monastery to Catholicos Anania to be ordained by him along with their promise to abide by the desired norms.[76] Thus ended the temporary schism and Catholicos Anania succeeded in securing the submission of the archbishop of Siwnikʿ and the Caucasian Albanian catholicos.

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[73] Vahan Siwnecʿi was later elected catholicos of Armenia (sed. 965/6–970) after the death of Anania Mokacʿi. As Ōrbelean relates in the next chapter, he introduced icons from Iberia into Armenian churches. This was perceived as too pro-Chalcedonian at a time when an anti-Chalcedonian sentiment was severe among certain segments of the Armenian hierarchy (on which, see chapter 5). Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, alive during the crisis in question, says that Vahan "expressed a desire to create amity and agreeable relations with the Chalcedonians through epistles (***Սա ընդ քաղկեդոնականս սիրելութիւն եւ հաճութիւն կամեցաւ առնել թղթովք***)." *Universal History* III.8. Complaints were made to the Bagratuni king who called a council at Ani to see what should be done. Vahan fled to Vaspurakan and took refuge with Apusahl Hamazasp (953/8–972), son of Gagik Arcruni. A new catholicos was elected in his place (Stepʿanos Sewancʿi). Both anathematized the other. Catholicos Stepʿanos went with some monks, *vardapets*, and a nobleman named Babkēn from Siwnikʿ in order to try to resolve the conflict. They were imprisoned at Ałtʿamar. The others were released but Catholicos Stepʿanos was held in captivity in the fortress of Kotorkʿ. After a couple years, both died within a short time of each other (Stepʿanos still in captivity). The schism was resolved when Xačʿik Aršaruni was elected Catholicos (sed. 972/3–990/1). See Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 53; Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.8.

[74] These were not restored until the Catholicate of Sargis (992/3–1019) when Yovhannēs was bishop of Siwnikʿ. See Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 52, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 285.

[75] On this occasion, it was Grigor Arcruni. Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 52, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 285–86.

[76] Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 52, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 286.

Dissidence and Ecclesiological Dispute: The Case of Xosrov Anjewacʿi

Catholicos Anania of Mokkʿ emerges in the period as a powerful catholicos seeking to bring order and stability to the chaotic and irregular situation that had been caused by unstable and disorderly political and ecclesiastical events in Armenia over the last half century. As such, he was particularly attuned to any separatist tendencies or challenges to his authority on the part of other bishops or high-ranking ecclesiastics, as well as pro-Byzantine or pro-Chalcedonian leanings, which as in the above instance were often correlated together. Both hierarchical and doctrinal dissidence were interpreted by him as a threat both to the integrity of the Armenian Church and the supreme authority of the head of that Church, especially in the wake of the unstable political conditions of the time and the Byzantine Empire's expansion.

This forms the backdrop to another controversy surrounding the episcopal hierarchy and pro-Chalcedonianism during the catholicate of Anania Mokacʿi, which brings us into Vaspurakan and closer to Narekavankʿ. This time the situation involved Xosrov, the father of Grigor of Narek and relative through marriage with Anania of Narek, who had been ordained bishop of Anjewacʿikʿ by Catholicos Anania (ca. 950). Xosrov, if not directly involved in the catholicos' dispute with the metropolitan of Siwnikʿ and the Albanian catholicos,[77] was certainly responding to the situation when he claimed that the distinction between the episcopal ranks of bishop, archbishop, metropolitan, and patriarch (catholicos) had only an administrative distinction and not a sacramental one, and therefore the catholicos had no right to demand the absolute submission and obedience of other bishops.[78] According to a document written by Catholicos Anania to explain why he anathematized Xosrov Anjewacʿi, the latter had claimed

[77] There is an allusion to his involvement in Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 52, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 276.
[78] Cowe, "Introduction" in Xosrov Anjewacʿi, *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, 8.

that "angels and archangels enjoyed equal honor and glory and consequently the patriarch and bishop shared equal glory and honor" and that "there is one throne and one dignity for the patriarch and bishop."[79]

Significantly, Xosrov was also censured for his Byzantinophilia and presumed pro-Chalcedonianism.[80] Earlier in the document, the Catholicos had noted his "absurd (***անհեդեդ***)" custom of pronouncing certain words in closer accordance with their Greek pronunciation (citing as examples, his saying *kirakē* as *kiwřiakē* and *Erusałem* as *Ɛrusałēm*).[81] Likewise, Xosrov had claimed that liturgical crosses need not be blessed before being venerated by the faithful, a point of dispute in Byzantine/Armenian polemical correspondence, where here Xosrov's view aligns with Byzantine norms over and against Armenian ones.[82] As mentioned in the first chapter and as will be discussed further in the next, the period of the catholicate of Anania Mokacʿi and Xačʿik Aršaruni (covering roughly the second half of the tenth century) marks a major turning point in Chalcedonian/non-Chalcedonian ecclesiastical and political relations. The preceding hundred years — its beginning marked by the council of Širakavan in 862 — of non-confrontation and relative toleration took a sour turn at precisely this time.[83] Certainly, the Byzantine political expansion into Armenia and its imperialistic political and ecclesiastical policy, which picked up pace in the second half of the tenth century lies heavy in the background

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[79] ***Մի պատիւ եւ մի փառք հրեշտակաց եւ հրեշտակապետաց, ըստ նմին՝ մի փառք եւ մի պատիւ հայրապետին եւ եպիսկոպոսին…մի աթոռ է եւ մի պատիւ հայրապետին եւ եպիսկոպոսին:*** Anania of Mokkʿ, "The Reason for Anathematizing Xosrov, Bishop of Anjewacʿikʿ by the Lord Anania, Catholicos of Armenia," *MH* 10:276.15–17, trans. Cowe, 12–13.

[80] He is remembered in the same way by Stepʿanos Ōrbelean. See *History of Siwnikʿ* 52, ed. Shahnazareantsʿ, 276.

[81] ***Սկսաւ նախ զբարբառն գեղակի արձակել՝ ըստ յունարէն լեզուոյն զկիրակէն կիւրիակէ կոչել եւ զերուսաղէմ՝ Եռուսաղէմ, եւ որ սոցին նման է, ի սոյն յառեալ բարբառ: Իսկ զկնի այսորիկ ապա այլ յառաջեաց բանդաղմուն անհեդեդս:*** Anania of Mokkʿ, "The Reason for Anathematizing Xosrov, Bishop of Anjewacʿikʿ by the Lord Anania, Catholicos of Armenia," *MH* 10:276.8–9, trans. Cowe, 12.

[82] Cowe, "Introduction" in Xosrov Anjewacʿi, *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, 7.

[83] Maksoudian, "Chalcedonian Issue;" Cowe, "Introduction" in Xosrov Anjewacʿi, *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, 5 n. 17.

of these internal controversies. In another letter, Anania Mokacʿi referred to dyophysitism as a cancer spreading throughout the Armenia realm.[84] For present purposes, the case of Xosrov marks another instance of the way in which the integrity of the Armenian Church and the authority of the catholicos in this period was perceived as being under threat — this time by an element from Vaspurakan and closely associated with Narek monastery — and the steps Catholicos Anania took to ensure order, conformity, and submission.

Tʿondrakecʿi: The Invention of a Heretical Type

By the mid-tenth and into the early eleventh century, abbots such as Anania at Narek and that of Kčaw monastery, as well as ascetic, reformist bishops like Yakobos of Harkʿ were denounced and branded with the label "Tʿondrakecʿi." To understand how the term evolved such that it could be applied in this century to bishops, abbots, and monks, one must first establish what the Tʿondrakite label came to signify in the eyes of establishment churchmen. Then, one may see how reformist bishops and spiritualist abbots and monks could be seen to pose a typologically similar threat to that posed by the Tʿondrakites.

Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, whose *Universal History* was commissioned by Catholicos Sargis I Sewancʿi, crystallizes the establishment Church's view in a one-line description he gives of Smbat of Zarehawan, calling him the "opponent of all Christian institutions [*or* hierarchies]" [85] The word translated here as 'institution' or 'hierarchy' is *karg* (**կարգ**), the Armenian equivalent

[84] ***աղանդ Քաղկեդոնի, որ յաչխարհիս Հայոց իբր քաղցկեղ ճարակէր եւ զբոլոր աշխարհս էր կալեալ:*** Anania of Mokkʿ, "Concerning the Rebellion of the House of the Albanians, Whose Ordination for Years Was outside of the Throne of the Holy Illuminator" *MH* 10:259.40. See Terian, "Gregory of Narek," 283.

[85] ***հակառակ ամենայն քրիստոնէական կարգաց:*** Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.3, *MH* 15:742.8; tr. Greenwood, 214.

of Greek τάξις or Latin *ordo*, and conveys the sense of 'order, rank, class, ordination, hierarchy, institution.' For example, it is used to speak of the angelic ranks or hierarchy, the different ranks or classes within the church, such as the episcopal rank or priestly class, or in general in reference to the various classes of society, or the arrangement of creatures and beings in general in an ordered arrangement or hierarchy.[86] According to the memory of a later ecclesiastical writer such as Stepʿanos, this is the chief significance of "Tondrakecʿi" — one who stands opposed to the institutions, orders, and hierarchies of the church, society, and the natural order.

Grigor of Narek, in his "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," outlines fourteen central points meant to summarize the errors of the Tʿondrakians. He opens this discussion with a summary statement quite similar to that of Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, saying that they have "renounced and abolished much that is divine and all that is apostolic from the divine institutions (***կարգաց***)."[87] Grigor, like Stepʿanos, here uses the word *karg*, which reinforces the way in which the Tʿondrakites were perceived as a threat to the institutions and hierarchical order of the establishment church. As mentioned above, Grigor refers multiple times to the treatise of Anania against the Tʿondrakites, and the fourteen points he presents against the community, which flesh out the ways in which they reject the church's institutions, are understood to be an outline summary of the main points of discussion that Anania treated at greater length in his longer treatise. They are worth quoting in full. Grigor says that they have renounced the following:

1. Ordination, which the Apostles received from Christ.[88]

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[86] ***ԿԱՐԳ*** *ասի եւ յայլ գիրս Դասակարգութիւն հրեշտակաց, կարգաւորութիւն եկեղեցական աստիճանաց, մանաւանդ քահանայութիւն, եւ եպիսկոպոսութիւն. կրօնք միանձանց, եւ որոշումն ամենայն վիճակի մարդկան, եւ արարածոց առ հասարակ, եւ ամենայն բանից եւ գործոց։* *NBHL*, s.v. ***կարգ***.

[87] ***Բազում ինչ աստուածային եւ առաքելական ամենայն ինչ ուրացեալ է ի նոցանէ եւ խափանեալ յաստուածային կարգաց։*** Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1087.4.

[88] ***Ձեռնադրութիւնն, զոր առաքեալքն ի Քրիստոսէ ընկալան։*** Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1087.5.

2. Communion of his body, about which the Apostle said, "By tasting the bread of communion, we receive and taste God himself joined to flesh."[89] But Smbat taught that this wonderful mystery is just a meal for the common [people].[90]
3. The Birth through spiritual pangs, by water and by Spirit, which, as has been made known, produces sons of God[91] — he taught them is just the filthy dregs of bath water (*ջուր լուալեաց*).[92]
4. And the blessed Lord's Day, on which he created the primal light and perfected it with the light of his Resurrection, and with it ordained the life-giving light of his Second Coming. That icon of a venerable day, he interpreted as on par with the other [ordinary] days.[93]

   And now, which of the following [institutions/practices], which we know them to have abolished, is not apostolic or divine:[94]

5. Bending the knees in sacramental supplication, although the Creator of all things himself bowed down and bent the knee.[95]
6. The Font is renounced by them, in which Christ himself was baptized.[96]
7. The Communion of immortality, which the Lord himself gave to all to taste.[97]

8. [They engage in] dirty, indiscriminate debauchery, whereas the Lord established the prohibition of even a glance.[98]
9. [They reject] the venerated Sign,[99] which God-become-man raised and bore on his own shoulder, as his own glory and power.[100]

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[89] See 1 Cor. 10:16–17.

[90] *Եւ հաղորդութիւն մարմնոյն նորա՝ զոր ասաց առաքեալ եթէ զհացն հաղորդութեան ճաշակելով զնոյն ինքն զԱստուած միացեալ ի մարմնի ընդունիմք եւ ճաշակեմք, զոր Սմբատ հասարակաց կերակուր զսարսափելին վարդապետեաց։* Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1087.6.

[91] See John 3:5.

[92] *Եւ զծննունդն հոգեւոր երկանցն, որ ի ջրոյ եւ ի Հոգւոյ, ծանուցեալ թէ, որդիս Աստուծոյ գործէ, ջուր ինչ լուալեաց զնոյն նոցին ուսոյց։* Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1087.7. *Ջուր լուալեաց* refers to the dirty, excess water left over after someone has bathed. See *NBHL*, "*ջուր լուալեաց*" s.v. *լուալիք*.

[93] *Եւ զաւրհնաբանեալ զաւր կիւրակէին, յորում արար զլոյսն առաջին եւ կատարեաց զլոյսն յարութեան իւրոյ ի նմին, եւ զլոյսն կենարար գալստեանն նոփաւ տնաւրինեաց, զայն պատկեր պաշտելի աւուր ընդ այլոցն զուգաթուեալ նոցին թարգմանեաց։* Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1087.8.

[94] *Արդ, զո՞րս յայսցանէ զնոցա գիտեմք խափանեալս, ոչ առաքելական կամ աստուածականս։* Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1087.9.

[95] *Զծնրադրութեանն խորհրդական պաղատանս, զոր ինքն Արարիչն ամենայնի խոնարհեալ կրկնեաց։* Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1087.10.

[96] *Թէ զաւազանն ուրացեալ ի նոցանէ, յորում ինքն Քրիստոս մկրտեցաւ։* Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1087.11.

[97] *Թէ զհաղորդութիւն անմահութեանն զոր ինքն բոլորից Տէրն ճաշակեաց։* Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1087.12.

[98] See Matthew 5:28. *Թէ զմծդնէական անխտիր պղծութիւնն, զոր Տէրն զհայեցուածն արգելեալ խորեաց։* Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1088.13.

[99] i.e. the Cross.

[100] *Թէ զնչանն երկրպագեալ, զոր Աստուածն մարդացեալ յուսն իւր բարձեալ կրեաց՝ իբր զփառս ինքնեան եւ զիշխանութիւն։* Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1088.14.

10. [They engage in] man-worshipping apostasy, which is more abominable and accursed than idolatry.[101]
11. [They have a] self-conferred, contemptible priesthood, which is the likeness of Satan.[102]
12. Their despisal of the rite (lit. 'crown') of marriage, which the Lord himself along with his mother the Theotokos respected and honored by his miracle.[103] They despise the rite (lit. 'crown') and consider approaching one another in love to be perfect love, from God and pleasing to Christ; saying that "God is love"[104] and desires union through love and not the rite (lit. 'crown').[105]
13. Their derisive mockery of the first-fruits, which Abel, Noah, Abraham, David, Solomon, and Elijah showed conciliates divine wrath.[106]
14. And they dare to name the head of their detestable sect "Christ," about which Christ previously bore witness: "There will arise false Christs and false prophets,"[107] and this is what the prophet meant by saying, "The fool has thought in his heart that there is no God."[108]

As can be gathered from the above list, "Tʿondrakecʿi" was understood as a threat levelled at the very heart and center of the institutional Church and its authority as manifested in its institutions and liturgical rites. The Church's power was due in large part to its claim to be the exclusive intermediary between the people and God. This role was visibly made manifest in a variety of ways, from major rites of passage to the quotidian details of daily life. The liturgical forms of the institutional Church — baptism, divine liturgy (*patarag*), marriage, burial — were the most

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[101] ***Թէ զմարդապաշտ ուրացութիւնն, որ գարշելի է եւ անիծեալ, քան զկռապաշտութիւն։*** Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1088.15. This could be a reference to the community's Adoptionist Christology. On this, see Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 216–230.

[102] ***Թէ զինքնաճեռն քամահանաց քահանայութիւնն, որ սատանայի է նմանութիւն։*** Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1088.16.

[103] See John 2:1–11.

[104] 1 John 4:8.

[105] ***Թէ զպսակին ամուսնութեան անգոսնութիւն, զոր Տէրն ինքեան աքանչելեաւք եւ մարբն իւրով Աստուածածնաւ յարգեաց եւ պատուեաց. զպսակն անգոսնեն, եւ զոր սիրով մերձենան յիրեարս կատարեալ սէր համարին եւ յԱստուծոյ եւ հաճոյ Քրիստոսի. թէ «Աստուած սէր է» եւ զսիրով միաւորիլն կամի եւ ոչ զպսակ։*** Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1088.17.

[106] ***Թէ զերախայրեացն կատակերգական երգիծանութիւնն, զոր Աբէլ եւ Նոյ եւ Աբրահամ եւ Դաւիթ եւ Սողոմոն եւ Եղիայ աստուածային բարկութեանն ցուցին հաշտարարութիւն։*** Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1088.18.

[107] Matthew 24:24.

[108] Psalm 13(14):1. ***Թէ որ զգլխաւոր աղանդին իւրեանց գարշութեանն յանդգնեալ Քրիստոս անուանեն, զոր Քրիստոս կանխաւ վկայեաց. թէ՝ «յարիցեն սուտ Քրիստոսք եւ սուտ մարգարէք», եւ այս է ասելն մարգարէին, թէ՝ «Ախորհեցաւ անզգամն ի սրտի իւրում թէ ոչ իցէ Աստուած»։*** Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1088.19.

prominent manifestations of the role and means by which the Church acted out its function as mediator between the human and divine realms. The Tʿondrakian community viewed it as unnecessary to perform these rites in the way instituted by the establishment Church and thus threatened its authority. One may profitably compare the situation here with the iconoclast controversy of an earlier period. Recent scholarship on Byzantine iconoclasm has uncovered the extent to which the clerical reaction against icons was due to their fear of it compromising their position as sole mediators between divinity and humanity and their general suspicion and hostility towards any other source of spiritual authority or power.[109]

The physical spaces and elements that were the visible loci of the Church's authority and mediating role were also under threat. The cross was both the quintessential symbol of the Church (comparable to the flag of a modern nation), as well as understood to be a sacred medium of divine power and presence in the hand of the cleric, particularly when sanctified by the *miwṙon*. Historians of the period, such as Tʿovma Arcruni and Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, relate episodes wherein crosses were stolen or intentionally destroyed.[110] Thus, the Tʿondrakite rejection of cross veneration was not just a matter of intellectual theological dispute, but was a highly charged matter with very practical consequences, as a result of such instances and its symbolic manifestation of church authority. Likewise, the church building, with relics of saints under the sanctified altar or in other significant places, was the physical meeting place between divine and human realms, a locus of the holy. Great pains were taken in the period to construct churches as beautiful and luxurious as possible to suit this lofty function, the church of the Holy

[109] See Brubaker, *Inventing Byzantine Iconoclasm*, 35, 49.
[110] See Tʿovma Arcruni, *History of the House of the Arcrunikʿ* III.27, *MH* 11:249–50, tr. Thomson, 306–08; Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 23, *MH* 16:615–622. For other instances, see Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 165–66.

Cross at Ałtʿamar, considered in the previous chapter, being one of the most extreme examples of visual ostentation. The Tʿondrakites' approach to such matters was essentially iconoclastic, summed up well in one purported report Grigor Magistros provides of their views: "We are not worshippers of matter but worshippers of God; and we consider the cross, church, priestly garments, and performance of the sacrifice as nothing, looking only to their inner sense [or mystery: ***խորհուրդ***]."[111] The Tʿondrakites rejected the notion that the church was primarily to be understood as the church building, believing it referred instead to the assembled believers. This is one of the principal points that Anania takes up in the fragment surviving from his *Refutation*, wherein he unifies the different senses of the word "church," as (a) pertaining to the assembly of believers who have come together;[112] (b) universal and catholic, spreading out through the entire inhabited world, unified and uniform;[113] (c) and as a sacred building that serves as the home of the Lord and a lordly temple.[114] Anania argues that these senses are not in opposition to one another, but in harmony together. His *Encomium on the Holy Universal Church*, much of it written in the second person addressed to the church, also praises the church according to these various senses. The anti-iconoclastic project is continued further by Grigor in the several discourses of his *Book of Lamentation* devoted to celebrating the church (75) and its ritual objects such as the *semantron* (92) and *miwṙon* (93).

