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**GRIGOR TATEVATSI AND  
THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION**

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I, Diana Tsaghikyan, hereby declare that this thesis has been entirely composed by me. I confirm that it has not been submitted in pursuit of any other academic degree or professional qualification.

[Diana Tsaghikyan]

## ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the sacraments of initiation of Grigor Tatevatsi (1346-1409), one of the most prominent ecclesiastical leaders of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian in *Armenian Church Patristic and Other Essays* examined Tatevatsi's sacraments of initiation, and declared that Grigor Tatevatsi abdicated the theology of the Armenian Apostolic Church and integrated many important issues from Thomas Aquinas. This study challenges Ashjian's statements, and by examining the political, historical and theological context, elaborates the sacraments of initiation of Grigor Tatevatsi in different colours.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, according to a missionary programme of Rome, successful work was started by the Latin Church in Armenia. During the crucial period for the Armenian Christianity, in time of political, social, intellectual and ecclesiastical changes, Grigor Tatevatsi becomes one of the dominating figures, and the first chapter examines his life. The second chapter of this work examines the purpose of the Dominican Order in Grand Armenia, and the origin of the *Unitors*, the Latino-Armenian Brotherhood, during fourteen century.

The last three chapters deal with Tatevatsi's sacramental theology of initiation. The third chapter focuses on the sacrament of baptism, the fourth chapter investigates the sacrament of confirmation, and the fifth chapter deals with the sacrament of communion and elucidates how Tatevatsi sees the sacrament that unites us to Christ. These three chapters compare the theology of Grigor Tatevatsi within that of Thomas Aquinas, showing how Tatevatsi engaging with Aquinas, not to abdicate Armenian theology but to defend it within the context of wider Christian practice, comparing

Latin, Greek and sometimes Syriac practice to show that Armenian theology reads the early Christian tradition in ways that sometimes differ from the other traditions, but are not inferior to them.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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It is with particular pleasure that I express my affectionate and deeply-felt gratitude to director of "Matenadaran" Scientific Research Museum-Institute of Ancient Manuscripts after Mesrop Mashtots Prof. Hrachya Tamrazyan and staff of Matenadaran, who were kind enough to give me access to their treasures: the unique manuscripts and other materials helped me to solve and understand a number of issues relating to the theme of my thesis.

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## INTRODUCTION

Medieval Armenia's history was complex. It was marked, on the one hand, by the formation and subsequent fall of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia (1080-1375), and on the other, by the Mongol-Tartar destruction of Greater Armenia in the middle of the thirteenth century, which introduced numerous difficulties and areas of contention. However, it was the Armenian Church in particular which faced new problems in this period, perhaps greater than those of any of the previous nine centuries, filled as they had been with achievements and failures, politics and polemics.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Latin Church made inroads in Armenia by the aid of a Roman missionary programme. Through the missionary efforts of the Franciscan Order, which established a base in Cilicia, most of the Armenians in Cilicia became Roman Catholics; meanwhile, the Dominicans established themselves in Persia, Galla, and Armenia. Owing to the mission of the Dominicans, the Armenian Church was first exposed to Latin theology. Great strides were made by the missionaries in a short period of time, and as a result of their work, a significant amount of Latin theological literature became available to Armenians. Clearly, Latin theology was welcomed in Armenia, as Sarkissian points out: 'Gradually they had achieved quite a wide expansion in the country; they began to gain a foothold chiefly through their educational activities which attracted many Armenians desirous of learning from them the elements of Western cultural and

scientific knowledge'.<sup>1</sup> However, in 1333, after the death of the Latin missionary Bartholomew, who was head of a new congregation, and whose principles were based on St. Augustine and St. Dominic, a new page was turned in Armenian society. The 'Unitors', the Latino-Armenian Brotherhood founded by the preaching friars, began to re-baptize and re-ordain representatives of the Armenian Apostolic Church. This state of affairs indicates that the fundamental question of the Armenian Church's unity with Rome was by this point at stake. In the light of this new policy, the Church's attitude toward the missionaries changed completely. In the face of the massive changes being proposed, a new generation of Armenian Church leaders emerged, establishing new schools and launching a propaganda campaign to cement the rejection of Latin theology.

Pre-eminent among the Armenian church fathers of this time was Grigor Tatevatsi (1346-1409), a charismatic celibate priest of extensive knowledge. During this crucial period for Armenian Christianity, Tatevatsi was a dominant figure, one who gained renown as a 'second illuminator' of the Armenian Church.<sup>2</sup>

Grigor Tatevatsi's most important theological works are as follows:

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1 Karekin Sarkissian. *A Brief Introduction to Armenian Christian Literature*. London: The Faith Press, 1960, 46-47.

2 Grigor's name is variously given in different English translations and transliterations as Grigor/Gregory of Tatev, of Datev, of Tatew, Grigor Tatevatsi, Grigor Tatewaci, and Grigor Tat'ewac'i. In this thesis, I will use the form 'Grigor Tatevatsi', except where quoting directly from other works which spell it differently. For the transliteration of Armenian in general, I use the Armenian Review transliteration style, which omits the use of diacritics and in which the transliteration of diphthongs is simplified. The transliteration of proper names may vary from the system according to widely accepted modern usage.

Ոսկեփորիկ (*Book of Golden Content*), where such questions as faith, theology, the existence of God, and the Holy Trinity are examined by Tatevatsi. The work was written in 1401, and published in 1746. The work was translated from Grabar to modern Armenian by Qyoseyan.<sup>3</sup>

Քարոզգիրք (*Book of Homily*). This collection of 344 homilies consists of two volumes: Ձմերան Չատոր (*Winter Volume*)<sup>4</sup> and Ամառան Չատոր (*Summer Volume*).<sup>5</sup> Քարոզգիրք was completed in 1407 and published also in Constantinople in 1740-1741. In 1998 the work was reprinted in Jerusalem in the original Old Armenian.

Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), which was written by Tatevatsi over 17 years. The original copy of it is held in the Matenadaran (the Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Yerevan). Գիրք Չարցմանց was published in Constantinople in 1729 and reprinted in 1993 in Jerusalem.<sup>6</sup>

Grigor Tatevatsi's substantial intellectual output falls, by content area, into four main groups: theological, philosophical, pastoral-liturgical and biblical commentaries. Despite their range and importance, the works of Tatevatsi, which are mainly available only in Old Armenian, are largely unfamiliar to Western scholars. For

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3 Տաթևացի Գրիգոր, Ոսկեփորիկ, Թարգմանություն Չակոբ Ջյոսեյանի: Երևան, Գրություն Չրատարակչություն, 1995. (Grigor Tatevatsi. *Book of Golden Content*. Translated into modern Armenian by Hakob Qyoseyan. Yerevan: Gtutyun Press, 1995.)

4 Տաթևացի Գրիգոր, Քարոզգիրք. Ձմերան Չատոր, Երուսաղեմ. Սրբոց Յակոբեանց Տպարան, 1998. (Grigor Tatevatsi. *Book of Homily: Winter Volume*. Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1998.)

5 Տաթևացի Գրիգոր, Քարոզգիրք. Ամառան Չատոր: Երուսաղեմ. Սրբոց Յակոբեանց Տպարան, 1998. (Grigor Tatevatsi. *Book of Homily: Summer Volume*. Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1998.)

6 Տաթևացի Գրիգոր, Գիրք Չարցմանց, Երուսաղեմ. Սրբոց Յակոբեանց Տպարան, 1993. (Grigor Tatevatsi. *The Book of Questions*. Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1993.)

many centuries, the absence of translations stifled Tatevatsi's voice for the larger scholarly community. Nonetheless, the fact that so many works survived and are preserved in their original form makes them very attractive objects of research.

When we turn from Tatevatsi's own writings to pre-modern and modern scholarship on Tatevatsi, it immediately becomes clear how poorly represented this significant figure of Armenian Church history in published research, particularly in English-language research.

In the seventeenth century, we find an account of Tatevatsi as an important theologian in Davit Balisetsi's *Anthology*, which provides details of Tatevatsi's life culled from the *Synaxarion* and from Metzopetsi's *History*.<sup>7</sup> The nineteenth-century scholar Ghevond Alishan in *Sisakan: Topography of the Land of Syunik* also registers the significance of Tatevatsi and the monastery at Tatev.<sup>8</sup> Alishan supplies information about some of Tatevatsi's works but is mainly interested in Tatevatsi's circle of writing correspondents.

Malachia Ormanian wrote extensively on Armenian history in Tatevatsi's period.<sup>9</sup> One of the most important works of Ormanian is *Azgapatum* (Ազգապատում,

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7 See Հակոբյան Վազգեն, Մանր ժամանակագրություններ, հատոր ք, Երեւան: (Hakobyan Vazgen. Small Chronographies, vol.2. Yerevan, 1956), chapter 13.

8 Ղեւոնդ Ալիշան, Սիսական, Տեղագրութիւն Սիինեաց Աշխարհի Վենետիկ, Ս. Ղազար, 1893; (Ghevond Alishan. Sisakan: Topography of the Land of Syunik. Venice, 1893).

9 Malachia Ormanian. The Church of Armenia, translated by G. Marcar Gregory. London: A.R. Mowbray & Co., 1912.

*National History*).<sup>10</sup> His work will be important for the first and second chapters, but he does not offer a detailed analysis of Tatevatsi's theology.

Manuk Abeghyan's classic *History of Old Armenian Literature* (1946) introduces Tatevatsi's *Book of Questions* and *Book of Homily*, providing a helpful analysis of their structure.<sup>11</sup>

The first modern scholarship to focus extensively on Tatevatsi's intellectual contributions was that of S. Arevshatyan, who during the Soviet era published three studies on Tatevatsi's philosophy: 'Grigor Tatevatsi on the Soul' (an article in Russian),<sup>12</sup> *Philosophical Views of Grigor Tatevatsi* (a monograph in Russian)<sup>13</sup> and 'The Philosophical School of Tatev and the *Weltanschauung* of Grigor Tatevatsi' (an article in Armenian).<sup>14</sup> These three studies introduce the historical background of Tatevatsi's philosophy, the socio-political foundations of his world view and his philosophical orientation, offering insights on his early formation, education and influences. Arevshatyan's introduction of Grigor Tatevatsi to a Russian-speaking

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10 Օրմանյան Մաղաթիա արք., Ազգապատում, Երուսաղեմ, Սրբոց Յակոբեանց Տպարան (Maghakia Ormanian. Azgapatum (National History), Vol, 1, 2, Jerusalem: Jakobean, 1913-27).

11 Manuk Abeghyan. *The History of Old Armenian Literature* (1946)

12 С. Аревшатын. Учение Григора Татеваци о душе/ Аревшатын С.С. // Известия Академии Наук Армянской ССР. – Ереван, 1956. - №7. - С. 65-79. (Arevshatyan, S. 'Grigor Tatevatsi's Doctrine of the Soul'. Izvestiya (news) of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR 7 (1956): 65-79).

13 С. Аревшатын. Философские взгляды Григора Татеваци. – Ереван: Издательство АН Армянской ССР, 1957. (S. Arevshatyan. *Philosophical View of Grigor Tatevatsi*. Yerevan: Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, 1957).

14 See Արեվշատյան Ս, Տաթևի Փիլիսոփայական Դպրոցը Եվ Գրիգոր Տաթևացի Աշխարհայացքը, «Բանբեր Սատենևարանի», համար 4, Երևան, 1958, 122-137: (S. Arevshatyan. 'The Philosophical School of Tatev and the *Weltanschauung* of Grigor Tatevatsi'. The Bulletin of Yerevan University, No. 4. Yerevan, 1958, 122-137.)

audience constituted a very important step in scholarship, since before this Tatevatsi had not been translated into any language.

Importantly, all of these scholarly contributions were made after World War II, in the Soviet Union under the communist regime. An esteemed scholar, Arevshatyan elucidated a completely new field in scholarship, and his motivations and methods of examination were entirely sound. However, in the light of Arevshatyan's historical context, some concern is justified regarding his attitude toward Tatevatsi's Christianity. In confirmation of this is Arevshatyan's short bibliography on Marxism-Leninism, which is used by authors in explaining different ideas for the reader. While there is no doubt that Arevshatyan provided a rigorous examination and critical analysis of Tatevatsi's philosophy, he aimed his study at readers educated under the influence of Marxist-Leninist philosophy and communist demagoguery. Arevshatyan recognizes Tatevatsi as a theologian, but he mainly presents him as nominalist philosopher. However, one may ask how many important ideas of Arevshatyan, not to speak of other writers in the Soviet period, concerning Tatevatsi's theology, or let us call it the study of the nature of God and pious beliefs, did not pass by the Communist Censor?

In 1958, Movsisyan, in *Sketches on the History of Armenian Schooling and Pedagogics in the tenth to the fifteenth centuries*, discusses Grigor Tatevatsi in the course of a history of the University of Tatev. This fine work by a learned scholar does not include as many footnotes as might be desirable, but offers an account well

grounded in contemporary sources, and his interpretations of the past of Tatev University will be drawn on extensively in the first two chapters of this thesis.<sup>15</sup>

In 1959, *Etchmiadzin* monthly, the official record of the Catholicosate of all Armenians, published some short articles on Tatevatsi in recognition of the 550-year anniversary of Tatevatsi's death. A short editorial on 'Grigor Tatevatsi' presents him as a great vardapet (doctor) of the Armenian Church, indicating that Tatevatsi was among the fathers who wanted to stop the Unitors and the first to wish to move the Catholicos seat from Sis to Etchmiadzin.<sup>16</sup> Also appearing in *Etchmiadzin* was an article by Gevorg vardapet Karpisyan, who provides a list of Tatevatsi's 28 works, as well as a short but highly informative introduction to the most important of these, namely, the *Book of Questions*, *Book of Golden Content* and *Book of Homily*,<sup>17</sup> supplemented by an article on Tatevatsi's life and activities.<sup>18</sup>

The 1959 issue of *Etchmiadzin* also contained an article by Sandro Behbudyants, who presents a text from Manuscript N 6607, 5a-6a: *Life of Grigor Tatevatsi* written by Jugayetsi.<sup>19</sup> Khachikyan had previously edited Jugayetsi's text in *Fifteenth-Century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*, but Behbudyants' edition makes the text more readable and accessible. Behbudyants also introduced some portions of

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15 Մովսիսյան Ա, Ուրվագներ Հայ Դպրոցի և Սանկավարժության Պատմության (X-XV դարեր), Երևան, 1958: (A. Movsisyan. *Sketches on the History of Armenian Schooling and Pedagogy in the tenth to the fifteenth centuries*. Yerevan, 1958.)

16 *Etchmiadzin*, N 4, 1959, 3-6.

17 Gevorg vardapet Karpisyan. 'Grigor Tatevatsi'. *Etchmiadzin*, N 4, 1959, 19-25.

18 Gevorg vardapet Karpisyan. 'Grigor Tatevatsi: Life and Activities'. *Etchmiadzin*, N 4, 1959, 25-32.

19 Բեհբուդյանց Սանդրո, Վարժ Բրիգորի Գրիգորի Տաթևացիոյ, «Էջմիածին», Էջմիածին, 1959, էջ 13-22 (Behbudyants, Sandro. 'The Life of St. Grigor Tatevatsi'. *Etchmiadzin*, N 4, 1959, 13-22.)

Tatevatsi's original texts which were published in 1740 (*Book of Homily Winter Volume*), in 1741 (*Book of Homily Summer Volume*), and in 1729 (*Book of Questions*). Also included was a short selection from an ode by Arakel Syunetsi to his teacher Tatevatsi, published in the *Book of Homily, Summer Volume*. Behbudyants' selection is excellent, it affords readers access to some of Tatevatsi's ideas and his language.

Khacheryan's 1962 book *The Linguo-Grammatical Theory of the Art of Writing in Medieval Armenia* features an entire chapter on Grigor Tatevatsi, providing an important account of Tatevatsi as a scribe and his perspective on scribal work.<sup>20</sup>

*Etchmiadzin* published two more Tatevatsi-related studies in the 1980s: the 'Commentary on the Lord's prayer' by Grigor Tatevatsi with an introduction by Abraham Mkrtychyan in 1987,<sup>21</sup> and an article by Armine Keuchgerian on 'Gregory of Tatev and the New Version of his Commentary on the Psalms' in 1988.<sup>22</sup> A more complete version of this article was published in English in 1996.<sup>23</sup>

#### *St. Nersess Theological Review*

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20 Լեվոն Խաչերյան, Գրչության Արվեստի Լեզվական-Քերականական Տեսությունը Միջնադարյան Հայաստանում, Երեվան, Հայկական ՍՍՀ ԳԱ Հրատարակչություն, 1962: (Levon Khatcheryan. *The Linguo-Grammatical Theory of the Art of Writing in Medieval Armenia*. Yerevan: Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, 1962.)

21 Abraham Mkrtychyan. *Etchmiadzin*, N 9-10, 1987, 47-61.

22 Armine Keuchgerian. *Etchmiadzin*, N 5-6, 1988, 55-64.

23 Armine Keuchgerian. 'Gregory of Tatev and the New Version of his Commentary on the Psalms'. *St. Nersess Theological Review*, 1:2, 1996, 181-189.

A 1996 article by Arakel Aljalian, Simeon Odabashian and Hratch Tchilingirian, ‘Curriculum of Educating Infants who are Called into the Rank of Priesthood: Necessary and Useful Advice Written by Lord Arakel, Bishop of Siwnik and Grigor of Tatew, the Great Rhetor’,<sup>24</sup> brings Tatevatsi’s pastoral concern with the strength of the Armenian priesthood to bear on educational guidance for parents, especially those whose children have a calling to the priesthood. This curriculum is divided into three stages--childhood, adulthood and manhood--and each stage presents ten steps of religious education and spiritual growth to age thirty. As a programme, it reminds us how deep and extensive was the theological education Tatevatsi was advocating.

Also relevant to this theme is a 1996 book by Hravad Hakobyan, in Armenian, entitled *Fine Arts in Armenian Schools*.<sup>25</sup> In the course of a chapter on the medieval period which helpfully examines the department of calligraphy and miniature painting of Tatev University, Hakobyan establishes that Tatevatsi was not only esteemed as a scribe, miniature painter and manuscript copyist, but also as one who passed all skills to his students. Discussed in this chapter are Tatevatsi’s theology of image and likeness, the symbols of particular colours and his theology of miniature painting.

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24 *St. Nersess Theological Review* 1:2, 1996, 233-45.

25 Հրավարդ Հակոբյան, Կերպարվեստը Հայոց Կրթարաններում, Գիրք I, (Հին շրջան և միջնադար), Երեվան, Գիտություն հրատարակչություն, 1996, Hravad Hakobyan, *Fine Arts in Armenian Schools. Book 1 (The Ancient and Medieval Period)*. Yerevan, “Gitutyun” Publishing House, 1996, 53).

In 1998, Seyran Zakaryan published *Armenian Philosophers: Grigor Tatevatsi*. This is one of the best works on Tatevatsi: the author also criticises Arevshatyan on some points.<sup>26</sup>

One of the few major English-language scholars who treat Tatevatsi's theology is Sergio La Porta, who is particularly interested in the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite on Tatevatsi's theology. (It is worth noting that Thomas Aquinas himself cites Pseudo-Dionysius copiously, though the extent of his influence on Aquinas remains disputed.) In 1997, Sergio La Porta published an article entitled, 'Concerning Job: Chapter 22 of the Sixth Volume of Grigor Tatewaci's Girk Harcmans [Book of Questions]'.<sup>27</sup> In 2001, La Porta's Harvard doctoral dissertation, *The Theology of the Holy Dionysius, Volume III of Grigor Tatewaci's Book of Questions: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, was successfully completed.<sup>28</sup> In 2002, La Porta published three other pieces: 'Additional Remarks Concerning "Man as the Image of God" in Grigor Tat'ewac'i's *Book of Questions*',<sup>29</sup> 'Grigor Tat'ewac'i's Pilgrimage to Jersualem',<sup>30</sup> and, with Arakelian, 'A Copy of Grigor Tat'ewac'i's *Book of Questions*: MS3425 of the Library of the Armenian

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26 Սեյրան Չաքարեան, Յայ Իմաստասերներ Սատենաշար 3. Գրիգոր Տաթևվացի: Երևան, 1998. (Seyran Zakaryan. *Armenian Philosophers: Grigor Tatevatsi*. Yerevan, 1998.)

27 Sergio La Porta. 'Concerning Job: Chapter 22 of the Sixth Volume of Grigor Tatewaci's Girk Harcmans'. *St. Nersess Theological Seminary Review* 2.2 (1997): 131-65.

28 Sergio La Porta. 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius, Volume III of Grigor Tatewaci's Book of Questions: Introduction, Translation and Commentary'. Ph.D thesis. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2001.

29 Sergio La Porta. 'Additional Remarks Concerning "Man as the Image of God" in Grigor Tat'ewac'i's Book of Questions', *St. Nersess Theological Seminary Review* 7 (2002): 67-84.

30 Sergio La Porta. 'Grigor Tat'ewac'i's Pilgrimage to Jersualem'. In *The Armenians in Jerusalem and the Holy Land*, edited by R. Ervine, M. Stone, and N. Stone, 97-110. Leuven: Peeters, 2002.

Patriarchate of Jerusalem’, none of which is immediately germane to the topic of this thesis.<sup>31</sup>

In Susanna Grigoryan’s 2002 study *Issues of Historical Grammar: Grigor Tatevatsi*, Tatevatsi is introduced as an accomplished grammarian and teacher, but the emphasis falls largely on his use of the Armenian language.<sup>32</sup>

*St Grigor Tatevatsi and his Moral Teaching*, published in 2009 (in Russian) by Ghevond Hovanisyan,<sup>33</sup> was occasioned by the six hundredth anniversary of the death of Saint Tatevatsi. Aiming to familiarize the Russian reader with Tatevatsi, Hovanisyan observes, ‘Unfortunately, the works of the Holy Armenian Apostolic Church, as the saints themselves, are little known among Russian orthodox readers...therefore, the aim of this work is to acquaint the Russian reader with a little grain of a tradition, which is accumulated in the hidden places of the Armenian Apostolic Church’.<sup>34</sup> This intended audience of foreign readers necessitates the broad coverage of several different topics in a single book.<sup>35</sup> Hovanisyan does,

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31 Sergio La Porta with M. Arakelian. ‘A Copy of Grigor Tat‘ewac‘i’s Book of Questions: MS3425 of the Library of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem’. *Sion* (2002): 338-50.

32 Գրիգորյան Սուսաննա, Պատմական Թերականական Հարցեր. Գրիգոր Տաթևազի 14-15- ուղ դը: Երևան, Գիտություն, 2002: Susanna Grigoryan. *Issues of Historical Grammar: Grigor Tatevatsi*. Yerevan: Gitutyun, 2002

33 Гевонд Оганесян. Святой Григорий Татеваци и его нравоучение. - Ереван: Ноян Тапан, 2009. (Ghevond Hovanisyan. *St. Grigor Tatevatsi and his Moral Teaching*. Yerevan: Noyan Tapan, 2009).

34 See Оганесян, Святой Григорий Татеваци (Hovanisyan, *St. Grigor Tatevatsi*), 3.

35 The book starts with an outline of the history of Christianity in Armenia from the beginning until the Golden Age. The author also briefly introduces some Christological controversies with which the Armenian Church was involved. The book presents information about the cultural life of Armenia until the fifteenth century, briefly including the monastery of Tatev and Tatev University. Overall the author aims to provide background in the

however, provide translations of some of Tatevatsi's moral teachings, thus helpfully introducing some of Tatevatsi's thoughts. Hovanisyan's is the most recent monograph devoted to Tatevatsi, and despite its lack of specialised analysis, it is commendable for attempting to introduce Tatevatsi to a new millennium. While reading it one may be struck by how modern Tatevatsi sounds, and even some 'old-fashioned thoughts' reverberate in very modern terms.

Finally, as far as more general scholarship on Tatevatsi is concerned, there has also been important recent work devoted to Tatevatsi's biblical commentaries, especially on the Books of Solomon. In 2012, Khachik Grigoryan translated Tatevatsi's commentary on the Books of Solomon from Old Armenian into English.<sup>36</sup> Tatevatsi's commentaries on Solomon's books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom and the Song of Songs appear here for the first time in English, revealing how important a position Tatevatsi occupied in Armenian commentary literature. The translator's annotation documents that Tatevatsi made ample use of the commentaries of Armenian fathers such as Grigor Narekatsi, Vardan Areveltsi, and Nerses Lambronatsi. Grigoryan had previously published *A Commentary on the Books of Solomon* in modern Armenian in 2009, having already disseminated his study of the Song of Songs separately.<sup>37</sup>

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Armenian Apostolic Church before Tatevatsi's time in order to prepare the Russian reader to grasp the historical, political and theological context in which Tatevatsi's moral teaching was formulated.

36 St. Grigor Tatevatsi: Commentary on the Books of Solomon. Translation from Old Armenian and Introduction by Khachik Grigoryan. Yerevan: Ankyunacar Publishing, 2012.

37 Տաթևվացի Գրիգոր, Սողոմոնի Գրքերի Մեկնությունը, Թարգմանիչ Գրաբարից Խաչիկ Գրիգորյան, Երևան.Անկյունաքար, 2009: (Grigor Tatevatsi. A Commentary on the Books of Solomon. Translated from Grabar by Khachik Grigoryan. Yerevan: Ankyunaqar, 2009).