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[111] ***Մեք ոչ եմք նիւթապաշտք, այլ աստուածապաշտք, եւ զխաչ եւ զեկեղեցի եւ զզգեստ քահանայի եւ զպատարագադործութիւն՝ զայսոսիկ ոչինչ համարիմք, այլ զխորհուրդ նոցա։*** Grigor Magistros, *Letters-II* no. 4 [67], *MH* 16:199.59. On the iconoclasm of the Paulicians/Tʿondrakites and their identification with Manichaeanism for that reason, see Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 201–204.

[112] ***Եկաւորական գումարութեամբ եկեալ ի մի հաւաքումն եւ անուանադրեալ ըստ ժողովման՝ եկեղեցի։*** Anania of Narek, *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians*, *MH* 10:436.3.

[113] ***Կոչի կաթուղիկէ, այսինքն բոլորակ, որ բնաւ ընդհանուր ընդ ամենայն տիեզերս, միապէս, միատեսակ, մի կաթուղիկէ եկեղեցի կոչի։*** Anania of Narek, *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians*, *MH* 10:436.6.

[114] ***Այլ եւ տուն եւ տաճար եւ եկեղեցի ասի...տուն Տեառն եւ տաճար տէրունական եւ եկեղեցի Քրիստոսի։*** Anania of Narek, *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians*, *MH* 10:43716.

The liturgical calendar of feasts and fasts was a prominent way by which the authority of the church permeated the daily life of the people, since time itself and the quotidian habits of eating and drinking were regulated by the liturgical calendar. The Tʿondrakian community did not attribute the same status of sacredness to Sunday that the institutional Church did, much less follow its calendar of prescribed feasts and fasts. Ordination, which was strictly regulated, granted the rite to perform liturgical functions and was the entryway into the highly articulated and stratified ecclesiastical hierarchy, from parish functionaries (*dpir*, *sarkavag*, etc.) at the bottom to the catholicos at the top. All the above were rejected by the Tʿondrakians, who instead sanctified their own priests and had a much less developed hierarchical structure. Taken together, all of the above makes it clear that the Tʿondrakites were viewed by Church hierarchs first and foremost as a menacing threat to the legitimacy of the establishment Church's power and authority, as manifested in its liturgical and ecclesial orders and institutions.

The Application of the "Tʿondrakecʿi" Label to Ascetic Figures

It is thus that the label "Tʿondrakecʿi" could be extended to anyone that threatened the authority of the Church and its role as exclusive mediator between the divine and human realms, enacted via its many visible institutions, such as the regimented ordination and stratified hierarchy and its liturgical rites, ceremonies, and sacraments. And with the awareness of the tenth-century crises examined above in the background, it becomes readily understandable how at this particular time the integrity of the Church, the stability of the social order, and the authority of the catholicos were perceived as being threatened seemingly on all fronts. It is under such conditions that the label "Tʿondrakecʿi" came to be applied to figures within the church (rather than the Tʿondrakian community itself which existed outside it) that the hierarchy viewed

as a threat to its authority or as competing sources of spiritual authority and power. Chief among such culprits were reformist, spiritualist, ascetic figures, whether they be bishops, *vardapet* abbots, or monastics (all of whom are represented in contemporaneous sources that censure "Tondrakecʿi" activity). The episcopal hierarchy and especially the catholicos viewed such figures as diminishing the importance of the liturgy and sacraments, which were the visible and physical manifestation of the Church's mediating role and external sign of their authority in a domain, and advocating instead another way to access God, focused on the interior, unseen, non-material, private plane.

One may see this illustrated through the case of Yakobos, bishop of Harkʿ, as portrayed in the *History* of Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi. From Aristakēs' first introduction of him, his asceticism is noted, as well as the fact that he encouraged such behavior in those priests under him:

> At the beginning of his term of authority, he exampled all the virtues. He dressed in sack-cloth, fasted, went bare-footed; and he chose for his priests who always accompanied him, men coarsely clad and simple, who avoided a life of pleasure, and constantly occupied themselves in the singing of psalms.[115]

Yakobos emerges as a reforming figure, who, like Xosrov of Anjewacʿi, believed that the delicate balance between spirit and body, inner reality and external manifestation, was off balance, with the latter being emphasized at the expense of the former. In the views of such spiritually-minded bishops, too much emphasis was being put on external forms to the neglect of the individual heart and spirit. For this reason, Yakobos introduced reforms in order to seek to correct this situation: "In the first place he began by establishing selection among priests

[115] ***Սա ի սկզբան իւրոյ իշխանութեանն առաքինական կերպարանս յանձին ցուցանէր՝ քրձազգած, պահացուղ, բոկագանաց։ Եւ ընտրեաց իւր քահանայս, որ յար ընդ ինքեան չրջէին, խոշորազգեստս եւ անպաճոյս, հատեալս ի հեչտալի կերակրոց. եւ միշտ սաղմոսական երգոցն պարապէին։*** Aristakēs Lastivercʿi, *History* 22, *MH* 16:610.2; trans. Conybeare, *Key of Truth*, 131–32.

according to worth and told the unworthy to remain silent."[116] This seems to indicate that Yakobos began to introduce some kind of hierarchy among ordained priests in his jurisdiction based not on their seniority or familial connections, but on their spiritual merit. This would have meant a disruption to the ecclesiastical and societal norm, and would have been perceived as bringing disorder during an era that, as we have seen, was already very dynamic and unstable. As the leader of a highly conservative institution, the catholicos would have viewed any innovation as potentially dangerous. Furthermore, Aristakēs claims that Yakobos ordered priests "to offer the sacrifice (*պատարագ*) only three times per year."[117] This seems to have applied to the monastic communities under his jurisdiction, which would have contained many ordained priests. This injunction would likely have been an attempt to downplay the external ritual, which in his view had been overly emphasized at the expense of the inner, spiritual dimension of faith. Bishop Yakobos also taught that the institution of confession and forgiveness does not in and of itself cleanse an individual of sin. Rather, an individual is only forgiven by God if he "in his own soul himself repented of his sins;" and unless he did that "commemorations help him not, nor liturgies (*պատարագք*)."[118] By the same reasoning, and like the Tʿondrakians, he scorned the practice of offering *matal* to atone for the sins of the departed, arguing that it did not help the soul that had not repented.[119] At issue was the tension between ritual cleansing vs. moral repentance. Bishop Yakobos inclined to the view that in his time the former was being emphasized at the expense of the latter and sought to correct the balance with reforms, some of

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[116] *Զառաջինն՝ ընտրութիւն սկսաւ առնել ի մէջ քահանայից ըստ արժանաւորութեան, եւ անարժանից ասաց լռել։* Aristakēs Lastivercʿi, *History* 22, *MH* 16:612.21; trans. Conybeare, *Key of Truth*, 133.
[117] *Ի տարւոջն երիս միայն մատուցանել պատարագս։* Aristakēs Lastivercʿi, *History* 22, *MH* 16:613.21.
[118] *Այլ այսպէս ուսուցանէր, թէ որ ինքն իւրով անձամբն, որով մեղաւն եւ նովիմբ չապաշխարեաց, նմա ոչ յիշատակք աւգնեն եւ ոչ պատարագք։* Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 22, *MH* 16:613.23; trans. Conybeare, *Key of Truth,* 134.
[119] Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 22, *MH* 16:613.23.

which (like offering mass only three times per year) would have been perceived as rather extreme. One may easily see how from the establishment Church's perspective, the reforms and behavior of a bishop like Yakobos would be perceived as a direct threat to the stability of the social and ecclesiastical order and its own role as exclusive mediator between the individual and God, enacted through its liturgical rites.

The stark language Aristakēs uses to describe the threat of Yakobos and his teaching reveals the degree to which it was seen as threatening the integrity of the Church. Aristakēs says that Yakobos planned "to subvert the holy church from its foundations" and "shear off the glory of the church."[120] As Aristakēs goes on to narrate, Bishop Yakobos' actions resulted in the most undesirable outcomes for the establishment Church, intermeshed as it was with the political and societal order: social unrest, division, and schism. As a result of Bishop Yakobos' activities, "the congregations were divided into two parties, because some accepted this teaching, but others not. And all were disturbed and perplexed."[121] Responding to the situation, a synod was called and Yakobos was summoned, but the governors of the province would not hand him over, according to Aristakēs because they respected his sanctity. Bishop Yakobos, however, was betrayed by a close associate named Esayi, and turned over to Catholicos Sargis (sed. 992/3–1019), who defrocked him and administered to him the common punishment reserved for heretics: "He branded his forehead with the likeness of a fox" and imprisoned him.[122] While in Aristakēs'

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[120] ***Կարծէր այնու հիմամբ տապալել զեկեղեցի սուրբ…կարծէր սափրել զփառս եկեղեցւոյ։*** Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 22, *MH* 16:612.17, 19; trans. Conybeare, *Key of Truth,* 133.

[121] ***Եւ առ այս յերկուս բաժանեցան ժողովուրդք, յոմանց ընկալեալ եղեւ այս, եւ յոմանց ոչ. եւ իբրեւ ամենայն մարդ ի ծուփս եւ ի տարակուսանս անկեալ կայր։*** Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 22, *MH* 16:613.24; trans. Conybeare, *Key of Truth,* 134.

[122] ***Եւ աղուեսադրոշմ կերպարանաւք խարան յերեսս նորա եդեալ։*** Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 22, *MH* 16:614.30; trans. Conybeare, *Key of Truth,* 135. This punishment was inflicted on heretical leaders in order to mark them as bestial and sub-human. On this punishment, see the nineteenth canon of the Council of Šahapivan. See Hovhanessian, "Canons of the Council of Šahapivan," 92; Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 82–83.

portrayal, Bishop Yakobos is called a Tʿondrakian,[123] he refers to him by this epithet for the reason mentioned above — that he threatened the integrity of the Church in a way typologically similar to that of the actual Tʿondrakians. We can be sure that he was not actually a member of the Tʿondrakite community firstly by the fact that he was a bishop of the establishment Church and secondly by the fact that Aristakēs reports that after he managed to escape from prison he tried to join the sect of the Tʿondrakians, after having been excommunicated from the Church.[124] The third indication is that he was excommunicated. Excommunication (anathematization) was the ultimate punishment for elements overly threatening to Church order and authority, and there are several such instances in our period, from bishops such as Xosrov and Yakobos to laypeople such as the bandits in Siwnikʿ.

Anania of Narek and the Tʿondrakecʿi label

On first impression and based on the *testimonia* about Anania and his *Refutation* from Grigor of Narek, one might assume that Anania of Narek wrote his *Refutation of the Tʿondrakians* on his own initiative in order to "demolish" the heresy. However, the facts on the ground were surely more subtle than that. One recalls that the work was commissioned by Catholicos Anania Mokacʿi, as Grigor Magistros had noted. This chapter has shown how the catholicate of Anania Mokacʿi was fraught with controversy. In the midst of crisis and chaos,

[123] Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 22, *MH* 16:614.30.

[124] Aristakēs says that even they refused to take him. This is a trope (*topos*) about heretics meant to further denigrate them (i.e., it probably did not happen). Aristakēs also relates that he fled first to Constantinople and sought baptism from the Chalcedonian Byzantines, but they refused to admit him (in other cases, such condemned figures are mentioned as rushing off to become muslim). In all likelihood, Yakobos went neither to the Tʿondrakians nor to the Chalcedonians, but after being defrocked went straight to his family in Xlatʿ (and then apparently later to Muharkin), where he resided until his death in ignominy, as Aristakēs goes on to say. See Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi, *History* 22, *MH* 16:614–15.32–36.

Catholicos Anania's agenda was to promote uniformity, demand obedience to the hierarchical order, and suppress subversive elements. It seems more likely that Catholicos Anania had Anania of Narek write the *Refutation* as a test of loyalty, because Narek monastery itself under Abbot Anania had emerged as a "Tondrakecʿi" menace (i.e., was viewed as threatening the primacy of the Church's role as sole mediator manifested in the external forms of its liturgy, hierarchical order, and institutions). Under Abbot Anania's leadership, Narek monastery with its vibrant spirituality and advanced ascetic-mystical practices (see Chapter Three) laid greater emphasis on the inner dimensions of Christian practice than on external forms. As such, it would have been a prime suspect in the eyes of the episcopal hierarchy, attuned as it was to any element that threatened its authority and the necessity of its mediating role. It is important also to recall here the differences between bishops and *vardapets* in this period, whose roles were completely different and unconnected with one another, unlike the contemporary situation in the church today. Bishops, unlike *vardapets* (ordained teachers of Theology) such as Anania, did not often receive advanced theological training. Their qualification to the largely administrative post of bishop generally had to do with their familial connections, rather than with their spiritual or theological qualifications. Those pursuing theology and advanced spirituality sought training in monastic academies and passed through the systematic training required to become a *vardapet*. Unlike the contemporary situation in the Armenian church, there was no overlap between *vardapets* and the episcopal hierarchy. Rather, the two represented different, and at times in this period, clashing forms of religious authority. The former relied primarily on spiritual, charismatic, theological authority, inasmuch as the *vardapet*'s function was to teaching and preach, while the latter primarily wielded administrative, hierarchical, liturgical authority. The rise to prominence of the cenobitic institutions in this period meant an elevation of the social

position and authority of the *vardapet* abbot, particularly when like Anania of Narek, that figure was the head of a monastic academy with many monks under their authority. Reading between the lines, some contemporary scholars have made the apt suggestion that it is probably more appropriate to think of Anania's *Refutation* as having been *compelled* by Catholicos Anania rather than simply commissioned.[125]

This view is lent further credence when one examines the extant portion of Anania's treatise. Although it is only a small fragment and therefore one must be cautious about drawing any implications or conclusions about the rest of the work, what immediately strikes the reader is how far removed the piece is from any trace of the typical invective or vociferous attacks that one normally finds in polemical works directed against heretics or heresies. By contrast, the fragment of the work that survives is a profound and subtle theological, philosophical, and etymological reflection on the meaning of the church (*եկեղեցի*) that is consonant with the mystical approach to theology exemplified in the discourses of Grigor's *Matean*. As Mahé observed, at one point it crescendos into panegyric-like praise of the church.[126] From the short fragment, one forms the impression that Anania was not only defending the Church from the critiques levelled against it by the actual Tʿondrakians, but that he was also defending himself from "Tʿondrakecʿi" suspicion, via a textual performance in which he demonstrated his own loyalty by showing the depth of his understanding and appreciation for the church. One recalls as well his one extant panegyric, which is a lengthy encomium in praise of the (Armenian) Church, which elaborates these themes even further. The greater part of the work is written in the second person, addressed to the church itself, as Anania praises and offers mystical reflection on the

[125] Cowe, "Generic and Methodological Developments," 679–80; Terian, "Gregory of Narek," 285.
[126] Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*, *Tragédie*, 55.

many dimensions of the church.[127] As such, the encomium prefigures the literary approach of Grigor Narekacʿi, as Hrachya Tʿamrazyan has observed.[128] In addition to Grigor's festal works (***տաղք***, ***գանձք***), one recalls specifically Grigor's approach in the several discourses of the *Matean* that are devoted to celebrating aspects of the Church, its faith and ritual elements, in particular the thirty-fourth, which is a lengthy confession of faith, the fifty-third, on the eucharist, the seventy-fifth, which eulogizes the spiritual *and physical* nature of the church, the ninety-second, devoted to the "wooden bell" or *semantron*, and the ninety-third, on the *miwṙon*. Weighing heavily in the contextual backdrop of all these texts is not just the Narekian writers' response to the iconoclastic views of the Tʿondrakians, but their own attempt to exonerate themselves of "Tʿondrakecʿi" suspicion by demonstrating that their highly internal approach to spirituality is not set in opposition to external liturgical forms and thus should not be viewed as a threat to the episcopal hierarchy.

There were indeed ways in which Anania's teaching could be identified with extremist positions of the time, like that of Bishop Yakobos. Reminiscent of the latter's policies, the central argument of Anania's "To Priests" is that the chief qualification or prerequisite of being a good priest is not first and foremost to be an adept performer of ritual or a loyal member to the hierarchy, but to be one who has attained inward and outward virtue. Thus, the treatise begins: "Now, the priestly rank itself is manifest in worthiness, how one must be holy and immaculate, removed from all evil things. For God demands of a priest the perfection [or: performance] of every virtue."[129] Anania says in many different ways and by referring to numerous biblical

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[127] Anania of Narek, *Encomium on the Holy Universal Church*, *MH* 10:628–46.77–221.

[128] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:295.

[129] ***Արդ, քահանայական աստիճան ինքն յայտնի է արժանաւորութեան, թէ որպէս պարտ է լինել սուրբ եւ անարատ, հեռացեալ յամենայն իրաց չարեաց, եւ զի զկատարումն ամենայն առաքինութեան պահանջէ Աստուած ի քահանայէն։*** Anania of Narek, "To Priests," *MH* 10:328.1.

examples that only the priest that is holy and perfected in virtue is worthy to approach God in the eucharistic liturgy. Otherwise, an unworthy priest communicates in the divine mystery to his peril. It is therefore the inner purity of the priest that makes him worthy of performing the mystery; it is not enough merely to be ordained and consecrated by the *miwṙon* without having attained inner sanctity as well.

Likewise, Anania's ethical instruction is marked by a distinction between external and internal behavior, with greater stress laid upon the latter in both the development of virtue and as the marker of true goodness. Anania uses two closely related terms to distinguish between the two domains: *ereveli varkʿ* (***երեւելի վարք***) refers to 'outward conduct' or 'visible behavior' while *anerevoytʿ barkʿ* (***աներեւոյթ բարք***) refers to 'internal disposition' or 'invisible behavior.' He clarifies this distinction in the following passage from the instruction "To Priests:"

> And just as you direct your outward conduct [***զերեւելի վարսդ***], i.e. with fasting, prayer, labors, and poverty, so also direct your inward disposition [***զաներեւոյթ բարս***], i.e. be gentle, humble, pleasant, merciful, without rancor, patient, peace-making, forbearing, because one must in every way be pleasing to God, be cleansed of outward faults as well as inward, spiritual vices, since the Pharisee and the foolish virgins rightly directed only their outward way of life and were found unworthy.[130]

What is implied in the latter half of the quote in the reference to the Pharisee and foolish virgins is that properly ordering the external is not sufficient for ensuring acceptability to God. Since this is an instruction to priests, the implication in the liturgical realm is that properly executing the external form (liturgical ritual) should not be the only or primary preoccupation of the priest. Rather, they should be more focused on their inward purity, their ascetic and ethical behavior.

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[130] ***Եւ որպէս զերեւելի վարսդ ուղղես՝ զպահս եւ զաղաւթս, զաշխատուԹիւնս եւ զանընչուԹիւնս, այսպէս եւ զաներեւոյթ բարս ուղղեա՝ հեզ, խոնարհ, քաղցր, ողորմած, անոխակալ, համբերող, խաղաղարար, երկայնամիտ, քանզի պարտ է ամենայնիւ հաճոյ լինել Աստուծոյ, յերեւելի սխալանաց մաքրիլ եւ յաներեւոյթ՝ ի չնչական ախտից, քանզի փարիսեցին եւ յիմար կուսանքն զերեւելիս միայն ուղղեցին զվարսն եւ խոտան գտան։*** Anania of Narek, "To Priests," *MH* 10:328.30. He elaborates on this also in "Evangelical, Apostolic, and Prophetic Speech," *MH* 10:403.

Such a view of course could be threatening to the hierarchy because its power was manifest in the external forms of rituals and it is by means of the faithful execution of rituals on the part of the priests that their role as mediator between the divine and human realms is expressed and enacted. From the perspective of the catholicos, this could well be viewed as a challenge to the power of the Church, which perhaps prized loyalty and faithful execution of liturgical form as highly as personal behavior. Reform and innovation of any kind are generally met with suspicion and hostility on the part of leaders of conservative institutions. Such concerns would be all the more salient in a period marked by chaos and disorder, when the Church already felt under threat by an internal community like the T‘ondrakians and an external church like the Byzantines, both of whom openly rejected and denounced their liturgical forms and rituals.