Let us now turn to the main writer in English on the subject of this thesis, Grigor Tatevatsi's theology of the Sacraments of Initiation. Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian, in *Armenian Church Patristic and Other Essays*, translated from Old Armenian into English and elucidated a portion of Tatevatsi's *Book of Questions*.<sup>38</sup> In three chapters of the book, originally written for the most part in the 1970s, Ashjian examines the theology of St. Tatevatsi.<sup>39</sup> 'The Image of God in Man According to St. Grigor Tatevatsi' is the subject of the first chapter; 'St. Grigor Tatevatsi and his Sacramental Doctrine: Baptism, Confirmation and Communion' constitutes the second chapter; and 'The Angelology of St. Grigor Tatevatsi with Special Reference to the "Celestial Hierarchy" of Dionysius the Areopagite' forms the third chapter. It is important to establish that Archbishop Ashjian's work marks a monumental step forward in Tatevatsi scholarship. Firstly, as mentioned by Ashjian himself, 'St. Gregory of Datev speaks, for the first time, in the English tongue'.<sup>40</sup> Secondly, Ashjian, in the course of introducing Tatevatsi to the English-speaking world, gives a brief but highly interesting interpretation of Tatevatsi's ideas.

In the second chapter of his book, Archbishop Ashjian examines Tatevatsi's sacramental theology of baptism, confirmation and communion and arrives at the conclusion that Tatevatsi assimilates many important issues from St. Thomas Aquinas, and moreover, prefers the reasoning of Thomas Aquinas on many important issues, as Tatevatsi's treatise on the sacraments consists largely of 'borrowed words

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38 Mesrob Ashjian. *Armenian Church Patristic and Other Essays*. New York: The Armenian Prelacy, 1994.

39 *Ibid.*, 22-146.

40 *Ibid.*, 14.

of philosophical terms and quotations'.<sup>41</sup> As Tatevatsi's numerous writings reveal, he was well versed in Latin theology – so well versed that he has been accused of neglecting Armenian thought in favour of Western ideas. Unfortunately, Tatevatsi thus first appears in English in a somewhat tendentious portrait which still colours his understanding in modern scholarship. It is with this portrait that the present thesis wishes to take issue. This study seeks to challenge Ashjian's argument, and by examining the political, historical and theological context of Tatevatsi's work on the sacraments of initiation, to paint Tatevatsi's theology in rather different colours.

The theology of the sacraments of initiation of Grigor Tatevatsi had been surprisingly neglected until Ashjian. Therefore, we should recognize that Archbishop Ashjian's work contributes to English readers' understanding of Tatevatsi's sacraments of initiation. However, it is significant that Ashjian, in concluding that Tatevatsi borrowed many ideas from Aquinas, does not advance an accurate portrayal of the relationship between the two theologians. Specifically, Ashjian does not comprehensively survey Aquinas's texts on the sacraments of initiation, and he does not actually describe the similarities between the two theologians. Instead, Ashjian annotates his translated text with reference to parallel passages in Aquinas, one assumes in order to underline similarities, and perhaps to point out possible sources used by Tatevatsi. But without a fuller examination of Aquinas's sacraments of initiation, and the extent to which they influenced Tatevatsi, it seems unfair to suggest that in the theology of the sacraments of initiation Tatevatsi renounced Armenian theology and simply appropriated that of Aquinas.

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41 Ibid., 70.

In order to shed light on why Ashjian's enthusiasm in expressing this view causes concern, we offer an excerpt from Ashjian's own writing concerning another topic as a young man, in the fall of 1970-1971, in a letter to his instructor at Princeton:

There is hope that things are changing (for the Armenian Church). The dire persecutions belong to the past, and the Church no longer has, except in Syria, Lebanon, and some other countries, the servitude forced on her by Moslem fanaticism. Throughout the world, there is new understanding of the nature and goal of the Christian Church. The major task of the hierarchy of the Armenian Church, and of other national churches, is to break out of the prison house of ethnocentrism. The Armenian Church must recover and recapture the essence of the call of its faith. The Church's calling is not doctrinal isolation, ethnic preservation or exclusive concern with national culture and aspirations. The supreme calling for the Christian Church is to be a living, burning witness to the living Saviour of all nations.<sup>42</sup>

This paragraph, in some regards, sounds as if it could have been written today. It is a cry from the heart of young Father Ashjian, who was hoping to see the Armenian Church move towards conversation with other churches. And we believe that the idea of ecumenism, which today have to guide all Armenian Church officials, guided Ashjian in writing these words over forty years ago. It is important to establish, however, that although the aim of these words appears most understandable, it is shorn of its context. This call to

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 11.

ecumenism issues from the heart of an enthusiastic student who does not live in Soviet Armenia, where the Armenian Church had only one ambition: to survive under the force of atheistic fanaticism. This is no place to discuss at length how every second or third family in Soviet Armenia was forced to have a Book of Atheism which dictated their style of life, how the buildings of churches were turned to storage facilities and warehouses, how Christian literature was destroyed and clergymen killed, but we must stress that it was a devastating time for the Armenian Church, which became isolated and lost. Perhaps Ashjian did not fully realize that the Armenian Church hierarchy under the Soviet regime did not have the luxury of looking beyond ‘doctrinal isolation, ethnic preservation or exclusive concern with national culture and aspirations’. For as history testifies, under the Soviet regime the Armenian Church attempted every possible – and impossible – strategy to save the faith as ‘living, burning witness to the living Saviour’ for the Armenian nation.

With all due respect to the important work executed by Ashjian on the sacraments of initiation of Grigor Tatevatsi, we believe that there is need for re-examination, and clearly, for more comprehensive analysis of Grigor Tatevatsi’s sacramental theology in comparison with Thomas Aquinas’s theology of sacraments and a clarification of how Tatevatsi reacts against as well as borrows from Aquinas. We believe that Tatevatsi has much to contribute regarding sacraments of initiation, and that questions therefore remain which require further attention. Ours will thus be the second attempt to examine the sacraments of initiation of Grigor Tatevatsi.

The methodology of the research will be both theological and historical: historical in its analysis of the sources, but mainly theological in examining Tatevatsi's approach to sacraments of the Church. The theology of the sacraments of initiation is impossible to understand apart from the cultural, historical and theological context to which it belongs; therefore, it is not possible to examine this question apart from its cultural and historical context. Moreover, in order to understand nuances, the theological heritage of these sacraments must be taken into account. Therefore, by outlining the cultural and historical factors which influenced the sacramental theology of Tatevatsi, we shall be in a better position to appreciate Tatevatsi's theological orientation and contributions. We will provide our own translation of Grigor Tatevatsi's sacraments of the initiation and compare it with the text of Thomas Aquinas. Toward this end, Tatevatsi's and Aquinas's differences in position concerning the theology of the sacraments of initiation will be elucidated. Our primary goal, however, is to examine Tatevatsi's own theology of the sacraments of initiation, and to show how this is driven by a commitment to placing the Armenian tradition within a wider Greek and Syriac tradition in concert with the Latin; a lengthy analysis of Aquinas' theology of the sacraments will not be attempted apart from those areas in which his thought is directly relevant to the positions taken by Tatevatsi.

As this survey demonstrates, important work has been completed in recent years on Tatevatsi in Armenian, Russian and English, from a variety of perspectives. Ormanian, Alishan, Abeghyan, Arevshatyan, Ashjian, La Porta, Zakaryan, Grigoryan, Movsisyan, Khacheryan and Hakobyan have all addressed different

aspects of Tatevatsi's early background, education, theology, philosophy and writings, as well as his years spent first with Vorotnetsi as a student, then as a head of the Tatev monastery. Tatevatsi has been represented as a nominalist philosopher, a great Scholastic theologian, a celebrated teacher, an accomplished scribe, a talented miniature painter and a productive writer, as well as one who occupies a distinctive position in Armenian commentary literature. Few of these works, however, have attempted to situate Tatevatsi theologically in the context of the theological struggle with the Unitors and the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas. In particular, apart from Archbishop Ashjian's tendentious portrait, no one has confronted Grigor Tatevatsi's sacraments of initiation or considered the insights they provide into his attempt to defend Armenian Apostolic theology within a wider context of contemporary Christian alternatives.

This thesis will firstly investigate Grigor Tatevatsi's life and work in the crucially positioned monastery of Tatev in the border Syunik province. The second chapter will establish the historical context by analysing the mission of the Unitors, their growth, as well as the Armenian reaction. The third, fourth and fifth chapters will consider the sacraments of Baptism, the Seal and Communion to show how Tatevatsi both engaged with and defended the Armenian tradition against the Thomist tradition of the Unitors, within the broader context of the diverse Christian theological traditions of his day. We will argue that, far from denying the Armenian tradition or embracing a barely understood Scholasticism, Tatevatsi used his deep and comprehensive erudition to show that the Armenian Apostolic tradition was the equal

of both the Latin and the Greek traditions in Scriptural exegesis, the study of the Early Fathers, liturgical tradition and logic, as well as in pastoral practice and piety.

## Chapter One: Grigor Tatevatsi (1346-1409)

He who was the teacher, and the embodiment of wisdom, the model for imitation, genuine source of divine prudence and delightfulness; he who was the dignified pursuer and dispenser of God's Word ... he was the most caring supervisor, the most loyal servant ... the most trustworthy shepherd and the most cautious guardian.

His love was infinite, his obedience was indescribable, his mercy was endless; his teaching was so engrossing, his preaching was so inspiring, his judgments were so impartial and his narratives were so comprehensive.<sup>43</sup>

There are not many available authentic sources about the life and deeds of Grigor Tatevatsi, but there are nevertheless a number of significant texts for examining his life. Our primary information about Tatevatsi comes from four sources. The first one is a short work of Tatevatsi's student Matteos Jughayetsi, who recounts certain stages of his teacher's life.<sup>44</sup> A second source is the work of another of Tatevatsi's students,

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43 Գրիգոր Տաթևացի, Քարոզքիրք, Ամառան Հատոր, Երուսաղեմ, Սրբոց Յակոբեանց Տպարան, 1998, 717-18: (Grigor Tatevatsi. *Book of Homily: Summer Volume*. Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1998, 717-18.) For a full text of Arakel Vardapet's 'Ode to the brave, brilliant and effulgent Master Grigor Tatevatsi, the disciple of Hovhan (Vorotnetsi) called Kakhik', see Քարոզքիրք, Ամառան Հատոր, 716-19: (*Book of Homily: Summer Volume*, 716-19).

44 Մատթեոս Չուղայեցիի Ձեռագիր № 6607, 5ա-6ա: (Matteos Jughayetsi, M6607 5a-6a.) This text was discovered by Khachikyan and is published in ԺԵ Դարի Հայերեն Ձեռագրերի Հիշատակարաններ, Սասն Առաջին (1401-1450), Կազմեց Լ. Խաչիկյան, Երեվան, Հայկական ՍՍՀ ԳԱ Հրատարակչություն, 1955: (Levon Khachikyan, *Fifteenth-Century Armenian Manuscript Colophons* Part I, Yerevan, 1955, 103-104); for a Russian translation see Источники по истории высших школ средневековой Армении (XII-XV вв.) Перевод с древнеармянского, вступительные статьи и примечания К. Тер-Давтян, предисловие и редакция

Tovma Metzopetsi, who in his *History of Tamerlane and His Successors* describes the years in which he was in personal communication with Tatevatsi.<sup>45</sup> There is in the third place the work of an unknown writer which is called the *Yaysmawurk*, the Armenian Synaxarion.<sup>46</sup> It has some similarities with the work of Metzopetsi.<sup>47</sup> And finally, the fourth consists of two parts, one a eulogy, written by Tatevatsi's student and relative Arakel,<sup>48</sup> and the other a panegyric, written by Tatevatsi's student Mesrop.<sup>49</sup> In addition, Davit Balisetsi, in his seventeenth-century *Anthology* compiled from a number of histories about the nation of Yabeth, presents information about

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С. Аревшатяна. Ереван, Айкастан, 1983, 64-65. (*Sources On the History of Higher Education in Medieval Armenia* (XII-XV centuries). Translated from Old Armenian, introduction and notes by K. Ter-Davtyan. Foreword and edited by S. Arevshatyan. Yerevan Hayastan, 1983, 64-65).

45 Թովմա Մեծորբեցի, Պատմութիւն Լանկ-Թամուրայ և Յաջորդաց Իւրոց, Փարիզ, 1860: (Tovma Metzopetsi. *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*. Paris, 1860); Товма Мецопеци. История Тимурленга и Его Преемников. Перевод с древнеармянского, предисловие и комментарии К.С. Тер-Давтян. Ереван: Наيري, 2005. (Tovma Metzopetsi. *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*. Translation from old Armenian, and comments by K.C. Ter-Davtyan Yerevan: Nairi, 2005). Tovma Metzopetsi wrote the *History of Tamerlane and His Successors* between 1430 and 1440. This work is the only memorial of fifteenth-century Armenian historiography. It covers the events from 1386 until 1440. As Metzopetsi was an eyewitness and participant of many events, his history has an undeniable value in representing the political, economical and cultural life of Armenia and neighbouring countries. Metzopetsi also gives impressive information about the religious leaders and about the famous educational centres of the Armenia. For a short introduction on Tovma Metzopetsi, see *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*. Vol. 2. *From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century*. Edited by Agop Hacikyan, Gabriel Basmajian, Edward S. Franchunk and Nourhan Ouzounian. Wayne State University Press: Detroit, 2002, 652-67.

46 Յայսմաւուրք, Ապրիլի իւ, Կ. Պոլիս, 1730: ('April 27', *Yaysmawurk*, Constantinople, 1730).

47 For a Russian translation of Յայսմաւուրք (*Yaysmawurk*) see Источники по Истории Высших Школ Средневековой Армении (XII-XV вв.), 57-63; (*Sources On the History of Higher Education in Medieval Armenia* (XII-XVcc.) 57-63).

48 On Arakel of Syunik or Syunetsi see Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*. Vol. 2. *From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century*, 622-24.

49 Զարոգբիրք, Ամառան Հատոր, 719-20: (Grigor Tatevatsi. *Book of Homily, Summer Volume*, 719-20).

Grigor Tatevatsi collected in the main from the *Yaysmawurk* and the *History of Metzopetsi*.<sup>50</sup>

Thus information about Tatevatsi's life survives, but it is sometimes conflicting information and a number of important issues are still unclear. However, throughout the authentic sources we can see who Tatevatsi was. Together they invite us to share Tatevatsi's hard but colourful journey. One virtually gets chance to see, to hear, to feel and to recognise Tatevatsi in different stages of the formation and establishment of his reputation.<sup>51</sup>

### 1.1 Early Years

Grigor Tatevatsi was born at the end of Ilkhanid rule, a period filled with momentous events in Armenian political and social life.<sup>52</sup> Scholars disagree about the date and

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50 See Վազգեն Հակոբյան, Սանր ժամանակագրություններ, հատոր ք, Երեւան, 1956. (Vazgen Hakobyan. *Small Chronographies*, vol.2, Yerevan,1956, chapter 13).

51 From modern sources on Grigor Tatevatsi's life and work, see Источники по Истории Высших Школ Средневековой Армении (XII-XV вв) 51-57. (*Sources On the History of Higher Education in Medieval Armenia (XII-XV centuries)*), 51-57; Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian. *Armenian Church Patristic and Other Essays*. The Armenian Prelacy: New York, 1994, 19-146; Sergio Van Asch La Porta. «The Theology of the Holy Dionysius, volume III of Grigor Tatewaci's Book of Questions: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary». Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 2001; Sergio La Porta. «Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem» in *The Armenians in Jerusalem and the Holy Land*. Edited by Michael E. Stone, Roberta R. Ervine, Nina Stone. Hebrew University Armenian Studies 4, Peeters: Leuven, Paris, Sterling, Virginia, 2002, 97-109 . Կարապիտյան Գեվորգ, Գրիգոր Տաթևազի. Կյանքն ու Գործունեությունը, «Էջմիածին», Էջմիածին, 1959 (3), 25-32,1959 (4), 19-26. (Karpisyan, Gevorg. 'Grigor Tatevatsi: the Life and Activities'. *Etchmiadzin*. Etchmiadzin, 1959 (3), 25-32; 1959/4, 19-26.).

52 See George E. Lane. *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Iran: A Persian Renaissance*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003; Robert G. Bedrosian, 'The Turco-Mongol Invasions and the Lords of Armenia in the 13-14th Centuries'. Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1979; Mark Chuanhang Shan. 'The Kingdom of God in Yurts: Christianity among Mongols in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries'. *Africanus Journal* 3, No. 2 November 2011; Samuel Hugh Moffett. *A History of Christianity in Asia*, Volume I: *Beginnings to 1500*.

place of Tatevatsi's birth. According to Ormanian, the date of his birth is 1346.<sup>53</sup> This is based on the chronology of Grigor Tatevatsi's life and the date of death of his teacher, Hovhannes Vorotnetsi, in the *Yaysmawurk*. From the *Yaysmawurk* we learn that Tatevatsi became Vorotnetsi's student at the age of fourteen and for twenty-eight years stayed with his teacher until the latter's death. According to Ormanian, Vorotnetsi died on the thirtieth of Nawasard, the same day as his birth, in the year 837 of the Armenian era, or 30 January 1388. Deducting twenty-eight years from 1388, Ormanian arrived at his date for the birth of Tatevatsi. A number of scholars accept 1388 as the date of Vorotnetsi's death,<sup>54</sup> but others argue for 1386.<sup>55</sup>

According to the *Yaysmawurk*, 'Filled with ineffable grace of the Spirit, the holy and blessed Grigor was the son of pious parents.' The *Yaysmawurk* starts with this sentence and then goes on to say that Tatevatsi's father, Sargis, came from Kadjberunik, from the city Archesh, and that his mother was from the village of Parbi in Ayrarat. 'Because of the oppression of the infidels, the family moved to Syunik [Vayots Dzor].'<sup>56</sup> The *Yaysmawurk* does not say when and where Tatevatsi was born, but it is apparent that, because of difficult circumstances, the family, who were clearly religious, changed their place of habitation. La Porta asserts that it was

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Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2004; Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog. *The Mongols and the Armenians (1220-1335)*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

53 See Օրմանեան Մաղաքիա արք.: Ազգապատում, Հատոր Բ. (Maghaqia Ormanian, *Azgapatum (National History)* vol. 2).

54 See *ibid.*; Robert W. Thomson. *The Teaching of Saint Gregory: An Early Armenian Catechism*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970, 226; Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 19.

55 Արեվշատյան (Arevshatyan), 1980, 7; Тер-Давтян, Источники по истории высших школ средневековой Армении (Ter-Davtyan, *Sources On the History of Higher Education in Medieval Armenia*), 47; La Porta, «Grigor Tatevatsi's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem», 108.

56 See Յայսմաւորք, Ապրիլի իւ (Yaysmawurk) 57.

because of the rising Turkman federation of the Qara-qoyunlu, who were settling in Archesh, that Tatevatsi's parents moved to Syunik.<sup>57</sup> While the *Yaysmawurk* seems to imply that Tatevatsi was born in Syunik, however, our other source for Tatevatsi's early life, Jughayetsi, says that Tatevatsi was born (in 1346) in the province of Gugark, in the village of Tmok (Tmkaberd Javakhq) in Georgia.<sup>58</sup> Jughayetsi, after relating where Tatevatsi was born, gives the same information about the origins of Tatevatsi's parents that is given in the *Yaysmawurk* text.

The *Yaysmawurk* further claims that all the other children born to Tatevatsi's mother had died and that the couple were left childless. But 'placing their hope and trust in God and taking as their mediator Grigor the Illuminator, with prayers they turned to God and asked him to grant them a child.' It is not without significance that in this time of despair they are said to have taken as their mediator a great saint of the Armenian Church and continued to pray and hope for a child. The author adds that 'the Lord Jesus Christ, who listens and fulfils a wish, listened to the prayers of his servants and by the request of Grigor the Illuminator gave them a son.'<sup>59</sup>

In Jughayetsi's *Life*, however, we are not told that Tatevatsi's parents had lost all their other children and that Tatevatsi was the only surviving child of his parents.

Jughayetsi's account in fact says that Tatevatsi had an older brother. And he adds that

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57 See La Porta, 'Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem', 97. On the Qara-qoyunlu, see V. Minorsky. *The Turks, Iran and the Caucasus in the Middle Ages*. Variorum Reprints: London, 1978, chapters 11, 13, and 14.

58 Բեհբուդյանց Սանդրո, Վարդ Սրբոյն Գրիգորի Տաթևացիոյ, «Էջմիածին», Էջմիածին, 1959, էջ 13-22 (Behbudyants, Sandro. 'The Life of St. Grigor Tatevatsi'. *Etchmiadzin*, 1959, 13-22.)

59 See Յայսմաւորք: (*Yaysmawurk*) , 57.

Tatevatsi was brought up by his own brother in King David's house. We know that at that time, between 1346 and 1360, the King of Georgia was indeed named David.<sup>60</sup> This changes the picture of Tatevatsi's childhood, as it might imply that Tatevatsi probably was born in Georgia and certainly suggests that he was not the only child of his family. La Porta points out that Tatevatsi, in a Gospel book he wrote out in 1373, remembers 'both my parents, my sisters and brothers'.<sup>61</sup> Taking into account the *Yaysmawurk*'s statement that Tatevatsi's parents were childless before his birth, as their other children had all died, we could, however, assume that Tatevatsi asks for remembrance all his family's members who are no longer alive.<sup>62</sup>

If Tatevatsi did indeed have a brother, it could be that, because of his parents' old age, Grigor was brought up under the protection of his own brother. However, 'brought up by his own brother' might imply no more than that Tatevatsi was brought up by a male relative, who could be a first or even second cousin, as it was a natural family commitment to take care of children who were related by blood. Another of Tatevatsi's students, Metzopetsi, when speaking of Bishop Arakel, says that he was Tatevatsi's sister's son,<sup>63</sup> which may suggest that Tatevatsi had a female cousin too. Hovanisyan believes that Tatevatsi's father had been married before and had children from the first marriage, but these children lost their mother and the

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60 It was not unusual for Armenian to move to Georgia, for more information on this topic see C. Toumanoff, 'Armenian and Georgia'. *Cambridge Medieval History*, v.1, Cambridge, 1966, 593-637.

61 See La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 7, note, 31. See Levon Khachikyan, *Fourteenth-century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*, Yerevan, 1950, 625.

62 Tatevatsi in the *Book of Questions* has a great ceremony, where he talks how important it is to remember and pray for people who are not with us anymore. We assume that in 1373 Tatevatsi's parents were already dead.

63 Arakel (the metropolitan bishop of Siwnik from 1407) states that Melik and David are his parents; Khachikyan, *Fifteenth-Century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*, 34, p. 38; on this see, Polarian 1971, 409-413.

father married a second time, so the brother could be a half-brother from the first family.<sup>64</sup> Unfortunately, Jughayetsi, like the unknown writer, does not say anything specific about Tatevatsi's family, nor do we have any information about what happened to Grigor's parents.

There is an interesting legend about Tatevatsi's birth in the *Yaysmawurk*. In it we learn that Tatevatsi's mother once saw in a dream Grigor the Illuminator, who was holding an extinguished lamp and told her, 'God has heard your prayers and by my intercession has given you a kind son; take this lamp and keep it, because the child that will be born from you will inflame this extinguished lamp with true faith.'<sup>65</sup>

The unknown author of the *Yaysmawurk* claims that the child was called Grigor at his baptism. One may assume that after such a dream, the child clearly had to be given a name in honour of Grigor the Illuminator, but there is no full and reliable account of Tatevatsi's baptism – when he was baptised, where or by whom. However, taking into account the fact that the author speaks in the same sentence about the birth and baptism, it may be conjectured that we are to assume the child was baptised very soon after his birth, perhaps, as was usual, on the eighth day.

Although the *Yaysmawurk* thus gives Grigorios as Tatevatsi's baptismal name, it is interesting that Jughayetsi, our other source for his early life, does not say anything about Tatevatsi's baptismal name. He simply reports the fact that the name Grigor

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64 See Гевонд Оганесян. Святой Григорий Татеваци и его нравоучение. Ереван: Ноян Тапан, 2009, 75. (Ghevond Hovanisyan. St. Grigor Tatevatsi and His Moral Teaching. Yerevan: Noyan Tapan, 2009, 75).

65 See Յայսմաւրկ: (*Yaysmawurk*), 57. Interestingly, it reminds the story of the birth of St Dominic Guzman, founder of the Dominican Order, whose mother was also childless, prayed for a son and dreamed of a dog with a torch in its mouth as a premonition that he would light up the world. See Jordan of Saxony, *Libellus*, 5.

was given to Tatevatsi by Vorotnetsi at his ordination. Perhaps it is simply an accident that Jughayetsi does not mention Tatevatsi's name. However, this clearly does not mean that the boy remained without a name until he met Vorotnetsi. La Porta, accepting Jughayetsi's account that Tatevatsi received the name Grigor in honour of Grigor the Illuminator only when he was ordained as a deacon by Vorotnetsi, argues that as a child he was first called Hutlushah, or Khutlusha.<sup>66</sup> A number of manuscripts which were copied by Tatevatsi before he became a vardapet (or doctor of church) were signed by him in this way.

It is not at once apparent why an Armenian family would have called their long-awaited, only son by this name. The first part of the name, *Hutlu*, or *Khutlu*, comes from the Tatar language and means 'blessed'.<sup>67</sup> The second part of the name, *shah*, is Persian, and means 'king'.<sup>68</sup> Certainly, the name by itself has an important message in it, and after a dream of the sort attributed to Tatevatsi's mother, we can see why parents might decide to give their son a name with such a *meaning*, as a 'king who is blessed' might 'light an extinguished lamp'. But we must still ask why Christian parents would give their son a name with such an *origin*. We assume that it could be an attempt to follow fashion; as Khachikyan points out, the name Hutlushah was well known in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>69</sup> Armenians always were and are still very welcoming towards international names, which have nothing to do with an

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66 See La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', p. 5.

67 Հրաչեայ Աճառեան, Հայոց Անձնանունների Բառարան, Երևան, Երևանի Պետական Համալսարան, 1944, 1214: (Hrachya Acharyan. *Dictionary of Armenian Names*. Yerevan, 1944, 1214)

68 Հայոց Անձնանունների Բառարան, 2185: (*Dictionary of Armenian Names*, 2185)

69 Լեւոն Խաչիկեան, Աշխատութիւններ, Երևան, Գանձասար, 1995, Հատոր Ա, 231-32 (Levon Khachikyan. *Works*, vol. 1. Yerevan: Gandzasar, 1995, 231-32)

Armenian origin. Or it could be a clever act of sensible parents, who in order to help secure their son's place in a dangerous, mixed society called him by a Tatar-Persian name.

According to the *Yaysmawurk*, when Tatevatsi was seven years old they started to teach him Holy Scripture. The *Yaysmawurk* also says that his elementary education lasted for seven years, and La Porta suggests that Tatevatsi probably started to learn the Psalter and how to chant.<sup>70</sup> 'After seven years of education, the gift of God was evident every year more and more.' From that sentence it would seem that Tatevatsi was a gifted child and had a level of knowledge surprising for his age, and moreover, that even at fourteen he was able to interpret Holy Scripture. 'By the age of fourteen Grigor was distinguished by his fruitful mind, and even teachers turned to him for explanation of the Holy Scripture, and Grigor gave them fine interpretations'.<sup>71</sup>

Alongside all this, according to the *Yaysmawurk* 'He performed many miracles in childhood, as recorded in his complete history'. The *Yaysmawurk* gives no information about the nature of the miracles in Tatevatsi's early years, but this statement implies that one who would like to learn more could turn to a complete history of Tatevatsi's life. We agree with Ter-Davtyan, who asserts that 'the unknown author probably had in front of him an extensive source, and the version that reached us belonged to a late period'.<sup>72</sup>

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70 La Porta, «The Theology of the Holy Dionysius», 8.

71 See Յայսմաւորք: (*Yaysmawurk*), 58

72 Тер-Давтян, Источники по истории высших школ средневековой Армении, 54; (Ter-Davtyan, *Sources on the History of Higher Education in Medieval Armenia*, 54).

The *Yaysmawurk* then reports that in the city of Tiflis (Tbilisi), Tatevatsi met a great teacher, a student of the great Yesai: ‘Seeing a boy who studied the Holy Scripture with passionate love, St Hovhannes [Vorotnetsi] accepted him as his pupil.’ ‘After that, for twenty-eight years, he, as a mentor, raised and educated him.’<sup>73</sup> We will return to the years that Tatevatsi spent with his teacher later in this chapter.

La Porta, examining the *Yaysmawurk*’s text about Tatevatsi, concludes that ‘at the age of fourteen, his teachers decided that he [Tatevatsi] should go to Georgia and meet Hovhannes Vorotnetsi.’<sup>74</sup> But the actual text of the *Yaysmawurk* does not say anything about who sent Tatevatsi to Georgia or why. It just indicates that when they were in Georgia, Tatevatsi met Vorotnetsi. La Porta’s conclusion might suggest that Tatevatsi’s teachers realised that, in order to enrich his knowledge, he needed to meet Vorotnetsi. It is not unlikely assumption, as Vorotnetsi had a great name as a teacher who could guide a gifted boy in the best way, as the history shows Vorotnetsi in fact did. But if, in order to meet Vorotnetsi, Tatevatsi had to go to Georgia, his teachers must have known that Vorotnetsi was indeed in Georgia, and moreover, must have assumed that Vorotnetsi was going to stay quite a long time in Georgia. Otherwise, why they would they send Tatevatsi to another country to meet a teacher, if that teacher normally lived and worked in Armenia?

Why, then, was Vorotnetsi in Georgia? Was it a short visit or a long-term stay? According to Alishan, Vorotnetsi was in Georgia in order to debate with Latin

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73 Յայսմաւորք: *Yaysmawurk*, 58

74 La Porta, ‘The Theology of the Holy Dionysius’, 2001.

missionaries.<sup>75</sup> A simple calculation shows that it had to be the early 1360s when Vorotnetsi met Tatevatsi, and we know that at that time successful work has been started by the Latin Church in Greater Armenia and that Dominican missionaries were quite active in Armenia. In the next chapter we will discuss in detail how in the first half of the fourteenth century, the envoys of Pope John XXII, using the unstable political situation in Armenia, were able to penetrate into some regions of Armenia and create strife among the Armenian clergy, and how as a result of the Dominicans' mission quite influential leaders of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Greater Armenia were converted. But for now, it is important to note that while the Armenian Church was facing massive changes, the new leaders of the Church were establishing schools and launching a campaign of counter-propaganda against Latin theology in Armenia. It seems surprising that Vorotnetsi, confronting such a major change in the inner life of the church in Armenia, would go to Georgia in order to stop the missionaries.

If Tatevatsi did indeed meet Vorotnetsi in Georgia, therefore, this may strongly suggest that he was actually from Georgia, as Jughayetsi says. If we maintain the tradition implied by the *Yaysmawurk*, that Tatevatsi was born in Syunik, we could suggest that Tatevatsi's father, or even the whole family, had some kind of connection with Georgia, which would take them there from time to time. We must take seriously the fact that both sources, the *Yaysmawurk* and Jughayetsi, stress that Tatevatsi met Vorotnetsi in Georgia. There is, unfortunately, no clear and complete account of their meeting, or of when and how it happened.

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<sup>75</sup> See Ալիշան Ղեւոնդ, Սիսական. տեղագրութիւն Սիւնեաց աշխարհի, Վենետիկ, 1893, 219: (See Ghevond Alishan. *Sisakan: Topography of the Land of Syunik*. Venice, 1893, 219).

It is regrettable that we cannot establish clearly all the steps in Tatevatsi's life – where he was born, what happened to his family, where and how he met his teacher – but the most important point of all is who Tatevatsi became after his education and what kind of heritage he left after his death.

## 1.2 Tatevatsi and Vorotnetsi

The *Yaysmawurk* and Jugayetsi come together in clear agreement in noting that Grigor Tatevatsi became a long-term student of Hovhannes Vorotnetsi.<sup>76</sup> Vorotnetsi, meeting Tatevatsi in Georgia, recognised his abilities and was happy to teach him.

Because of the impact Vorotnetsi had on Tatevatsi's character and career, it is important briefly to present the story of a man with whom Tatevatsi was to be closely connected for twenty-eight years, who was to bestow the title vardapet on him and who would entrust to him the Aprakunis monastic school, and eventually no less a treasure than Tatev University.

Vorotnetsi was born in the province of Syunik, in the region of Vorotan. By birth he was an aristocrat, as he was a son of Grand Prince Ivane of Syunik.<sup>77</sup> He received his education under Yesayi Nchetsi at the University of Gladzor.<sup>78</sup> It is worth noting

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76 See Աիշան, Սիսական, 219: (Alishan, *Sisakan*, 219); Մովսիսյան Ա, Ուրվագծեր Հայ Դպրոցի և Մանկավարժության Պատմության (X-XV դարեր), Երևան, 1958, 125: (A. Movsisyan. *Sketches on the History of Armenian Schooling and Pedagogics (10-15 cc)*. Yerevan: 1958, 125).

77 See Թովմա Մեծոբեցի, Պատմութիւն Լանկ-Թամուրայ և Յաջորդաց Իւրոց, 14: (Tovma Metzopetsi. *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*, 14); *The Heritage of Armenian Literature: From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century*. Volume II, 601,

78 MS1115 presents Tatevatsi's affirmation that Vorotnetsi was a student of Nchetsi. See ԺԵ Դարի Հայերեն Ձեռագրերի Հիշատակարաններ, Մասն Առաջին (1401-1450), Կազմեց Լ. Խաչիկյան, Երեվան, Հայկական

that the University of Gladzor, founded in 1280 by Nerses Mshetsi, was known as the highest secular school, where male pupils got an encyclopaedic education, and therefore contemporaries named Gladzor University a ‘Second Athens’.<sup>79</sup> ‘It was almost of the same age as one of the most influential centres of European science – the University of Paris, and could compete with the latter in terms of its cultural and educational significance as well as by virtue of the treasures in its library and of the versatility of its curriculum.’<sup>80</sup> Many people from different parts of Armenia went to Gladzor to study, and even from far-away Cilicia people arrived to enrich their knowledge; many future theologians, historians and scientists graduated from Gladzor.<sup>81</sup>

The fame of Gladzor increased during the time that Yesayi Nchetsi<sup>82</sup> was Rector, a position he held for approximately sixty years.<sup>83</sup> Nchetsi, as Rector, guided much research and inspired many translations and theological and philosophical writings. He was also one of the pioneers of the Armenian Church active in theological

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ՍՍՀ ԳԱ Հրատարակչություն, 1955, 86: (See *Fifteenth-Century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*. Edited by L. Khachikyan, part A, Yerevan, 1955, 86).

79 See Ալիշան, Սիսական (Alishan, *Sisakan*), 135; Խաչերեան Լեւոն, Գլաձորի Համալսարանը Հայ Մանկավարժական Մտքի Չարգացման Մեջ (XII-XIV դդ) , Երեւան, Լույս Հրատարակչություն, 1973: (Levon Khacheryan, *The Role of Gladzor University in the Development of Armenian Pedagogical Thought (XII-XIV cc.)* Yerevan, 1973), 55.

80 *Armenian Miniatures of the 13th and 14th centuries from the Matenadaran Collection Yerevan*. Emma Korkmazian, Irina Drampian, Grigori Hakopian. Translation from Russian by Ashken Mikoyan. Leningrad: Aurora Art Publishers, 1984, 8.

81 See Խաչերեան, Գլաձորի Համալսարանը Հայ Մանկավարժական Մտքի Չարգացման Մեջ (Khacheryan, *The Role of Gladzor University in the Development of Armenian Pedagogical Thought*).

82 For information on Yesayi Nchetsi see Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*. Vol. II, *From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002, 591-597.

83 See Ալիշան, Սիսական, էջ 129-137: (Alishan, *Sisakan*, 129-137); Յովսեփեան Գարեգին, Խաղբակաճ կամ Պոռոշեան իսկոյն պատմութեան մեջ, Անթիլիաս-Լիբանան, 1969 (Garegin Hovsepyan, *Khaghbakank or Prosheank in the History of Armenia*. Antelias, 1969), 188-279.

controversy against Latin missionaries.<sup>84</sup> During the entire period of existence of the University of Gladzor the struggle against the movement for Union with the Latins was bitterly pursued. In this as in much else Vorotnetsi followed in his teacher's footsteps. In the next chapter we will see how the teachers of Gladzor University stood out against the Unitors. But for now let us examine what made Gladzor University a special and unique place.

It is important to remember that the monasteries in this period became citadels of higher education and introduced to Armenian society many well-known teachers in philosophy, theology, literature, and art.<sup>85</sup> The cultural and educational centres in the region of Syunik were bright examples of intellectual institutions of the Middle Ages in Armenia: according to Alishan, there were forty-eight monasteries in Syunik.<sup>86</sup> The most outstanding of these were Gladzor, Tatev, Noravank, and Vorotnavank.

Many of these monasteries were rich in lands, villages, libraries and schools. Most of them had been founded from the donations of the pious. In Syunik,<sup>87</sup> among the prominent Church and political figures, writers and teachers of that period were

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84 See Խաչերեան Լեւոն, Եսայի Նչեցիս եւ Գլաձորի համալսարանը (1280-1340), Լոս Անճելըս, 1988: (Levon Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*. Los Angeles, 1988).

85 See Մովսիսյան, Ուրվագծեր Հայ Դպրոցի և Մանկավարժության Պատմության (X-XV դարեր), (Movsisyan. *Sketches on the History of Armenian Schooling and Pedagogics (10-15 cc)*), 95-125.

86 See Ալիշան, Սիսական: (Alishan, *Sisakan*)

87 For information on the Orbeli family (Burtelyan branch) in Syunik see Խաչիկյան Լեվոն, Սյունաց Օրբելյանների Բուրթելյան ճյուղը, «Բանբեր Մատենադարանի», № 9: Երեվան, 1969 (Levon Khachikyan. 'The Burtelyan Branch of the Orbelians of Syunik'. *Matenadaran Bulletin* № 9. Yerevan, 1969), 173-199.

Stepanos Orbelian,<sup>88</sup> who wrote the valuable *History of the Province of Syunik*;<sup>89</sup> Nerses Mshetsi,<sup>90</sup> who founded the University of Gladzor; Mshetsi's pupil Yesayi Nchetsi,<sup>91</sup> who succeeded his teacher and also became head of the University of Gladzor; Hovhannes Vorotnetsi,<sup>92</sup> himself a head of the University of Tatev; and of course his pupil Grigor Tatevatsi. The list of great teachers and pupils over a period of two centuries is very long. MS 1115 in the great collection of Armenian manuscripts housed in the Matenadaran in Yerevan contains a list illustrating the continual ties between different generations of Armenian thinkers.<sup>93</sup>

Khacheryan studied manuscripts connected with Gladzor University and showed that theological texts prevail among them. And so Khacheryan concludes that the main subject of study at Gladzor was theology and that Gladzor University was in

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88 See Ստեփանոս Օրբելյան, Սյունիքի Պատմություն, թարգմանությունը և ծանոթագրությունները Ա. Աբրահամյանի, Երեվան, Սովետական գրող, 1986, 3-18: (Stepanos Orbelian. *The History of Syunik*. Translation from Old Armenian into Modern Armenian, Introduction and edition by A. Abramnyan. Yerevan: Sovetakan Grogh, 1986, 3-18); Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, vol. II, *From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century*, 534-536;

89 See Օրբելյան Ստեփանոս, Սյունիքի Պատմություն (Stepanos Orbelian. *The History of Syunik*), 18-64.

90 See Խաչերեան, Գլածորի Համալսարանը Հայ Մանկավարժական Ստեփ Զարգացման Մեջ (XII-XIV դդ) (Khacheryan, *The Role of Gladzor University in the Development of Armenian Pedagogical Thought (XII-XIV cc.)*), 18-42.

91 See Khachikyan, *Colophons of the Fourteenth Century*, 10; Ալիշան Դեռնո, Հայապատում, Վենետիկ, 1901, 525-26: (Alishan, Ghevond. A Collection of Historical Materials about Armenians, Venice, 1893, 525-26). Ալիշան՝ Սիսական, 135-38: (Alishan, *Sisakan*, 135-38); Тер-Давтян, Источники по истории высших школ средневековой Армении (Ter-Davtyan, *Sources On the History of Higher Education in Medieval Armenia*), 29-33.

92 See Գրիգորյան Գ. Հովհան Որոտնեցու Ֆիլիսոփայական Ուսմունքը, Երեվան, Հայկական ՍՍՀ ԳԱ Հրատարակչություն, 1980, 1-44: (G. Grigoryan. *The Philosophy of Hovhann Vorotnetsi*, Yerevan: Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, 1980, 1-44).

93 See Matenadaran, manuscript 1115, 123a-123b.

particular very much interested in the study and interpretation of Biblical texts.<sup>94</sup> The study of the Bible was the first and foremost subject required for attaining the degree of doctor of the Church, a requirement legally formulated by Mkhitar Gosh.<sup>95</sup> But this was true not only of Gladzor, for medieval universities of the West had the same practice.<sup>96</sup> In those universities – for example in Paris – students spent some four years in study of the Bible and a further two years in studying the scholastic theologian Peter Lombard’s work *Liber Sententiarum*.<sup>97</sup> Later the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas began to be examined at the universities. And various works of Aquinas was examined, in Armenian translation, in Gladzor too.<sup>98</sup> Gladzor University, then, had a great interest in the study of theology, but it is interesting to note that the students of Gladzor were also taught about the pagan gods and ancient mythology. Besides theological subjects, pupils studied ancient philosophers in Armenian translations, mainly, Aristotle, Plato, and Zeno. A cardinal example of this is Zeno the Stoic’s *About Nature*.<sup>99</sup>

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94 See Խաչերեան, Գլաձորի Համալսարանը Հայ Մանկավարժական Ստեփ Զարգացման Մեջ (XII-XIV դդ) (Khacheryan, *The Role of Gladzor University in the Development of Armenian Pedagogical Thought (XII-XIV cc.)*), 98-102.

95 See Մխիթար Գոշ, Դատաստանագիրք, գ խմբագրություն, փոխադրության հեղինակ եւ խմբագիր Մաքսիմ Ոսկանյան, Երեւան, Իրավունք, 2008, էջ 49: (Mkhitar Gosh. *Book of Judgments*, third publication, Edited by Maksim Voskanyan, Yerevan, Iravunq, 2008, p. 49).

96 See Hastings Rashdall. *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, vol. I, London, 1895, 455; for Theology as a science at the University see Ulrich Leinsle, *Introduction to Scholastic Theology*. Translated by Michael J. Miller. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010, 120-81. (originally published in 1995, in German)

97 See Rashdall, 455.

98 See Խաչերեան, Գլաձորի Համալսարանը Հայ Մանկավարժական Ստեփ Զարգացման Մեջ (XII-XIV դդ) (Khacheryan, *The Role of Gladzor University in the Development of Armenian Pedagogical Thought (XII-XIV cc.)*), 100.

99 Arevshatyan has translated this work from the Old Armenian into Russian. See ‘Zeno the Stoic, About Nature’. *Bulletin of Matenadaran*. 3 Yerevan 1956, 315-42.

Armenia and medieval Armenian philosophers were interested in space, time, the role of the senses, natural phenomena, the origin and destruction of matter, and the observation of various aspects of the natural world. The curriculum of Gladzor University was based on original set texts as well as commentaries on those texts.<sup>100</sup> The seven liberal arts, *septem artes liberales* – rhetoric, grammar, dialectics, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music – were taught in Gladzor.<sup>101</sup>

Mkhitar Sasnetsi recalls one episode that had happened to him thirty years before: he challenged the statement of one of his friends ‘that those who add water to the cup of the Lord’s blood, be they Syrians or other nationalities, are under opprobrium and that this was counted against them as sin.’<sup>102</sup> The issue arose from the study of texts with the excellent teacher named Yesayi [Nchetsi], regarding the mixing of water with wine in the Eucharistic cup.<sup>103</sup> Sasnetsi concluded,

That was a tradition which they had adopted according to the custom of their forebears and they were not under the opprobrium of sin. Yet we would be

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100 See Խաչերեան, Գլաձորի Համալսարանը Հայ Մանկավարժական Ստեփ Զարգացման Մեջ (XII-XIV դդ) (Khacheryan, *The Role of Gladzor University in the Development of Armenian Pedagogical Thought (XII-XIV cc.)*), 104.

101 Ibid., 106-31.

102 Sasnetsi was a prominent theologian and one of founders and teachers of Metzop school in Metzop Monastery, who was a student of Nerses Mshetsi and graduated from Gladzor University. On Mxitar Sasnetsi see *The Sources of History of High Schools of Medieval Armenia (12-15 cc.)*; Тер-Давтян, *Источники по истории высших школ средневековой Армении* (Ter-Davtyan, *Sources On the History of Higher Education in Medieval Armenia*), 36-45 )See Mkhitar Sasnetsi, *Theological Discourses*, CSCO 542, 543, *Scriptores Armeniaci* 22, 23, ed. and tr. S.P.Cowe (Louvain: Peeters, 1993, 543, 101.

103 Ibid.

under opprobrium and sin thereafter if we were to descend to their religious practice and add water to the cup of the Lord's blood. For that is not consistent with the tradition which we received from our Holy Fathers. This was the sort of debate between us as we argued with one another.<sup>104</sup>

On the one hand, this story of Sasnetsi's is nothing more than an episode from his own life, which represents his attitude towards the unmixed cup. But on the other hand, the episode is very valuable in that it illustrates the atmosphere of schooling in thirteenth-century Armenia. Through this episode one may virtually feel the climate during the debate and see that students were encouraged by their teacher to think, to analyse and to share their thoughts. It is an illustrative example of open-mindedness and mutual respect. And it also shows that in the thirteenth century students were educated to acknowledge and cherish the tradition.

Gladzor played an important role in the revival of theological and philosophical culture and in the study of grammar, rhetoric, painting and the art of writing. It lasted in all about sixty years, and after the death of Nchetsi, was closed in 1338.

Vorotnetsi belongs to the fourteenth-century theologians who spent their whole lives in a monastic community, organising and leading it. And in saying community, we mean to imply a high educational centre. And, as we can see in Vorotnetsi's case, these centres were numerous. He stayed and lectured in Daranagh, Aprakunis and

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104 See Ibid., 101. Sasnetsi mentions that same night of a debate, in his dream vision he was celebrating the liturgy, and was going to add water to a cup, when the voice told him, 'Never do that again and never instruct anyone to do such a thing'. See 102. Sasnetsi points out that in the morning he went to his friend and admitted his error.

Tatev. And, most importantly, he founded the academy of Aprakunis and revived the University of Tatev.<sup>105</sup>

During the years of his education at Gladzor University, under the supervision of Nchetsi, Vorotnetsi had studied philosophy, theology, grammar, natural science, and languages, and for his extensive knowledge he was called the ‘thrice-great Armenian philosopher’. As a student of the great Yesayi, Vorotnetsi not only acquired great erudition, but he gained experience in building a community. According to some scholars, after the death of Nchetsi, Vorotnetsi became Rector of Gladzor<sup>106</sup>, but after the closing of the University of Gladzor, he and his pupils moved to Tatev, where he founded Tatev University and continued his fruitful work. Because of his young age, it is questionable whether Vorotnetsi after the death of his teacher Nchetsi become head of Gladzor or not, but one thing that is obvious is that as he grew into the status of a teacher, he was able to draw upon the rich tradition he had inherited.

The link between schools of Gladzor and Tatev was Vorotnetsi.<sup>107</sup> When Vorotnetsi arrived at Tatev Monastery, it did not have the fame that it had had hundreds of years before, when the number of monks and pupils reached over five hundred.<sup>108</sup> Tatev long before Vorotnetsi had been a highly respected educational centre, but, after a

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105 See Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, vol. 2, *From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century*, 600;

106 See Аревшатын С., Лалафарян С. Сочинение Иоанна Воротнеци Об Элементах. Вестник Ереванского Университета, Ереван, Митк, 1956 (S. Arevshatyan, and S. Lalafaryan. ‘An Essay on Elements of Hovhannes Vorotnetsi’. *Matenadaran Bulletin*, 1956), 3, 344).

107 See Լեւոն Խաչիկեան, Աշխատութիւններ, Երեւան, Գանձասար, 1995, Հատոր Ա, 231-32; (Levon Khachikyan. *Works*, vol. 1. Yerevan: Gandzasar, 1995, 231-32).

108 See Մովսիսյան, Ուրվագծեր Հայ Դպրոցի և Մանկավարժության Պատմության (X-XV դարեր) (Movsisyan. *Sketches on the History of Armenian Schooling and Pedagogics (10-15 cc)*), 95-102.

period of decline, under the supervision of Vorotnetsi the University of Tatev once again flourished.

Vorotnetsi passed on his experience from Gladzor to Tatev. This can be illustrated by his programme of education, his attempt to enrich Tatev monastery with new buildings and his effort to enrol as many students as possible. Over the years of his teaching career, Vorotnetsi trained many talented students. Under his supervision, research and teaching activities in Tatev prospered.

Grigoryan believes that, inasmuch as Vorotnetsi was related to the Orbeli family, the indigent Rector would ask for their help and patronage.<sup>109</sup> On the one hand this would seem to be natural, since as head of Tatev, to whom else could Vorotnetsi turn for protection and sponsorship if not to the rulers of that province. But on the other hand, for many centuries the Orbeli family had willingly supported the life of Tatev and sponsored it not only with money, but also with lands and fully populated villages, and so the Orbeli family would be predisposed to help Vorotnetsi. Moreover, many members of the Orbeli family had been pupils of Gladzor University, which could further explain their help. And even without any direct relationship with Vorotnetsi, they would know who Vorotnetsi was, for even at the beginning of his work, Vorotnetsi was considered to be a great teacher, who came from Gladzor, the best place of education, with the best system of education and with the best reputation for research and writing. And so the Orbeli family could have full

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109 See Գրիգորյան Մ, Այունիքը Օրբելյանների Օրոք (XII-XV դ): Երեվան, Հայկական ՍՍՀ ԳԱ Հրատարակչություն, 1981, 167: (Grigoryan, M. Syunik During the Reign of Orbelians (XII-XV century ), Yerevan: Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, 1981, 167).

confidence in Vorotnetsi's leadership, sure that in his hands Tatev University would be saved.

In conditions of political crisis and social collapse, the University of Tatev was newly reopened in 1345. Despite its periods of decline, Tatev Monastery was still famous and respected. And the need for some powerful cultural centre which could become not only a high educational school, but also a centre of resistance which would check the decline of Armenian cultural ideology, encouraged Church leaders to form and develop the University of Tatev. The fact that Vorotnetsi moved to Tatev from Gladzor may suggest that he brought some significant number of books with him from Gladzor. It is known that the Gladzor library had an exceptional collection, and it was also a major centre of calligraphy, where hundreds of manuscripts were copied. With Vorotnetsi's move, Tatev's library could also be enriched with a good collection of philosophical and theological works. Moreover, it is known that Vorotnetsi continued to buy books for Tatev library.