Approaching the issue from this nuanced contextual backdrop, it becomes understandable why Anania in particular, and the abbots of the new monasteries in general, could be seen as posing a threat to, or perceived as competing with, the episcopal hierarchy in a way typologically similar to the T‘ondrakites. The explosion in monastic construction, the greater social and economic visibility of monasteries, and the greater number of monks under the leadership of the *vardapet* abbots, gave those figures an increased measure of spiritual authority and clout. The spiritual counsel they offered and the private prayer and devotions they emphasized could easily be seen as competing with the external liturgical forms the episcopal hierarchy relied on, by offering an alternate, higher, independent path to union with the divine. Anania’s own texts bear witness to the fact that he laid more emphasis on the inner, spiritual dimensions of prayer and piety than the external performance of liturgical services. For example, in “On Compunction and Tears,” he counsels his addressee:

> Obtain a pure heart and a humble spirit, so that God will incline to your prayers and smell the sweet aroma. As it is written, "When Noah offered the sacrifice (*պատարագ*) to God, it was smelled by the Lord as a sweet aroma" — not, that is, the body or the blood of the birds and beasts, but the will of the one who offered. Likewise, your prayers are a sacrifice (*պատարագ*) to God; offer them before God with purity of heart.[131]

Here, Anania uses the word "sacrifice (*պատարագ*)," to refer not to the eucharist or mass (its common designation in Armenian), but to the private, contemplative prayer of the monk, offered in secret. In "Counsel on Prayer," he instructed that one should never neglect the communal prayers, and that one should perform without deviation one's privately determined rule of prayer, fasts, and abstentions.[132] In the monastic setting, it was the latter that was given extra emphasis over the former. For example, an anonymous text "On Faith (*Ցաղագս հաւատոյ*)," from a fourteenth-century monastic miscellany that also contains the only known copy of Anania's "Recapitulated and Condensed Sentences," states explicitly that "the honor and glory of communal prayer is single, while that of individual prayer is twofold."[133] Likewise, at Narek, the private prayer of the monk was given special emphasis. One recalls that Grigor's *Matean* itself was composed in the first place to be employed in the private prayer, and in conjunction with the spiritual exercises of monks.[134] It is easy to see how, given the various social and ecclesiastical

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[131] *Սիրտ սուրբ ստացիր եւ հոգի խոնարհ, որ քո յաղաւթսն խոնարհի Աստուած եւ հոտոտի ի հոտ անուշից։ Որպէս եւ գրեալ է, թէ «Ցորժամ մատոյց Նոյ պատարագ Աստուծոյ, հոտոտեցաւ ի Տէր ի հոտ անուշից», ոչ թէ ի մարմին եւ յարիւն թռչնոցն եւ անասնոցն, այլ ի կամս մատուցանողին։ Այսպէս եւ քո աղաւթքն պատարագ է Աստուծոյ, սրբութեամբ սրտիւ մատո զնա առաջի Աստուծոյ։* Anania of Narek, "On Compunction and Tears," *MH* 10:368–69.59–61.

[132] *Զկարգեալ աղաւթսն հասարակաց՝ զտուընչեան եւ զգիւերոյ, բնաւ մի՛ անտես առներ։ Զքո սահմանեալ առանձնական կարգն անխափան կատարեա զաղաւթից եւ զպահոց, եւ զկարգեալ պահն սրբութեամբ պահեա, զամենայն զգայարանսն զգուշութեամբ պահեա, մանաւանդ աչս եւ զականջս եւ զչաւչափելիս։* Anania of Narek, "Words for Prayer," *MH* 10:347.1–2.

[133] *Հասարակ աղաւթքն է միակի պատիւ եւ փառք, իսկ առանձնականն՝ կրկնի։* From "On Faith (*Ցաղագս հաւատոյ*)," M 2680 ff. 350r–361r. Cited in Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 254 n. 122. See also Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*, *Tragédie*, 60–61.

[134] I have considered this use of Grigor's prayer book in Arlen, "Texts for Keeping Watch," 16–19.

crises that led to what Jean-Pierre Mahé has called the "antiheretical psychosis" that marked the middle to late tenth century,[135] such a perspective would be viewed with hostility.[136]

One can appreciate further the concerns of Catholicos Anania Mokacʿi when we consider the fact that certain monastic communities of the period were known or supposed to have had direct associations with Tʿondrakites. An example of the former is the monastery of Kčaw in Mokkʿ, to which Grigor of Narek addressed his letter of reproval, noting that the abbot had reported to a *vardapet* named Mušeł that he (the abbot) had sent a messenger to the Tʿondrakites and had been convinced that "they are not alien to the apostolic tradition (*չեն նոքա աւտար յառաքելաւանդ դաւանութենէ*)".[137]

Another episode related by Aristakēs Lastivertcʿi is suggestive in regard to the way that ascetic activity came to be associated with the Tʿondrakecʿi label.[138] The reported event took place in the district of Mananałi, a region associated with the Arab emirates and not far from the border with the Byzantine empire. As with the episode of bishop Yakobos, the narration begins with ascetic activity. This time the figure in question was a monk named Kuncik, who lived in the area around the city of Širni. Kuncik was a highly respected and influential spiritual leader to certain noble men and women of the area, including one Hranoyš and her two kinsfolk, Axni and Kamaray, who held domains in the area, and a prince (*išxan*) named Vrvēṙ. Working together, they influenced many of the local people and transformed the places of worship in accordance with "Tʿondrakecʿi" ways, including the monastery that Vrvēṙ himself had financed and supported on his private domain and churches in the villages of Kašē and Ałiwsoy. Aristakēs

[135] "psychose antihérétique regnant à cette époque." Mahé, "L'église arménienne," 521. One might compare this to McCarthyism (Red Scare) of the last century or the "cancel culture" of the present.
[136] This point was made in Cowe, "Generic and Methodological Developments," 679–80.
[137] Grigor of Narek, "Letter to Kčaw Monastery," *MH* 12:1087.1.
[138] The episode is narrated in Aristakēs Lastivercʿi, *History* 23.

notes with horror that "whenever an opportunity presented itself…they shamelessly tore down the symbol of our salvation and the armor of our Lord's victory"[139] and then relates an example of one such episode. As mentioned above, the Tʿondrakians viewed the reverence paid to physical crosses as idolatrous matter-worship. As also mentioned above, there are examples in the period of iconoclastic destruction, as well as theft, of crosses used in the liturgical services of the church as well as *xačʿkʿars* (carved stone crosses erected to commemorate the death of a loved one or on other occasions). Probably in an attempt to emphasize the spiritual, inward dimensions of faith and downplay external objects and forms, those in Vrvēṙ's domains removed some of the costly and prized ritual objects and crosses employed in worship. In response to such "Tʿondrakecʿi" activity, the region's archbishop, Samuēl, gathered an armed force and had the perpetrators seized, in particular six of the principal leaders (called *vardapets* by Aristakēs), who were branded with the sign of a fox.

Here then is another vivid example of the way in which ascetic and spiritual monks were under great suspicion and at times violently persecuted by the episcopal hierarchy. Despite his earlier *Refutation*, Anania could not escape the "anti-heretical psychosis" of the age. During the tenure of the next catholicos after Anania Mokacʿi, Xačʿik Aršaruni, Anania was charged with the "Tʿondrakecʿi" label. Xačʿik demanded from him a profession of his orthodox belief, despite the fact that Anania had written two previous works at Xačʿik's request, the *Book of Instruction*, while Xačʿik was bishop of Aršarunikʿ and the *Root of Faith*, while Xačʿik was catholicos.[140] These details show just how fraught with tension the relations between the episcopal hierarchy

[139] ***Ո՛ւր եւ դիպաւղ ժամ հանդիպէր նոցա, զփրկութեան մերոյ զնշանն եւ զտէրունական յաղթութեան զգէնն…խորտակէին անամաւթաբար:*** Aristakēs Lastivercʿi, *History* 23, *MH* 16:617–618.15, trans. Conybeare, *Key of Truth*, 137.
[140] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:144–45.

and the leaders of the new cenobitic monasteries were. Evidently, the accusation came at the end of Anania's life (*ի ժամ վախճանի իմոյ*)[141] and was apparently the result of Catholicos Xačʿik listening to the accusations of others against Anania (*ընդունակ խնդութեամբ բանսարկուս բանից...եղեր լսող*).[142] Abbot Anania was apparently deposed from his position as abbot of Narek, and he accused the catholicos of relishing his exile (*ախորժելով զիմս տարագրութիւն*).[143] According to the memory of a local tradition preserved in a letter by Yakob Patkancʿ, when he was deposed from Narek Anania took refuge at Kčaw monastery in Mokkʿ (the same monastery to which Grigor wrote his letter against the Tʿondrakites).[144] Likely from exile, Anania wrote the "Letter of Confession" in order to establish the veracity of his word (*իմոց բանից ճշմարտութիւն*) and the trustworthiness of his faith (*զհաւատիս հաւատոց իմոց*).[145] In this work, he was obliged to denounce and anathematize "all heretics, the first, the middle, and the last (*նզովեմ զամենայն հերձուածողսն, զառաջինս եւ զմիջինս, եւ զվերջինս*)"[146] and especially those of his time, the Tʿondrakites.[147] He then confessed his loyalty

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[141] Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession," *MH* 10:649.3.
[142] Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession," *MH* 10:649.4.
[143] Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession," *MH* 10:649.4.
[144] Yakob refers to the monastery as the "alleged site of Lord Anania's resignation/dismissal (*հրաժարման տեղի վարկանի՝ տեառն Անանիայի*)." The letter is a report of the research of Yakob Patkancʿ in Mokkʿ. Yakob was a monk of Ktucʿ Anapat and was sent by his abbot Karapet *vardapet* to seek out a rare copy of Grigor's *Matean* that was preserved there and which, according to local tradition, was an original copy written by Grigor himself. Yakob copied it and it became the base for the 1774 edition of Grigor's book of prayers. This letter is preserved in at least four sources: the manuscript M 950 (ff. 44r–45v, copied in 1834 in Constantinople by a priest named Ełiazar — the principal work in the manuscript being an encomium to Varag composed in 1766 by Yovhannēs Mokacʿi at the request of the archbishop Grigor); the manuscript M 5037 (a miscellany (*ժողովածոյ*) copied in 1797 in Constantinople by the notary (*նօտար*) Mattʿēos); the manuscript M 5066 (a miscellany copied and illustrated in Constantinople from 1808–1815 by Yakob Patkancʿ); the printed edition of Grigor of Narek's *Matean* (Գիրք աղօթից) in Constantinople in 1807 (pages 498–500). For an evaluation of this source, see Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi,*43–47; Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek*, *Tragédie*, 55–56, 99 n. 379.
[145] Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession," *MH* 10:649.1.
[146] Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession," *MH* 10:650.9.
[147] *Եւ որք ի մերում ժամանակիս, որք թոնդրակեցիք կոչին, նզովեալ եղիցին յԱստուածոյ եւ յամենայն սրբոց Աստուածոյ:* Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession," *MH* 10:650.10.

to the doctrine established by the prophets, apostles, and early church councils[148] and compiled a lengthy creedal confession of faith that is explicitly aligned with official church dogma.[149] He calls himself a "child and inheritor of this faith from birth to old age,"[150] putting his trust in the divine to vindicate him.[151] We do not know the outcome of the story — whether he was reinstated at Narek or died in ignominious exile, like Xosrov Anjewacʿi.

The foregoing discussion has elaborated the connection between ascetic, spiritualist figures and the "Tʿondrakecʿi" label. Monastic spirituality laid emphasis on the inner nature of the individual's journey to God (*theōsis*) as being of greater importance than the performance of external, liturgical rituals. While monastics like Anania and Grigor were not openly iconoclastic or opposed to the Church establishment, their interior mysticism was viewed as threatening to the catholicos and episcopal hierarchy, who perceived it as diminishing their own, as well as the Church's role, as the sole mediator between humans and the divine, especially in light of the social and ecclesiastical crises that marked the period. This is the reason their spiritual activity at Narek came under suspicion and attack and why they were forced to defend themselves and their devotion to the church in some of their works.

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[148] Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession," *MH* 10:650–51.11–28.
[149] Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession," *MH* 10:652–55.35–73.
[150] ***Եւ այս հաւատոյ եմ որդի եւ ժառանգ ի ծննդենէ մինչեւ ի ծերութիւն։*** Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession," *MH* 10:655.74.
[151] Anania of Narek, "Letter of Confession," *MH* 10:657.90–92.

CHAPTER 5

ANANIA OF NAREK AND ARMENIAN RESPONSES TO BYZANTINE EXPANSION

Արդ, զընտրեալ յԱստուծոյ զՀայաստանեացս ո՞վ իշխէ արհամարհել. ո՞չ ապաքէն հակառակ գտանի այնպիսին Հոգւոյն Սրբոյ, որ ընտրեաց զմեզ ողորմութեամբն իւրով եւ շնորհիւ:

Now then, who would dare to condemn us Armenians, who have been chosen by God? Would not such a person be found to be an adversary of the Holy Spirit, Who chose us by His mercy and grace?

— Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*

As discussed in the first chapter, the period from the middle of the ninth to the middle of the eleventh century is marked by a resurgence of the Byzantine Empire, which gradually expanded southwards into Cilicia, northern Syria, and Mesopotamia, and eastwards into Lesser and Greater Armenia. From the perspective of Armenia, the Byzantine expansion may be roughly divided into two periods.[1] During the first, from the middle of the ninth century through the reign of Romanos II (963), the empire's campaigns and territorial gains were mostly confined to the borderlands, the emirates, and the areas of western or Lesser Armenia. The second period was marked by the absorption of many of the Armenian kingdoms and principalities into the Byzantine Empire, beginning with the Bagratid principality of Tarōn in 966/7 and culminating with the Bagratid kingdom of Kars in 1064. This chapter considers the role of Anania of Narek and a cluster of high-ranking *vardapets*, who, under Catholicos Xacʿik Aršaruni, were charged with defending the autonomy and integrity of the Armenian Church in the face of the territorial advances of tha Byzantine Empire and the assimilationist agenda of its eastern hierarchs.

[1] On these campaigns and this period of expansion, see Shepard, "Equilibrium to Expansion;" Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours;" Ter-Ghewondyan, *Arab Emirates*, 109–24; Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, 124–26.

Ecclesiastical Diplomacy as a Branch of Byzantine Foreign Policy

After a bleak century and a half for the Byzantine state, which experienced significant territorial losses to the caliphate followed by a fraught period of collective self-reckoning, the psychological depths of which are manifest in the long iconoclast controversy, the prevailing mood in the state became much more optimistic by the middle of the ninth century.[2] After the "Triumph of Orthodoxy," the Byzantine Empire, under Michael III (r. 842–867) and Basil I (867–886), began looking eastwards with an eye to winning back territory on the eastern borders of its state.[3] Initial Byzantine victories against the Arabs in the 850s must have lent confidence to the emperor and his army.[4] In 861, the beginning of the crisis at the caliphal capital (discussed in the first chapter), likely provided further impetus for the Byzantine Empire to seek ways to exploit to their advantage the unstable situation in the East. Naturally, Constantinople looked to the Christian peoples of the caliphate to join their co-religionists across the border in the battle against the Muslim enemy. Throughout this period, the patriarch of Constantinople played an important role in advancing this goal of Byzantine foreign policy. Thus, in the early 860s, during his first patriarchal term, Patriarch Photios (sed. 858–867; 877–886) sent John, Archbishop of Nikē (in Thracia), as his emissary on a diplomatic mission to Armenia to convey an appeal for regional Christian unity and harmony. This should be seen not as a pursuit of theological and Christological agreement for its own sake, but as a diplomatic mission serving the interests of

[2] On the iconoclast period, see Brubaker and Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era*; Auzépy, "State of Emergency."
[3] On the reigns of these two emperors, which followed immediately after the resolution of the iconoclast controversy, see Tougher, "After Iconoclasm."
[4] Tougher, "After Iconoclasm," 297.

imperial foreign policy, which sought to persuade Armenia (and the other Christian peoples of the Caucasus) to join its side in the military operations against the emirs and caliphate.

To discuss matters, a synod convened at Širakawan in 862/3 under the auspices of (then *sparapet*) Ašot Bagratuni and Catholicos Zakʿaria Jagecʿi (sed. 855 – 877).[5] The patriarch of Constantinople was represented by John, Archbishop of Nikē (in Thracia) and also present was the West Syrian archdeacon Nonnus of Nisibis.[6] That the synod had less to do with theological or Christological discussion and more to do with political matters is indicated by the fact that only one representative was present from the Byzantine side. Had the discussions at the synod been primarily about debating Christological issues, John of Nikē likely would have found himself at a great disadvantage vis-à-vis the Syriac representative Nonnus (not to mention significantly outnumbered by all of the non-Chalcedonians present). Nonnus held something of celebrity status at the time, having engaged in theological and apolegtic activities in Armenia since the early ninth century. As a young deacon, he debated Theodore Abū Qurrah at the court of Ašot Bagratuni (775–826), prince of Tarōn, in the year 817, arguing the miaphysite position over and against Theodore's Chalcedonian theology, and, according to later Armenian writers such as Vardan Arewelcʿi, winning the debate.[7] Later, Nonnus was commissioned by prince Ašot's son Bagrat to write a commentary on the Gospel of John.[8] He composed the work in Arabic and it was subsequently translated into Armenian some thirty years later.[9] As a result of

[5] On this synod and its significance, see Maksoudian, "Chalcedonian Issue and the Early Bagratids;" Dorfmann-Lazarev, "Armenian-Syrian-Byzantine Council of Širakawan" in *Christ in Armenian Tradition*, 293–313; idem, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius*, 19–23, 56–57 (for the date of the synod), 212–40.
[6] On these figures, see Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius*, 66–79.
[7] Thomson, "Introduction" in Nonnus of Nisibis, *Commentary on the Gospel of Saint John*, xviii–xix; Maksoudian, "Chalcedonian Issue and the Early Bagratids," 336–37.
[8] Nonnus of Nisibis, *Commentary on the Gospel of Saint John*.
[9] Thomson, "Introduction" in Nonnus of Nisibis, *Commentary on the Gospel of Saint John*, xix–xxi.

the contentious context in which it was composed, the commentary is preoccupied with defending miaphysite Christology as formulated by Cyril of Alexandria.[10] Nonnus was imprisoned along with the high-ranking Armenian noble dynasts at Sāmarrāʾ in the early 850s, and unlike his patron Bagrat, he did not apostatize but rather held to the faith and was later hailed as a confessor upon his release.[11] By the time of the synod therefore, Nonnus was a highly respected figure, long known for his stalwart faith and miaphysite convictions, who was comfortable moving in Armenian circles and engaging in Christological debate.

While the complete acts of the synod do not survive, the extant articles associated with it "reflect a disposition towards establishing a *modus vivendi* between the Monophysite [sic] and Chalcedonian elements in Christian Caucasia," as Krikor Maksoudian has noted.[12] At this stage, Byzantine influence among the Christian communities of the caliphate was minimal, after over a century of a fixed border zone (*thughūr*) that separated the imperial church from the Christian communities across the border. The relative weakness of the Byzantine side in this early phase meant it was unable actually to interfere to any significant degree in ecclesiastical or political matters with regard to the Christian communities that remained on the other side of the caliphal border, integrated within the caliphal administrative structure, and under caliphal suzerainty. Nevertheless, pursuing relations marked by mutual good will between the different confessional communities would have been beneficial both to Ašot and the Byzantine emperor (then Michael III). The Byzantine side likely foresaw even at this early phase that its expansion eastwards would be greatly facilitated by the cooperation of the Christian communities in the region, if they

[10] Thomson, "Introduction" in Nonnus of Nisibis, *Commentary on the Gospel of Saint John*, xx.
[11] Dorfmann-Lazarev, "Armenian-Syrian-Byzantine Council of Širakawan" in *Christ in Armenian Tradition*, 295.
[12] Maksoudian, "Chalcedonian Issue and the Early Bagratids," 338.

were to make common cause against the Muslim adversary. Thus, they aspired for pan-Christian military unity against the Muslim powers, conceived of as a common foe. The Byzantines were presumably also already aware of the growing autonomy of the provincial dynasts in the caliphate and, seeking to exploit the weakening of their ties to the caliphal center, were hoping to cement new relations of amity with themselves. Meanwhile, Ašot was looking to consolidate his position as the pre-eminent ruler in the region, who could maintain the peaceful co-existence of the various confessional communities in the Caucasus.[13] One recalls that Ašot's relatives, the Bagrationi of Iberia, oversaw a Chalcedonian Christian population in communion with the imperial church. Thus, Ašot had his own special, familial interest in seeking "mutual toleration" over Christological differences. The Bagratid dynast was eager to not allow arcane theological disputes undermine the interests and cohesion of the larger Bagratid noble house.