And so Vorotnetsi brought from Gladzor all the elements required for the organisation of Tatev University. Vorotnetsi was himself the author of religious, theological and philosophical works.<sup>110</sup> A list of his works is given by Arevshatyan<sup>111</sup>, but a selection should be mentioned here: an *Analysis of Aristotle's*

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<sup>110</sup> Արեւշատյան Ս, Տաթևիլի Փիլիսոփայական Դպրոցը եւ Վ գրիգոր Տաթևեւացիւ Աշխարհայացքը, «Բանբեր Մատենադարանի», համար 4, Երևան, 1958 (See S. Arevshatyan. 'Philosophical School of Tatev, and Weltanschauung of Grigor Tatevatsi' *Matenadaran Bulletin* 4, 1958), 123-26.

<sup>111</sup> For Armenian text see Воротнеци Иоанн. *Об элементах (Сочинение, составленное из высказываний философов)*/ Перевод с древнеармянского Аревшатына С., предисловие Аревшатына С. и Лалафаряна С.

*Categories, Brief Commentary on David's Analysis of the Five Books of Porphyry, Philosophical Discourses, The Nine Beatitudes of Christ, Commentaries on the Gospels of St Matthew and St John, and a Commentary on the Epistles of St Paul.* We know that Vorothenesi did not like to write, and Tatevatsi was one of his students who carefully wrote out and edited some of his lectures <sup>112</sup>

The date of Vorothenesi's death has normally been taken to be 1388, but there are some scholars who support 1386.<sup>113</sup> Tovma Metzopetsi says that Vorothenesi died in 1386, and the *Yaysmawurk* gives the same date. There is proof that Vorothenesi was still alive in 1385, since, as La Porta points out, his student Lazar, referring to a manuscript of that year, says that it was completed 'at the feet of the great rabunapet Yovhannes [Vorothenesi]'.<sup>114</sup> It is known that the great teacher died in Aprakunis and that upon the death of Vorothenesi, Tatevatsi became the head of two monasteries, Aprakunis and Tatev.

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Вестник Матенадарана. Ереван, 1956. 3 (Hovhan Vorothenesi, 'Elements (Philosophical Discourses)', translated by S. Arevshatyan. *Matenadaran Bulletin* 3, 1956), 354-55.

112 See Аревшатын С., Лалафарян С., Сочинение Иоанна Воротнеци Об Элементах. Вестник, 3, Ереван, 1956, 345. (See S. Arevshatyan, and S. Lalafaryan. 'An Essay on Elements of Hovhannes Vorothenesi'. *Madenadaran Bulletin*, 1956, 3, 345.)

113 See Աիշան Սիսական (Alishan, *Sisakan*), 220; Խաչիկյան, Սյունաց Օրբելյանների Բուրբելյան Եյուղը, (Khachikyan. 'The Burtelyan Branch of the Orbelians of Syunik', 192; Գրիգորյան. Հովհան Որոտնեսցու Ֆիլիսոփայական Ուսմունքը (Grigoryan, *The Philosophy of Hovhann Vorothenesi*), 5-6; Արեվշատյան, Տաթևվի Փիլիսոփայական Դպրոցը (Arevshatyan. 'Philosophical School of Tatev'), 123; Тер-Давтян, Источники по истории высших школ средневековой Армении (Ter-Davtyan, *Sources On the History of Higher Education in Medieval Armenia*), 47, 66; La Porta 'Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem', 108.

114 See La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 4. Khachikyan, *Fourteenth-century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*, 533. It is cited also by Matevosyan-Marabyan 2000, 28. See *Yaysmawurk*.

We can now return to Tatevatsi's relations with Vorotnetsi. As we have seen both the *Yaysmawurk* and Jugayetsi say that Grigor Tatevatsi was a student of Vorotnetsi's.<sup>115</sup> And both say that they met in Georgia. Both also agree in recording that Vorotnetsi took Tatevatsi with him on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

According to the *Yaysmawurk*, Vorotnetsi took Grigor to the city of Jerusalem, where the Lord walked, and ordained him as a celibate priest.<sup>116</sup> La Porta in an important article on 'Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem' examines the accounts of the pilgrimage in the *Yaysmawurk* and Jugayetsi<sup>117</sup> and suggests a full chronology for Tatevatsi's early life, part of which we have already noted: that Tatevatsi was born in 1344, was dedicated to the Church in 1351 at the age of seven, met his teacher Vorotnetsi in 1358 and was ordained deacon in 1371. Having shown that in 1373 Tatevatsi was with Vorotnetsi in Jerusalem, where he was ordained as a priest, La Porta establishes that between 1374 and 1376 Tatevatsi received the lowest rank of vardapet, and after training for many years received the title of eminent vardapet in 1385.<sup>118</sup>

In 1371, therefore, Vorotnetsi took Hutlusha with him, and they went to the mountain Sepuh, where the grave of Grigor Lusavorich – Gregory the Illuminator – was. On

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115 See Ալիշան Սիսական (Alishan, *Sisakan*), 220; Խաչիկյան, Սյունաց Օրբելյանների Բուրթելյան ճյուղը (Khachikyan. 'The Burtelyan Branch of the Orbelians of Syunik'), 26; Գրիգորյան. Հովհան Որոտնեցու Ֆիլիսոփայական Ուսմունքը (Grigoryan, *The Philosophy of Hovhann Vorotnetsi*), 5; Մովսիսյան, Ուրվագծեր Հայ Դպրոցի և Մանկավարժության Պատմության (X-XV դարեր) (Movsisyan. *Sketches on the History of Armenian Schooling and Pedagogics (10-15 cc)*), 125.

116 See *Yaysmawurk*, 60.

117 See La Porta, 'Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem', 97-109.

118 Ibid.

the way to Jerusalem, at the tomb of Lusavorich, Vorotnetsi ordained Tatevatsi as a deacon, and he was then ordained priest in Jerusalem in 1373. La Porta shows that in 1373 Tatevatsi was still a deacon, as in one of the colophons which he wrote in that year, he referred to himself as the scribe Grigor, ‘formerly called Xutlushah’, and ‘in the third colophon of the same manuscript, Tatevatsi refers to himself as Grigor the deacon’.<sup>119</sup>

What Tatevatsi was doing between 1358, when he met Vorotnetsi, and 1371, when he composed his first colophon, is not clear. However, it is clear that Tatevatsi was ordained as a deacon by 1371, as we have seen.<sup>120</sup> Tatevatsi, refers to himself as Grigor the deacon, formerly named Khutlushah, in the colophon to Matenadaran MS 1659, a copy of the *Hexaameron* of Fra Bartholomew, Bishop of Maragha.<sup>121</sup> In the colophon to MS 7151, an *Anthology of Philosophical Matters*, which was also copied by Tatevatsi in 1371, we find the same self-reference: Grigor the deacon, formerly called Khutlushah.<sup>122</sup> From these notes it is certain that in 1371 Tatevatsi was already a deacon. In 1373 Tatevatsi composed four colophons,<sup>123</sup> which are preserved in a Gospel book found in Akn. The first colophon shows that the gospel was written by the scribe Grigor, formally called Khutlusha at the monastery of the Illuminator in

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119 See La Porta, ‘Grigor Tatewaci’s Pilgrimage to Jerusalem’, 103.

120 See Օրմանեան: Ազգապատում, Յատոր Բ. (Ormanian, *Azgapatum (National History)*) II: 1981, Կարպիսյան, Գրիգոր Տաթևվաղի. (Karpisyan. ‘Grigor Tatevatsi’), 1959/3, 26; Pilaryan 1971, 396, Alawnuni 1929, 103 and Alawnuni 1938, 344-345, La Porta, ‘The Theology of the Holy Dionysius’, 31, and La Porta, ‘Grigor Tatewaci’s Pilgrimage to Jerusalem’, 101-109.

121 See Khachikyan, *Fourteenth-century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*, 610.

122 Ibid., 609.

123 For all four colophons, see *ibid.*, no. 625.

the church of St Karapet, by the order of Vorotnetsi.<sup>124</sup> It is interesting that Tatevatsi associates this monastery with the ordination of St Grigor Lusavorich's son Aristakes, describing it as the monastery which 'our Holy Grigor himself had built, and where Aristakes had been ordained by him'.<sup>125</sup> According to Agathangelos, this happened at the Cave of Mane, which was located on Mt Sepuh.<sup>126</sup> It is interesting that Jugayetsi also records that Tatevatsi was ordained a deacon on Mt Sepuh at the monastery of St Grigor Lusavorich.<sup>127</sup> Tatevatsi and Jugayetsi are clearly referring to the same monastery.<sup>128</sup> From the second half of the fourth colophon, composed in 1373, it is clear that after Ekeleac Grigor Tatevatsi travelled to Jerusalem, as Tatevatsi himself mentions that he wrote this part of the colophon in the Holy City Jerusalem. According to both *Yaysmawurk* and Jugayetsi Tatevatsi's ordination as a celibate priest took place there, as we have seen.<sup>129</sup> La Porta points out that in another colophon that dates to 1379, written by Tatevatsi and preserved in Oxford MS 657<sup>130</sup>, Tatevatsi refers to himself simply as Grigor.<sup>131</sup> La Porta also notes that the first time Tatevatsi refers to himself as a priest is in a colophon to Venice MS

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124 See *ibid.*, 507.

125 See *ibid.*

126 Agathangelos, paragraph 861. See also La Porta, 'Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem', 103.

127 See Jugayetsi.

128 For detailed discussion see La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 31-32 and La Porta, 'Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem', 103-104.

129 See La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 32-33. La Porta maintains that Tatevatsi was ordained in Jerusalem around Easter of 1373. See La Porta, 'Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem', 104.

130 It is a copy of the *Scholia on Cyril of Alexandria*, which was copied in Tatev, in 1379. See Khachikyan, *Fourteenth-century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*, no. 657.

131 See La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 32, note 119. Also see Khachikyan, *Fourteenth-century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*, no. 657.

253, from the year 1386.<sup>132</sup> The details of Tatevatsi's movements from around 1373 to 1376 are a matter of dispute. Perhaps he acquired the rank of vardapet during these years. La Porta suggests that Tatevatsi probably became vardapet between 1374 and 1376.<sup>133</sup>

According to the *Yaysmawurk* Tatevatsi became an 'eminent doctor' (*tsayraguyn vardapet*) one year before Vorotnetsi's death. This has to be 1385, if we consider 1386 as the date of Vorotnetsi's, or 1387 if we agree with those scholars who assign his death to 1388. Therefore, when Tatevatsi became vardapet between 1374 and 1376, it should be the lower rank of vardapet, which as La Porta points out 'allowed him only to preach, but not yet to compose works of his own'.<sup>134</sup>

The *Yaysmawurk* says that 'in 807 of our era [1358] Vorotnetsi asked Tatevatsi to do an interpretation of Holy Scripture in order to become a doctore of church'. Here there is a mistake, for at that time Tatevatsi would have been only twelve years old. From Metzopetsi's account we learn that Tatevatsi, in order to be accredited as a vardapet, was given this task by Vorotnetsi in 1386.

According to the *Yaysmawurk*, 'Before his death Vorotnetsi called his disciples and blessed them with spiritual and divine blessings. He also appointed Grigor over all teachers, and Vorotnetsi entrusted Tatevatsi his congregation.' This is confirmed by

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132 See Khachikyan, *Fourteenth-century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*, no. 695. Also see La Porta, 'Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem', 104.

133 See La Porta, 'Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem', 105. The same author suggests the year 1374 in La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 33, note 121.

134 See La Porta, 'Grigor Tatewaci's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem', 107.

Tovma Metzopetsi, who, in his *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*, has Vorotnetsi himself say the same thing. This clearly shows that Vorotnetsi did not see as his successor anyone else other than Tatevatsi. Grigor had stayed with his great teacher for twenty-eight years.

### 1.3 Tatev

In order to understand the work of Vorotnetsi and of Tatevatsi himself, we have to look at the University of Tatev, and in order to understand the story of Tatev University we have to elucidate the history of Tatev village and Tatev Monastery. The existence of the village of Tatev can be traced back to the second century BC.<sup>135</sup> It is situated thirty-five kilometres east of the city of Goris, in the region of Syunik.

For a detailed history of Tatev Monastery and Tatev University, we are indebted largely to the narrative of the late thirteenth-century bishop of Tatev, Stepanos Orbelian.<sup>136</sup> In 839, Orbelian tells us, the bishop David bought for 10000 dram from the lord Pilipe the place known as the Eagle and the area around the monastery. Five years later David received Tatev village as a gift from the same ruler Pilipe, near which the monastery would lie. In 848, Pilipe ordered a new church of St Grigor

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135 See Պողոսյան Ս, Տաթևի Համառոտ Պատմությունը, Երկրորդ հրատարակություն, Երեվան, Չանգակ-97, 2011, 3: (Sedrak Poghosyan. *The Brief History of Tatev [Village]*. Yerevan: Zangak-97, 2011, 3).

136 See Ստեփանոս Օրբելյան, Այունիքի Պատմություն, թարգմանությունը և ծանոթագրությունները Ա. Աբրահամյանի, Երեվան, Սովետական գրող, 1986 (Stepanos Orbelian. *The History of Syunik*. Translation from Old Armenian into Modern Armenian, Introduction and edition by A. Abramnyan. Yerevan: Sovetakan Grogh, 1986), 3-18.

Lusavorich to be built to the south of the old church.<sup>137</sup> Orbelian, explaining this decision of the bishop to move to somewhere so apparently remote, explains that in the beginning it was the rule that all bishops should live in villages and towns, as a minister has always to be with his congregation, and instead of living in isolation, needed to control his parishioners, so that no deceiver could enter and steal away innocent souls. However, this changed, and Orbelian, without giving any explanation, says that later on, priests, in order to find peace for their eyes and ears, decided to live in monasteries and only go to their parishioners and preach when it was convenient for them to do so.<sup>138</sup> Whether this was thought to be a recognition of past traditions or, on the contrary, it was an attempt to follow a new fashion, the important point is that they came more and more to value the monastic experience of solitude, which was always at the heart of the spirituality of the Christian life. Orbelian, in speaking of the origin of the bishopric of Tatev, claims that the seat of the bishops of the Sisakan dynasty was situated in Syunik and that due to their wish to live somewhere isolated, they settled down in Tatev.

The Monastery of Tatev itself was founded in 895 and became one of the most influential cultural centres of the forty-eight monasteries in Syunik. (Orbelian mentions the names of thirty and adds that there were others, which he does not

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137 For further details see Orbelian. *The History of Syunik*, 193-201; Ալիշան, Սիսական (Alishan, *Sisakan*), 226-27); Տէր-Մովսիսեան, Հայկական Երեք Մեծ Վանքերի Տաթեհի, Հաղարծնի եւ Դադի Եկեղեցիները եւ Վանական Շինութիւնները, Երուսաղէմ, Սրբոց Յակոբեանց Տպարան, 1938 (Mesrop Ter-Movsisyan. *The Churches and Monastic Buildings of the Armenian Three Large Monasteries of Tatev, Haghartsin and Dadivank*. Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1938), 6-7.

138 See Orbelian, *The History of Syunik*, 193-201.

name.<sup>139</sup> But of course not all these monasteries existed at the same time, nor were all in a prospering state.)<sup>140</sup> Tatev Monastery passed through three main periods of construction or reconstruction up until Orbelian's time, the first in the ninth century, in the time of the great prince of Syunik, Pilipe I, and of bishop St David II.<sup>141</sup> This included the building of the main church of Pogos Petros from 896 to 906, which became the cathedral of the Syunik principedom.<sup>142</sup> In 904 a *gavazan* – an octahedral, swinging pillar with the function of an earthquake warning signal – was (miraculously, according to Orbelian) set up in Tatev. Under the influence of seismic vibrations of the ground or even the simple touch of human hands the *gavazan* would bow down and again return to its original position. Orbelian claims that at this sight, ‘the Seljuks, who had already put the Church of Grigor the Illuminator to the fire, stood in fear and did not continue their destruction’.

In the eleventh century, St Hovhannes VII, by order of the King of Syunik, Smbat II, directed a major reconstruction. In 1006-1057, the monastery had been demolished, burned and plundered. Orbelian notes that St Hovhannes bravely rebuilt the

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139 See Տէր-Մովսիսեան, Հայկական Երեք Մեծ Վանքերի Տաթեհի, Հաղարծնի եւ Դադի Եկեղեցիները եւ Վանական Շինութիւնները (Ter-Movsisyan. *The Churches and Monastic Buildings of the Armenian Three Large Monasteries of Tatev, Haghartsin and Dadivank*), 4; Ալիշան, Սիսական (Alishan, *Sisakan*), 119-490).

140 See Տէր-Մովսիսեան, Հայկական Երեք Մեծ Վանքերի Տաթեհի, Հաղարծնի եւ Դադի Եկեղեցիները եւ Վանական Շինութիւնները (Ter-Movsisyan. *The Churches and Monastic Buildings of the Armenian Three Large Monasteries of Tatev, Haghartsin and Dadivank*), 4.

141 See Orbelian, *The History of Syunik*, 376-77.

142 See *ibid.*, 205-210; Ալիշան, Սիսական, 226-27; (Alishan, *Sisakan*), 227-28; Տէր-Մովսիսեան, Հայկական Երեք Մեծ Վանքերի Տաթեհի, Հաղարծնի եւ Դադի Եկեղեցիները եւ Վանական Շինութիւնները (Ter-Movsisyan. *The Churches and Monastic Buildings of the Armenian Three Large Monasteries of Tatev, Haghartsin and Dadivank*), 8.

Monastery, and it became even more beautiful.<sup>143</sup> Then, in 1170, Turks once more seized the Monastery and took ten thousand manuscripts, which had been collected over many centuries. For forty years Tatev Monastery was shrouded in darkness, completely destroyed by its enemies, before the monks returned. In 1295 came the third phase, with a rebuilding of the church by Orbelian himself. After Orbelian's time, in 1381-1387, Tatev was burned by Tamerlane, to be restored under Vorotnetsi, as noted above.

As this narrative suggests, Tatev Monastery, as well as being remote and beautiful, was a great military prize. Geographically, it was one of the most interesting places not only in Syunik, but in the whole of Armenia, as it is located in Great Hayk, Syunik. Its location is perfect in many respects. As Ter-Movsisyan and Alishan describe the location of Tatev Monastery, the village of Tatev is located on a small plateau, which is on three sides surrounded by spurs of the high mountain Kazbel.<sup>144</sup> The plateau has an inclined surface, going down from the north to the southeast, and ends in a steep drop. Along the side of this precipitous drop there are hard rocks, over which from a height of two hundred meters the foaming Tatev river runs down into the Vorotan river.<sup>145</sup> On the top of this beautiful precipice is Tatev Monastery. Orbelian says that 'from the ancient times, on a protruding stone, there was a very

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143 Orbelian, *The History of Syunik*, 265-67.

144 Տեր-Մովսիսեան, Հայկական Երեք Մեծ Վանքերի Տաթեիի, Հաղարծնի եւ Դադի Եկեղեցիները եւ Վանական Շինութիւնները (Ter-Movsisyan. *The Churches and Monastic Buildings of the Armenian Three Large Monasteries of Tatev, Haghartsin and Dadivank*), 4; Ալիշան, Սիսական (Alishan, *Sisakan*), 222.

145 Տեր-Մովսիսեան, Հայկական Երեք Մեծ Վանքերի Տաթեիի, Հաղարծնի եւ Դադի Եկեղեցիները եւ Վանական Շինութիւնները (Ter-Movsisyan. *The Churches and Monastic Buildings of the Armenian Three Large Monasteries of Tatev, Haghartsin and Dadivank*), 5; Ալիշան, Սիսական (Alishan, *Sisakan*), 222-23.)

primitive church with unhewn stones, where a few hermits lived'.<sup>146</sup> According to Orbelian, it was a focal point for Syunik and Baghats (the modern Ghapan). The greatest advantage was its location, as it was far from the routes of enemy invasion.<sup>147</sup> But even the fact that monastery is built on a huge rock, surrounded by mountains, and a deep ravine with swiftly flowing rivers did not stop such invasions. For enemies saw this as a highly desirable place to control, as they were intent not only on taking hostages, but on seizing power throughout the territory.

In speaking of his own rebuilding of the church of St Grigor Lusavorich, Orbelian tells the story of the discovery of an important relic. While they were destroying the base of the northern pillar, they found 'an ineffable treasure.' It was a relic of St Grigor Lusavorich – a part of his skull and right arm – which was hidden in a small, sealed wooden box.<sup>148</sup> Orbelian adds that after completing the construction, they put the relics in an inconspicuous and safe place. Unfortunately, he gives little detail about the relics, which is quite understandable, as he would not wish to give too much away about such 'an ineffable treasure', and the only further fact that Orbelian mentions is that, after finding this treasure, they rejoiced and gave glory to God.<sup>149</sup> It is interesting also that in telling the story, he does not mention any names and only

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146 See Orbelian, *The History of Syunik*, 205; Ալիշան, Սիսական (Alishan, *Sisakan*), 225; Տեր-Մովսիսեան, Հայկական Երեք Մեծ Վանքերի Տաթեհի, Հաղարծնի եւ Դաղի Եկեղեցիները եւ Վանական Շինութիւնները (Ter-Movsisyan. *The Churches and Monastic Buildings of the Armenian Three Large Monasteries of Tatev, Haghartsin and Dadivank*), 6.

147 See Orbelian, *The History of Syunik*, 205-210; Ալիշան, Սիսական (Alishan, *Sisakan*), 225; Տեր-Մովսիսեան, Հայկական Երեք Մեծ Վանքերի Տաթեհի, Հաղարծնի եւ Դաղի Եկեղեցիները եւ Վանական Շինութիւնները (Ter-Movsisyan. *The Churches and Monastic Buildings of the Armenian Three Large Monasteries of Tatev, Haghartsin and Dadivank*), 6.

148 Orbelian, *The History of Syunik*, 377.

149 *Ibid.*, 377.

speaks of ‘we’. But, taking into consideration the role of the dynasty and the bishop of the Tatev Monastery, it is clear who is implied by that ‘we’.

Under Vorotnetsi and Grigor Tatevatsi himself, the monastery of Tatev became once more a centre of cultural revival, a centre of faith and a place of great hope and promise. Among Tatevatsi’s students there were Arakel Syunetsi, Matteos Jughayetsi, and Tovma Metzopetsi, each of whom made an important contribution to fifteenth-century Armenia, and Grigor Tatevatsi had a direct role in the education of these cultural and theological leaders.

As we have seen, the Monastery of Tatev owed much to its special geographical location, but its fame is due above all to its educational system, in the development of which Tatevatsi was a crucial figure.

#### **1.4 *Gratun* / Library**

Tatev, like Gladzor, owed much of its renown to the collection of books made available there to students and scholars. Indeed, it was assumed that one of the main structures that any monasteries should have was a *gratun* – a ‘house of writing’, or library. Traditionally, monasteries – not least Tatev – paid great attention to the process of education, and that of course required books.<sup>150</sup> Despite much terrible destruction, many ancient manuscripts, some as old as the tenth century, survived

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150 See Տեր-Մովսիսեան, Հայկական Երեք Մեծ Վանքերի Տարբերի, Հաղարծնի եւ Դադի Եկեղեցիները եւ Վանական Շինութիւնները (Ter-Movsisyan. *The Churches and Monastic Buildings of the Armenian Three Large Monasteries of Tatev, Haghartsin and Dadivank*), 20.

thanks to monasteries' *gratuns*.<sup>151</sup> Tatev in particular had a rich *matenadaran*, or manuscript repository. According to Yeganyan, in the late twelfth century Tatev library contained some thousands of manuscripts,<sup>152</sup> while according to Orbelian, the manuscripts of Tatev Monastery numbered more than one thousand.<sup>153</sup> As Yeganyan points out, no precise information about the manuscripts of Tatev Monastery was available until the 60s of the nineteenth century.<sup>154</sup> Yeganyan also says that we have only a slight idea of the contents of Tatev's library since only 109 manuscripts which were written in Tatev Monastery between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries have survived and come down to us.<sup>155</sup> Between 1863 and 1910 a number of lists were made of Tatev's manuscripts, but none of these was published.<sup>156</sup> A cumulative list of manuscripts from Tatev library was compiled by Yeganyan.<sup>157</sup> In 1863 there were 187 manuscripts; in 1864-1865, 139 manuscripts; in 1866, 91 manuscripts; in 1868, still 91 manuscripts; in 1893, 73 manuscripts; in 1899, 107 manuscripts were recorded; in 1904, only 99; and in 1910, no fewer than 142.<sup>158</sup> At present, there are 147 manuscripts in the *Matenadaran* in Yerevan which can be traced to the library of Tatev.<sup>159</sup> What happened to the others? Archbishop Ter-Movsisyan reported that in 1904, when he was making list of Tatev's manuscripts, he discovered that the last

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151 Ibid., 20.

152 See Եգանյան Օնիկ, Տաթևվի Գրատան Ձեռագրերը, «Բանբեր Մատենադարանի», № 9: Երեվան, 1969 (Onnik Yeganyan, 'The Manuscripts of the Tatev Library'. *Matenadaran Bulletin*, № 9. Yerevan, 1969), 417- 25.

153 Ibid., 417.

154 Ibid.

155 Տես Մաշտոցյան Մատենադարան, Քարտարան № 3; *ibid.*, 417.

156 See *ibid.*, 418:

157 *Ibid.*, 418- 420.

158 *Ibid.*, 420.

159 Their numbers are: № 2490, 2821, 3319, 3462-3467, 3645-3648, 3650-3658, 3718, 3919, 3770-3776, 3815-3820, 3913-3942, 4004-4009, 4066-4086, 4119, 4134-4150, 4152-4172. 4181, 4261, 4275, 4423, 4509, 6271, 7243, 7363, 7364, 7386, 7418, 7724, 7759, 8302, 8593, 9244, 10199. See *ibid.*, 421.

priest to organize the library destroyed many manuscripts which seemed to him to be in a bad condition.<sup>160</sup>

### 1.5 The Scribal Arts and the ‘Art of Writing’

The arts of copying and illustrating manuscripts were developed from the first stages of the creation of the Armenian alphabet. However, there are only a few examples prior to the ninth century.<sup>161</sup> In the Ejmiadzin Gospels, from 989,<sup>162</sup> we have two sewn pages from a parchment manuscript of the seventh century.<sup>163</sup> As Hakobyan points out, the illuminations they contain are masterpieces.<sup>164</sup> The artists were clearly well educated and trained. According to literary sources, in Aragatsoten province, in the seventh to eighth centuries, there was a school of miniature painting. In 862, Queen Mlqe ordered a magnificent Gospel book and presented it to the church of the Holy Virgin in Varag.<sup>165</sup> It is the only manuscript from this school that has survived

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160 See Տեր-Մովսիսեան, Հայկական Երեք Մեծ Վանքերի Տաթևի, Հաղարծնի եւ Դադի Եկեղեցիները եւ Վանական Շինութիւնները (Ter-Movsisyan, *The Churches and Monastic Buildings of the Armenian Three Large Monasteries of Tatev, Haghartsin and Dadivank*), 20; Եգանյան, Տաթևի Գրատան Ձեռագրերը (Yeganyan, ‘The Manuscripts of the Tatev Library’), 421. Վերոհիշյալ 147 ձեռագրերը սկարագրված են Մատենադարանի Ձեռագրացանկի հատորներում (Տես Եգանյան, 432):

161 See Дурново Л.А. Краткая история древнеармянской живописи. – Ереван: Армянское государственное издательство, 1957. (Durnovo, L. *Short History of Ancient Armenian Art*. Yerevan: The Armenian State Publishing House, 1957).

162 See Matenadaran, M 2874. Durnovo discusses M 2374, see Дурново. Краткая история древнеармянской живописи (Durnovo, *Short History of Ancient Armenian Art*), 18.

163 See Հրավարդի Հակոբյան, Կերպարվեստը Հայոց Կրթարաններում, Գիրք I, (Հին շրջան և միջնադար), Երեվան, Գիտություն հրատարակչություն, 1996 (Hravard Hakobyan, *Fine Arts in Armenian Schools*. Vol. 1 (*The Ancient and Medieval Period*). Yerevan, “Gitutyun” Publishing House, 1996), 53.

164 See *ibid.*, 53; Дурново. Краткая история древнеармянской живописи (Durnovo, *Short History of Ancient Armenian Art*).

165 See Հակոբյան, Կերպարվեստը Հայոց Կրթարաններում (Hakobyan, *Fine Arts in Armenian Schools*), 53. According to Hakobyan, this manuscripts is kept in the Mkhataryan Library in Venice, numbered 1144 86.

intact.<sup>166</sup> It is a significant example of a fine manuscript from the ninth century. And, considering that Queen Mlqe would be unlikely to order a Gospel from unknown artists, we may assume that there must have been other fine works of these painters, about which we unfortunately have no information. Although a substantial majority of illuminated Armenian manuscripts are kept in the Matenadaran in Yerevan, a not inconsiderable number are kept in book depositories, libraries and private collections all around the world. Almost twenty five thousand manuscripts are known, and most of them are illustrated.<sup>167</sup> Yet even this number is incomplete, as there are still manuscripts waiting to be examined and catalogued. However, it is clear that the growth and development of the art of illuminated manuscripts flourished in the tenth eleventh centuries<sup>168</sup> and that the scribal arts were deemed of great importance and were taught in the monasteries.<sup>169</sup>

At the beginning of his career Tatevatsi appears as an artisan scribe. From one of the manuscripts in the Matenadaran, we learn that in Tatev University there was a ‘class of writing’.<sup>170</sup> The same manuscript also reveals that scribes studied not only miniature painting, but also portrait and landscape painting.<sup>171</sup>

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166 Ibid.

167 Ibid.

168 See *ibid.*, 53-72.

169 See Խաչերյան Լեվոն, Գրչության Արվեստի Լեզվական-Քերականական Տեսությունը Միջնադարյան Հայաստանում, Երեվան, Հայկական ՍՍՀ ԳԱ Հրատարակչություն, 1962 (Levon Khacheryan, *The Linguistic-Grammatical Theory of the Art of Writing in Medieval Armenia*. Yerevan, 1962); Հակոբյան, Կերպարվեստը Հայոց Կրթարաններում (Hakobyan, *Fine Arts in Armenian Schools*); Дурново. Краткая история древнеармянской живописи (Durnovo, *Short History of Ancient Armenian Art*).

170 See Manuscript M7823, 26b.

171 See Manuscript M7823, 23b.

In the Middle Ages ‘writing’ was understood as an ‘art’, which was itself understood as a ‘science’, which embraced the adjacent skills of study and performance arts such as miniature painting, ornament painting, knowledge of old Armenian system of musical notation, knowledge of bookbinding and knowledge of inks. Later, each of these aspects became individual branches of art, but in the Middle Ages in Armenia, in order to be a manuscript scribe one had to have knowledge of all these.<sup>172</sup>

Grigor Tatevatsi is known not only as a good scribe himself, but also as a great teacher of scribal art. He copied many philosophical and theological works, and a number of manuscripts with colophons written by Grigor have survived.<sup>173</sup> For him, ‘writing’ was also a form of knowledge.<sup>174</sup> According to Tatevatsi, ‘In order to achieve the best, one has to study, then to perform: one has to ponder, gaze and then work.’ It is an art of making a journey towards the imagination. When Tatevatsi speaks of study, he means first of all study of the language. As he points out, ‘The study of the ‘art of writing’ is first of all study of grammar and study of translation.’ It is important to remember that in the Middle Ages in Armenia, the study of

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172 See H Tashyan, 1898; G. Hovsepyan, 1913; I. Harutyunyan, 1892; Hrachya Ajaryan, 1928; K. Ghafadaryan, 1939; A. Abrahamyan, 1959; Խաչերյան Լեվոն, Գրչության Արվեստի Լեզվական-Քերականական Տեսությունը Միջնադարյան Հայաստանում (Khacheryan, *The Linguistic-Grammatical Theory of the Art of Writing in Medieval Armenia*).

173 See ԺԵ Դարի Հայերեն Ձեռագրերի Հիշատակարաններ, Մասն Առաջին (1401-1450), Կազմեց Լ. Խաչիկյան (Khachikyan, *Fifteenth-Century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*, part I), 103-104.

174 See Հակոբյան, Կերպարվեստը Հայոց Կրթարաններում (Hakobyan, *Fine Arts in Armenian Schools*); Дурново. Краткая история древнеармянской живописи (Durnovo, *Short History of Ancient Armenian Art*). Խաչերյան Լեվոն, Գրչության Արվեստի Լեզվական-Քերականական Տեսությունը Միջնադարյան Հայաստանում (Khacheryan, *The Linguistic-Grammatical Theory of the Art of Writing in Medieval Armenia*).

grammar was understood in five ways – as etymology, sequence (of tenses), orthography, articulation and prosody.<sup>175</sup>

As we have seen, for Tatevatsi the language of manuscripts was very important. But why does Tatevatsi speak especially of grammar and translation? By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Armenian language had undergone significant changes from the language of the fifth or sixth centuries; it had moved away from the classical Grabar.<sup>176</sup> By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, classical Grabar was no longer a spoken language; it existed more as an academic and church language.<sup>177</sup> Therefore the scribes of the Middle Ages needed to study classical Armenian in order to be able to copy or write a manuscript. They needed a high level of linguistic and grammatical competence. This state of affairs is illustrated by the fact that already in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries such scholars as Nerses Shnorhali, Nerses Lambronatsi and Vardan Areveltsi were using both Classical Armenian and the New Armenia of their time in their writing.<sup>178</sup> As Khacheryan points out, ‘It means that people did not understand Grabar [Old Armenian] anymore, and the author in order to make his ideas accessible for everyone, was forced not to use Grabar, and to use

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175 See A. Aytnyan. *The Grammatical Examination of New Armenian or the Present Armenian Language*. Vienna, 1866, part 3, 337. Also, Խաչերյան Լեվոն, Գրչության Արվեստի Լեզվական-Քերականական Տեսությունը Միջնադարյան Հայաստանում (Khacheryan, *The Linguistic-Grammatical Theory of the Art of Writing in Medieval Armenia*), 12-13.

176 See Խաչերյան Լեվոն, Գրչության Արվեստի Լեզվական-Քերականական Տեսությունը Միջնադարյան Հայաստանում (Khacheryan, *The Linguistic-Grammatical Theory of the Art of Writing in Medieval Armenia*), 20-24.

177 See *ibid.*, 20.

178 *Ibid.*, 22.

the language that was used by the people.’<sup>179</sup> Therefore, Khacheryan suggests, we may say that the ‘art of writing’ with its linguistic and grammatical aspects were directly tied to the system of spelling and pronunciation of the language which had passed from Grabar to the spoken Armenian language of the Middle Ages with its changes in orthography.<sup>180</sup>

We need not consider this topic in detail, but it is important to note that scribes now had all the tasks that other scribes in past centuries had faced, plus the new linguistic demands of the language, which brought in their wake many complex questions.<sup>181</sup> In the fourteenth century the ‘art of writing’ was developed and was taught in many Universities. The Universities of Gladzor and Tatev are clear examples.

As Khacheryan points out, ‘For Tatevatsi there is no strict division between grammar and logic.’<sup>182</sup> He does not separate the linguistic aspect of a text from its logical structure. That is to say, Tatevatsi believes that the true meaning resides in the words, and that it is therefore most important not only to write or translate the word correctly from a linguistic point of view, but its logical sequence must be observed. Tatevatsi points out in one of his texts that ‘the words have been mutilated by illiterate scribes; therefore our translators, in order to overcome all difficulties, went to foreign countries to study language and grammar for the purpose of being able to

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179 Ibid.

180 Ibid., 23.

181 Ibid., 11-52.

182 Ibid., 181.

penetrate into the idea.’<sup>183</sup> Khacheryan rightly points out that under the prevailing conditions, there was an urgent need to develop a linguistic-grammatical theory of the ‘art of writings’.<sup>184</sup> Tatevatsi, as we shall see, has three works concerning this ‘art of writing’.<sup>185</sup>

## 1.6 Education in Tatev

Grigor Tatevatsi stayed at Tatev between 1390 and early 1408. The University at that time had great prestige and so students from the whole of Armenia wanted to study there. According to Tatevatsi, a child is more gifted at study than an adult,<sup>186</sup> but children have differing abilities due to their character, heredity and upbringing.<sup>187</sup> From Matenaderan MS 7823 we learn that there were three faculties: music, art and theology.<sup>188</sup> Kirakos Banaser, a biographer of Tovma Metzopetsi, discusses the

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183 Ibid., 184.

184 Ibid.

185 See *ibid.*, 180. *The Linguistic-Grammatical Theory of the Art of Writing in the Medieval Armenia* by Khacheryan is a great work for understanding the different periods of ‘the art of writing’ in Armenia. Khacheryan also examines deeply Tatevatsi’s work concerning ‘the art of writing’.

186 See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 251.

187 See *ibid.*, 251-252.

188 ‘He had in the monastery of Tatev three faculties. In one he taught the music with sweet-sounding melodies of the former musician-vardepets, so that at once they came from the entire land and from the cities and studied at his feet. And in the other, [Tatevatsi taught] the art of portrait painting and various [styles of] painting. And in the third, [Tatevatsi taught] the ‘internal’ and ‘external’ writings in particular the Old and New Testaments, with ‘internal’ and ‘external’ commentary and translation’. (English text from La Porta, ‘The theology of the Holy Dionysius’, 43. Also see Khachikyan 1946, 231-32, Մովսիսյան, Ուրվագծեր Չայ Դպրոցի և Մանկավարժության Պատմության (X-XV դարեր); (Movsisyan. *Sketches on the History of Armenian Schooling and Pedagogics (10-15 cc)*), 131-32; Խաչերեան, Գլածորի Համալսարանը Չայ Մանկավարժական Ստեփ Զարգացման Մեջ (Khacheryan, *The Role of Gladzor University in the Development of Armenian Pedagogical Thought*), 96-97. Mathews-Sanjian 1991, 23-24. The manuscript is the *History of Arcakh*, dated to 1870-1880, copied by its author Arakel Kostanyan.

various sciences and disciplines which were taught at the University of Tatev.<sup>189</sup> The system of education included secular and spiritual disciplines. During their seven or eight years of education, students, regardless of their speciality, were required to study theology, secular sciences and arts. The principles of classical education were grammar, rhetoric and logic. The series of exact sciences were arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music theory. The music faculty taught music by the canons of mellifluous singing, following the systems of ancient singer vardapets,<sup>190</sup> focusing on the study of the liturgy and the Divine Office. Rhetoric, grammar, logic, foreign languages and painting were also taught, and many mature students were well prepared in teaching, preaching and the scribal arts.

The latter were very important and were regularly taught in the monasteries. Gospels and philosophical and theological works were copied. Tatevatsi is known not only as a good teacher of scribal art, but also as a fine scribe himself. Art, for Tatev and for Grigor Tatevatsi, was a form of knowledge.

Exact numbers of students are unknown, but Tatevatsi's student Metzopetsi tells us that when he arrived in Tatev in 1406 with eleven fellow students, there were many others there. He adds that the number of monks in the monastery was between sixty to eighty.

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189 For the life of Tovma Metzopetsi see, Ovanisyan, 1-13, or *Armenian Hagiography of the V-XV Centuries*. Translated from Old Armenian and commentary by K.S. Ter-Davtyan. Yerevan; Nairi, 1996, 261-268.

190 See Մովսիսյան, Ուրվագծեր Հայ Դպրոցի և Մանկավարժության Պատմության (X-XV դարեր), (Movsisyan. *Sketches on the History of Armenian Schooling and Pedagogics (10-15 cc)*), 125-170.

In 1408, Tatevatsi was forced to flee from Tatev to Metzop. Metzopetsi says that Tatevatsi took with him ten vardapets<sup>191</sup> and many monks and that the party numbered eighty in all.<sup>192</sup> Another of Tatevatsi's students, Sargis, speaks of 160 monks and eight vardapets.<sup>193</sup> A list of names of some of those who studied at Tatev, the names of the eleven students who accompanied Tovma to Tatev and the names of the ten vardapets who came to Metzop Monastery with Tatevatsi are recorded in Metzopetsi's history and in his colophon to Matenaderan MS 2065.<sup>194</sup>

According to the *Yaysmawurk* in Syunik Tatevatsi gathered many students and educated them in the true faith. In his lectures he opened for them difficult passages of Scripture: 'Like a bee flying over the different flowers in distant lands and bringing sweet nectar and healthy potion, so did the holy Tatevatsi penetrate through the Old and New Testaments.' 'Greek and Latin rhetoricians came to Tatevatsi and listened to his speech, full of boundless knowledge, which as an inexhaustible source flowed from his lips. His wisdom was perfect, and his knowledge was boundless.' 'In his sermons, Grigor through the art of speech led all to admiration.'

He had many disciples, including Mkhitar of Tatev; Hovhannes of Ehegnavank; Galoust of Syunik; Hagop Bostatsi; Grigor from Ararat; Grigor and Matteos, both from Jugha; Zakaria Astapatsi; Yeghia Metzopetsi; Hovhannes

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191 Later Tovma mentions that there were eleven vardapets; see Metzopetsi.

192 See Khachikyan, *Fifteenth-Century Armenian Manuscript Colophons*, 101, it is a colophon from 1410. The manuscript is M 2065, a copy of Tatevatsi's Sermons, which was completed by Tovma Metzopetsi in 1410.

193 See *ibid.*, 93.

194 See Tovma Metzopetsi; La Porta gives the complete English translation of the names and by comparing different colophons is able to provide an explanation of these figures in his thesis ('The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 53-57).

from the monastery of Vahand; Unan of Shemakha; and Hovhannes of Karmir Kapan. And three of his students came from other territories: Matteos Uhetsi from the St Gandzasar Monastery, Mkrtich from Paytakaran and Stepanos from Hakhaverzh. And more than sixty ministers were with him.

He began to teach them the works of foreign philosophers, and revealed and elucidated the hidden meaning of the treasures with perfect wisdom. He examined fourteen epistles of the Apostle Paul and the letter ‘To those’ of Gregory the Theologian.

And the twelve brethren, the disciples of the great Sargis, after the death of their vardapet went to study with the great Grigor. Here are their names: Hagop, Margare, Hovhannes, Mkrtich, Karapet, Melkiset, Sargis, Matteos, Karapet and Tuma [there are only ten names in the list]. For a whole year he comforted them with the divine writings. But because of persecution by infidels, Grigor, taking with him all his disciples, left the Syunik region and went to the area of Archesh. He settled in the monastery of Metzop with the humble, blessed man of God, the vardapet Hovhannes, who preached the Word of God. Hovhannes with all his disciples went out to meet the spiritual father, and accompanied him to his hermitage.<sup>195</sup>

### **1.7 Syunik and the Mongols**

Much of our story so far has taken place in Syunik. Grigor may have been born there, or at least spent some time there with his family. There were the great monasteries

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195 *Yaysmawurk*, 61

and Universities of Gladzor and Tatev. In 1390 he was invited to Syunik by Prince Smbat Orbelian.<sup>196</sup> And there much of our story in the next Chapter, of conflict with the Unitors, will take place.

According to Orbelian the historian, Syunik had twelve provinces, and the first one, where the thrones of Syunik's princes and of the Patriarch were located, was Jghuk, which was later named Syunik. The region of Syunik was one of the most important parts of Armenia; Agathangelos already reports that King Trdat, in sending St Grigor to Caesarea to be ordained, sent sixteen princes of the House of Torgom, including the prince of Syunik, with deputies to accompany St Grigor.<sup>197</sup> It is an important fact, as we see that even the beginning of the fourth century, the leaders of Syunik were respected and played a very important role in the life of the country. In 970 Syunik became a kingdom, which lasted for almost two hundred years, but in 1170 it was destroyed by the Seljuks. The kingdom of Syunik was the last kingdom in the territory of historical Armenia.<sup>198</sup>

In comparison with other provinces in Central Armenia, Syunik was protected from pillage and violence at the hands of the Mongols, and was in a relatively secure state

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196 See Аревшатян С.С. *Философские взгляды Григора Татеваци*. – Ереван: Издательство АН Армянской ССР, 1957. (S. Arevshatyan, *Philosophical Beliefs of Gregory Tatevatsi*. Yerevan: Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, 1957), 29; Կարափայան, Գրիգոր Տաթևվացի. (Karpisyan. 'Grigor Tatevatsi'), 1959/3, 27), where the author mentions the date but did not mention that Tatevatsi was invited. But Khachikyan believes that it was only in 1393 that Tatevatsi moved to Tatev with his students from Aprakunis. See Խաչիկյան, Այոնևաց Օրբելյանների Բուրթելյան ճյուղը, (Khachikyan. 'The Burtelyan Branch of the Orbelians of Syunik', 193.

197 See Ագաթանգեղոս, Պատմություն Յայոց (Արամ Տեր-Ղեվոնդյանի) (Agathangelos, *History of Armenia*. (Aram Ter-Ghevondyan).

198 See Ս. Պողոսյան, Տաթևի Յամառոտ Պատմությունը, Երկրորդ հրատարակություն (S. Poghosyan. *The Brief History of Tatev*), 5).

economically. The Universities of Gladzor and Tatev, together with other monasteries, had become major centres of cultural revival, and for two centuries not only maintained the cultural traditions of the past, but made significant contributions of their own to Medieval Armenian culture. The role of Gladzor and Tatev Universities is key, as even under the heavy yoke of Tartar-Mongol invasions, due to the work of these educational centres, Armenian culture continued its development, particularly in the fields of theology, history, philosophy and art.

The Mongol conquests and invasions are often depicted as the most ravaging and devastating examples in history of barbarian nomadic subjugation of developed and progressive centres in the Middle Ages. But the Mongols in some periods of their dominion were quite tolerant of the culture, religion, and social and political structures of defeated nations. This tolerance was, though, double-barrelled, especially with reference to social and political structures. Armenian feudal lords (naxarars), most of whom retained control of their lands and whose power was left intact in many respects, became merely a tool of the Mongol invaders.

To become a part of the vertical administrative of the Mongol Empire, foreign lords were supposed to be granted an 'inju status', which entitled them to rule independently in their own land and to pay taxes directly. That status could be honored only after paying the Mongol Great Khan a formal visit. It obliged lords to collect taxes imposed by the Empire, to take part in Mongol campaigns with their own army and to make a journey to a Mongol court on first demand. Breaking any of those obligations was considered as high treason and was cruelly punished. 'Inju

status' was not for the Mongols merely an administrative tool. In the first place, as Bedrosian observes, 'the immediate effect of this was to distort and partially destroy the nexus of political (and of course, military) ties which had existed between the nobles and the Georgian Crown.'<sup>199</sup> Secondly, 'inju status was an ideal tool for the 'manipulation of naxarar precedence'.<sup>200</sup> According to Dadoyan, 'by the instigation of the Mongols, they [Armenian lords] were in constant competition with each other'.<sup>201</sup> Hence, as observed by Lane, 'the bestowal of such favors as 'inju status' was a convenient way for the Mongols to pre-empt the build-up of powerbases and possible resistance, and reward faithful service'.<sup>202</sup>

Co-optation of allegiance, a corollary of the manipulation of naxarar precedence, occurred as a natural consequence of Mongol policies. This involved more than simply the extension of one lord's boundaries at the expense of another's. The Mongols attempted to incorporate certain prominent naxarars into their own court and administration, and thereby created conflicts of loyalty. They further sought to bind naxarars to themselves by providing them with Mongol wives.'<sup>203</sup>

Thus, despite the fact that the Mongols were mainly illiterate and less developed than the nations they vanquished, they understood and firmly implemented the principle

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199 Bedrosian, 'The Turco-Mongol Invasions', 180.

200 Ibid.

201 Seta B. Dadoyan 'The Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World: Armenian Realpolitik in the Islamic World and Diverging Paradigms - Case of Cilicia Eleventh to Fourteenth Centuries.' *Armenian Studies* 2, 152.

202 Lane, *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Iran*, 55.

203 Bedrosian, 'The Turco-Mongol Invasions', 186.

of *divide et impera*. ‘The response of the Armenian lords to the new reality of Mongol rule, expressed in various ways, was important for both parties. The Armenians preserved their lands through loyalty to Mongol lordship, and thus secured their political identity in the region. In return, the Mongols gained reliable vassals to assist them in their military activities.’<sup>204</sup>

The first period of Mongol dominion in Armenia was characterised by considerate treatment of the Armenians Church and its bishops. The Mongols, who had not as yet turned to Islam, even benefited the Church with tax-free status. At the same time many Armenian lords under the pressure of high taxes were forced to grant their properties to monasteries to avoid bankruptcy.

Mongol policy toward the Armenian Church might be attributed to a number of factors. First, ‘the Mongols did not sympathize with the Muslims, because they stood before their imperialist project and often used the Christians against them.’<sup>205</sup> Therefore, the Armenian Church was important for the Mongols as a religious institution which could persuade its followers to fight against ‘infidels’ and first of all against the Seljuks. Secondly, the Armenian Church was important for the Mongols as a social and political institution taking into consideration the fact that, apart from its prosperity and its weight and prestige in society, most of its bishops were close relatives of the lords of the districts in which they served. Noting that it was routine practice in the Arsacid period as well, Bedrosian observes that ‘when a given regime granted the Church tax-free status or other privileges, the secular lords

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204 Dashdondog. *The Mongols and the Armenians*, 97.

205 Dadoyan, ‘The Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World’, 152.

attempted to transfer the family holdings to the (family) Church, to avoid paying taxes, or to obtain other advantages. Each of the major naxarar families groomed certain members (sometimes selected at birth) for specific offices in the Church<sup>206</sup>. The clearest example of this is found in thirteenth-century Syunik, where the Metropolitan bishop Stepanos Orbelian, a member of the Orbelian family of princes and feudal lords, was the brother of Prince Elikum III Orbelian, who controlled Syunik province at the same time.<sup>207</sup> Finally, without over-emphasising this, we cannot forget that the Mongols were not devoid of Christian influence. It is well known that among the mainly shamanist Mongols were Nestorian Christian tribes.<sup>208</sup> Furthermore, it is also known that there were Christian wives and sisters of Mongol nobles, and some of them actively supported Christians. Dashdondog stated, ‘Undeniably, the fact that some of the Mongol chiefs had Nestorian Christian wives assisted the Christians in the Caucasus. Thus in 1242, the help of Altuna Khatun made possible the return of Nersēs, the Catholicos of Caucasian Albania to his seat.’<sup>209</sup> Another example is provided by Dadoyan, who observes that ‘the Monastery and Seminary of Tat’ew in Siwnik’ were renovated with the help of Ilkhanid Baiju’s Christian wife.’<sup>210</sup>

One of the most significant examples of the collaboration of Armenian lords with the Mongols is found in the Orbelian family. After the death of the Syunik prince Elikum

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206 Bedrosian, ‘The Turco-Mongol Invasions’, 229.