The Byzantine expansion eastwards picked up pace during the reign of Basil I, who undertook military campaigns in eastern Cappadocia, northern Syria, and western Armenia against the emirates in those territories. Emperor Basil succeeded in taking Sebasteia and keeping it under Byzantine control. Ecclesiastical diplomacy functioning as a branch of Byzantine imperial policy continued in the next decade during Patriarch Photios' second patriarchal term. Extant are epistolary exchanges between the patriarch with prince Ašot and the *vardapet* bishop Sahak Mŕut, the expert theologian who replied on the latter's behalf.[14] It has been noted that they are marked by a general air of amicability, which distinguishes them from other periods of polemical interchange between the two sides.[15] However, this should be seen as

[13] Maksoudian, "Chalcedonian Issue and the Early Bagratids," 336–37.
[14] See Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius*, 24–91.
[15] Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius*, 241.

a result of the fact that the interchange was not fundamentally about Christological issues, but about diplomacy and furthering political and military ties between the Byzantine state and Bagratuni realm. During these excahnges, Photios also sent a relic of the True Cross, yet when Ašot resisted the Byzantine effort to persuade him to exchange caliphal for Byzantine suzerainty, the epistolary exchanges likewise turned sour, as a result of the failed diplomatic mission to secure Ašot's loyalty. Thus, the final letters reveal both sides "reverting to their traditional positions, defining and rebutting in meticulous detail the doctrinal errors of the others."[16] The Byzantine forces' defeats at Melitenē in 882 and Tarsus in 883 reveal the failure of the Byzantine Empire's foreign policy aspirations vis-à-vis Armenia at this stage. Nevertheless, in 884, as mentioned before, Basil sent Ašot a crown in hopes of persuading the latter to become his (instead of the caliph's) vassal, revealing the extent to which the Byzantine Empire was committed to its foreign policy agenda vis-à-vis Armenia.

During the reign of Basil's successor, Leo VI, Sebasteia was administratively incorporated into the empire as a theme in 911. One is able to observe the next phase in the diplomatic approach conducted through the Constantinopolitan patriarch in an extant letter of Patriarch Nicholas Mystikos (sed. 901–907, 912–925) addressed to Catholicos Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi (sed. 898–924) written in 913/4 and preserved in the latter's *History of Armenia*.[17] The chief aim of this letter was to persuade the Christian peoples of the Caucasus to unite together to make common cause against the Muslim enemy (in this case, Sājid emīr Abū'l Sāj).[18] It should be seen as further continuation of the Byzantine political and diplomatic agenda

[16] Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 351. See further idem, "Failure of a Mission?"
[17] Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi, *History of Armenia* 54, MH 11:521–24.1–14, tr. Maksoudian, 189–91, tr. Boisson-Chenorhokian, 303–05.
[18] See especially *MH* 11:523.7–9, tr. Maksoudian, 190, tr. Boisson-Chenorhokian, 305.

seeking to win over the Christian peoples of the Caucasus to its side against the Muslim caliphate and emīrs. In this, Byzantium began to achieve more enduring success, achieving major military advances against the emirates when they captured the important military outposts of Melitenē in 934 and Theodosioupolis (Ar. Qālīqalā, Arm. Karin) in 949, by which the Byzantines took control of Cappadocia. While Armenian military units did not assist in these advances, they at least did not resist them, unlike for example the case in 922, when Ašot II's forces fought against the Byzantine army attacking Duin.[19]

The Resettlement of Miaphysite Christians into Imperial Territory

In order to hold their newly won territories during this first phase of expansion, it was necessary to settle there a population that would be loyal to the empire and willing to defend the lands against the armies of the caliphate and emirates. Miaphysite Syrians and Armenians formed a significant proportion of those who were invited to settle in the area of Sebasteia and Cappadocia, and they took up residence alongside others belonging to the Chalcedonian confessional community.[20] While there is little data on the particularities of intercommunal relations there in this early phase, it is reasonable to assume that non-Chalcedonian Armenians and Syrians attended Chalcedonian churches. Many were likely rebaptized as a way of ensuring their full sacramental participation and integrating them into their new setting. It is plausible to assume that there were also non-Chalcedonian churches established to serve the Armenian and Syrian communities that immigrated into the region, especially later in the century when they began to come in larger numbers. When Armenian immigration into the region significantly

[19] Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 354.
[20] On the Syrian and Armenian immigration into these territories, see Cowe, "Armenian Immigration."

increased in the latter half of the century, confessional tensions in turn began to arise in the region.

From the middle of the tenth century up until the century's end, there is evidence in sources from the period of the way in which ecclesiastical relations between the hierarchs of the different confessional communities turned to mutual hostility, as the freshness of renewed interaction soured with the passing of time and as the clashing ecclesiological views of each side came up against one another. While regional Byzantine hierarchs looked to integrate Armenians into their churches and pursued a policy of assimilation, Armenian hierarchs looked to defend their right to separate existence and autocephaly and prevent their flock from integrating and assimilating. Anania of Narek was one of the *vardapets* who played a leading role in advising the catholicos most engaged in this struggle, Xačʿik Aršaruni, who made efforts to counter the threats facing the church.

Catholicos Anania Mokacʿi and the Beginnings of Chalcedonian Tension

On the Armenian side, the catholicosal reign of Anania Mokacʿi (941/2 – ca. 963/4 or 965/6)[21] is marked by a resurgence of hostility on the part of Armenian church leaders towards Chalcedonianism. In the case of Catholicos Anania, we see this at play in the latter's engagement with the secessionist regions of Siwnikʿ and Ałuankʿ, discussed in the previous chapter. In one of the extant documents surviving from Catholicos Anania, entitled "Concerning the Rebellion of the House of the Albanians, Whose Ordination for Years Was outside of the Throne of the Holy Illuminator (*Յաղագս ապստամբութեան տանն Աղուանից որ ընդ ժամանակս լեալ էին*

[21] On the uncertainty surrounding the dates of his catholicosal tenure, see Greenwood, *Universal History*, 222 n. 91 and 92, 232 n. 155.

ձեռնադրութիւնն արտաքոյ սուրբ Լուսաւորչի աթոռոյն)," he notes how at the outset of his catholicate, he was appalled to discover that some bishops in those realms had accepted the Chalcedonian confession and that some of the princes and general population had married spouses belonging to the Chalcedonian confessional community (a regular phenomenon of dynastic intermarriage).[22] Catholicos Anania cites in particular intermarriage between Armenians (***Հայ***) and Iberians (***Վրացի***).[23] This situation hearkens back to the turmoil of the late sixth and early seventh century, when, like the Iberians, the Albanian church along with Siwnikʿ had broken with the Armenian church, accepted Chalcedon, and temporarily aligned with the imperial church. Unlike the situation with Iberia, however, the Armenian church managed to achieve reunion with Albania. Nevertheless, there was a precedent for an Armenian catholicos like Anania to see Chalcedonian acceptance as a pretext for secession or as two sides of a single threat, and Anania portrays the present situation as such in his letter. For Siwnikʿ and Albania, the profession of Chalcedonianism should be interpreted first and foremost as a way of distinguishing themselves from the Armenian Church and thus providing a justification for secession and autocephaly, following the secessionist tendencies also at work on the political plane as part of this broader trend. As for intermarriage, of course, among the noble classes, marriages naturally were made for political alliances and to cement dynastic ties, and not primarily for expressing creedal solidarity or confessional beliefs. In line with the political trends

[22] ***Եւ ի հաւատալ Տեառնն լինճ զհաւտ իւր, գնեալ քաջաբեր արեամբն, յապուշ եղեալ զարհուրեցայ եւ երկիւղ մեծ պաշարեաց զիս, զի նկատեալ զիրի իրի նշկահումն, որ եղեալ էր յեկեղեցիս Աստուծոյ, գտի զոմանս [յ]եպիսկոպոսաց ապստամբեալս, եւ զոմանս յիշխանաց գաւառապետաց եւ զայլ խառնիճաղանճ ամբոխս քրիստոնէից ի խառն ամուսնութիւն քաղկեդոնականաց։*** *MH* 10:256.8.

[23] Anania of Mokkʿ, "Concerning the Rebellion of the House of the Albanians, Whose Ordination for Years Was outside of the Throne of the Holy Illuminator" *MH* 10:256.9. It is possible that this refers simply to non-Chalcedonians and Chalcedonians respectively, as the latter term was also a sobriquet applied to Chalcedonian Armenian in this period. On the use of ***Վրացի*** in reference to Chalcedonian Armenians, also pejoratively called *Cayd* (or *Cad* or *Cayt*ʿ or *Cat*ʿ), see Garsoïan, "Problem of Armenian Integration," 104; Arutjunova-Fidanjan, "Ethno-Confessional Self-Awareness." However, in the present context it is likely that it refers to actual Iberians.

of the era, where fragmentation and the rise of local autonomous rule was sought after by the nobility, Albania and Siwnikʿ sought autonomy on the political and ecclesiastical plane. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in addition to the secessional aspirations of the local nobility and hierarchs, which were likely the fundamental motivation at play, part of the jurisdictional and hierarchical disputes regarding the consecration of the *miwṙon* and the irregular ordination of the metropolitan of Siwnikʿ and catholicos of Ałuankʿ was the presence of pro-Chalcedonian leanings among hierarchs in those same regions. In his letter, Catholicos Anania cites bishops and leading princes in those regions who had converted to Chalcedonianism and thus broken ties with the miaphysite hierarchy.[24] Later in the same letter, he goes on to state that his chief desire was "to purge the heresy of Chalcedon that had begun to sprout, spreading in the land of Armenia like a cancer taking hold of the whole realm," making a pun with the words 'Chalcedon (***Քաղկեդոն***)' and 'cancer (***քաղցկեղ***).'[25] His emphasis on enforcing the boundaries separating the different confessional communities was part of his larger aim to reassert the authority of the Armenian catholicos over the Caucasian Albanian catholicos and the metropolitan of Siwnikʿ. As the Byzantine advance drew close to Armenian territory, the catholicos was likely triggered by the correlation between secession and pro-Chalcedonianism and feared a repeat of earlier history. As discussed in the previous chapter, he then made a concerted and prolonged effort to demand the submission of the Albanian catholicos and Siwnid metropolitan, and reassert the primacy of the Armenian church. As Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi relates, he also "commanded those

[24] Anania of Mokkʿ, "Concerning the Rebellion of the House of the Albanians, Whose Ordination for Years Was outside of the Throne of the Holy Illuminator" *MH* 10:258.22–24.

[25] ***Եւ նախ կամեցաք մաքրել զընծիւղեալ աղանդ Քաղկեդոնի, որ յաչխարհիս Հայոց իբր քաղցկեղ ճարակէր եւ զբոլոր աչխարհս էր կալեալ։*** Anania of Mokkʿ, "Concerning the Rebellion of the House of the Albanians, Whose Ordination for Years Was outside of the Throne of the Holy Illuminator" *MH* 10:259.40.

baptized Chalcedonian to be baptized a second time"[26] thus further enforcing the communal boundaries under his catholicosal primacy. Thus, Anania Mokacʿi's catholicate is marked by a defense of the anti-chalcedonian position of the Armenian church, its institutional and existential separateness from the imperial church, and its claim to primacy over the other regions of the realms of the Caucasus seeking autocephaly (Ałuankʿ and Siwnikʿ).[27]

Despite Catholicos Anania's strong stance against Chalcedonianism in Siwnikʿ, it was Vahan, metropolitan of Siwnikʿ, who was chosen as his immediate successor at a conclave presided over by Bagratid King Ašot III *Ołormac*. Perhaps in selecting Vahan the Bagratid king was seeking to cement relations politically with Siwnikʿ, since the latter was aiming for secession from the Bagratuni realm. Given the hostile atmosphere among Armenian clerics towards all things Chalcedonian, the election of Catholicos Vahan incited a strong reaction from Armenian hierarchs, especially once Vahan began to seek amicable relations with the Chalcedonian Iberians. According to Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, Vahan "expressed a desire to create amity and agreeable relations with the Chalcedonians through epistles."[28] Later historians and chroniclers, such as Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, Vardan Arewelcʿi, and Kirakos Ganjakecʿi, note that Vahan had icons brought from Iberia, which were installed on the altars of Armenian churches.[29] These amicable exchanges with the Chalcedonian Iberians drew the ire of anti-Chalcedonian Armenian clerics. A gathering of anti-Chalcedonian senior bishops and *vardapets* thus convened

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[26] ***Հրամանաւ Տեառն Անանիայի զքաղկեդոնական մկրտեալսն կրկին անգամ հրամայեցին մկրտել***: Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.7, *MH* 15:754.54; tr. Greenwood, 229.

[27] As Patricia Boisson, who has recently translated and studied the extant works of the catholicos, states, "Le catholicos Anania Mokacʿi consacre la quasi-totalité de son pontificat à la défense des positions antichalcédoniennes de l'Église arménienne." See Boisson et al., "Trois opuscules d'Anania Mokacʿi," 772.

[28] ***Սա ընդ քաղկեդոնականս սիրելութիւն եւ հաճութիւն կամեցաւ առնել թղթովք***: Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.8, *MH* 15.809.10.

[29] Stepʿanos Ōrbelean, *History of Siwnikʿ* 53; Vardan Arewelcʿi, *Compilation of Armenian History* 47; Kirakos Ganjakecʿi, *History of Armenia*, 87.

in the city of Ani, calling upon the Bagratid king to remove the catholicos. Among those who gathered, Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi singles out "Lord Xačʿik, bishop of Aršarunikʿ, father Polykarpos, abbot of Kamrǰajor, father Sargis, a monk of the community of Hoṙomos, and father Stepʿanos, a monk of the monastery of Sewan (***Տէր Խաչիկ՝ Արշարունեաց եպիսկոպոս եւ հայր Պողիկարպոս՝ առաջնորդ Կամրջաձորոյ եւ հայրն Սարգիս՝ Հոռոմոսի վանաց վանական եւ հայր Ստեփանոս՝ Սեւանայ վանաց վանական***)" among "many other bishops and fathers (***այլ եպիսկոպոսունք եւ հարք բազումք***)."[30] Before any action could be taken by the king one way or the other, Catholicos Vahan fled to Vaspurakan and took refuge with the Arcrunid dynast, Apusahl Hamazasp. A new catholicos was elected in his place, the aforementioned Stepʿanos Sewancʿi, and both anathematized the other, thus initiating a short-lived schism. After a couple of years, both died within a short time of the other, and the schism was resolved with the election of bishop Xačʿik Aršaruni, a close associate of Anania of Narek, and one of those who had gathered against Catholicos Vahan in Ani. Catholicos Xačʿik carried on the legacy of Catholicos Anania Mokacʿi, who was his maternal uncle, by making the defense of the Armenian Church's confession of faith and its institutional autonomy a high priority, in collaboration with Anania of Narek and other senior *vardapets*, an issue to which we will turn shortly.

Catholicos Xačʿik Aršaruni and Confessional Conflict in Imperial Territory

The period of greatest tension in relations between the non-Chalcedonian and Chalcedonian clerics in the region began after the beginning of the Byzantine expansion into Greater Armenia, as the empire sought to incorporate the realms of Armenian princes into the

[30] *MH* 15:756.12, tr. Greenwood, 233.

empire. The first such Armenian realm to be annexed was Tarōn, after the death of its prince Ašot in 966/7.[31] Following the incorporation of new territories into the empire, the Byzantine Church naturally sought the integration of non-Chalcedonians into the imperial church through acceptance of Chalcedon and rebaptism. Integrating or assimilating Armenians who immigrated into its realm or when the Byzantine Empire took over territory with an Armenian-majority population was the standard policy known from previous centuries.[32] However, the much larger numbers of immigrant and relocated miaphysite communities led to a new situation in the late tenth century, distinguished from earlier periods of immigration westwards into the Byzantine state by the size and scale of those belonging to miaphysite communities, where in places like Sebasteia, Cappadocia, and Tarōn, miaphysite Armenians formed a majority of the population. Efforts to integrate and assimilate the miaphysite ecclesiastical bodies naturally began at the top. Thus, in 966, the Syrian patriarch was summoned to Constantinople for theological discussions and detained there until his release by Phocas' successor John Tzimiskes in 969.[33] These developments were probably known in Armenia and may have influenced the strong reaction of the anti-Chalcedonian Armenian hierarchs against Catholicos Vahan mentioned above, events which coincided precisely with these developments. A couple decades later, we hear of the rise and rapid escalation of confessional tensions between pro- and anti-Chalcedonian hierarchs and their communities in Sebasteia and Cappadocia, with coercive and then violent measures taken against miaphysite Armenian priests and bishops (on which, see below).

[31] Greenwood, "Armenian Neighbours," 357.
[32] On the Byzantine policy of integration in earlier periods, see Charanis, *Armenians in the Byzantine Empire*; Garsoïan, "Problem of Armenian Integration;" Kaldellis, *Ethnicity and Empire*, especially pp. 123–195.
[33] Cowe, "Armenian Immigration," 114.

It is those two regions that became the principal foci of tension between Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian hierarchs, who found themselves in the unprecedented situation of administering overlapping episcopal jurisdictions. While hard evidence is lacking for this region, it is reasonable to assume that the local Byzantine bishops advanced a policy of rebaptizing non-Chalcedonian Armenians according to the Byzantine rite and Chalcedonian confession of faith in order to integrate them into the imperial churches. This follows the process established in the earlier period of expansion into Armenian territory, when the empire imposed Chalcedon and Byzantine liturgics on the Armenian population in their jurisdiction, and the Armenian miaphysite hierarchy fought to resist this imposition.[34] Now that the Armenian church had miaphysite bishops in the same area, they naturally resisted such a policy, and in retaliatory response, adopted the same policy of rebaptizing those Armenians in their churches who had been baptized Chalcedonian.[35] This defensive move advanced in response to a Byzantine offensive parallels the literary defense advanced in response to the Byzantine attack in the theological and ecclesiological realm, which will be discussed in detail below.

Diverse Armenian Responses to Byzantine Expansion

Armenian responses to Byzantine expansion and the effort to integrate Armenians into the empire were mixed and diverse. Some, seeing themselves outmatched by the powerful

[34] See Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 69, pp. 89–91; Mahé, "L'église arménienne," 462–468.
[35] It is otherwise difficult to explain the policy advanced by Catholicos Xačʿik Aršaruni at the advice of the leading *vardapets* of the day, such as Anania of Narek, to rebaptize those who had been baptized Chalcedonian. See Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, *MH* 10:534.732, where he provides a liturgical/theological rationale for rebaptizing those baptized Chalcedonian. Anania also commissioned the *History* of Uxtanēs, whose third book deals with the rebaptism of the *Cayd*, on which see below. On the rebaptizing of Armenians by Chalcedonians in this period, see Garsoïan, "Problem of Armenian Integration," 72–73; Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.30. For other examples, see Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History*, 476–77, n. 171; Preiser-Kapeller, "Aristocrats, Mercenaries," 362.

Byzantine army, saw little choice but to accede to the Byzantine state's demands and make the best of a bad situation. On the political plane, one sees this through the way in which dynasts such as Arcruni King Senekʿerim-Yovhannēs exchanged his lands in Vaspurakan for Sebasteia in 1021. Others looked for opportunities in the current situation to improve their chance of survival and advance their own interests. One may note the monastery of Glak at Innaknean [Glakavankʿ; Innakneavankʿ; S. Karapet at Muš][36] as an example of the latter. In the aftermath of the Byzantine takeover of Tarōn, this monastic community re-presented their past — in a work known as the *History of Tarōn* — so as to make themselves appear acceptable and gain the favor of their new Byzantine overlords in Tarōn. Their successful rebranding enabled them to endure not just the contemporaneous changes, but also endure as the principal holy site in the region up until the twentieth century.

The *History of Tarōn* purports to be the work of two authors: Zenob of Glak, first abbot of the monastery in the fourth century (appointed by S. Grigor the Illuminator), whose first part records the conversion of Armenia in the early fourth century as well as activity involving the monastery; and Yovhannēs Mamikonean, seventh-century bishop of the Mamikonean house, who translated Zenob's original Greek composition and compiled and wrote the second portion, which relates to events transpiring in Tarōn during his own time.[37] However, Levon Avdoyan has argued against this traditional attribution, demonstrating convincingly that the work issues from a tenth-century context, specifically after 966 (the Byzantine annexation of Tarōn) and before 989/90 (the *terminus ante quem* for the completion of Uxtanēs' *History*, which uses the

[36] Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, no. 368, p. 70.
[37] Avdoyan, *Pseudeo-Yovhannēs Mamikonean*, 1.