207 Ibid.

208 Mark Chuanhang Shan. ‘The Kingdom of God in Yurts’; Moffett. *A History of Christianity in Asia*. Volume I, 400; Bedrosian, ‘The Turco-Mongol Invasions’, 137. Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog. *The Mongols and the Armenians*, 38.

209 Dashdondog. *The Mongols and the Armenians*, 38.

210 Dadoyan, ‘The Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World’, 152.

III Orbelian in 1250, the hereditary and heritable rights of Orbelian's family were belligerently contested by the Zakarian lordly family. This forced Smbat Orbelian to travel twice (in 1252 and 1257) to the Mongol capital Kara-Korum. During these meetings Smbat not only confirmed his family's hereditary rights, but also widened the territory they controlled and obtained many other advantages. According to Sanjian,

Prince Smbat's success had far-reaching consequences. The entire province of Siwnik' was now constituted into a separate *tuman* as the Orbelian hereditary domain and was granted "inju status". This meant that the tribute from Siwnik' was no longer collected by tax-farmers but the Orbelian prince who was responsible directly to the Mongol court. Clergy and religious institutions were tax-exempt and prosperities that had been confiscated from them were restored.<sup>211</sup>

### **1.8 Grigor Tatevatsi and the Age of Feudalism**

Tatevatsi, being a medieval theologian, carefully evaluated the ruling feudal ideology. He maintained the idea that a society cannot exist without a rule, laws and power. According to Tatevatsi, a social hierarchy develops some form of order in public life, a certain mode of relationship and communal life, and all power comes forth for the purpose of organising and regulating public life. He explains that human beings are social and political creatures. God created man as a social being; hence the creation of social units meets the requirements of human nature. Tatevatsi makes it

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211 Avedis Krikor Sanjian. *Armenian Gospel Iconography: The Tradition of the Glajor Gospel*. Dumbarton Oaks, 1991, 12.

clear that a society without a ruler is doomed to destruction, while a nation ruled and regulated by law in its governance is the stronger. ‘A nation and a city are made strong by a ruler and spiritual leader; hence they gain spiritual and physical viability.’ And when a nation is without a ruler and the people without leadership, they are divided and have fallen down and been trodden under the feet of men and scattered, driven by stormy winds and deformed and withered and defiled with many sins.’ Tatevatsi points to the inconsolable fate of the Armenian people: ‘Now we can see our nation, unruled and without a leader like sheep without a shepherd, devoured by beasts and perishing.’

According to Tatevatsi man is a unity of soul and body, spiritually attached to the heavenly realm and physically to the earthly realm. And so he differentiates two forms of governance, spiritual and secular. Spiritual governance is performed by the leaders of the Church, who govern the ‘spiritual house of God and the souls of men’, whereas kings and rulers regulate the ‘physical house of the world, villages, towns and countries’.

Fundamental differences, according to Tatevatsi, exist between these two powers. People are subjected to the worldly power by force, obligation and necessity, but they obey the spiritual power willingly and by free choice, inasmuch as a human being has free will. Also, worldly governance is transient and mutable, and therefore limited in time and space, whereas spiritual governance is permanent and not subject to limitation in terms of time and space. Moreover, secular governance refers to

men's bodies only and has no power over them at all after death, whereas spiritual governance refers to both body and soul and influences men in the afterlife as well.

It is clear that for Tatevatsi there is a prevalence of the spiritual power over the worldly. I would argue that Tatevatsi thought that in Western society, the Catholic Church evidently dominated every aspect of life, and the prevalence of spiritual power over secular was deeply rooted in Western religious and philosophical thought. While in medieval Europe, as he saw it, a holy theocracy was headed by the Roman Catholic Church, in Armenian society historical circumstances had shaped a different relationship between spiritual and secular power. Because of a long-lasting absence of statehood, the Armenian people had come under the rule of various foreign powers differing from them and from each other in their religious and cultural values. In this case the Christian precept of the prevalence of the spiritual power became a national idea used by the Armenian clergy to justify the significance of the spiritual unity of the Armenian people.

It is claimed that Tatevatsi 'was respected and honoured by the ruler Tamerlane and his son Miranshagh',<sup>212</sup> a claim which seems highly implausible considering the treatment of Tamerlane in Tovma Metzopetsi's *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*. There we are told that Tamerlane was cruel and merciless towards the Armenian people and during his three devastating incursions<sup>213</sup> into Armenia, many

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212 See Тер-Давтян, 1996, 242. (Ter-Davtyan, 1996, 242).

213 During nineteen years Tamerlane made three excursions to Armenia. The first was from 1386-1387, the second from 1394-1396, and the third between 1399 and 1404.

died and were tortured, for refusing to change their beliefs.<sup>214</sup> Therefore, it seems particularly unlikely that such a ruler and his son would respect and even honour an Armenian Christian teacher, whose nation was struggling so much.

But there is perhaps another side to the question, and some sort of respect might seem less unlikely. For it is also claimed, by Jughayetsi, that ‘Armenians were honoured with respect from foreigners due to the wise speeches of Grigor Tatevatsi.’<sup>215</sup> Clearly, the author means that even foreigners liked to listen to his words. It is said that Tatevatsi knew Arabic, and *Yaysmawurk* seems to confirm this. It is also known that Tatevatsi with his students, for their own safety, were often forced to change their place of stay. The fact that they were moving from one place to another suggests that they were in touch with people of different cultures and faiths. And Tatevatsi’s patience to carry on, to investigate, to elucidate, to develop and to share his wisdom with others, in spite of such a difficult environment, was obvious to all. The accounts of Jughayetsi and Metzopetsi, which are the narrative of eyewitnesses, state that Tatevatsi was an intriguing figure, even to foreigners.

His fame can be illustrated in these words:

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214 See Tovma Metzopetsi. *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*. For example in the town Tosp, which was in Vaspurakan province, people found refuge from the enemy in the castle of Van, but Tamerlane held the castle in siege for forty days and, unfortunately, people who were suffering from the absence of water and bread, finally gave up. Metzopetsi writes, ‘the bloody tyrant ordered to take women and children as prisoners and to throw others down from the castle, believers and nonbelievers. They executed his villainous order and started to throw down everyone wholesale. There were so many dead bodies that last people who were thrown down did not die’.

215 See Тер-Давтян, 1996, 242. (Ter-Davtyan, *Armenian Hagiography of the V-XV Centuries*, 242).

For the glory of Christ, our God, in this year the construction of the church of the Holy Virgin was completed, which began in 857 (1402) and was finished seven years later in 858 (1409). And when a great teacher Grigor arrived there, his fame spread throughout the country. Many vardapets and monks gathered around him, as disciples gathered around Christ. He began to elucidate and illuminate Holy Scripture, like our Saviour Jesus, who on the Mount of Olives enlightened the apostles with the teaching of the blessed life. Vardapet Hovannes, filled with unspeakable joy, rejoiced and was anxious about the one thing necessary. And he prayed to Christ, saying, ‘My Lord Jesus, I praised your mother, and you have honoured me with my spiritual fathers, scribes and true disciples. On the day of the consecration of the church of your Mother you sent them to me. How can I repay you for this? I, a poor man, have nothing. We can only bless and praise the Most Holy Trinity and the Mother of the Only-Begotten for the fact that you granted me to see the completed construction of the church.’<sup>216</sup>

### **1.9 Tatevatsi’s Writings**

The vardapet Grigor Tatevatsi was a prolific writer, who left an extensive literary output, which can be divided by content into four main groups: theological, philosophical, pastoral-liturgical and exegetical. It is through Tatevatsi’s writings we see him most clearly.

According to the *Yaysmawurk*, Tatevatsi wrote many works for the church, namely:

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216 Arakel, 716—20.

*Select interpretation of the Psalms;*

*Select interpretation of Proverbs, Song of Songs, and the Book of Wisdom;*

*Interpretation of the Book of Job;*

*Select interpretation of the Book of Isaiah;*

*Select interpretation of the Gospel of John;*

*Select interpretation of the Gospel of Matthew;*

*Book of Questions;*

*Summer Volume and Winter Volume;*

*Book of Golden Content;*

*Interpretations of Aristotle's 'Categories', 'Periarmeviasa' 'Peri hermeneias',  
'On Virtue';*

*Introduction to and interpretation of the 'Book of Erudite Conversations';*

*Interpretation of the works of Aristakes and of the letters of Georg;*

*Interpretation of the book 'To those';*

*Little question book of Georg;*

*and the essay On the rules of ordination into the rank of doctors of Church.*

‘Tatevatsi also wrote many other works, which we do not mention, but with which the learned of the day were instructed, and by which the vardapets preached by them. He is called the second John Chrysostom and Gregory the Theologian, because he saw our blindness nationwide.’

The eulogy continues,

And he could even give bread or an apple to an old man ... Blessed are those who saw and heard him ... His look was menacing and beautiful. He fasted strictly and loved holiness, had a handsome face, eyes full of tears, and great height and was so attractive and generously gifted with graces that his disciples compared their teacher with our Lord Jesus Christ. The great Armenian teacher Grigor was full of the radiant gift of the Holy Spirit. He became the second illuminator of Armenians, and the most perfect theologian, surpassing men of wisdom: old and new doctors of the church.<sup>217</sup>

Tatevatsi was much interested in Greek theologians and philosophers and often made use of Dionysius of Alexandria, Athanasius of Alexandria, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea and John Chrysostom, as well as Cyril of Alexandria and Dionysius the Areopagite. Among Latin authors, Tatevatsi knew well Augustine of Hippo, Albertus Magnus and especially Thomas Aquinas.

The most important theological works of Grigor Tatevatsi are, firstly, *Ոսկեփորիկ* (*Book of Golden Content*), where such questions as faith, theology, the existence of God, and the Holy Trinity are examined. The work was written in 1401 and published in 1746. In 1995, it was translated from Grabar into modern Armenian by Qyoseyan. A second work of Tatevatsi is *Թարրուզիրք* (*Book of Homilies*), which is an excellent textbook on homiletics and consists of two volumes, *Զմերան Զատոր* (*Winter Volume*) and *Ամառան Զատոր* (*Summer Volume*). *Թարրուզիրք* was

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<sup>217</sup> *Yaysmawurk*, 62

completed in 1407 and published, also in Constantinople, in 1740-1741. There are 344 sermons written partly against the attempts at achieving unity of the Roman Church. In 1998 the work was reprinted in Jerusalem in Ancient Armenian.

And finally, the most important work for our purposes is Գիրք Հարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), which was written by Tatevatsi over a period of seventeen years and completed in 1397.<sup>218</sup> The *Book of Questions* has often been compared in style and contents to *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, and has been called an Armenian *Summa*.<sup>219</sup> But Ashjian rightly points out that ‘the *Book of Questions* is not a classical summa, as it is often called in western scholarship, for it does not dispose of the questions with objections, arguments and solutions. Rather, the answers follow the questions: Grigor lines up all his arguments, sometimes in a hyper analytical system, giving as many as forty or more arguments, testimonies, indications, quotations, etc.’<sup>220</sup> Moreover, Tatevatsi, though a man of extensive knowledge, was never a scholastic theologian. He was influenced by classical philosophy, and from his works it is clear that he was familiar with Western thought, for, in order to be able to speak against it, he had to know what it was that he was speaking against.

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218 The original manuscript is № 3616. There is also manuscript № 9247, which was copied in 1407 by Tatevatsi’s pupil, under Tatevatsi’s control. It is acknowledged that the first publication, which was in 1729 in Constantinople, was of high quality, and probably had a run of 150-200 copies, which was indeed a large print run for the eighteenth century. Now, there are only 37 copies which have survived and are preserved in museums and libraries all over the world. For complete information about the *Book of Questions* see the introduction by Arevshatyan in *Book of Questions*, Jerusalem, 1993, I-XI (In Armenian).

219 See Mesrob Krikoryan. *Grigor of Tatev. A Great Scholastic Theologian and Philosopher*, 327. Also see Leon Arpee, ‘High-Lights of Armenian Mediaeval Ecclesiastical Literature’. *Church History* 13..4 (1944), 278.

220 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 110.

### 1.10 Tatevatsi as an Ecclesiastical Leader – The Controversy of the Akhtamar

At the beginning of the second decade of the twelfth century the problem of schism had long troubled the Armenian Church. The simultaneous presence of two Catholicos in Akhtamar<sup>221</sup> and Sis complicated the life of Armenians in Cilicia and Greater Armenia. The regions of Kajberunik, Artsrunis, Xizan, Mokka, Rstunik, Turuberan and Van recognised the authority of the Catholicos of Akhtamar. But their inhabitants were excommunicated and anathematized by the remainder of the Armenian Church.<sup>222</sup>

Metzopetsi reports that Tatevatsi with his students, including Metzopetsi himself, because of the difficult conditions in Syunik, went to Artchesh<sup>223</sup> (in Kajberunik) and settled in Metzop Monastery.<sup>224</sup>

According to Metzopetsi, while at Metzop Monastery,<sup>225</sup> Tatevatsi resolved the controversy of Akhtamar. ‘At the same time [1409], he was busy with the question of Akhtamar’s bond [that is, anathema, excommunication] and by convening a great

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221 See Միքայել Չամչյանց, Հայոց Պատմություն, Երևան, 1984: (Miqael Chamchyants, *History of Armenia*, repr. Yerevan, 1984 (orig. ed. Venice 1784); Nerses Akinean. *Chronicle of the Catholicoses of Akhtamar*. Vienna, 1920; Օրմանեան: Ազգապատում, Հատոր Բ. (Ormanian, *Azgapatum (National History)*) II: 1398-1399.

222 In colophons dating from the 1369 to 1433, we see that the scribes recognize the authority of the Catholicos of Akhtamar. La Porta presents all these in *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 1301-1480, A Source for Middle Eastern History*. Selected, Translated, and Annotated by Avedis Sanjian. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1969. See La Porta, ‘The Theology of the Holy Dionysius’, 79, note 235.

223 Artchesh is a town located in the Van Province, on the northern bank of Lake Van (now in Turkey). See Tadevos Hakobyan. *The Cities of Historical Armenia: Artchesh*. Yerevan, 1982, 256 (In Armenian).

224 See Metzopetsi, *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*, 51-52.

225 For the history of Metzop Monastery see Մովսիսյան, Ուրվագծեր Հայ Դպրոցի և Մանկավարժության Պատմության (X-XV դարեր), (Movsisyan. *Sketches on the History of Armenian Schooling and Pedagogics (10-15 cc)*), 200-211.

council removed the curse of the great Catholicoi from all.<sup>226</sup> Metzopetsi adds that Hovhannes,<sup>227</sup> the great monk and vardapet at the Monastery of Metzop ‘guided the council of the holy brothers and took care of them all, feeding and dressing them.’<sup>228</sup> Unfortunately, we are not told how Tatevatsi organised the council, who was present at it, or whether the council was intended to discuss only the question of Akhtamar? If it was indeed a ‘great council’ that resolved the controversy, this must suggest the participation of many monks and ecclesiastical leaders from all over Armenia, as it was a serious and important problem. But if the monk Hovhannes alone took care of all the participants, the council may not have been ‘great’ in the number of participants, but rather in the stature of those present, who were truly respectful and important ecclesiastical leaders.

In the *Yaysmawurk*, we are told that Grigor Tatevatsi, when he was in the Monastery of Metzop, saw a dream, and that when he woke up, he started to lament with bitter tears.<sup>229</sup> Then, according to the *Yaysmawurk*, Tatevatsi sent a salutatory letter to

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226 See Metzopetsi. *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*. 1860, 52 (In Old Armenian); Metzopetsi. *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*. Translation from old Armenian, and comments by K.C. Ter-Davtyan. 2005, 46 (In Russian).

227 Metzopetsi says that Hovhannes (Artcheshtsi) was a student of Vorotnetsi for twelve years. In order to get authorization to become a vardapet, he was asked by Vorotnetsi to learn by heart holy writings, but because of sickness Vorotnetsi did not manage to give Hovhannes that authority, and asked Tatevatsi to do it and to send him to his birth place, which was Kajberunik. Tatevatsi complied with request of Vorotnetsi. See Metzopetsi, *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*. 1860, 55-56.

228 See Metzopetsi, *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*. 1860, 52-53 (In Old Armenian); *History of Tamerlane and His Successors*. Translation from old Armenian, and comments by K.C. Ter-Davtyan. 2005, 46 (In Russian).

229 ‘In the monastery of Metzop, Grigor saw a dream, as if three corpses, wrapped in a shroud and being bound by unbreakable chains hands and feet, were put in front of Grigor. And he turned and said, ‘Who are you? And why are you in fetters? And they said, ‘We are condemned and excommunicated Catholicoses -dissidents. We

Catholicos Hakob of Sis, who convened the great council of Church fathers and took from them the curse.<sup>230</sup> So while Metzopetsi speaks of a ‘great council’, the *Yaysmawurk* reports a letter of Tatevatsi’s.

The eighteenth-century historian Chamchyants purports to cite Tatevatsi’s letter.<sup>231</sup> He writes to the Catholicos of Sis that, when they reached Vaspurakan, he and his students once again recognised that the Catholicos of Akhtamar had disgraced himself. Tatevatsi also says that all the clergy and lay representatives of the place agreed to dismiss the Catholicos [Davit III of Akhtamar] from his orders and from the throne. Moreover, they wrote two letters and sent them to all cities and villages and to the four parts of the land, ‘to the East, to the throne of Grigor Catholicos of the Albanians; to the South, to Persia; to the North, to the Georgian house; and to the West, to your holy throne [Sis].’<sup>232</sup> Tatevatsi says that the Catholicos must ordain the bishops of those now obedient to his holy throne and bless their muron, by which the believers will be illuminated and from which they will receive a divine light.

The key demands of the letter are, first, that they ask the Catholicos Hakib III of Sis to write a letter of blessing to all – to every city and to every vardapet and all priests, and, secondly, to release their dead from anathema. And in order to reinforce this request, Tatevatsi asserts that, ‘when the land of Vostan and others hear that, they

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pray to you, for the love of Christ, tell (order) to remove off us the curse of the great Catholicos (patriarch), the successor of the throne of Grigor the Illuminator’. *Yaysmawurk*, 61

230 See *Yaysmawurk*, 62

231 For the whole letter (with some passages abbreviated) see Միքայել Չամչյանց, Հայոց Պատմութիւն (Miqael Chamchyants, *History of Armenia*, Vol. III, 456. Akinean also presents the letter with a few sentences abbreviated, but he fills in all the words abbreviated by Chamchyants. See Nerses Akinean. *Chronicle of the Catholicoses of Akhtamar*. Vienna, 1920, 15-16; La Porta presents the letter in English translation; see La Porta, ‘The Theology of the Holy Dionysius’, 80-81.

232 See Միքայել Չամչյանց, Հայոց Պատմութիւն (Miqael Chamchyants, *History of Armenia*, Vol. III, 456.

will repent and come to your obedience, and there will be one flock and one shepherd'.<sup>233</sup> Chamchynts presents the Catholicos' answer, and we see that he did immediately send the letter that was asked by Tatevatsi.<sup>234</sup>

A careful reading of Tatevatsi's letter to Hakob III shows that he first reports what had already been done, by, he says, the will of many. The tone of the letter shows clearly that, secondly, Tatevatsi does not in fact *request* the Catholicos to act, but directly *states* what he should do – write a letter of blessing to all and release the dead from their bonds. And finally, Tatevatsi concludes his letter with the confident assertion that the Catholicos himself, in doing all this, will become the shepherd of one flock. La Porta rightly notes that 'this suggests both the extraordinary power which Tatevatsi possessed as the head *vardapet* from Siwnik and relative lack of influence the Catholicos could exercise outside of Cilicia'.<sup>235</sup> So the letter clearly illustrates Tatevatsi's high authority and his place as an ecclesiastical leader.

The monk Hovhannes, who welcomed Grigor Tatevatsi in the Monastery of Metzop, was not only Tatevatsi's classmate, but also a bright representative of Kajberunik, who during his years of education in Tatev had always wanted to return to his own land. If we bear in mind that Tatevatsi's father and grandfather had been born in Kajberunik we can imagine his special connection to the place and the close relations that the two students of Varotnetsi must have had.

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233 Ibid.

234 Ibid., 456-57.

235 La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 81.

Perhaps Tatevatsi's dream or the will of ecclesiastical and lay representatives may have motivated Tatevatsi's role in solving the controversy; in any case, he could not pass by the problem of the schismatic see of Akhtamar, and we may assume that he felt an urgent need to resolve a situation which was enfeebling the whole Armenian Church. And the anathema on the inhabitants of the land (living and dead) weighed heavily on Tatevatsi. It must have been a burning issue for him for a long time, since he had a strong personal interest in the question. He explains, 'My grandfather's and my father's family were from a city in Kajberunik, and they unwillingly consented to the schism of Akhtamar, for which we pray with our hands uplifted to the Lord, that He might be reconciled with them in love'<sup>236</sup>

Ormanian, who was himself formerly the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople, concludes that 'the see of Aghthamar, which had severed her connection in 1114, had been reconciled to the mother Church under the patriarchate of Hakob III of Sis (1409), through the intermediary of the great divine, St. Grigor of Tatev, who had wisely set himself to the task of terminating this split.'<sup>237</sup> From the sources, we can see that Tatevatsi was the one who could produce reasoned argument and who managed to persuade patriarch Hakob III and end the split between the mother Church and the see of Aghtamar.

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236 See Grigor Tatevatsi, 1939, col. 1398. For the excommunication of the Catholicos of Akhtamar see Kiwleseryan, 1939, cols. 1384-1387; for Tatevatsi's concerns about excommunication and release from the bonds of excommunication see the *Book of Questions*, 538-42; For an explanation how the bond of excommunication worked for those who obeyed the Catholicos of Akhtamar see Kiwleseryan, 1939, cols. 1387-1389.

237 See Օրմանեան: Ազգայատուհ, Հատոր Բ. (Ormanian, *Azgapatum (National History)*) II: 72

Another burning ecclesiastical question concerned the seat of the Catholicos. Tatevatsi put a great deal of effort into the attempt to persuade the authorities to move the Catholicate from Sis to Etchmiadzin.<sup>238</sup> After the fall of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia in 1375, the Patriarchal See remained in Sis, but lost much of its power and became a target for foreign domination. Obviously, under such political conditions the idea of returning the Patriarchal See to Greater Armenia proved attractive. Grigor Tatevatsi was among those Church leaders who desperately wanted to return the Patriarchal See and who understood that when the country was falling into ruin, the See of the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians had to be moved to Holy Etchmiadzin, which had been its original location. Tatevatsi did not see the fulfilment of his dream, but his students lived up to their teacher's expectations. In 1441, the See of all Armenians was finally relocated to Etchmiadzin.<sup>239</sup> Among Tatevatsi's students were Arakel Syunetsi, Matteos Jughayetsi, Tovma Metzopetsi, and each of them made an important contribution to fifteenth century Armenia, and it is clear that Grigor Tatevatsi had an immediate role in the education of these cultural, historical and theological leaders.

Grigor Tatevatsi is canonised by the Armenian Church, but there is no indication as to when this happened.<sup>240</sup> He was the last saint to be accepted into the Armenian Synaxary.<sup>241</sup>

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238 In 1292 the supreme patriarchal throne was moved to the capital of the Cilician Armenia to Sis.

239 See Tovma Metzopetsi. *A Memorandum about Renewal of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin*.

240 There is no formal ritual for granting sainthood in the Armenian Church.

241 His feast day is the Saturday before the fourth Sunday in Lent

## Summary

Our discussion has shown that Grigor Tatevatsi, as the student of a great teacher – Hovhannes Vorotnetsi – as well as a student of the rich heritage of Armenian culture, belief and Christian tradition, became a profound thinker and a productive writer. But should we think of him as a philosopher or as a theologian? As we saw above, some Armenian scholars of the twentieth century followed a tendency to categorise Tatevatsi as a nominalist philosopher. I would not deny that there is philosophy in the works of Grigor Tatevatsi – certainly a philosophical spirit – but Tatevatsi does not deserve to be called only a philosopher, as the bulk of his writing shows a deep theological concern. As we have seen, he was a gifted student of the theologians, a humble clergyman, a productive scribe and miniature painter, the author of many religious and theological works, who became an intellectual theologian and an ecclesiastical leader. Yet he was much more than that.

Due to his knowledge, appreciation of the tradition and love of God, Tatevatsi was a teacher. And a Christian teacher was the apex of his mission. A good example of that is given by a miniature portrait of Grigor Tatevatsi by an anonymous artist, produced in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, which may have been painted from life.<sup>242</sup> The artist did not portray Tatevatsi in the common poses of sitting behind a desk, writing, or standing, surrounded by saints or angels. Instead, Tatevatsi is shown against the background of a church, surrounded by his pupils. It is a significant painting as this unique miniature portrait represents the personality of Tatevatsi. He is shown as an older man with a long white beard and with a peaceful

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242 MS 1203, 129.

expression on his face. He is holding in his hands a rolled-up paper, and it appears that he is about to open and read it, and all the students are in a state of expectation. The nuances and colours of the picture raise a number of interesting points concerning the symbolism of icons, but that is not our present concern. The most significant aspect of the portrait is that the artist depicted Tatevatsi, in the middle of the miniature, surrounded by his students and considerably larger than they are. It seems that the idea was to illustrate the fact that Tatevatsi had reached the summit, as one of the pillars of Armenian Church tradition, with many followers who are educated by this wise man.