History of Tarōn).[38] More recently, Tim Greenwood has uncovered how the *History of Tarōn*'s retelling of the Armenian Christian fourth-century past was used to bolster the position of the monastery in the tenth century, presenting itself as the principal site of pilgrimage and devotional worship in Tarōn, a position it then was able to maintain up until the early twentieth century.[39] It achieved this by rewriting the topography of the Armenian conversion narrative, presenting not Aštišat, but the location of the monastery of Glak as the site at which S. Grigor first destroyed the pagan shrines and built in their place a martyrium for the relics of St. John the Baptist (S. Karapet).[40] It also creates multiple connections between S. Grigor the Illuminator, the monastery of Glak, and the metropolitan of Caesarea, thereby bolstering the role of the imperial church in the conversion of Armenia and presenting Armenian-imperial relations as harmonious and mutually beneficial.[41] In connection with this latter point, it is significant that throughout the latter half of the text, which deals with the seventh century, there is no hint of confessional tension between the Armenian and imperial church, which one may interpret as an indication of the ingratiating stance of the tenth-century author towards the new ruling power, brought about by the expediency of the new political realities at play in tenth-century Tarōn.[42] The text also records the dispatch of several members of the clerical élite from the metropolitan of Caesarea into Tarōn, who are unknown from other sources such as Agatʿangełos, to assist with S. Grigor's evangelizing efforts.[43] This narrative element in the fourth-century depiction of S. Grigor's evangelization mission may be interpreted as the monastery's acceptance of a new phenomenon

[38] Avdoyan, *Pseudeo-Yovhannēs Mamikonean*, 42–47. For the dating of Uxtanēs' *History*, see Greenwood, *Universal History*, 23.
[39] Greenwood, "Imagined Past, Revealed Present;" idem, *Universal History*, 17–21.
[40] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 18.
[41] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 19–20.
[42] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 21.
[43] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 19–20.

taking place in the latter half of the tenth century, the establishment of imperial episcopal sees in the region: the see of Tarōn itself, one at Muš, one in Xoytʿ and one at Katsoun.[44] As Greenwood concludes, the monastery of Glak took advantage of the "radical political and social restructuring following the departure of the existing lay and clerical elite" in Tarōn, by working with the new status quo to bolster its own position regionally and "advertise itself as the principal centre of pilgrimage and devotional worship in Tarōn."[45] A survival strategy may be detected in the text, as the author sought to make as broad an appeal as possible, desiring to attract patronage and pilgrimage from all local Christians, regardless of their confessional belonging.

Reading against the grain and between the lines of Uxtanēs' *History of Armenia*, Kosuke Nakada has recently speculated over the extent to which that text, which is hostile to Byzantine authority and Chalcedonianism, attests to the contemporary existence of pro-Byzantine and pro-Chalcedonian sentiments in segments of the Armenian population in Byzantine Sebasteia.[46] Armenians were a diverse community, and Sebasteia, like other regions, exemplifies the variety of contemporary responses to the Byzantine Empire and their eastwards expansion that are observable across the Armenian population and *oikoumené*. Nevertheless, it must be stated that the extant sources contain little mention of soft power and diplomacy at work in Sebasteia. On the contrary, it is the location of the harshest coercive measures taken against miaphysite clerics (see below).

[44] Greenwood, "Imagined Past, Revealed Present," 384.
[45] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 19.
[46] Nakada, "Uxtanēs of Sebasteia."

The Response of the Leading *Vardapets* to the Byzantine Policy of Assimilation

Uxtanēs was one among a cluster of *vardapets* and high-ranking clerics, who united together and strove collectively to defend the autonomy and integrity of the miaphysite Armenian confession and community against the Byzantine ecclesiastical agenda of assimilation and the compulsory means that began to be employed against miaphysite Armenian bishops in imperial territory (on which, see below). Foremost among these were the *vardapets* Anania of Narek and Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi, Catholicos Xačʿik Aršaruni, and Uxtanēs, bishop of Sebasteia. All had close ties with Anania and collaborated together in the joint effort. As he relates in the letter/dedication to Anania that introduces his *History*, Uxtanēs had not only been Anania's pupil at Narek but Anania had commissioned Uxtanēs to write the *History* and in a series of meetings and epistolary exchanges, had helped him to plan it and draft an outline.[47] Xačʿik and Anania shared a similar upbringing and had collaborated on a number of different projects during their careers, the latter commissioning multiple literary works from the former.[48] Samuēl, in his *Explanation of Feasts*, refers to his own discussions with Anania over liturgical and theological matters significant to the contemporary debates with the Byzantines (specifically, the Fast of the First-Fruits [***առաջաւոր պահք***], a difference of liturgical practice that became a point of controversy in the polemical exchanges in this period).[49] Related differences in fasting and

[47] Uxtanēs, *History of Armenia* I, *MH* 15:446–455, tr. Arzoumanian, 11–20.
[48] On Catholicos Xacʿik's ties with Anania, see Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 14–53.
[49] "The beginning of the fast of the catechumens, the first week was called 'First-fruits' and after the second week [was called] 'Good Living' [i.e., Mardi Gras]. Not only Basil said this, but also my own *vardapet* Stepʿanos Kamrǰajorecʿi and also others who preceded. Likewise both *vardapets* Petros and Anania, who formerly dwelt in Antakʿ and then in Xawarajor and later in Narek, taught the same thing… *Vardapet* Georg said this. Because although he knew all and about all, yet the origin was Cyril who set this as an institution. From him I heard this, and on one occasion I told this to *vardapet* Anania at Narek, and he, surprised, said, 'that explanation of yours [of the origin] is hidden from all,' because he had written much concerning the origins of the fast of the 'First-fruits,' yet he had not written this. I am not able to write the many examples and explanations [of the origins] due to the length of the discourse, so I will only indicate what was said. ***Սկիզբն երախայից պահոցն առաջին չաբաթն Առաջաւորք***

liturgical practice had come up earlier at the Council of Trullo (or the Quinisext council) in 692, in which certain canons went out of their way to denounce contemporary Armenian practices and differentiate Byzantine liturgical practice from Armenian usage.[50] It is thus no surprise that such issues came to the fore again in this period.

Action on the Ground: Rebaptism

The group worked together both through ecclesiastical activity on the ground and by crafting a strong literary defense of the Armenian faith and church with their pens in response to Byzantine attack. On the ecclesiastical administrative plane, two areas stand out. One was the establishment of new bishoprics in imperial territory, which was warranted because of the large Armenian population that required pastoral care. The second was the rebaptism of Armenians who had been baptized Chalcedonian and were called *Cayd* (or *Cad* or *Cayt῾* or *Cat῾*), a pejorative term meaning 'half' or 'incomplete' or 'deficient' or 'hybrid' to designate the way in which they were neither fully Roman nor fully Armenian.[51] The third book of Uxtanēs' *History* (no longer extant) treated the rebaptism of these Chalcedonian Armenians, describing the districts in which they lived, and providing detailed information about those areas, including

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անուանեցան, եւ զկնի Բ չաբաթն՝ բարեկենդանուքիւնք։ Զայս ոչ միայն Բարսղիղիոս ասէր, այլ եւ վարդապետն իմ Մտեփանոս կամրջաձորեցի եւ այլք, որք էին։ Նոյնպէս եւ Պետրոս եւ Անանիա վարդապետք, որ յառաջագոյն յԱնտաք եւ ապա ի Խաւարաձոր եւ յետոյ ի Նարեկ բնակեցան, զնոյն վարդապետէին։ … Զայս ասաց Գեորգ վարդապետ։ Զի թեպետ եւ զամենեցուն եւ զամենայն գիտէր, այլ սկիզբն զայս ղնէր կիւրղի դրուքեանն։ Ի նմանէ լուա եւ երբեմն Անանիայի վարդապետի ասացի ի Նարեկի, եւ նա զարմացեալ ասաց, թէ յամենեցունց ծածկեալ է այդ պատճառդ, զի ինքն վասն Առաջաւորաց բազում պատճառս գրեալ էր եւ զայս ոչ էր գրեալ։ Զայս բազում աւրինակս եւ զպատճառս վասն երկայնագոյն բանից ոչ կարեմ գրել, այլ միայն նշանակեմ զասացեալսն։ *MH* 10:720.18–29.

[50] See Herrin, "The Quinisext Council," 159–61.

[51] See Arutjunova-Fidanyan, "Ethno-Confessional Self-Awareness," 354–57; Garsoïan, "Problem of Armenian Integration," 104–109; Greenwood, *Universal History*, 21–22; *NBHL*, s.v. *Cayd*; Achaŕean, *Hayerēn armatakan baŕaran*, s.v. *Cayt῾*.

where they had villages and cities, fortresses, and monasteries.[52] By Uxtanēs' testimony (see previous note), this took place in collaboration with King Smbat (r. 977–989) and other nobles, and thus belongs to the catholicosal tenure and at the initiative of Catholicos Xačʿik (972/3–990/1) and his close collaborators, one of the most important of whom was Anania. This mission at large should be seen as a miaphysite Armenian response to the efforts of the Chalcedonian imperial Church to assimilate Armenians and integrate them into the church of the empire. We unfortunately lack details as to the specifics of the way in which the Armenian Church rebaptized Chalcedonian Armenians, due to the third book of Uxtanēs' *History* being lost. Given that it took place in Byzantine territory, it is likely that it was towards Armenians who already desired to return to the miaphysite Armenian Church. It would be hard to imagine that the Armenian Church had the ability or power to coerce or enforce Armenians in imperial territory to return to their church.

[52] In the letter to Anania in which he gives an outline of the work to come, Uxtanēs indicates that he plans to include in his third book a description of "the baptism of the nation called Cad, their districts and the principal villages and cities and fortresses, organized by district, which are in that country, just as your will commanded; and the monasteries with their monks, each by name, and the remote places of the hermits, both those who live in communities and those who live by themselves, whether in inhabited or uninhabited places, in order to illustrate the power of God which worked in secret and openly on those who have been baptized, through the appearance of signs and miracles, visions and manifestations, all together spiritual works. And the speech and the care and the labour and the testimony of the bishops of [the see of] the blessed Grigor and his servants, the cooperation and command of king Smbat and the enthusiasm of the nobles for this spiritual work, and the testimony of the princes, according to each one's authority, and the other members of the elite, according to each one's honour, those who worked with us in this discourse and spiritual endeavour [*զմկրտութիւն ազգին՝ որ Ծադն կոչի. նա եւ զգաւառս, եւ զգեղս գլխաւորս, եւ զքաղաքս, եւ զբերդս իւրաքանչիւր գաւառաւք՝ որ են յաշխարհին յայնմիկ՝ որպէս եւ կամք քո հրամայեցին, եւ զվանաւրայս հանդերձ վանականաւք՝ անուամբ իւրաքանչիւրոց, եւ զանապատս միայնաւորաց, եւ որք բազմակեցք եւ որ միայնակեացք բնակեալ յապատս եւ յանապատս, եւ զաւրինակ ցուցանել զաւրութեանն Աստուծոյ. որ ի ծածուկ եւ ի յայտնի գործէր ի մկրտեալսն՝ երեւմամբ նշանաց եւ արուեստից՝ տեսլեամբ եւ յայտնութեամբ, միանգամայն եւ զգործս հոգեւորս. ե՛ւ զբան ե՛ւ զքան ե՛ւ զվաստակ ե՛ւ զհանդէս երանելի եպիսկոպոսացն Գրիգորի՝ եւ իւրոյ պաշտաւնէիցն, զգործակցութիւն եւ զհրաման թագաւորին Սմբատայ, եւ զնախանձ նախարարացն ի հոգեւոր գործն, եւ զհանդէս իշխանացն ըստ իւրաքանչիւր իշխանութեան, եւ զայլ եւս պատուաւորացն ըստ իւրաքանչիւր պատուոյ, որք գործակից լինէին մեզ ի բանս եւ ի գործ հոգեւոր*]." Uxtanēs, *History of Armenia* I, *MH* 15:454–55.66, tr. Greenwood, *Universal History*, 22.

Action on the Ground: New Episcopal Sees and Religious Violence

The second major initiative taken on the ecclesiastical administrative plane to counter the Byzantine imperialist agenda was the establishment of Armenian miaphysite episcopal sees in imperial territory, already referred to previously. Under Catholic Xačʿik, Armenian miaphysite episcopal sees had been established in other areas of imperial territory with an Armenian population. Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi connects this development with the large increase in the number of Armenians that had spread into the newly reconquered Byzantine territory:

> In the days of lord Xačʿik, patriarch of Armenia, this people of Armenia spread and extended across the regions of the west, to the extent that he consecrated bishops for it in Antioch of Syria, in Tarsus of Cilicia, and in Sulind [*or* Sulund], and in all these districts.[53]

Tarsus was taken by the Byzantines in 965 and Antioch in 969.[54] It is thus likely that a number of new episcopal sees were founded in the 970s and 980s in Cilicia, Sebasteia, and other regions of imperial territory where there was a large Armenian population. Anania of Narek provides further information about such territories with miaphysite bishops in his *Root of Faith* (see below). Anania's pupil Uxtanēs was himself bishop of Sebasteia, probably taking over after the defection of Sion of Sebasteia (see below), and is believed to have written his *History* while in residence there.[55]

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[53] ***Իսկ յաւուրս Տեառն Խաչիկ հայրապետին Հայոց սփռեալ տարածեցաւ ազգս Հայոց զկողմամբքն արեւմտից, մինչեւ ձեռնադրել նմա եպիսկոպոսունս յԱնտիոք Ասորւոց եւ ի Տարսոն կիլիկեցւոց եւ ի Սուլնդայ եւ յամենայն գաւառսն յայնոսիկ։*** Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.31, *MH* 15:810.1, tr. Grenwood, 295. See Bozoyan, "L'Église et l'identité arméniennes," 414. The location of "Sulind," which may be a corrupt form, is unknown. For a discussion of possibilities, see Macler, *Histoire Universelle*, 141–42, who inclines towards the opinion that it is a corrupt form of Seleucia. Another possibility is Laranda in Cilicia.

[54] See Greenwood, Universal History, 295 n. 520.

[55] It is unclear whether he was in charge of the see before the defection of Bishop Sion of Sebasteia in 986/7 or whether he took up the post immediately afterwards. See Kolanjian, "Ukhtanes the Historian."

We know definitely that two Armenian sees were established in the theme of Sebasteia, one in the city of Sebasteia and the other in Larissa, before 986/7, because Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi records that in that year two Armenian miaphysite bishops, Sion of Sebasteia and Yovhannēs of Larissa, along with a number of "insignificant priests (*այլք յաննշան քահանայիցն*)" accepted the Council of Chalcedon under fear of torture, exchanging affiliation with the Armenian Church for the imperial one.[56] The defection of these bishops and the derogratory reference to those priests is presented in sharp contrast to the "leading priests of the city of Sebasteia (*զգլխաւոր քահանայս Սեբաստիոյ քաղաքին*)," who were tortured "for their faith (*վասն հաւատոյ*)," by the local imperial bishops, but nevertheless refused to capitulate.[57] As this episode forms the immediate background to the exchange of disputatious theological letters that forms the subject of the second half of this chapter, the passage in question deserves to be quoted in full. After describing the relocation of Armenians to Macedon by Basil II, Stepʿanos writes:

> And the effeminate pastors and the metropolitan of Sebasteia began to oppress the people of Armenia in matters of faith. He had recourse to violence and began to torture the priests concerning faith, and he conveyed the leading priests of the city of Sebasteia in iron chains to the court of the king. Having been ill-treated in prison, the senior one of the priests, Gabriēl, was killed; he was an old man and full of knowledge and steadfast in this divine faith. This occurred in 435 of the Era (986/7 AD). Then others, insignificant priests and two bishops of Sebasteia and Larissa, Sion and Yovhannēs, through the same metropolitan, accepted the Council of Chalcedon and were excluded from the unanimity of Armenians. And from that time they banned the Armenian call to prayer in the city of Sebasteia until king Basil came to the country of the east, which we shall recount in its place.[58]

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[56] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.20, *MH* 15:769.6, tr. Grenwood, 252. Larissa is located about 50 miles south east of Sebasteia and was then a *tourma* of the theme of Sebasteia. See Greenwood, *Universal History*, 252, n. 275. For a map, see Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 105, p. 125.

[57] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.20, *MH* 15:769.3–4, tr. Grenwood, 252.

[58] *Եւ կանացի հովիւքն եւ մետրապաւլիտն Սեբաստիոյ սկսան նեղել զազգն Հայոց վասն հաւատոյ. եւ զբռնութիւն ի ձեռն առեալ՝ սկսաւ տանջել զքահանայս վասն հաւատոյ, եւ զգլխաւոր քահանայս Սեբաստիոյ քաղաքին երկաթեղէն կապանաւք հասուցանէն ի դուռն թագաւորին։ Եւ ի բանտի չարչարեալ զաւագն երիցանցն զԳաբրիէլ, սպանին, զի էր այր ծեր եւ իմաստութեամբ լի եւ քաջապինդ ի հաւատս աստուածեղէնս։ Այս եղեւ ի ՆԼԵ թուականին։ Իսկ այլք յաննշան քահանայիցն եւ երկու եպիսկոպոսունք Սեբաստիոյ եւ Լառիսոյ, Սիոն եւ Յովհաննէս, ի ձեռն նոյն մետրապաւլտին ընդալան զժողովն Քաղկեդոնի՝ ի բաց կալով ի միաւորութենէն Հայոց։ Եւ յայնմհետէ արգելին զժամաձայն Հայոց ի քաղաքէն Սեբաստիոյ մինչեւ ցգալ*

It is important here to distinguish the policy of the local Byzantine hierarchs of Sebasteia from the tolerance promoted by Basil II, whose clemency was a part of his diplomatic agenda in Armenia. The local Byzantine hierarchs were likely acting on their own initiative without reference to policies coming from Constantinople, whether from the royal or patriarchal court. It is in the shadow of these tense relations and violent actions that we may now turn to a series of theological exchanges in which Anania played a major role.

Action with the Pen: The Literary Defense

In addition to taking the step of rebaptizing Armenians baptized Chalcedonian and establishing episcopal sees in Byzantine territory, the group of high-ranking clerics and *vardapets* mounted a literary campaign in response to Byzantine letters that attacked their beliefs and right to autocephaly. After the description of violent coercion carried out upon the Armenian miaphysite community in Sebasteia, and the repressive measure of banning them from employing the call to prayer (*semantron*),[59] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi writes:

> That metropolitan [of Sebasteia] and other metropolitans began to write very long letters to lord Xačʿik, catholicos of Armenia. The previously mentioned *vardapets* replied to them using very powerful arguments; we have deemed it appropriate to include one of the letters at this point.[60]

թագաւորին Վասլի յաչխարհն արեւելից, զոր յիւրում տեղւոջն ասացուք։ Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.20, *MH* 15:769–70.3–7, tr. Grenwood, 252 (slightly modified).

[59] This policy was reversed ca. 1000 by Emperor Basil, who on a visit in person to Sebasteia, allowed the Armenian clerics to "be free in all religious practices and to sound the call of the bell-ringer which the metropolitan had banned [***համարձակ լինել յամենայն գործս հաւատոց եւ հնչեցուցանել զձայն ժամահարի, զոր արգելեալ էր մետրապաւլիտն***]." Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.43, MH15:822.7, tr. Greenwood, 308.

[60] ***Եւ ապա մետրապաւլիտն այն եւ այլ մետրապաւլիտք սկսան թուղթս մեծամեծս գրել առ Տէր Խաչիկ Հայոց կաթողիկոս։ Որոց ընդդէմ պատասխանեալ քաջակորով իմաստիւք յառաջ ասացեալ վարդապետքն, զոր պարտ համարեցաք զմի ի թղթոցն կարգել յայսմ վայրի։*** Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.20, *MH* 15:770.8–9, tr. Grenwood, 252.