We may conclude with the words of Arakel Syunetsi's *Ode to Grigor Tatevatsi*:

A man of virtuous behavior and of devout prayer; he was a teacher in reading, a mentor of disciples; an explorer of divine depths, a revealer of secret things, an adornment to the church and a composer of statutes. He was a declaimer of oracles, a teacher of priests, an instructor of the people, a host of widows, and caretaker to orphans ... His mercy was infinite, his humility was incredible, his teaching was assiduous. Dauntless in reproaching, non-covetous in admonishing, impartial in judgement, diligent in speaking; he was in his actions and teaching like Jesus. His fulfilment was work and preaching to others. Spending nights in work and reading by day, praying through the night and contenting himself with reading by day, contemplating texts at night and teaching his disciples by day, receiving from the Divine Spirit at night and sharing with seekers by day, admiring the heavenly sea at night and watering the arid human mind by day, shining bright at night and sharing with

seekers by day, picking up precious gems at night and beading them in the morning ... therefore was he so appealing to everyone and longed for by everyone. For all who went to become his disciples delighted in seeing him and rejoiced at his words. First, they were enchanted by his divine image and afterwards by his fiery words. He instructed kings and admonished rulers, edified landlords and rebuked scoundrels. He atoned for sinners and cleansed the guilty. He converted those who strayed and prevented them from falling -- a healer to the afflicted, a consoler to those who sorrowed and a comfort to mourners, a pattern for priests and a boast for teachers.<sup>243</sup>

Tatevatsi's life and writings helped his students to discover themselves, encouraged and challenged them, gave them the tools they needed to make their own way, invited them to hear and to raise their own voices, stimulated their ideas and guided to choose whom they would follow. In sum, as a theologian Grigor Tatevatsi inspired students as he had himself inspired teachers. But the most significant feature of this is that his mission as a great teacher is not yet over.

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243 See Summer Volume, Arakel Vardapet's 'Ode to the brave, brilliant and effulgent Master Grigor Tatevatsi, the disciple of Hovhan (Vorotnetsi) called Kakhik', 719.

## Chapter Two: The Unitors

The historical path of the Armenian Church during the Middle Ages was very complicated. From the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, Armenians established a separate kingdom, apart from Greater Armenia, in Cilicia, with Sis as its capital.<sup>244</sup> During the Cilician period, the Armenian Church fell under Latin influence and was in a number of ways significantly Latinised.<sup>245</sup> From the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries, the Armenian Church, for the first time in its history, developed relations with the Roman Church. In a short period of time much had been accomplished by missionaries, and as a result of the work of Franciscans and Dominicans in particular, some influential leaders of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Greater Armenia as well as in Cilicia were converted. The fundamental question of the unity of the Armenian Church with Rome achieved urgency.

Scholarship exists in French, Russian and Armenian on the subject of Catholic preachers and their Armenian followers, but no comprehensive treatment has been attempted in English. The principal authorities on this question are Alishan, Ormanian, Anasyan, Petrovich, Khacheryan, Khachikyan (in Armenian),

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244 See *Armenia and the Crusades: the Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*. Translated from the Original Armenian with a commentary and introduction by Ara Dostourian. Lanham, New York, London: University Press of America, 1993; *The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia*. Ed. by T. S. R. Boase. Edinburgh & London: Scottish Academic Press, 1978; Richard Hovannisian. *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*. London, 1997; Sirarpie Der Nersessian, 'The Kingdom of Cilician Armenia', in Kenneth M. Setton, ed., *A History of the Crusades*, 6 vols. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962-1989, vol. II, 630-59.

245 See Jacob Ghazaryan, *The Armenian Kingdom in Cilicia During the Crusades: The Integration of Cilician Armenians with the Latins 1080-1393*. England: Curzon Press, 2000; Robert W. Thomson. 'The Crusades through Armenian Eyes', in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*. Edited by Angeliki Laiou and Roy P. Mottahedeh. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2001, 71-82.

Arevshatyan (mostly in Russian), Van den Oudenrijn, Loenerts (in French) and Sergio La Porta (in English).<sup>246</sup> Needless to say, we will not be able to treat the topic fully in one chapter, but it is important to draw attention to some aspects of the Latin-Armenian Brotherhood and to identify the distinguishing features of the Unitors.

The purpose of this chapter, then, is to examine the origin and actions of the Dominican Order in Greater Armenia. The relationship between the Latin and Armenian Churches from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries in Cilician Armenian will briefly be examined, but our attention will centre upon events in Greater Armenia during the fourteenth century. We will firstly ask why leaders of the Armenian Church were so welcoming toward the Catholic missionaries; secondly, what problems arose between the Armenians and the Catholics to change the

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246 See Ղեւոնդ Ալիշան, Սիսական, Տեղագրութիւն Սիինեաց Աշխարհի Վենետիկ, Ս. Ղազար, 1893 (Ghevond Alishan. *Sisakan: Topography of the Land of Syunik*; Venice, 1893). Marc Antonius Van den Oudenrijn. 'Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Arménie'. 1. L'Union de Qrnay 1330,' *Oriens Christianus* 40 (1956), 94-112; 'Le nouvel athénée', *Oriens Christianus* 42 (1958), 110-133; 'La congrégation des Uniteurs', *Oriens Christianus* 42 (1959), 110-119; 'Les adversaries de l'union', *Oriens Christianus* 45 (1961), 95-108; 'Les Dominicains de Naxijewan', *Oriens Cristianus* 46 (1962), 99-116. Լեւոն, Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի համալսարանը (1280-1340), Լոս Անճելըս, 1988, 327-66 (Levon Xacheryan, *Yesayi Nchetsi and the University of Gladzor 1280-1340*. Los Angeles: Alco, 1988, 327-66). Զոնեցի Յովհաննես, Յաղագս Քերականին, Բնագիրը Հրատարակության պատրաստեց Լ. Խաչիկյանը, Ներածությունը Լ. Խաչիկյանի և Ս. Ավագյանի: Երեվան Հայկական ՍՍՀ ԳԱ Հրատարակչություն, 1977 (Hovannes Krnetsi, *About Grammar* (the original text edited by L. Khachikyan, the Introduction by L. Khachikyan and S. Avagyan. Yerevan: Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, 1977, 5-51.). Անասյան Հ., Հայկական Մատենագիտություն Ե-ԺԸ դդ: Հատոր Բ, Երեվան, Հայկական ՍՍՀ ԳԱ Հրատարակչություն, 1976 (H. Anasyan, *Armenian Bibliography, 5th-18th cc.*, vol. 2. Yerevan: Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, 1976.). Sergio La Porta. 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius, volume III of Grigor Tatewaci's Book of Questions: Introduction, Translation and Commentary'. Ph.D thesis. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2001, 15-30.; 'Պետրովիչ Գրիգոր, Սիաբանող Եղբայրները եւ Հայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360), «Հանդես Ամսօրեայ», 1969, № 7-9, 357-70, 465-86: (Petrovich, Grigor. 'The Unitarian Brethren and the Armenian Church (1330-1360)'. *Handes Amsorya*, 1969, № 7-9, 357-70, 465-86).

attitudes of the former toward the missionaries; and thirdly, how and why the ecclesiastical leaders of Greater Armenia attempted to curtail Catholic influence.

## **2.1 The Kingdom of Cilicia and the Beginning of Relations with the Latin West**

From the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, Armenians established a separate kingdom in Cilicia. It was ruled by two dynasties: from 1080 to 1219 the Reubenian dynasty controlled the kingdom,<sup>247</sup> and later, from 1226 to 1375, the Hethoumian dynasty held power.<sup>248</sup> Territorially, they held a large tract of land on the river Pyramus, north-east of Adana, with its capital in Sis. It is important to note that both dynasties were struggling against the Turks and were not at all on friendly terms with the Greeks. Moreover, both dynasties enjoyed good relations with the Crusaders; tangible evidence of that friendship exists in the numerous marital and military alliances between Armenians and their Latin neighbours.<sup>249</sup> As Fortescue pointed out, ‘The Barons of Sis, remembering the long persecution of the Byzantines, hating Moslems as their deadly enemies, eagerly welcomed the Crusaders.’<sup>250</sup> Therefore, throughout the Cilician period, from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, the Armenian Church for the first time in its history, in the context of these political problems, began to establish a relationship with the Roman Church.<sup>251</sup>

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247 See *Vahram's Chronicle of the Armenian Kingdom in Cilicia: during the time of the Crusades*. Translated from the original Armenian with notes and illustrations by Charles Fried Neumann. London, 1831.

248 See Ghazaryan, *The Armenian Kingdom in Cilicia*, 53-75;

249 See Aziz S. Atiya. *A History of Eastern Christianity*. London: Methuen & Co Ltd., 1968, 332-34.

250 See Adrian Fortescue. *The Lesser Eastern Churches*. London: Catholic Truth Society, 1913, 388.

251 See Bernard Hamilton. ‘The Armenian Church and the Papacy at the Time of the Crusades’. *Eastern Church Review, A Journal of Eastern Christendom* 10 (1978): 61-87.

Khacheryan notes it was not only on account of its geographical position and economic relations that the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia lay within the sphere of Western influence. In addition, in the Kingdom itself the presence of numerous Latin princely possessions and close ties against a common enemy (especially in periods of military conflict), as well as kinship relationships, deeply impacted the country's public life and morals, which were 'Europeanised' in various ways. As the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia was surrounded by the Muslim world and had for many years confronted Byzantium, it was natural to seek political and military alliance with Western powers, and first of all with the Papacy, as perhaps the major political power in the European politics of the time.

According to Khacheryan, the first correspondence between the Armenian court, the Catholicate and the Papacy clearly shows that the approaches of the Armenian court and the Catholicate to the Papacy were dictated only by motives of political and military alliance and support, and that religious and confessional union was a bargaining chip in diplomatic negotiations to achieve this goal, whereas for the Papacy the chief priority and decisive intent was the confessional aspect, that is, submission of the Armenian Church to Rome.<sup>252</sup> Gregory Tgha, Catholicos of Cilicia, in an official letter to Pope Innocent II announced his recognition of the Church of Rome as the mother of all Churches, and on behalf of the Armenian Church accepted the norms of the Papal Church, but at the same time noted that the Kingdom was in the 'dragon's mouth', and that the 'dragon' threatened not only the

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252 See Խաչերեան Լեւոն, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (1280-1340), Լոս Անճելոս, 1988 (Levon Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*. Los Angeles: Alco, 1988), 328-29.

Cilician Kingdom but also the entire Christian world. This meant that the common enemy had to be confronted with united effort.<sup>253</sup> The Catholicos implied that if the Pope protected the borders of Cilicia from the encroachments of the ‘dragon’, then the Armenian Kingdom would itself be a safeguard for Christendom and the Holy See.<sup>254</sup>

In a letter to the Pope dated May 29 1199, Leo II of Cilicia made it clear that the Armenian court had long been waiting for the help promised by the Pope – help which never came. Meanwhile, the enemy was threatening to annihilate not only the Kingdom of Cilicia but also the whole Christian world because it was the enemy of the ‘Cross’; hence all powers ought to be united to act jointly against the common foe.<sup>255</sup>

The approach to the Church of Rome was, then, prompted by a concern for the defence and survival of the Cilician Kingdom and pursued for the purpose of political and military alliance and protection.<sup>256</sup> The fact that for the Armenian Kingdom close relations with Rome were prompted solely by state interests and consideration for the defence of the country is also evidenced by another letter of Leo II, in which he indicates that he could not be reconciled to the humiliating situation of the Armenian Church being directly under the jurisdiction of a particular Latin

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253 Ibid., 329.

254 See Clemens Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana ex ipsis Armenorum Patrum et Doctorum testimoniis*, vol. I, Rome, 1648, 347-48

255 See Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցիս եւ Քլաճորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 330.

256 Ibid., 331.

Church; he requires a parallel relationship with the Church of Rome and is willing to recognize only its overall precedence. In his reply the Pope agreed to the demand of Leo II.<sup>257</sup>

Intermittent relations between the Armenian and Latin Churches actually began even before the Crusades. Catholicos Grigor II Vkeyase (1025-1105) is said to have received the pallium from Pope Gregory VII.<sup>258</sup> However, the first serious move toward Rome occurred during the Catholicate of Gregory III. The Catholicos Gregory III and his brother Nerses were present at a council of the Roman Church in Antioch in 1141 and in Jerusalem in 1142.<sup>259</sup> During this council, theological and ritual differences between the Latin and Armenian Churches were examined.<sup>260</sup> At that time the Papal legate was bishop Alberic, who, impressed by the Armenian Catholicos, eulogised him to Innocent II. The Pope therefore wrote a letter to the Armenian Catholicos in which he recognized the orthodoxy of the Armenian Church. But he added that for the full unification of the two Churches, the Armenians should mix water with wine in the chalice and celebrate Christmas on 25 December.<sup>261</sup>

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257 Ibid., 334.

258 See Պետրովիչ Միաբանող Եղբայրները եւ Հայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360), «Հանդես Ամսօրեայ», № 7-9: 1969: (Grigor Petrovich, 'The Unitarian Brethren and the Armenian Church (1330-1360)'. *Handes Amsorya*, 7-9.), 4; Van den Oudenrijn 1956, 100; M. Chamchyants, *The History of Armenia* II: 1999-2000; Օրմանեան (Ormanian) I: 1305-1306; La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 15.

259 See Պետրովիչ Միաբանող Եղբայրները եւ Հայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360), Պետրովիչ Միաբանող Եղբայրները եւ Հայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360), Petrowicz, 'The Unitarian Brethren and the Armenian Church', 5; Van den Oudenrijn. 'Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Arménie'. 1. L'Union de Qrnay 1330,' *Oriens Christianus* 40 (1956), 100; Օրմանեան (Ormanian) I: 1365-1367; Chamchyants, *The History of Armenia* III: 54-55. La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 15.

260 See Atiya, *A History of Eastern Christianity*, 333.

261 See Boase, *The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia*, 9-14.

These admonitions – to mix water in the chalice and to celebrate Christmas on 25 December – were repeated by the Popes on numerous occasions. For example, Eugene III and Linius III, in return for the prospect of political help, raised the same points.<sup>262</sup> But it is interesting that Pope Clement III (1187-1191) turned to Leo, the governor of Cilicia, for help, and during the Third Crusade, the Armenians supported the Crusaders. Because of this assistance, in 1195 the emperor Henry IV praised Prince Leo as the king of Cilicia. Leo, in order to secure the patronage of the West, desperately wanted to be crowned by the West.<sup>263</sup> For Leo's coronation, Cardinal Conrad, the Papal envoy, arrived in Cilicia. But because of differences in the profession of faith, it was decided that Leo could not be crowned. There is no doubt but that Rome had accurately appraised the historical situation, and instead of simply sending a letter explaining that the Pope could not crown and bless anyone who did not have the same profession of faith, it immediately sent a Cardinal, who arrived in Cilicia with clearly expressed requirements for Leo. On his arrival, the Cardinal encouraged Leo to promote the idea of unification of the Armenian and Latin Churches.

Leo, in order to achieve his goal, was even prepared to admit some changes in the profession of faith. The Latin Church pressed the Armenians to accept a number of conditions: to celebrate feasts of the Lord and commemoration days of saints on

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262 In 1145 Catholicos Gregory III Pahlavouny turned to Pope Eugene III (1145-1153), and Gregory IV asked Pope Luke III (1181-1185) for political help. In order to assist, the Popes suggested celebrating Christmas on the 25th of December and mixing water in the Chalice. See Պետրովիչ Միաբանող Եղբայրները եւ Հայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360), Petrowicz, 'The Unitarian Brethren and the Armenian Church', 7); Օրմանեան, 1484-1485: (Ormanian I: 1484-1485); Chamchyants, *The History of Armenia* III: 142-145; Van den Oudenrijn. 'Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Arménie'. 1. L'Union de Qrnay 1330,' *Oriens Christianus* 40 (1956), 100.

263 See Boase, *The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia*, 11-22.

fixed days, whereas in their own calendar the Armenians had a system of moveable feasts; to conduct services in the church, whereas Armenians usually conducted them in the vestry, with only the Divine Liturgy being celebrated in the church; and on the eve of Christmas and Easter to use only fish and vegetable oil, not dairy products or eggs. The pressure for these changes was not unexpected, historically and theologically, but neither was it welcome. However, Leo duly called a council, but all the demands of the Latin Church were there rejected. An agreement was, however, signed between a representative of Rome and twelve Armenian bishops, though, unfortunately, we do not know on what conditions. Ironically, on 6 January 1199, when Armenians celebrate the birth of Christ, Cardinal Conrad did indeed crown Leo.<sup>264</sup> It should be noted that the Crusaders, by sending a crown (in 1198) to Leo, probably contributed to international recognition of the power of the Rubenian royal dynasty in Cilicia.<sup>265</sup> This deepening relationship between Armenians and the Crusaders drove the Emperor in Constantinople to action. He wanted to persuade Leo to join the Orthodox. Leo cunningly never committed himself to a direct rejection of the overtures and kept his crown as well.

In short, at the end of the twelfth century the Cilician Armenian state had to struggle for survival on two fronts – against the Mamelukes of Egypt and Syria and against the Seljuk Turks in Asia Minor.<sup>266</sup> The Hethumid dynasty, together with most of the

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264 See Պետրովիչ Միաբանող եղբայրները եւ Յայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360), Petrowicz, ‘The Unitarian Brethren and the Armenian Church’, 7-8); Օրմանեան: (Ormanian I: 1370-1371); Chamchyants, *The History of Armenia* III: 164-170.

265 See Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 328.

266 See Օրմանեան: (Ormanian).

Cilician Armenian feudal families, was allied with wealthy merchants who had close economic ties with European countries and linked the future of Armenian Cilicia to help anticipated from the West. The heads of the Catholic Church continually promised to launch new Crusades and liberate Armenians from Muslim oppression, and, in exchange for their supposed aid, demanded the union of the Armenian and Roman Churches. Armenians, that is, were to renounce the traditions of their own Church and admit the supremacy of Rome. Naturally, these requirements were met in various ways by Cilician monarchs and Catholicoi, but, as Khacheryan stresses, this first phase of relations with the Latin West, involving the Kingdom of Cilicia, was driven throughout by the need for cooperation against a common enemy.<sup>267</sup>

## **2.2 The Thirteenth Century**

There were some positive relations between the two Churches in the thirteenth century. It is, for example, known that there were instances of receiving the pallium in 1205 and 1238.<sup>268</sup> For many years, however, the Latin Church continued to demand from the Armenian Church various changes. In 1244, Pope Innocent IV in a letter to Catholicos Constantine I pressed the Armenians to use oil in the anointing of the sick according to the custom of the Latin Church. In the Second Council of Sis, in 1243, twenty-four canons regarding the life of the faithful were established. In 1246, these canons together with an Encyclical of the Catholicos which stipulated anointing the sick with oil, were sent to Eastern Armenia for implementation. In order to

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267 See Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցիւն եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 328.

268 See Օրմանեան (Ormanian II :1565-1566, 1614). Van den Oudenrijn. 'Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Arménie'. 1. L'Union de Qrnay 1330,' 100

explain the political benefits which Armenians could gain from the unification of the Churches, Pope Innocent IV sent bishop Timanch to Cilicia in 1248. King Hethoum thereupon asked the Catholicos to reply to the Pope's missive.<sup>269</sup> Though the Catholicos respected the Roman see, he did not want to accept the conditions proposed by the Pope. Therefore, he sent King Hethoum a message, refusing to accept the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church and asking the king not to trust the West.

The Roman see, receiving this answer, reduced her conditions by suggesting the need only to acknowledge the Filioque – that the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from God the Father, but also from the Son – the very question that in 1054 had played such a major role in the separation of the Byzantine and Latin Churches.<sup>270</sup> Catholicos Constantine convened the Third Council of Sis to determine an answer to this proposal. Unable to arrive at a final decision, the Council solicited the opinion of Church leaders of Eastern Armenia. This became a new problem for the Armenian Church, and different opinions were expressed. Thus it was difficult to arrive at a decision.

In 1262 bishop Guliemos, the legate of Pope Urban IV, arrived in the East and settled in Achaya. To welcome the legate King Hethoum sent his brother Oshin, and the Catholicos sent archimandrite Mkhitar Skevratsy, who conducted a dialogue with the Papal legate, in which bishop Guliemos insisted that the Pope of Rome was the

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<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> This letter was written in 1250.

Head of the Church, whereas Mkhitar Skevratsy argued from Scripture that the Head of the Church was not the Pope of Rome, but Christ Himself.

### 2.3 Grigor VII Anavarzetsi

The ties between the Latin and Armenian Churches were further strengthened when king Hetum II and Grigor VII Anavarzetsi, in 1293, moved the Catholicate from Hromklay to the Armenian capital of Sis. In the same year, Hetum II, adopting the name John, after the Franciscan John of Montecalvino,<sup>271</sup> became a member of the Franciscan third order.<sup>272</sup> Gregory VII (1293-1306), bishop of Anavarza, had become the Catholicos of the Armenian Church in 1293.<sup>273</sup> Stepanos Orbelian notes that he was well educated, knew Latin and Greek, and was, moreover, enthusiastic for the unification of all the Christian Churches.<sup>274</sup> To achieve this aim the Catholicos was even ready to sacrifice some of the traditions of the Armenian Church. During this period, Hethoum II (1289-1301), who was already a Catholic, reigned in Cilicia, and he too was an enthusiast for the unification of the Churches. Hetum II and the ‘Latinophiles’ are indeed credited by Ormanian with raising Grigor VII of Anavarza to the patriarchal see, since he was a zealous partisan of their opinions.<sup>275</sup>

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271 Franciscan John Montecalvino, thus achieving what had been his goal in Cilicia for years, converted the king.

272 L Khachikyan, ‘The Armenian Government of Artaz and the School of Tzortzor’, Բանբեր Մատենադարանի, No. 11, 1973, 53.

273 See Ստեփանոս Օրբելյան, Սյունիքի Պատմություն, թարգմանությունը և ծանոթագրությունները Ա. Աբրահամյանի, Երեվան, Սովետական գրող, 1986, 352: (Stepanos Orbelian. *The History of Syunik*. Translation from Old Armenian into Modern Armenian, Introduction and edition by A. Abramnyan. Yerevan: Sovetakan Grog, 1986, 352.)

274 Ibid.

275 See Օրմանեան: (Ormanian).

The Catholicos tried to make changes in a series of ritual issues which always hindered the unification of the Armenian Church with the Byzantine and Latin Churches. He first adjusted the Synaxaries of the Church to correspond to the Latin and Greek festal calendars, and, at King Hethoum's request, established the feast of All Saints on 1 November, as it is in the Latin Church. In 1295-1296, Mariam, the Armenian wife of the Crown Prince of Byzantium, and her sister, at the request of the Byzantine Church, were rebaptized as if they had turned to the true faith from a heretical church. This, as well as the reaction of the clergy of Eastern Armenia, dampened the enthusiasm of Gregory of Anavarza toward the Greeks and instead turned his attention to the West in the hope of receiving political assistance for Cilicia. Preparing to make changes in the liturgical life of the Armenian Church, he had written special hymns for Christmas and Epiphany and planned to celebrate those feasts separately rather than together, on 6 January, as had been the custom. But realizing that it would prove impossible to receive help from the Latins either, he decided not to pursue the unification of Churches. Clearly, this would generate considerable problems in his own Church. Matenadaran MS 2776 contains a copy of a letter addressed to the Catholicos, in which we see how a great church leader of Syunik, Stepanos Orbelian, replied to the letter of the Armenian Patriarch Gregory Anavarzetsi (or Metskaretsi).<sup>276</sup> No matter how far the Cilician Kingdom was from Eastern Armenia, a religious and cultural commonality was maintained between the two parts.

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<sup>276</sup> See MS 2776.

To illustrate the bonds that united them, the Armenian world recognized the Cilician kings and Catholicos as ‘Kings and Catholicos of all Armenians’, the University of Gladzor as the ‘capital of wisdom of the nation of Togarmah’, and Yesayi Nchetsi, its head, as the ‘tutor of the Armenian nation’. Khacheryan notes that candidates for the episcopacy from Eastern Armenia sought official recognition and anointing from the Holy See of Cilicia. And the reality of this universality was taken into account by foreign powers.<sup>277</sup> Prior to making a final decision on matters of concern to the whole nation, the Catholicos usually sent delegates or circular letters to Eastern Armenia for approval, and correspondence and envoys were also sent in the opposite direction, from Eastern Armenia to Cilicia. In 1295, spiritual and secular officials of Eastern Armenia sent a petition to the Catholicos Gregory Anavarzetsi which was signed by both heads of the University of Gladzor. The petitioners required two things from the Catholicos of Cilicia: renunciation of the demand to join the Church of Rome and a commitment to preserve and abide by the traditions of the Armenian Church.

Eastern Armenia's representatives declared with an unhesitating determination, ‘And if even these words have no significance for the Catholicate and the court, subsequent schism from them will be inevitable and irreversible’. And they added that if they were to be punished with the rigour of royal authority, they were willing

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<sup>277</sup> See Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցիս եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 337.

to suffer torture, exile and prison, and were ready to die for the holy and apostolic tradition.<sup>278</sup>

The letter is a very able production. Its tone is quite bold, especially when it is borne in mind that it is addressed to the Catholicos of all Armenians, and it shows clearly that the Armenians of Greater Armenia had decided to keep a respectful distance from him. It contains a deep theological and doctrinal analysis of the Armenian Church canons and a reminder of the decisions of the three Ecumenical Councils', as well of other local councils between the fifth and the tenth centuries.<sup>279</sup> The letter concludes, 'Although we have many ideas and suggestions, we do not need to make our letter long, and to teach you as if you are uneducated, as a short letter would also be enough for you'.<sup>280</sup> A close reading of the letter confirms that its author is very angry, and, as an educated man who is not only familiar with the Armenian Church Fathers and Church canons but has a great understanding of theology in general, cannot tolerate the Catholicos's erroneous ideas and genuinely wishes to work toward the union. But the main impression of this letter is a feeling of the Armenian spirit, and this spirit does not belong to only one person but reflects the will of many church leaders of the Armenian Church in Greater Armenia.