While the original letters of the Byzantine metropolitans in question do not survive, a collection of extant documents provide a vivid picture of the literary defense mobilized by the leading *vardapets* of the day, who also crafted the reply of Catholicos Xačʿik to the letter sent by the metropolitan of Sebasteia.[61] The chronology of these documents is difficult to establish, and precise dating does not seem possible. The letter of Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi, written at the command of Catholicos Xačʿik, in reply to a letter sent from Theodore, metropolitan of Melitenē, is perhaps the earliest of the documents.[62] According to Mattʿēos Uṙhayecʿi (Matthew of Edessa), this letter was written in 985/6.[63] Then there is Catholicos Xačʿik's "Reply" (composed not by him but by *vardapet* theologians), which has been dated to ca. 986/7, based on the part of Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi's *Universal History* in which it is placed. The third and most lengthy is Anania's *Root of Faith*, which Catholicos Xačʿik had commissioned to aid in the defense of the Armenian church, its theology and liturgical practices, in response to the denunciatory letters sent by Byzantine bishops and in light of the uptick of hostilities between the imperial and non-Chalcedonian confessional communities that marked the catholicate of Xačʿik. From the letter of dedication in Uxtanēs's *History*, already referred to several times above, we learn that Anania delivered this lengthy work to Catholicos Xačʿik at his residence in Argina in the summer of either 980 or 987, at which time Anania also commissioned Uxtanēs to write the latter's *History*, which may be viewed as another of the documents that comprise the Armenian Church's response to Byzantine imperialism.[64] Tʿamrazyan has argued that Anania's

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[61] The lengthy reply of Catholicos Xačʿik comprises the next chapter of Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi's *Universal History*. See *MH* 15:770–800; tr. Greenwood, 253–283.
[62] "Letter of Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi," *MH* 10:747–761; *Book of Letters-1*, 302–322; *Book of Letters-2*, 550–579.
[63] Mattʿēos Uṙhayecʿi, *Chronicle*, I.34, tr. Dostourian, 39.
[64] For a discussion of the details surrounding this meeting and the date in question, see Tʿamrazyan, *Anania Narekatsʿi*, 39–43; Greenwood, *Universal History*, 7. The *terminus ante quem* for the date of Uxtanēs' *History* is the winter of 989/90 (the death of Smbat II). On the date of the meeting between Xačʿik, Anania, and Uxtanēs in

Root of Faith formed one of the chief sources from which Catholicos Xačʿik's reply was crafted, which would be unsurprising given the close connections between the two and the evidence from Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi cited above that signals the role of the *vardapets* in composing Catholicos Xačʿik's reply.[65] Similarities between the two works seems to confirm a connection between them, although it does not seem possible to tell which was written first.[66] In any case, Anania's perspective should be seen in the "Reply" of Xačʿik. Nevertheless, it does not seem possible to establish whether the *Root of Faith* was composed and delivered in 980, before the outbreak of the worst hostilities and before the letters sent by the metropolitans of Sebasteia and Melitenē, or afterwards in 987. If the latter date, then Anania's *Root of Faith* may instead be seen as an expansion upon the earlier letters, prepared in order to be a more exhaustive resource and reference work to be utilized as occasion demanded in further correspondence and defense from Byzantine polemicists. In addition to Anania's *Root of Faith*, Xačʿik's "Reply," and Samuēl's letter, the *History* of Uxtanēs is a fourth extant document that forms part of this collaborative literary response to Byzantine agression. It was certainly composed after the *Root of Faith*, and likely after the other two letters, since we know that Anania and Uxtanēs spoke together to plan its contents on the occasion when Anania delivered the *Root of Faith* to Catholicos Xačʿik in person at his residence in Argina.

Sebasteia, Greenwood reasons, "If the meeting did take place in early July 987, Uxtanēs completed his History in two and a half years. This is a narrow time-frame for the composition, but by no means an impossible one. Both dates remain viable." See Greenwood, *Universal History*, 23. Another factor to consider is that Uxtanēs is thought to have written his *History* while bishop of Sebasteia. If Sion defected in 986/7, did Uxtanēs fill the post after him, or was he bishop of Sebasteia before him, as Kolanjian supposes (with little evidence or argumentation)? See Kolanjian, "Ukhtanes the Historian," 151–52

[65] Tʿamrazyan, "Anania Narekatsʿov 'Hawatarmat' dawanabanakan erkě," in *MH* 10:475–76.

[66] On which, see Tʿamrazyan, "Anania Narekatsʿov 'Hawatarmat' dawanabanakan erkě," in *MH* 10:475–76.

These four documents, when read together, form a vivid picture of the way in which the Armenian Church defended its own faith and autonomy in light of the Byzantine expansion. The rest of the chapter will be devoted to an explication of this defense, examining some of the methods and argumentation that formed the *vardapets*' literary defense of the Armenian Church. Our focus will be on the three documents issuing from the Armenian *vardapets*, rather than Uxtanēs' *History*, since the latter text has already received greater scholarly attention. My goal is not to get into the details of the theological and Christological differences, as such topics have been covered before in previous scholarship that has examined the different periods of the long history of debates between the dyophysite and miaphysite churches.[67] Rather, my goal is to illustrate the way in which the Armenian *vardapets* responded to the claim that their church was heretical and schismatic and had no right to exist separately from the imperial church and its Chalcedonian theology.

Although the original letters sent by the Byzantine bishops to the Armenian catholicos are no longer extant, a reading of the sources composed by the Armenian *vardapets* allows one also to recover some of the principal arguments and assertions made by the Byzantine side, which the *vardapets* counter in the course of their replies. It will be helpful then to proceed by reconstructing some of the original arguments and points made against the Armenian Church by the Byzantine ecclesiasts who wrote to them, and then noting the way in which the Armenian *vardapets* composed their defense.

The Armenian *vardapets* responded to the attacks of the Byzantine Church by defending their understanding of Christology not by referring to the interpretation/argumentation of their

[67] As a starting point, see Garsoïan, *L'Église arménienne et le grand schisme*; Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius*; idem, *Christ in Armenian Tradition*; Augé, *Églises en dialogue*.

own (native Armenian) theologians and fathers, but by appealing to the Christological views of the pre-Chalcedonian Greek fathers, who were revered as fathers and saints by the Byzantine bishops and theologians with whom they were in dialogue.[68] Thus, reading through Anania's *Root of Faith*, Catholicos Xačʿik's "Reply," and Samuēl's "Letter," one encounters dozens of quotations from pre-Chalcedonian Greek fathers, who are cited or brought together to support the Armenian perspective in a manner resembling florilegia. This approach draws on an earlier tradition, as seen for example, in Timothy Aelurus' *Refutation of Chalcedon*. The Armenian *vardapets* mined earlier florilegia, such as Aelurus' *Refutation*, the *Seal of Faith*, and Stepʿanos Siwnecʿi's *On the Incorruptibility of the Body of Christ* in order to respond to the attacks of the Byzantine bishops.[69] The most notable such figures, and those most commonly cited are the Cappadocian fathers — Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and especially Gregory of Nazianzus ("The Theologian") — Irenaeus, Cyril of Alexandria and Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius of Alexandria, Epiphanius of Salamis, John Chrysostom, and Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (believed to be a first-century author).[70] These are obviously the main figures of the Greek patristic era and thus the highest authorities that could be brought to bear on the debates. As they explain in the works being examined here, this was an explicit strategy on the part of the Armenian *vardapets*, transmitted from past generations. For example, after listing a number of

[68] This point has been noted before by others who have examined the theological debates and polemical exchanges between the Byzantine and Armenian Churches in various centuries. See, for example, Terian, "Miaphysites, Armenian."

[69] For passages used by Anania of Narek in his *Root of Faith* with parallels in the *Seal of Faith*, see, for example, *MH* 10:540–41.826–29, *MH* 10:541–42.844–61, *MH* 10:542–43.862–78, *MH* 10:544.887–88, *MH* 10:545–46.915–17, *MH* 10:546.918–19, *MH* 10:546.920–25, *MH* 10:546–47.926–33, *MH* 10:547.942–44, *MH* 10:547–48.945–49, *MH* 10:548.950–54. For passages with parallels in Stepʿanos Siwnecʿi's *On the Incorruptibility of the Body of Christ*, see, for example, *MH* 10:541–42.844–61, *MH* 10:542–43.862–78, *MH* 10:544.885–86, *MH* 10:544.889–90, *MH* 10:544.893–94, *MH* 10:544–45.896–98, *MH* 10:545.903–04, *MH* 10:545.906–09, *MH* 10:547.937–41. For passages with parallels in Timothy Aelurus' *Refutation of Chalcedon*, see, for example, *MH* 10:540.821–25, *MH* 10:585.1414.

[70] For a fuller list, see "Letter of Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi," *MH* 10:749.27.

such early Greek fathers on whom the Armenians rely and from whom their understanding of Christology derives, Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi writes:

> So, if you claim that we are alien to the Church of God, first say that all these [fathers] are alien, for these are our *vardapets* and teachers, and we know no one else at all. Although by claiming that they are alien, you alienate yourself from your own hope.[71]

Anania employs the same strategy in his defense of various Armenian liturgical practices that differed from contemporary Byzantine usage and thus were attacked on the grounds of being theologically deviant or heretical. For example, after defending the Armenian practice (a continuation of the early Church practice) of celebrating Christmas and the Baptism of Christ on the same day (January 6th) and citing a number of patristic authorities to support this practice, Anania writes, "We learned this from the holy fathers of Nicaea, and we hold fast to that which we received, and have not departed from it. But you do not follow the way of your own fathers."[72] This approach of the tenth-century Armenian *vardapets* is made quite explicit in the "Reply" of Catholicos Xačʿik, where we find the following statement:

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[71] ***Արդ, դու, եթէ աւտար ասես զմեզ յԱստուծոյ եկեղեցւոյ, նախ ասա՛ աւտար զսոսա զամենեսեան, զի սոքա են վարդապետք մեր եւ ուսուցիչք, եւ զայլ ոք բնաւ ոչ գիտեմք, եւ աւտար զսոսա ասելով՝ աւտարանաս եւ դու ի յուսոյն քումմէ:*** "Letter of Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi," *MH* 10:750.30.

[72] ***Մեք աշակերտեմք սրբոց հարցն, որ ի Նիկիա, եւ զոր առաքն, հաստատուն ունիմք եւ ոչ թիւրեցաք. դուք, եթէ ոչ զձերոց հարցն գնացէք ճանապարհ…:*** Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, *MH* 10:569.1214. Likewise, after defending Armenian customs regarding communion practices with citations from Scripture and various fathers, Anania states, "So then, if there is so much testimony from the Holy Scriptures and your own *vardapets*, then from where did you learn to indiscriminately give communion to your unworthy people, especially on Holy Thursday, when it is not [fitting] for all the laity to commune, but only the priests, as Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us, when he distributed it only to those twelve [disciples] although there were many who had been his disciples and believed in him… [***Եւ արդ, եթէ այս ամենայն վկայութիւն Գրոց Սրբոց եւ ձերոց վարդապետաց են, ուստի՞ ուսայք անխտիր հաղորդեցուցանել անարժան ժողովրդեան ձերոյ, մանաւանդ՝ յաւուր Մեծի հինգշաբաթին, որ ոչ է ամենեցուն ժողովրդականաց հաղորդել, բայց միայն քահանայիցն, որպէս ուսոյց մեզ Տէր մեր Յիսուս Քրիստոս, այն երկոտասանիցն միայն բաշխեաց, թէպէտ եւ բազումք դոյին աշակերտեալք եւ հաւատացեալք ի նա***...] Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, *MH* 10:535.749.

> Not only did we not develop an argument against you makers of division[73] through them and by means of them;[74] we did not even do so through the *vardapets* of our own kith and kin, from whom we have been taught. For just as we do not debate with Jews using the teaching of the Evangelists and the Apostles, but induce them to believe through their own prophets, so also for you, we composed treatises using different and multiple citations from your own *vardapets* and those who have become beacons in your own country, so that the triumph over all schismatics and filthy sects may be all the more evident and noticeable.[75]

Thus, the tenth-century Armenian *vardapets* defended their position by appealing to fathers universally recognized by all the Christian churches of the time,[76] and not by appealing to their own native Church fathers. By arguing with the Byzantine bishops according to the Christological understanding of their own early fathers, the Armenian *vardapets* shifted the nature of the debate, forcing the bishops to disavow (or explain away) the teaching of their own

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[73] "Makers of division (*բաժանողացդ*)" appears to be a *double entendre*, signifying both the way in which his interlocutors divide the nature of Christ according to their dyophysite Christology, and, perhaps more significantly, the way in which they cause division in the Church by anathematizing those who disagree with the definitions of Chalcedon.

[74] Referring to Dioscorus of Alexandria and Peter 'the Fuller' of Antioch, whom the Byzantine polemicists claimed that the Armenians followed, as a result of which they had deviant views. This is a recurrent claim in the exchanges of the period. Samuēl responds to such claims with the following caustic lines: "But as for Dioscorus, who you are so frequently reproving us with in your argumentation, let me ask you, and you tell me, 'Who is that Dioscorus? Is he not your patriarch, head and leader of the third Council of Ephesus?' Who has neither a confessional letter, nor a definition of faith, nor any other tradition to be found in the Armenian realm….So, if he is worthy of confidence, let him be accepted, but if he thinks something foreign, what is it to us, since he is one of yours? [***Այլ որ Դիոսկորոսիւ ստէպ ստէպ թչնամանես զմեզ իրաւաբանելով, հարցանեմ զքեզ, ասա՛ ինձ՝ ո՛վ է Դիոսկորոսն այն. ո՞չ ապաքէն հայրապետ քո է, գլուխ եւ առաջնորդ երրորդ ժողովոյն, որ յԵփեսոս, զորոյ ո՛չ գիր խոստովանութեան, եւ ո՛չ սահման հաւատոց եւ ո՛չ այլ ինչ աւանդութիւն ունի աշխարհս Հայոց…Արդ, նա, եթէ արժանի հաւատարմութեան է, ընկալեալ լիցի. եւ եթէ աւտար ինչ խորհի, մեզ չէ ինչ փոյթ, վասն զի քո է։***] " "Letter of Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi," *MH* 10:751.41–42. Although regarded a saint in the Coptic and West Syriac traditions, he is not so officially in the Armenian tradition, nor could I find any writing of Dioscorus of Alexandria extant in Armenian, apart from quotations in early florilegia such as the *Seal of Faith* and the *Refutation of Chalcedon* by Timothy Aelurus. See Thomson, *Bibliography*, 45. In his *Root of Faith*, Anania of Narek, in referring to him as the successor of Cyril does call him "thrice-blessed (***փոխանորդ նորա երիցս երանելին Դիոսկորոս***)," but does not include any citations from him or his writings. See *MH* 10:575.1288.

[75] ***Մեք ո՛չ միայն, զի նոքաւք եւ ի ձեռն նոցա բան դնեմք ընդդէմ բաժանողացդ, այլ եւ ո՛չ ազգական եւ սեռն ընտանի եւ ուսուցիչ վարդապետաւք մերոք*** [sic], ***այլ որպէս ընդ հրէայսն ո՛չ աւետարանական եւ առաքելական վարդապետութեամբք վիճեմք, այլ ի նոցունց մարգարէիցն հաւանեցուցանեմք սոյնպէս եւ ընդ ձեզ, ի վարդապետաց ձերոց եւ որ յաչխարհ ձեր պայծառացան՝ բանադիր լինիմք յոգնազան եւ բազմապատիկ պիտառութեամբք, զի առաւել երեւելի եւ նշանաւոր յաղթութիւնն լիցի ամենայն հերձուածողաց եւ պիղծ աւանդիցն։*** Xačik Aršaruni. "Reply," *MH* 10:680.195.

[76] With the exception of the East Syriac Church, which did not accept the Council of Ephesus, or those fathers such as Cyril of Alexandria, whose Christological writings played an influential role in that council.

fathers in order to counter the Armenian position.[77] The *vardapets* were well aware of their upper hand in this aspect of the debate, since the Chalcedonian formulation "in two natures" represented a traditional Latin formula and was foreign to Greek Christology before that time.

Another argument advanced by Byzantine polemicists was that the Armenian Church did not accept the Council of Chalcedon solely because they weren't there, or out of spite due to not being invited. Anania reports this assertion being made by contemporary opponents:

> And there are some of you who ignorantly counter by saying that "Armenians did not accept the Council of Chalcedon simply out of a desire for contrariness, because none of them were called to the Council of Chalcedon."[78]

The Byzantine emperor only had the right to invite those within his own jurisdiction to the council, and in 451, when the council was held, Greater Armenia lay entirely within the Sasanian Empire.[79] Therefore, it was impossible for him to summon Armenian delegates to the council. In fact, Armenians were only represented at Nicaea, but accepted the acts of Constantinople and Ephesus, even though they were not represented at those councils.

Relatedly, there were claims that Armenians did not understand the Christology of the council and were subsequently led astray by heretical leaders. Samuēl reports this kind of claim in the following passage:

> You were worried about us Armenians, as if we were alien to the Church of God, stupid and ignorant of reason and wisdom. You reproved us, saying, "You do not recognize what is besmirched, because some had earlier sown among you the darnel of evil." You slandered our fathers as holding spurious formulae which were not theirs and claimed,

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[77] They obviously were averse to doing so, and thus it is not surprising that many of the debates tended to revolve instead around concrete differences in liturgical practices and customs. See Terian, "Miaphysites, Armenian."

[78] ***Այլ եւ են ոմանք, որք տգիտաբար հակառակիք եւ ասէք, թէ հայք միայն ոչ ընկալան զժողովն Քաղկեդոնի վասն նախանձու հակառակութեան, վասն ոչ զոք կոչելոյ ի նոցանէ ի ժողովն Քաղկեդոնի:*** Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, *MH* 10:557.1063.

[79] See Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, map 65, p. 85; map 67, p. 88.

> "For that reason, you do not accept the Council of Chalcedon, having been persuaded by Dioscorus, who said 'Christ [is] one nature.'"[80]

The *vardapets* response to such claims was that they understand the Christology of Chalcedon perfectly well, and the issue they have with it is that it contradicts the definitions of the first three councils and the theology of the early fathers of the church, citations from whom they filled their letters with. Thus, Samuēl explains,

> But in regard to our not accepting the Council of Chalcedon — which you say is holy and on a par with the first three councils — we did not learn that from Dioscorus, but from their own definitions and from the Tome of Leo of Rome, which was the occasion and cause for the Council of Chalcedon, which did not agree with the confession of the first holy fathers, which we had accepted.[81]

The Tome of Leo, from its first introduction to eastern theologians at the Council of Chalcedon, met fierce resistance by those who supported Cyril of Alexandria's miaphysite Christology, as it clearly contradicted the Cyrillian formula of "one incarnate nature of God the Word (μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκομένη)." Its acceptance at Chalcedon was seen to contradict the earlier council of Ephesus, and for that reason was never accepted by those committed to the Cyrillian definition of Christology.[82] Anania was an heir to this tradition. One must also bear in mind that Armenians did not have access to the full text of Leo's Tome but only the expurgated version known from Aelurus' *Refutation*, which included only the most extreme dyophysite portions.[83] Anania thus argues with full assurance that the Council of Chalcedon departs from the faith of

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[80] ***Հոգացեալ էիք եւ զմեզ՝ զՀայաստանեայս, որպէս աւետարս գոլով յեկեղեցւոյ Աստուծոյ, ախմարս եւ տգէտս բանիւ եւ իմաստութեամբ, եւ մեղադրեալ, թէ զարատաւորն ոչ ճանաչէք, զի ոմանք յառաջնոցն անտի սերմանեցին ի ձեզ զորոմն չարին՝ զրպարտելով զհարսն մեր ի բանս սուտս, զոր ոչ նոցա, եւ վասն այնր ոչ ընդունիք զժողովն Քաղկեդոնի՝ հաւանեալք Դիոսկորոսի, որ մի բնութիւն ասաց զՔրիստոս:*** "Letter of Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi," *MH* 10:748.20.

[81] ***Բայց վասն ոչ ընդունելոյ մեր զժողովն Քաղկեդոնի, զոր ասես դու սուրբ եւ հաւասար երից ժողովոցն, զայդ ոչ ի Դիոսկորոսէ ուսաք մեք, այլ ի նոցունց սահմանադրութեանցն եւ ի Տոմարէն Լեւոնի Հռոմայեցւոյ, որ էր առիթ եւ պատճառ ժողովոյն Քաղկեդոնի, որք ոչ միաբանին խոստովանութեան առաջին սրբոց հարցն, զոր ընկալաք մեք:*** "Letter of Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi," *MH* 10:751.43.

[82] On resistance to the Tome of Leo at the Council of Chalcedon, see Price, "The Council of Chalcedon."

[83] See Cowe, "The Tome of Leo."

the first three councils, adding an additional point against it, namely, that there was no consensus in the establishment of its definition. He writes:

> The faith which they established was not through the will of consensus, which was a rule for councils — to establish the truth of the faith through love and unison of the assemblies, if it happens to be aright — but they made [its acceptance] obligatory by violent means, since whoever would not agree with the evil council would have to step aside from their authority [over their diocese].[84]

Anania then gives examples of emperors that attempted to impose the Council of Chalcedon by force upon those Christian communities that did not accept it, citing Marcian (r. 450–457), who convened the council, as well as Justin I (518–527) and Justinian (527–565).[85] Anania was well aware of the coercive methods taken to enforce acceptance of Chalcedon and of bishops who were deposed for opposing it.[86] This leads into another point of debate that recurred in the controversy of the period.

These are the related issues of size and scale, one of the salient and visible differences between the Chalcedonian church of the empire in its close confrontation in this period with the much smaller Armenian church. The Chalcedonian bishops leveraged to their advantage the fact that while the Byzantine Empire is large, Armenia is small. They argued that the large Byzantine Empire is united and holds to the same belief, while the Armenians are lone outsiders that have veered off into a false direction with erroneous beliefs. Each of the three documents counter this claim in a related way. Samuēl writes:

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[84] ***Հաւատան, զոր հաստատեցին ոչ կամաւ հաւանութեամբք, որպէս աւրէնն էր ժողովոց սիրով եւ միաբանութեամբ ատենից հաստատել զճշմարտութիւն հաւատոյն, եթէ ուղիղ հանդիպի, այլ բռնութեամբք հարկ արարին, զի որ ոչ հաւանեացի էար ժողովոյն, ի բաց կացցէ յիշխանութենէն։*** Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, *MH* 10:557.1063.

[85] Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, *MH* 10:557.1064–66.

[86] On Marcian's coercive methods for imposing acceptance of the council, see Price, "The Council of Chalcedon," 82; Price, "Truth, Omission, and Fiction," 95. On miaphysite bishops such as Severus of Antioch and Peter of Apamea being deposed by Justin and on Justinian's efforts to remove opposition to Chalcedon, see, for example, Millar, "The Syriac Acts," 65.

> For we are not alone in not sharing in the Council of Chalcedon. But there are many other nations than those which you wrote in your letter. There is a multitude of nations that do not accept the Council of Chalcedon, including Armenia, Caucasian Albania, the Lupenians,[87] the Kałpʿkʿ,[88] the Čiłbkʿ,[89] the Syrians who are Jacobites, all Egypt, great Ethiopia, Arabia, Arapinar,[90] and the whole realm of India. All these do not accept the Council of Chalcedon, but along with us say "one nature of the incarnate Logos,"[91] although they each have various distinctions and their own religious customs.[92]

The *vardapets* who composed Catholicos Xačʿik's "Reply," are responding to the same argument from a different angle when they say, "If faith is defined in terms of numbers or wealth, the barbarian Persians and the savage Arabs and those who are beyond, at the end of the universe, are more numerous and opulent than you."[93] This issue is responded to most thoroughly by Anania of Narek in the *Root of Faith*. There, he counters with the point that only by force was Justinian able to impose acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon upon those within the empire.[94] By contrast, there is universal consensus outside of the empire in rejecting the Council of Chalcedon:

> It is very evident that the other nations, which are not under the same rule, have not accepted the faith of Chalcedon. I will reveal just how many regions there are who are

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[87] On the Lupenians, see Hewsen, "The Kingdom of the Lupenians;" idem, "On the Location of the Lupenians;" idem, *Geography of Ananias of Širak*, 119 n. 87, 246 n. 82A.

[88] I have been unable to identify this people/nation.

[89] On this people, see Hewsen, *Geography of Ananias of Širak*, 55A, 57, 119 n. 85, 245 n. 76A, 246 n. 85A.

[90] I have been unable to identify this place.

[91] A quotation of the Cyrillian formula "one incarnate nature of God the Word (μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκομένη)," whose Christology prevailed at the Council of Ephesus (431) and became the key definition for miaphysite theology and those churches outside the empire who maintained that definition in opposition to the definition of Chalcedon. See McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*.

[92] ***Զի ոչ եթէ միայն մեք ոչ հաղորդիմք ժողովոյն Քաղկեդոնի, այլ առաւել եւս քան զազգսն, զոր քո ի թղթի ասաց դրեալ էիր, են եւ այլ եւս բազմութիւնք ազգաց, որք ոչ ընդունին զժողովոյն Քաղկեդոնի, որպիսիք ամենայն Հայք, Աղուանք, Լփինք, Կաղփք, Ճիղբք, Ասորեստանեայք, որք են Յակոբիկ, ամենայն Եգիպտոս, Եթիոպա մեծ, Արաբիա, Արապինար, եւ ամենայն աշխարհն Հնդկաց. ամենեքեան սոքա ոչ ընդունին զժողովն Քաղկեդոնի, այլ ընդ մեզ մի բնութիւն ասեն Բանին մարմնացելոյ, թէպէտ եւ ունին ինչ բաժանմունս եւ կրաւնս իւրաքանչիւր:*** "Letter of Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi," *MH* 10:761.159.

[93] ***Եւ եթէ բազմութեամբ կամ մեծութեամբ հաւատ սահմանի՝ խուժքն Պարսից եւ դուժքն Տաճկաց եւ եւս անդր, որք ի ծայր եզերաց տիեզերաց բազումք եւ փարթամք են, քան զձեզ:*** Xačik Aršaruni. "Reply," *MH* 10:1945, tr. Greenwood, *Universal History*, 277–78.

[94] Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, *MH* 10:557.1066.

> with us in not accepting their [sc. Byzantine/Chalcedonian bishops'] faith, up until the present day.[95]

The list that follows is even longer and more comprehensive than that of Samuēl's quoted above, including Christian communities in geographical locations as far east as China.[96] These replies from the *vardapets* counteract one of the recurrent points levelled against Armenians by Byzantine polemicists, by reversing the facts of the argument. According to the *vardapets*, there is in fact broad consensus outside of the empire. It is only those areas within the empire that (through force) have come to accept Chalcedon. Armenia experienced this approach first hand in the late sixth and seventh centuries when Chalcedonian orthodoxy was imposed through force on those areas that came under Byzantine military control.[97] In Anania's and the *vardapets*' portrayal, there is universal consensus in rejecting Chalcedon among those peoples located outside of the empire, while the empire's acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon looks parochial and thuggish by contrast, maintained only through force.

Anania makes a further point in the same passage, noting how there are even many bishops within the empire that reject Chalcedon. After making this point, he provides a list of those areas within the empire that have bishops who do not accept the Chalcedonian faith, and instead agree with the faith of the Armenians.[98] This is a significant passage, and deserves to be quoted in full:

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[95] ***Ահա քաջայայտ է, զի յայլ ազգս, որ ոչ ընդ նոյն իշխանութեամբ են, ոչ ընկալան զհաւատն Քաղկեդոնի, զորս յայտ ցուցից, թէ որչափ գաւառք են, որ ընդ մեզ են եւ ոչ ընդունին զնոցայն հաւատ մինչեւ ցայսաւր։*** Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, *MH* 10:557.1067.

[96] Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, MH 10:558.1071–1080.

[97] See Mahé, "L'église arménienne," 462–68.

[98] Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, MH 10:557.1068–70.

> Also those which are under their rule, are there not many who do not hold to their faith but to ours? Look at how many bishops there are in your Middleland,[99] in Asia, in Cappadocia, in Bithynia, in Galatia, in Asia Proper (Idia),[100] in Lystra in Cilicia, in Tarsus, in Mesopotamia, in Phrygia, as well as all the Syrians under our authority in Cappadocia, in Gangara,[101] near the Pontus and on the other side of it, in Tʿarsis in Macedonia, as well as those who were formerly under your authority, are there not many bishops, ordained by the Armenians, who stand fast in the true faith, not wavering from the three holy councils in Nicaea, Constantinople, and Ephesus, and the faith defined by S. Grigor? We have bishops in all those districts obedient to the see of S. Grigor. And in addition to this we have many other nations in the faith of the three holy councils, who like us and along with us anathematize the Council of Chalcedon.[102]

This passage attests to the fact that there were bishops within the Byzantine empire in the 980s that rejected the Council of Chalcedon, and aligned with the faith of the Armenian church. This provides some further evidence on the activity of the Armenian Church in the Byzantine sphere. As mentioned above, we hear from Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi of Armenian bishoprics founded in the theme of Sebastia (one in the city of Sebasteia and the other in Larissa) as well as in Cilicia at Tarsus, in Syria at Antioch, and Sulind(?) (*or* Sulund?). From Stepʿanos we also learn that Armenians were transferred to Macedonia by the Emperor Basil II in the early 980s.[103] Presumably, an episcopal see was established to serve the community there around that same

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[99] The 'Middleland' refers to the Anatolian Peninsula or Asia Minor in general, i.e. the land located between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. See Hewsen, *Geography of Ananias of Širak*, 45A, 52, 52A 55A, 100 n. 1, 242 n. 12A.

[100] See Hewsen, *Geography of Ananias of Širak*, 52, 52A, 101 n. 26.

[101] Also called Gētaṙu or Gaitara. See Hewsen, *Geography of Ananias of Širak*, 143–44 n. 65, 145 n. 76, 248 n. 104A, 306, 329.

[102] ***Նա եւ որ ընդ նոցա իշխանութեամբք են, ո՞չ ահա բազում այն են, որ ոչ զնոցայն, այլ մերս ունին հաւատ, եւ առ՛ս, որչափ եպիսկոպոսունք կան ի Միջերկրեայդ, յԱսիայ եւ ի Գամիրս եւ ի Բութանիա եւ ի Գաղատիա եւ ի յառանձնակ Ասիա եւ ի Լիւստրիայ ի Կիլիկիա եւ ի Տարսուս եւ ի Միջագետս եւ ի Փռիւգիայ եւ բոլոր յամենայն Ասորիք ընդ մերով իշխանութեամբք ի Գամիրս եւ ի Գանգրա եւ ի մերձ ի Պոնդոս եւ յայնկոյս՝ ի Թարսիս ի Մակեդովնիա եւ որք միանգամ ընդ ձերով իշխանութեամբք են, ո՞չ ահա բազում եպիսկոպոսունք, ի հայոց ձեռնադրեալ, հաստատուն կան ի ճշմարտութեան հաւատս՝ ոչ թիւրեալ յերից սուրբ ժողովոյն՝ ի Նիկիայն, ի կոստանդնուպաւլսին եւ յԵփեսոսին եւ ի սրբոյն Գրիգորի սահմանեալ հաւատոն։ եւ զայդ ամենայն գաւառաց եպիսկոպոսունք ունիմք հնազանդութիւն աթոռ* [sic] *սրբոյն Գրիգորի։ եւ ի վերայ այսր ունիմք եւ զայլ ազգս բազումս ի հաւատս երից սուրբ ժողովոյն, որպէս մեք, եւ նզովեն զժողովն Քաղկեդոնի ընդ մեզ։*** Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, *MH* 10:557–58.1068–70. There is a textual problem with the penultimate sentence (no textual variants are given for this work in the *MH* edition). Presumably, the original would have read: ***եւ զայդ ամենայն գաւառաց եպիսկոպոսունս ունիմք ի հնազանդութիւն աթոռոյ սրբոյն Գրիգորի։***

[103] Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* III.20, *MH* 15:769.1–2, tr. Greenwood, 251–52.

time.[104] This information from Anania of Narek's *Root of Faith* attests to other areas of the Byzantine empire where there were bishops who rejected Chalcedon and were aligned with the Armenian Church. Anania refers to three different categories of such bishops. There are those episcopal sees founded by the Armenian Church in places such as Sebasteia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, and elsewhere. Secondly, there are those who were under the jurisdiction of (or in accord with) the Armenian Church like the Syriac bishops mentioned. Finally, there are those who presumably broke ranks with the Byzantine Church and aligned with the Armenian Church. In this last category, Anania may be referring to bishops who rejected Chalcedon and dyophysite Christology and professed miaphysite Christology, thus coming into Christological agreement with all those miaphysite churches outside of the empire.

This passage provides further information on the areas where the Armenian church was able to establish episcopal sees and appoint bishops during the catholicate of Xačʿik Aršaruni.[105] It also may be considered in conjunction with the brief description Uxtanēs gives in his dedicatory letter to Anania that opens his *History*, which provides a brief description of the otherwise lost third book of Uxtanēs, wherein he would have described the communities of *Cayd* (see note 32 above); i.e. those Chalcedonian Armenians who had left the Byzantine Church and been rebaptized by the Armenian Church.

It is by following the course of this same logic that Anania is able to counteract the Byzantine claim that the Armenians broke away from the universal church when they rejected

[104] In an earlier period, similar transfers of Armenians were ordered by the Emperor Maurice as recounted by Sebēos. See Greenwood, Universal History, 251–52, n. 271. On the Byzantine practice of population transfer, see Charanis, "Transfer of Population." On Armenian mobility in the period, see Preiser-Kapeller, "Aristocrats, Mercenaries."

[105] It is also possible that some of the locations in this passage are later interpolations, since Anania of Narek's text does not exist in its original form but was reworked by later figures such as Anania of Sanahin.

the Council of Chalcedon. Thus, while disputing practices surrounding the Fast of the First-Fruits near the end of the work, Anania writes:

> Now then, if you wish to inquire into the origin of the Fast of the First-Fruits, I will tell you openly. For there is nothing secretive about our confession, which we received in truth from S. Grigor, and which we will preserve steadfastly forever, which you also received along with us and preserved up until the separation of your faith from ours.[106]

According to the view of the *vardapets*, represented here by Anania, given the universal consensus outside of the empire, it is in fact the imperial church that broke away from the faith of the fathers encapsulated in the first three councils, whereas the Armenian Church, like those elsewhere outside of the empire, have preserved it.

In this chapter, we have recovered the significance of the role played by Anania of Narek in the confrontation of the Armenian and imperial churches in the latter half of the tenth century. In response to the Byzantine agenda to assimilate and integrate Armenia into the empire politically and ecclesiastically and in response to polemical attacks from Byzantine bishops in the newly reconquered territories on the eastern edge of the empire, the *vardapets* united together under the leadership of Catholicos Xačʿik Aršaruni to craft a robust literary defense. The voice of Anania and his contemporaries represents a cogent response to this reality taking place on the ground and in epistolary exchanges. Through a reading of Anania's *Root of Faith* in conjunction with documents extant from the *vardapets* and ecclesiasts who collaborated together in this defense, we were able to compile a vivid picture of the way in which the Armenian Church defended not just its right to existence — jeopardized by the imperialistic agenda of the

[106] *Բայց արդ, եթէ կամիք զպատճառս պահոց Առաջաւորացն խնդրել՝ ասացից. յայտնապէս եւ ոչ ծածուկ ինչ է մեր դաւանութիւնս, զոր ճշմարտիւ ընդալաք ի սրբոյն Գրիգորէ, եւ հաստատութեամբ պահեմք մինչեւ յաւիտեան, զոր եւ դուք ընդալայլք ընդ մեզ եւ պահիցէք մինչեւ ցհաւատոյդ որոշումն ի մէնջ։* Anania of Narek, *Root of Faith*, MH 10:593.1515.

Byzantine Church during its period of expansion in the late tenth century — but its claim to be the preservers of the authentic faith of the early Christian church and fathers, which the imperial church had abandoned and forsaken as a result of the Christology of Chalcedon, which contradicted the Christology of the earlier councils. Rather than an aberrant church following its own direction in isolation from universal Christianity, in the *vardapets'* portrayal, it is the imperial church that parochially has followed its own independent direction, whereas there is universal consensus outside of the empire, among the Christian communities of Egypt, Ethiopia, the Middle East, the Caucasus, India, and China. This is a perspective that has rarely been heard in scholarship treating the ecclesiastical debates and differences between the Byzantine and Oriental orthodox communions.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has recovered the significance of a little known figure of the tenth-century AD, Anania of Narek, and through his works and activities has offered new perspectives on several of the major regional developments of the period in which he lived and actively participated. The first chapter set the stage by providing a general overview to the period, situating Armenia in relation to the complex and dynamic political, social, and economic realities that marked it as a contested space between the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate and Byzantine Empire from the middle of the ninth to the middle of the eleventh centuries. Considering Anania's life and literary works as intermeshed with developments occurring in the broader region has allowed for a richer appreciation of this significant figure that is not limited to the Armenian literary and intellectual tradition narrowly defined.

The starting point of the second chapter was Anania's role as first abbot of Narek monastery. The founding of Narekavankʿ was contextualized within the regional proliferation of civic and religious building activity in the wider region from the mid-ninth to mid-eleventh centuries. A rich picture of the integration of Armenia within the larger caliphal economy, its role in the facilitation of international trade, and the growing autonomy and consequently decreased level of taxes paid by Armenian dynasts to the caliphal center, provided an explanation for the vast amounts of disposable wealth available to the Bagratuni, Arcruni, and Siwni rulers of the period, some of which they funneled into construction projects. This period is marked by a regional proliferation of large, permanently endowed cenobitic institutions, many of which endured into the modern period. The dynastic patronage of monastic centers and holy sites was one major means of bolstering a family's public image and marking their control over a

territory. The foundation of Narekavankʿ was contextualized within the dominance of the Arcruni family across Vaspurakan and its prestigious rise to preeminence vis-à-vis the other noble Armenian families under the ambitious career of King Gagik in the first half of the tenth century. Narek monastery's founding correlates to the period of Arcruni political dominance over the Bagratunis and the temporary relocation of the catholicosal see to Ałtʿamar. I argued that Narekavankʿ was founded to be a spiritual and intellectual center located near the Arcruni capital at Ostan and Ałtʿamar in tandem with King Gagik's co-opting of political and ecclesiastical authority from his Bagratuni rivals to the North. In the same manner, Anania and his companion vardapet Petros were relocated from monasteries in the Bagratid realm and invited to lead the direction of the monastery of Narekavankʿ. This chapter also contributed to research on the founding and dating of the monasteries established in this period. It determined that the 935 date that has been attached to the founding of Narekavankʿ is simply an approximation plucked from the margin of Chʿamchʿean's *History*, and that no more certainty could be established in regard to the actual date of its founding than the period between the 930s–940s. What is significant about the founding of Narek and other monasteries of this period is not the exact date, but the circumstances during which the monastery was founded, as well as the prestige the monastery gained over time through the activities of its abbots and renowned *vardapets*. Finally, the chapter contributed to a scholarly debate on the agents who were active in the founding of the monastery. Following Maksoudian, I argued for seeing the establishment of Narekavankʿ and the other monasteries founded at this time as owing to the joint agency and initiative of the noble dynasts that funded them and the *vardapet* abbots who directed them. Nevertheless, I argued that not every aspect of the oft-cited opinion that the monasteries were founded by miaphysite Armenian monks fleeing persecution from Byzantine territory during a

(spurious) persecution under the reign of Nikephoras Phokas should be dispensed with. The period is one of population movements and the mixing of peoples and communities, and it is by no means unlikely that there were Grecophone and perhaps also Syrophone monks at monasteries like Narek and other notable intellectual centers, such as Hoṙomos, whose very name may preserve a memory of the presence of such figures from the East Roman Empire. Finally, the chapter summarized what was new about the cenobitic institutions founded in this period, namely their permanent, fixed structures and endowments and their much larger size and scale than the previous cenobitic circles of late antiquity.

The third chapter continued the lines taken up at the end of the second chapter, elaborating further on the various roles played by medieval Armenian monasteries. Cenobitic institutions had a variety of functions. Some were royal mausoleums, others secured family wealth, housed relics and became sites of pilgrimage and thus generators of income, while others provided lodging for wayfarers and traveling merchants. It then narrowed in on the handful of monasteries founded in the ninth to tenth centuries that developed academies for the training of *vardapets*. Narekavankʿ was one of the very first of the monastic academies to be founded and as such it bore oversized influence on the shape and direction of subsequent academies. Therefore, the impact of Anania's educational program at Narekavankʿ had great significance not just for the future generations formed at Narek (Grigor, Uxtanēs) but also on the future Armenian intellectual tradition, since monasteries served as the principal intellectual centers in the Armenian *oikoumené* into the early modern period. Making use of Anania of Narek's *Book of Instruction* and other sources, this chapter presented a reconstruction of the holistic educational program at Narekavankʿ, which was focused not just on intellectual pursuits, but aimed at shaping the whole human person, conceived of as a unity of mind, body, and spirit. I examined

the place and function of Scripture and liturgy, the trivium, and patristic texts in shaping the mind, intellect, and outlook of monks. Attention was then paid to bodily practices, ascetic training, spiritual exercises, and ethical formation. Finally, particular attention was paid to writing and the use of texts and how they were used in conjunction with contemplative, spiritual exercises in order to aid the ascetic-mystical quests of monastics. I demonstrated how Anania and Grigor composed texts specifically for use in conjunction with ascetic exercises, a fundamental aspect of their own writing as well as monastic literature in general, which is sometimes overlooked in scholarship focused exclusively with philological or literary issues.

The fourth chapter considered the complex relationship of Anania with a heretical community known as the Tʿondrakians, who have been the subject of much scholarship and debate but about whom little scholarly consensus has been reached in regard to some of the most fundamental questions relating to the community's origin, beliefs, etc. I presented a new approach to this topic, focusing on questions the sources allow us to answer — not what the Tʿondrakians believed, who they were, etc. but how they were perceived by the Armenian polemicists who wrote against them. This was motivated in part by the perplexing situation that Anania both wrote a treatise against the heretical community and then later was himself denounced as a *Tʿondrakecʿi*. Anania is one of many ascetic and spiritual figures of the age who came under suspicion or were denounced as *Tʿondrakecʿi* by the catholicos and members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. By a reexamination of the principal sources and by distinguishing two phases in the Tʿondrakian controversy in the context of other controversies and crises that the church faced in this period, I demonstrated how the epithet "Tʿondrakecʿi" evolved over time to signify anyone that posed a challenge to the authority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and threatened its position as sole mediator between the divine and human realms, manifested in the

church's liturgical services and ceremonies. In the turmoil of the tenth century, I argued that ascetic, monastic *vardapets* like Anania and reforming, spiritualist bishops such as Xosrov Anjewacʿi and Yakobos of Harkʿ were denounced as "Tʿondrakecʿi" because they were perceived as a threat to the catholicos and to ecclesiastical and societal order and authority in general. The focus on interior spirituality and the inward path to the divine pursued at monasteries like Narek was perceived as a threat to the authority of the church hierarchy, manifested in the external rituals of the liturgy. These conflicts also provided a nuanced background to the pronounced focus on praising the church, its liturgical rites and ritual objects, which is found throughout the works of both Anania and Grigor. Such preoccupations of the Narekian writers were motivated in part by their desire to demonstrate and textually perform their loyalty to the church and their orthodox belief.

The fifth chapter focused on the response of the leading *vardapets* under Catholics Xačʿik Aršaruni to the tense ecclesiastical situation between Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian confessional communities, which emerged in the second half of the tenth century near the height of the Byzantine eastwards expansion. First, the chapter explained how ecclesiastical initiatives from the patriarch of Constantinople towards the Christian communities in the Caucasus were guided not to much by a desire for theological accord *per se*, but by the dictates of Constantinopolitan foreign policy, functioning as an important branch of imperial diplomacy. It then reviewed the beginnings of anti-Chalcedonianism in the catholicosal tenure of Anania Mokacʿi and the way in which pro-Chalcedonianism was intermingled with political and secessionist trends in Caucasian Albania and Siwnikʿ. The height of Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian conflict came in the second half of the tenth century during the Byzantine Empire's expansion into the territory of Greater Armenia. I examined some of the diverse

Armenian responses to this dynamic political and ecclesiastical landscape, before narrowing in on the situation in Cappadocia and Sebasteia and the role of Anania and the leading *vardapets* in protecting their flock from the Byzantine policy of integration and assimilation. Under Catholicos Xačʿik, Anania and the leading *vardapets* led initiatives both on the ground and with their pens to counteract the Byzantine agenda. They advanced a policy of rebaptizing Armenians baptized Chalcedonian who had returned to their churches, a response to the Byzantine policy of integration and assimilation of Armenians via rebaptism. Secondly, they saw to the formation of episcopal sees in imperial territory to serve the large number of Armenian immigrants relocating into the eastern themes of the Byzantine Empire. Finally, Anania and his fellow *vardapets* crafted a powerful literary defense to polemical letters sent by eastern imperial hierarchs that challenged the Armenian church's right to autocephaly and self-determination. Through a reading of three central works of the period that responded to the Byzantine polemicists — Anania's *Root of Faith*, the "Letter to the Metropolitan of Melitenē" by Samuēl Kamrǰajorecʿi, and Catholicos Xačʿik's "Reply to the Letter of the Metropolitan of Sebasteia" (composed by the *vardapets*) — I reconstructed the way in which the Armenians presented themselves as preservers of the authentic faith of early Christianity, who held to the faith of the early fathers and councils, from which, they claimed, the imperial church had departed. In opposition to the picture painted by the Byzantine polemicists of an Armenian Church that was a small, isolated, and insignificant heretical community, I reconstructed the *vardapets'* universal and global vision of Christianity, as they presented their own church as one among many, in universal consensus and communion with other Christian communities living outside of the Byzantine Empire in Egypt, Ethiopia, the Middle East, the Caucasus, India, and China.

APPENDIX A: *LIFE* OF ANANIA FROM A *YAYSMAWURKʿ (SYNAXARION)*[1]

[181v] [***Մ***]***ահմի իը*** [28] ***եւ Նոյեմբերի զ*** [6]։ ***Վերադարձումն նչխարաց ս[ր]ք[ո]յն Պօղոսի խոստովանողին ի Կոստանդինու պօլիս. եւ հանդիստ ս[ր]ք[ո]ցն Յոհաննու սիւնեաց եպիսկոպոսին։ եւ Անանեայ նարեկացւոյն։***

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[183r] [***Ի***] ***սմին աւուր եւս հանդիստ ս[ր]ք[ո]յն անանեայ վարժապետի նարեկացւոյն։ Սա ի մանկութ[են]է առեալ զլուծ կրօնաւորական կարգի, եւ բազում առաքինական երկոց զանձն տրտեալ. վարժեալ եղեւ յաստուածային գրոցն գիտութե[ան]ց։ Եւ առաւել եւս հմուտ լեալ փիլիսոփայական արհեստից, մինչ զի յամ[ենայն] տեղիս տարածեալ հռչակեցաւ անհաս ոգե[ւորու]թի[ւն] գիտութե[ան] նորին՝ եւ ի թագաւորութե[ան] Հայոց բարեպաշտին աբասայ բագրատունւոյն յերկրէն ռչտունեաց. իբրեւ չինեցաւ մեծահռչակ վանան*[2] *որ կոչի նարեկ։ Եւ ի ժողովիլ բազմաց միանձանց. ի վանան հարկեալ զնա կացուցին առաջնորդ ս[ուր]բ ուխտին կարկաւորել զեղբարսն ըստ գիտութե[ան] եւ ըստ խոհեմութե[ան] իւրոյ։ Եւ նա մեծաւ հոգաբարձութ[եամ]բ հաստատեաց ի ս[ուր]բ ուխտն զսահման առաջնոց սրբոց հարցն ըստ կանոնադրութե[ան] ս[ր]ք[ո]յն բարսեղի կեսարացւոյն։ Յաւել եւս ելից զտեղին գիտնական արամբք եւ քաղցրանուագ երգեցողովք եւ բարեզարդ կարգադրութ[եա]մբք կալ միչտ յընթեր[183v]ցումն ս[ուր]բ գրոց։ Եւ ըստ վարուցն մաքրութե[ան] կրօնիցն գովելոյ հոգիազարդ փիլիսոփայութ[եամ]բ եւ զբազումս եհան ի հրահանգս իմաստից գիտութե[ան]։ Եւ ի ժամանակին յայնմիկ յերեւիլ հերձուածոյն Թոնդրակացւոց չարադրեաց գիրս ընդ դէմ անիծելոյն սմբատայ եւ այլոց հերձուածոց հարուստ բանիւք։ Եւ ի սորին վանից՝ ելին արք իմաստունք եւ կատարեալք, յորոց մի էր եւ ս[ուր]բն գրիգոր նարեկացին հերչտակն ի մարմնի, որդի դստեր եղբօր նորին։ Եւ այնպէս երանելին անանեայ պայծառացեալ միչտ ի վարդապետութի[ւն] աստուածային գրոցն, եւ հասեալ ի կատար կենացն՝ հանգեաւ ի տ[է]ր, եւ եղաւ ի վանս իւր սաղմոսիւք եւ օրհնութ[եամ]բ ի փառս ք[րիստոս]ի պսակողին սրբոց։***

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[1] This is the only known *life* (*vark*ʿ) of Anania, found in a lone *Synaxarion* (*Yaysmawurk*ʿ) copied in 1719 in Isfahan (***Իսպահան***): M 7359, 181v–183v (*life* of Anania at 183r–183v). The scribe and decorator was Awetis *kʿahanay*. It is written in very clear bolorgir, with marginal decorations and illuminations. The illuminations/decorations, however, are not completed. They are in outline (in reddish stencil), with decorative capital letters either absent or likewise in stencilled outline. A miniature of Anania with two other figures in the margin of his life appears on f. 183r. Behind him stands his companion *vardapet* Petros, renowned Scriptural exegete, with a manuscript held open in his hands. Anania is receiving the keys to Narek monastery from a figure, presumably the Arcruni dynast who funded the building of the monastery (King Gagik?). For a color reproduction of the illumination, see Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, vol. 2 (between pp. 152–53). On this source, see Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:125–27.

[2] ***Վանան***. Grammatically incorrect. It is possible the original form was ***վանս***, with the ***-ս*** deictic suffix signifying ‘this monastery,’ and the ***-ն*** otiose, added by a later scribe. This would imply that the provenance of the *life* is connected with Narekavankʿ.

Sahmi[3] 28 and November 6. Return of the relics of Saint Paul the Confessor[4] to Constantinople and repose of Saints Yovhannēs of Siwnikʿ[5] and Anania of Narek…

On this same day also [is] the repose of S. Anania, master teacher[6] of Narek. From childhood he took upon himself the yoke of the celibate monastic order,[7] giving himself over to many ascetic labors of virtuous striving and becoming trained in scholarly approaches to divine Scripture. He became so learned in the philosophical arts[8] that the unattainable spirituality of his knowledge was proclaimed abroad in every place, from the land of Ṙštunikʿ where the very renowned monastery called Narek was built even into the kingdom of Armenia of the pious Abas Bagratuni (r. 929 – 953). And when many monks had gathered into the monastery, then they compelled him and appointed him as abbot[9] of the holy congregation to regulate the brothers according to his knowledge and prudence. And with great guardianship he established for the holy congregation the regulation of the first holy fathers according to the rule of S. Basil of Caesarea.[10] Furthermore, he filled the place with scholarly men and sweetly harmonious singers with well-adorned ordinances[11] to remain always in the reading of Holy Scripture. And pursuing the praiseworthy purity of religious life together with spiritually adorned philosophy, he directed many in the training of scholarly wisdom. And at that time when the Tʿondrakite heresy appeared, he composed a book against the cursed Smbat[12] and other heresies with abundant arguments. And from the monastery of this same (abbot), there arose wise and perfect men, one of whom also was S. Grigor of Narek, the angel in the body, his niece's son. And thus the blessed Anania, always radiant in the teaching of divine Scripture, having advanced to the end of his life, took his rest in the Lord, and was placed in his monastery to the accompaniment of Psalms and canticles and to the glory of Christ who crowns the saints.

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[3] [***Մ***]***ահմի***. Third month in the native Armenian calendar. See Abrahamyan, *Hayotʿ gir ew grchʿutʿyun*, 100.

[4] Paul I (ca. 300 – ca. 351), bishop of Constantinople (ca. 337–39, 341–342, 346–51). Elected and deposed multiple times during Nicene-Arian conflicts of the middle fourth century. Exiled several times, finally to Cucusus (Koukousos) in Cappadocia, where he was starved and then strangled to death by Arian sympathizers. His remains were transferred to Constantinople by order of Emperor Theodosius I in 381. See *ODB*, s.v. "Paul I."

[5] Catholicos Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi (sed. 898–924).

[6] ***վարժապետ***. In the early modern period, ***վարժապետ*** is sometimes used in place of ***վարդապետ***. This does not necessarily imply, however, that the *life* as a whole issues from this late period.

[7] ***կրօնաւորական կարգի***. Literally 'religious order.' ***կրօնաւորական***, 'religious' is often used in distinction to 'married' (***ամուսնացեալ***) life, hence 'celibate.'

[8] ***փիլիսոփայական արհեստից***. ***Արհեստ*** (or ***արուեստ***) is the Armenian equivalent of Gk. τέχνη or Lat. *ars*. Here, the reference is to the academic disciplines of the liberal arts, in particular the trivium. On the trivium in the Armenian monastic setting, see chapter 3.

[9] ***առաջնորդ***. Literally, 'leader,' a common way of referring to the position of abbot.

[10] ***ըստ կանոնադրութե[ան] ս[ր][ո]ն բարսեղի կեսարացւոյն***. A reference to the *Book of Questioners* (Գիրք հարցողաց). On this book, and its use in medieval Armenian monasteries, see the beginning of chapter 3.

[11] ***բարեզարդ կարգադրութ[եա]մբք***. This refers to how the monastic day was structured, how the monks would spend their time. As there are no extant *typika* in the Armenian tradition (see the beginning of chapter 3), the daily schedule was presumably communicated orally and at the discretion of Anania in his role as abbot.

[12] Smbat of Zarehawan (fl. mid-9th c.), remembered in Armenian sources as the founder of the Tʿondrakite heresy. See Garsoïan, *Paulician Heresy*, 140–43 and chapter 4 of this study.

APPENDIX B: REIGNS OF DYNASTS AND CATHOLICOI

BAGRATUNI[1]

Ašot I "the Great" (*sparapet*, 855 – 862; prince of princes, 862 – 884; king, 884 – 890)[2]
Smbat I "the Martyr" (890 – 914)[3]
Ašot II *Erkatʿ* "'the Iron (King)" (914 – 928/29)[4]
Abas I (929 – 953)[5]
Ašot III *Ołormac* "The Merciful" (953 – 977)[6]
Smbat II *Tiezerakal* "Master of the Universe" (977 – 989)[7]
Gagik I "the Great" (989/90 – 1017/20)[8]
Yovhannēs-Smbat III (ca. 1017 – 1041)[9]
Ashot IV "the Brave" (ca. 1017 – 1040)[10]
Gagik II (ca. 1041 – 1044)[11]

ARCRUNI (VASPURAKAN)

Ašot I 'the Senior' (grandfather of Gagik; 836 – 852, 868 – 874)
Gurgēn (852 – 855)
(Grigor-)Derenik (857 – 868, 874 – 887, son of Ašot I, father of Gagik; married Sopʿi, father of Ašot II 'the Junior', Gagik, and Gurgēn)
Ašot II 'the Junior' (887 – 903/4ʿ brother of Gagik)
Gagik I Arcruni (prince, 903/4 – 908; king 908 – ca. 943/4)[12]
Derenik-Ašot (ca. 943 – 953/8)[13]
Apusahl Hamazasp (953/8 – 972)[14]
Ašot-Sahak (972 – 983)[15]
Gurgēn-Xačʿik (972 – 1003)[16]
Senekʿerim-Yovhannēs (972 – 1021)[17]

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[1] For other rulers and patriarchs in the era, see the tables and charts in *CHBE*, 906–929.
[2] Greenwood, "Patterns of Contact and Communication," 79.
[3] Greenwood, "Patterns of Contact and Communication," 79.
[4] Greenwood, "Patterns of Contact and Communication," 81.
[5] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 224 n. 91.
[6] Greenwood, "Patterns of Contact and Communication," 94.
[7] Tʿamrazyan, *Grigor Narekatsʿin ev Narekyan dprotsʿě*, 2:130.
[8] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 163.
[9] "Genealogical Tables and Lists of Rulers" in *CHBE*, 918.
[10] "Genealogical Tables and Lists of Rulers" in *CHBE*, 918.
[11] "Genealogical Tables and Lists of Rulers" in *CHBE*, 918.
[12] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 158.
[13] "Genealogical Tables and Lists of Rulers" in *CHBE*, 918.
[14] "Genealogical Tables and Lists of Rulers" in *CHBE*, 918.
[15] "Genealogical Tables and Lists of Rulers" in *CHBE*, 918.
[16] "Genealogical Tables and Lists of Rulers" in *CHBE*, 918.
[17] "Genealogical Tables and Lists of Rulers" in *CHBE*, 918.

Catholicoi

Dawitʿ II Kakałecʿi (ca. 806 – 833)[18]
Yovhannēs IV (ca. 833–855)[19]
Zakʿaria Jagecʿi (855 – 877)[20]
Gēorg II Gaṙnecʿi (877 – 897)
Maštocʿ (897 – 898)
Yovhannēs Drasxanakertcʿi "the Historian" (898 – 924)[21]
Stepʿanos II Ṙštuni (ca. 925)[22]
Tʿēodoros I Ṙštuni (925 – 934/5)[23]
Ełišē Ṙštuni (934/5 – 941/2 = AE 383 – 390)[24]
Anania Mokacʿi (941/2 – ca. 963/4 or 965/6 = AE 390 – 414)[25]
Vahan I Siwnecʿi (ca. 965/6 – 970)[26]
Stepʿanos III Sewancʿi (ca. 970 – 972/3)[27]
Xačʿik I Aršaruni (972/3 – 990/1)[28]
Sargis I Sewancʿi (992/3[29] – 1019)
Petros I Getadarj (1019 – 1058)

See of Catholicate[30]

Vałaršapat (ca. 314 – 484)
Duin (484 – end of ninth c.)
Ałtʿamar (ca. 923 – ca. 948)
Argina (ca. 950 – 992)
Ani (992 – 1046)

[18] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 173 n. 242.
[19] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 173 n. 243.
[20] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 176 n. 259.
[21] Garsoïan, "Independent Kingdoms," 172.
[22] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 222 n. 89.
[23] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 222 n. 89.
[24] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 222 n. 91.
[25] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 222 n. 91 and 92, 232 n. 155.
[26] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 233 n. 157.
[27] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 233 n. 163.
[28] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 4.
[29] Greenwood, *Universal History*, 295, n. 522.
[30] Mahé, *Grégoire de Narek, Tragédie*, 30 n. 121; idem, «L'église arménienne,» 503–04.

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ABBREVIATIONS

cpg = Maurice Geerard, ed. *Clavis patrum graecorum: qua optimae quaeque scriptorum patrum graecorum recensiones a primaevis saeculis usque ad octavum commode recluduntur*, Turnhout: Brepols, 1974–2003.

CHBE = The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c.500–1492. Edited by Jonathan Shepard, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

CSCO = Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium

EI₂ = Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960–2005. https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2

EI₃ = Encyclopedia of Islam, Three. Edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas and Everett Rowson with a team of more than 20 section editors. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2007–. https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3

EIr = Encyclopædia Iranica, online edition, New York, 1996–. http://www.iranicaonline.org/

HHSHTB = Hakobyan, Tʿadevos Khachʿaturi, Stepʿan Tigrani Melikʿ-Bakhshyan, and Hovhannes Khachʿaturi Barseghian. *Hayastani ev harakitsʿ shrjanneri teghanunneri baṛaran*. 5 vols. Erevan: Erevani Hamalsarani Hratarakchʿutʿyun, 1988–2001.

JSAS = Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies

M = Matenadaran, Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Erevan, Armenia.

MH = Matenagirkʿ Hayotsʿ [= *Armenian Classical Authors*]. Antelias/Erevan, 2003–.

NBHL = Nor bargirkʿ haygazean lezui, 2 vols. Edited by Gabriēl Awedikʿean, Khachʿatur Siwrmēlean, and Mkrtichʿ Awgerean. Venice: St. Lazarus Press, 1836–37.

OCD = The Oxford Classical Dictionary. Edited by Simon Hornblower, Antony Spawforth, and Esther Eidinow. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012 (4th ed.).

ODB = The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium. Edited by Alexander P. Kazhdan. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

ODLA = The Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity. Edited by Oliver Nicholson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

P = Bibliothèque Nationale de France

REArm = Revue des études arméniennes

SC = Sources Chrétiennes

TM = Travaux et Mémoires. Centre de recherche d'histoire et Civilisation de Byzance. Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard. 1965–.

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Armenian

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"To Priests" (***Խրատ քահանայից***). *MH* 10:328–336.
"On Patience and Peace" (***Խրատ վասն համբերութեան եւ խաղաղութեան***). *MH* 10:337–341.
"On Humility" (***Խրատ վասն խոնարհութեան***). *MH* 10:342–46.
"Counsel on Prayer" (***Բանք աղաւթից***). *MH* 10:348–355.
"On this Transitory World" (***Վասն անցաւոր աշխարհիս***). *MH* 10:348–355.
"On Attention to Thoughts" (***Յաղագս խորհրդոց զգուշութեան***). *MH* 10:356–359.
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"Recapitulated and Condensed Sentences on the Things Said to You Before" (***Գլխաւորեալ եւ համառաւտ բանք վասն յառաջ ասացելոցդ***). *MH* 10:421–427.

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