Khacheryan notes that the entire staff of the University of Gladzor backed these declarations made by the heads Yesayi Nchetsi and David Sasnetsi. Yesayi Nchetsi

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278 See Օրբելյան, Սյունիքի Պատմություն (Stepanos Orbelian. *The History of Syunik*) 361; See Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 338-339.

279 See Օրբելյան, Սյունիքի Պատմություն (Stepanos Orbelian. *The History of Syunik*) 354-62.

280 See Օրբելյան, Սյունիքի Պատմություն (Stepanos Orbelian. *The History of Syunik*) 360.

and his disciples even anathematised those who would disagree with the terms proposed in the letter, meaning, of course, the King and the Catholicos.<sup>281</sup> In this respect, Orbelian's letter to Yesayi Nchetsi is also noteworthy; it shows clearly that the fate of both parts of Armenia greatly troubled the representatives of Eastern Armenia. Orbelian's anxiety concerned not only the Armenian people but the fate of all the nations of the Christian world in the face of both external and internal enemies.<sup>282</sup>

In one of his letters against the Unionist movement, Nchetsi designated the present a time of anarchy and stated that resistance to the Union movement was compromised by the lack of a 'righteous King' and a 'Catholicos zealous for the traditions' as national leaders, since both had gone over to the enemy; otherwise it would have been easier to fight against the sowers of destruction.<sup>283</sup>

King Hethoum continued to demand that the Catholicos should achieve the unification of the two Churches. We know that the Catholicos refused to do this, and for this reason was dethroned and exiled, and in 1306, he died in exile.<sup>284</sup> The Catholicos prior to his death had proclaimed, 'I am an Armenian, and I die as an Armenian'. After the death of Gregory of Anavarza, King Leo in 1307 convened a council known as the Seventh Council of Sis.<sup>285</sup> Forty-three bishops and princes from

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281 See Օրբելյան, Սյունիքի Պատմություն (Stepanos Orbelian. *The History of Syunik*) 462.

282 See M 848/81a.

283 See M 1548/377a; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 340.

284 See Օրմանեան: (Ormanian).

285 Sometimes it is called the fifth council.

Cilicia participated. Leo dishonestly presented to the Council a letter which he claimed had been written by Gregory of Anavarza and which accepted a series of theological and ritual changes: a) mixing water in the chalice; b) accepting seven Ecumenical Councils (like the Greek and Latin Churches, instead of three); c) admitting that Christ has two natures, two wills and two energies; d) celebrating the feasts of the Lord as the Greeks and Latins do – Christmas on 25 December, Candlemas on 2 February, Annunciation on 25 March; e) using only fish and olive oil on the eves of Christmas and Easter; f) singing the Trisagion with the addition of Christ's name—'Christ, who was crucified for us'. The participants of the Council, with the exception of five bishops, accepted these changes. In this Council, Constantine, Bishop of Caesarea, an upholder of unification, was elected Catholicos (1307-1322).

La Porta says of this Council that 'in 1307 the participants at the Synod of Sis signed their allegiance to Rome. Although Grigor VII had prepared the assembly, he died before it opened'.<sup>286</sup> The participants of the Council did indeed sign on to Roman allegiance,<sup>287</sup> but La Porta's dictum glosses over the fact that Leo had dishonestly presented a letter to the Council, as if written by Gregory of Anavarza, and implies that Gregory of Anavarza had himself decided to assent to the unification of the Churches. The sources, however, make clear that he refused to do this, and for that

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286 La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius'.

287 Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 455-471; Palcean 1878, 273-281. La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 16.

reason was dethroned and exiled.<sup>288</sup> La Porta's statement is here probably following Galanus.<sup>289</sup>

The decisions of the Council of Sis were to face serious resistance in both Eastern Armenia and Cilicia. At the end of the thirteenth century and in the first decades of the fourteenth, national assemblies were convened to approve the unification of the Churches, and, naturally, bitter political and ideological clashes again broke out between the elites in Cilicia and the secular and spiritual leaders of mainland Armenia.

#### **2.4 The Fourteenth Century**

Many in the Armenian Church rejected the decisions of Catholicos Constantine, and under the leadership of the Metropolitan of Syunik a council was called, which warned the Catholicos not to make changes in the traditions of the Armenian Church. Among the Eastern bishops, already struggling against the Latin missionaries in Greater Armenia, were the distinguished leaders of Syunik, Hovhannes Orbeli and such churchmen and scholars as Ysayi Nchetsi and David Sasnetsi. They wrote a letter in reply to Catholicos Constantine, composed between 1309 and 1315. The

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288 See Օրմանեան (Ormanian).

289 See La Porta, 'The Theology of the Holy Dionysius', 16. La Porta in footnote #65, mentions Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 455-471, and Palcean 1878, 273-281.

letter is preserved in Matenadaran MS 2776<sup>290</sup> and has been published in Old Armenian.<sup>291</sup>

In it they claim that, although the letter of the Catholicos had been eagerly anticipated in Syunik, the leaders of the Church had been very disappointed by its content:

When we first got your letter, we rejoiced and prayed for your life, but when we continued to read, we did not expect to hear and to see such things from you, as it was full of reproachful words and strict canons, but we had hoped to hear from you words of love, blessing and peace, and a little comfort and care, as we are burdened with much suffering and misery.

Later in the letter, the authors assert that, apart from God and the Catholicos himself, there is no other source from which they may expect words of comfort and joy. And so they had sent a letter to the Catholicos, who wanted them to accept changes in rituals. The letter then explains why these leaders of the Armenian Church did not wish to accept the beliefs of the Catholicos. They claim that originally all Christian Churches had adopted the same order and the same statutes as the Armenian Church, and they reproach the Catholicos for ignoring historical facts and for adopting one-sidedness. A nuncio had come from the Catholicos, they write, and it presented his

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290 See M 2776/264a; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցիս եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 342.

291 See Նամակ Հովհաննու Օրպելի եւ Այլոց Եպիսկոպոսաց եւ Վարդապետաց Սիինեաց ի Պատասխանի Թղթոց Կոստանդնի Բ. Կաթողիկոսի Հայոց, «Ճռաբար», 1860-1861, 39-43: (See ‘The Letter of Hovhann Orpeli and Other Bishops and Teachers in response to Catholicos of Armenians Constantine II’. Tjraqagh, 1860-1861, 39-43.)

orders in a brief and succinct speech, to this effect: ‘If someone takes upon himself to celebrate with water and observe Christmas on 25 December, they will be given myrrh and be consecrated; and if they are not willing to celebrate on 25 December and add water to the holy sacrament, they will not be given myrrh and consecration’.<sup>292</sup> This requirement was rejected by the representatives of Eastern Armenia, authorized by all princes, monks and people.

This is an understandable position at a time when Greater Armenia was struggling under the Mongols; further problems, issuing from the Church in Cilicia, tipped the balance. When the central question of the union of the Armenian Church with Rome was raised, the attitude toward the missionaries changed radically. The leaders of the Armenian Church clearly realized the massive scale of the proposed changes, and in order to halt the Latin campaign, initiated a resistance to Latin theology.

In this criticism of the missionaries, the vardapets of Gladzor University took a leading role. Thus, Yesayi Nchetsi was one of the pioneers of Armenian Church actively involved in the theological controversy against Franciscan and Dominican missionaries. In this relentless struggle, the great teacher Yesayi Nchetsi mercilessly attacked the Unitors, calling them ‘alien thinkers’ and ‘wolves in sheep's clothing’.<sup>293</sup> We therefore have three prominent Armenian thinkers of the medieval period –

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292 See M 2776/264a, 265a; see Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (*Khacheryan. Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 343-44.

293 Նամակ Հովհաննու Օրպեյի եւ Այլոց Եպիսկոպոսաց եւ Վարդապետաց Սիինեաց ի Պատասխանի Թղթոց Կոստանդնի Բ. Կաթողիկոսի Հայոց, «Ճռաբաղ», 1860-1861, 55-58:

Yesayi Nchetsi (1260-1338), Hovhannes Vorotnetsi (1315-1386) and then Grigor Tatevatsi (1346-1409), Vorotnetsi's student – who were representative of three generations, tied to each other by teacher-pupil relationships and by their shared understanding of the Papacy's intentions. These are the figures who took upon themselves a commitment to defeat Catholic propaganda and to cherish the Armenian cultural, historical and theological heritage. For the entire period of its existence, the University of Gladzor was a focal point of the struggle against the Unionist movement.

That movement concerned and disturbed not only the Kingdom of Cilicia, but the public and political life of Western Armenia as well. Papal policy made systematic use of the heavy losses suffered by the Kingdom of Cilicia at the hands of the Mamelukes of Egypt which left the country powerless to resist the claims and coercion of Papal power. If the Kingdom of Cilicia and the Catholicate were still playing politics with Rome in order to gain support from her at any cost, the latter trimmed her policies to push for the conversion of all Armenians.<sup>294</sup>

However, King Leo's successor, Oshin (1307-1320), exerted every effort to bring the decisions of Constantine and the Council of Sis to fruition. In order to neutralize the disturbances he convened a Council in Adana, in 1316. Thirteen bishops, seven archimandrites and ten princes took part in it.<sup>295</sup> In this Council the objections against

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294 See Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցիև եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 337.

295 Օրմանեան (Ormanian).

the decisions of the Council of Sis were rejected as contrary to the truth, and the decisions of the Council were themselves confirmed once again.

But such Councils could not alter the fundamental traditions of the Armenian Church, and proved to have no lasting effect upon her. After the Council of Adana King Oshin appealed to Pope John XXII and Philip, king of France in 1318, asking for the aid they had promised in return for the unification of the Churches, but in vain.<sup>296</sup> The result of this pro-Latin policy was only to exacerbate the hostile attitude of the neighbouring Moslems, especially the Mamelukes of Egypt, whose frequent incursions into Cilicia were to cause the fall of the Armenian State. Catholicos Mesrop I of Artaz (1359-1372), was frustrated by the fact that the West had not kept its promises, and convened the Eighth Council of Sis in 1361, which decreed the abolition of all the innovations which were the result of the Cilician kings' pro-Latin policies.<sup>297</sup> In the end, despite matrimonial alliances, political manipulations and Church relations, the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia fell in 1375.<sup>298</sup>

The Patriarchal See in Sis was at the mercy of foreigners. Clearly, the idea of moving the Patriarchal See back to Greater Armenia became, under such complex political conditions, an important goal for Church leaders in Greater Armenia.

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296 See Boase, *The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia*, 29-30.

297 *Ibid.*, 30-33.

298 Օրմանեան (Ormanian); Boase, *The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia*; Richard Hovannisian, *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times.*; Ghazaryan, *The Armenian Kingdom in Cilicia*; Dostourian, *Armenia and the Crusades: the Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*.

During the Cilician period, the Armenian Church had come under Latin influence, and as the result of Latin missionary work, most of the Armenians in Cilicia had become Roman Catholics. For Armenians, the effort toward union was not without precedent in the sense that for many centuries there had been attempts to conquer Armenia and the Armenian Church by Zoroastrian Sasanids, Byzantines and Muslim Arabs. But during the period of Armenian-Latin interaction, it became very difficult for the Armenian Apostolic Church to preserve its religious heritage. The religious and dogmatic disputes which arose between the Roman Catholic and Armenian Churches had a profound impact on the inner life of the Armenian Church, with a depressing effect on many Armenians. As Ormanian points out, ‘The Armenian Church has always understood the meaning of union in the true and strict sense of the term. She has desired to see its establishment on the basis of a spiritual communion between the Churches, of mutual respect for their several positions, of liberty for each within the limits of her own sphere, and of the spirit of Christian charity overruling all’.<sup>299</sup> The situation in Cilicia made all that very difficult.

The Armenian Church had always had a number of options for reconciliation available—with the Syrian Church, the Greek Church and finally, the Latin Church. At this point, these options were still open. Therefore, different rulers and Church leaders, in order to work toward unity on the part of the Armenian Church, had tried to establish relationships with different neighbours.

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<sup>299</sup> Malachia Ormanian. *The Church of Armenia*, translated by G. Marcar Gregory. London: A.R. Mowbray & CO, 1912, 58.

The Byzantines were, of course, still very influential and, as always, had the ambition to dominate the Armenian Church. However, a long history had led most Armenians to understand that, given the lack of mutual respect, there could be no spiritual communion between the Churches. Moreover, the Council of Chalcedon, which was not accepted by Armenians, would always be a fundamental problem between them. And so, as the historian Stepanos Orbelian pithily expressed in his letter to the Armenian Catholicos, ‘We [Armenians in Greater Armenia] prefer to go down to hell with our [Church] Fathers, rather than go up to heaven with Greeks.’<sup>300</sup>

The Syrian Church was weaker than the Greek Church, and despite a long history of relations between the Churches, had less of an impact on Armenia. After the formation of the Kingdom of Cilicia and the translation of the patriarchal seat to Sis, relations with the Latin Church were the prime consideration, and that consideration was, as we have seen, primarily a political one. In this complex situation, the political aim of Armenians was, firstly, to survive as a nation with its identity intact and, secondly, not to lose the faith of the Armenian Apostolic Church. It was in these circumstances that the Armenians in Cilicia started to negotiate with the Latins, but we must not forget that during the Cilician period (1080-1375), the Armenian Church also had an eye from time to time on unity with the Greeks. As Ormanian summarizes, ‘Documents prove a series of uninterrupted negotiations and overtures toward unity which were conducted, both with the Greeks and the Latins, during the entire period of the Roubenian dynasty in Cilicia’.<sup>301</sup>

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300 See Օրբելյան, Սյունիքի Պատմություն (Stepanos Orbelian. *The History of Syunik*) 361.

301 See Ormanian. *The Church of Armenia*, 60.

Khacheryan argues that Yesayi Nchetsi was the indomitable pioneer of the anti-Unitarian struggle, as well as its theorist and organiser. In 1328, Nchetsi wrote a letter to the leader of Armenian Atrpatakan entitled *To Sir Matheus*. It is a key document in the way that it reflects the circumstances of the time and reveals the tactical considerations of the anti-Unitarian movement leaders.<sup>302</sup>

The letter opens with a warning to the population to stay away from all errors and attitudes deserving of condemnation. Nchetsi writes that he himself is aware that some of the Christians of the land have been alienated from the religion of the holy Fathers. He warns not to believe those who ‘promote false knowledge’ to estrange the people from their traditions.<sup>303</sup> He goes on to assert that the confession of the Armenian Church is not something introduced by unknown men but was transmitted by the Apostles and holy Fathers from ancient times and is common to all Christian churches. All Christian churches from the beginning were accustomed to celebrate the Nativity on 6 January, and to administer the sacrament in the liturgy with unmixed cup, whereas the mixing of water was a practice admitted only later, during the reign of Pope Alexander, and the celebration of Christ's birthday was only changed to the 25 December under the Emperors Arcadius and Honorius. Regarding the dispute over one or two natures of Christ, he continues, the notion of two natures of Christ has never been denied by our ancestors: the only difference is that instead of admitting the prevalence of one (human) nature over the other (divine) nature, they admit both natures equally and without confusion, just as light is mixed with air

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302 Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցիս եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 345.

303 See *Tjrakagh* (Moscow), 1860, 158.

and fire with iron.<sup>304</sup> Nchetsi concludes that this accusation is also baseless and should never cause division and the renunciation of Armenian traditions.

Significantly, after this clarification, Nchetsi requires two different approaches in the treatment of the renegades from the Armenian Church who have defected to the Unionists, on the one hand, and of those who have entered the country from the ‘Catholics, Greeks and Syrians’, on the other.<sup>305</sup> In the first case he requires a strict and even harsh attitude, whereas in the second he requires kindly treatment and brotherly feeling; but if the latter group ever abuses the hospitality shown to them and begins to behave subversively then it should also be treated uncompromisingly and without toleration, as ‘wolves in sheep’s clothing’.<sup>306</sup> In the letter Nchetsi also provides advice and instructions for priests on administering baptism and holy matrimony and explains how priests are to be remunerated. G. Hovsepyan notes that these canonical instructions and commandments are taken from the statutes of the Council of Dzagavanits, treated by Vardan, Hovhannes Yerznkatsi and Yesayi Nchetsi himself as popular and edifying disciplinary instructions.<sup>307</sup>

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304 See *Tjrakagh* (Moscow), 1860, 162-63, 210. On the basis of testimonies from Gregory the Theologian and Cyril of Alexandria, he goes on to support the formula of ‘one nature of the divine Logos incarnate’. See Գարեգին Յովսէփեան, *Խաղբակակն կամ Պոռոշեանք հայոց պատմութեան մէջ*, Անթիլիաս-Լիբանան, 1969 (Garegin Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank in the Armenian History*, 2nd edition. Antelias, 1969), 286, and *Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը* (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 347.

305 See *Tjrakagh* (Moscow), 162.

306 See *Tjrakagh* (Moscow), 162; see Յովսէփեան, *Խաղբակակն կամ Պոռոշեանք* (Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank*), 286; *Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը* (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 347.

307 See Յովսէփեան, *Խաղբակակն կամ Պոռոշեանք* (Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank*), 286.

The disciples of Yesayi Nchetsi also strove to prevent what they perceived as a dangerous movement. Mkhitar Sasnetsi, a former student at Gladzor, describes in a letter the situation that resulted from the efforts of Catholic missionaries and Armenian Unionists, in similar terms to those of Nchetsi's letter. In this letter, preserved in Matenadaran MS 1321, Sasnetsi writes that Unionists have grown unruly and insolent, and he considers their reproaches as 'puerile arrows' inasmuch as their statements are futile and bragging declamations, and so he Sasnetsi labels them as 'false apostles and crafty labourers'.<sup>308</sup> Sasnetsi adduces passages of Scripture to show that Christians have no 'command' to reproach each other, and that it is in fact forbidden to do so by canonical instructions.<sup>309</sup> He contrasts the friendly attitude of the Armenian Church with the actions of the Roman representatives, highlighting their insidious intent and proclaiming that Armenians have always accepted them as 'brothers and fellow-ministers' and rejoiced in the unity and commonality of faith, whereas the latter have responded with hostility; they have sown division and behaved like 'wolves walking about in lambskin'.<sup>310</sup> We can clearly discern here an echo of Nchetsi's words. Mkhitar Sasnetsi scorns the backsliders, remarking that when the Catholic priests of Rome preach what they have learned from their teachers, it may be understandable, 'but how could you adherents

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308 See M 774/24a - b, 42a; See Յովսէփեան, Խաղբականք կամ Պռոշեանք (Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank*), 288; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 348-49.

309 See M 774/42a; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 349.

310 See M774/45a; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 349; Յովսէփեան, Խաղբականք կամ Պռոշեանք (Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank*), 288.

of theirs curse and scorn your traditions?’<sup>311</sup> Sasnetsi notes that the pro-Union movement also unleashed and encouraged the display of antisocial actions. If a sense of shame and decency had curbed people's evil inclinations in the past, licentiousness has now grown to utter insolence. Any appeal to prudence and chastity made to these impudent transgressors is matched by a shameless reply on their part: ‘We are *Franks* [that is, Catholics]’, which means ‘your scolding is of no concern or meaning for us’.<sup>312</sup> In connection with this supposed self-identification as ‘Franks’, we may note that in this very period there were attempts to introduce Latin into Armenian churches for prayer and the liturgy.<sup>313</sup>

## 2.5 Hovhannes Vorotnetsi

Hovhannes Vorotnetsi continued the efforts of Nchetsi. According to Metzopetsi, Vorotnetsi, ‘surrounded by many students’,<sup>314</sup> ‘struggled day and night against the Altarmay [who had become Catholics] of the Ernjak district’.<sup>315</sup> One Malachia Ghrimetsi, in particular, the heir of a great fortune, became a student of Vorotnetsi’s.<sup>316</sup> Ghrimetsi had studied at the monastery of Tatev, and after receiving the degree of vardapet, decided to use his wealth in order to promote the Armenian Church against the Latin.<sup>317</sup>

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311 See M774/47a; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 350.

312 See M 774/ 47.

313 Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 350.

314 See Metzopetsi.

315 Ibid.

316 See Օրմանեան (Ormanian) II:1959-1960.

317 Ibid.

Metzopetsi relates the story of a scandal that occurred at the monastery of Aprakunik, in the district of Ernjak,<sup>318</sup> when Ghrimetsi and Vorotnetsi were together trying to resolve the situation.<sup>319</sup> In order to be closer to the centres of Unitor teaching, a former classmate of Vorotnetsi's, Sargis Aprakunetsi, was sent to Aprakunik in the Ernjak, where Unitors were very active.<sup>320</sup> A group of these Unitors, according to Metzopetsi, wanted to test Sargis' knowledge of the faith on the basis of their study of Peter of Aragon's *Book of Virtues and Vices*. Therefore, one of the students absconded with a copy of the text and brought it to Sargis, saying, 'Once I was a monk from among you, but Satan ruined me and made me Chalcedonian, and my heart is wounded by your disrespect and cursing'. Sargis, we are told, studied the text, and two days later, when the Unitor students came to examine him, Sargis astounded them with his erudition. However, the plan had unforeseen drawbacks. Sargis' students heard his account of the Latin work and begged him to lecture on the *Book of Virtues*. Sargis did so and, according to Metzopetsi, his students were thereby infected with false doctrine and, moreover, did not understand the teaching of the Armenian Church.<sup>321</sup>

The story shows the huge impact that the novelty of these Latin works had on young students, who wanted to convert to the Latin Church. Clearly, that was not Sargis's aim, and he turned for help to Ghrimetsi. Ghrimetsi, in order to combat the attraction to the Latin Church, in turn enlisted the aid of Vorotnetsi, who left the monastery of

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318 Metzopetsi; Օրմանեան (Ormanian) II: 1966-1967.

319 Metzopetsi; Օրմանեան (Ormanian) II: 1966-1967.

320 Օրմանեան (Ormanian) II: 1958-1959.

321 Metzopetsi.

Tatev to go to Aprakunik. There he conducted an investigation of all clerics and laymen. Some were imprisoned, some were placed in fetters and some were beaten.<sup>322</sup>

Mkhitar Aparanetsi, a Unitor monk, also recalls this event, but naturally advances a different interpretation of the story.<sup>323</sup> He says that Sargis, being an ascetic man, was filled with wonder at the Latin Church. But Ghrimetsi, being an evil man, arrived to root out all Armenians who had favoured any sort of union with Rome.

The accounts of Metzopetsi and Aparanetsi differ radically regarding the events surrounding the scandal at Aprakunik in 1376-77, but it is clear that Ghrimetsi and Vorotnetsi were both actively involved in blocking union with the Latin Church. We also know that after the death of Vorotnetsi, Tatevatsi was the head of Aprakunik for two years, and only after that moved to Tatev Monastery, which may imply that Tatevatsi was also involved in this affair.

We would like to mention shortly that that Tatevatsi with his teachers were involved in the question of filioque too. And it could be helpful to see their thoughts about this issue. In the fourteenth century, the question of the Filioque doctrine which accompanied the efforts of the Latin missionaries penetrated Greater Armenia. In 1321, Nchetsi as head of the University of Gladzor, in his letter to the bishop of Tabtis-Ter Matteos, touches slightly on the issue of Filioque:

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322 Metzopetsi.

323 M. A. Oudenrijn, *Linguae Naicanae Scriptores, ordines praedicatorum congregationes fratrum unitorum ... Bernae*, 1960, 218-221. This is a selection from chapter 43 of Apareneci's Book of Orthodox.

The Father is uncreated, He has not come into being, not having been made, not having been born. The Son is only from the Father, not having come into being, not having been made, but born. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and receives from the Son, not having come into being, not having been made, but emanated.<sup>324</sup>

Vorotnetsi turns to this question three times, and by comparison with Nchetsi the issue of Filioque is more significant:

We also believe in the Holy Spirit, emanation from the Father, true God: emanated from the Father before eternity: begun through emanation in a beginningless fashion: conjoined; and equal God with the Father and with the Son: of the same nature; of the same glory; sovereign and lord of one power and of one will with the Father and with the Son.<sup>325</sup>

Moreover, in order to emphasize that the Armenian Church differs from the Latin Church, Vorotnetsi cites four aspects of this difference, again impugning the Filioque:

Come let us undertake to demonstrate the second (point), the cause of our schism from the Chalcedonian council and its adherents. First, they say that the Holy Spirit (is) an emanation from the Son and the Father. And second, since they say our Lord Jesus Christ [has] two natures and two energies and two wills. And third, since they celebrate the feast of Christmas on 25

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324 See the letter of Nchetsi, 1860-1861, 159. For the English text see La Porta, 'The Filioque Controversy in Armenia'. *St. Nersess Theological Review* 8, 2004, 96.

325 See Բաղդասարյան (Baghdasaryan), 1973, 23: M 557, 4v. For English translation see La Porta, 'The Filioque Controversy in Armenia'. *St. Nersess Theological Review* 8, 2004, 100.

December. Fourth, since they celebrate the mysterious offering of the body and blood of the Lord with water.<sup>326</sup>

La Porta presents a translation of the entire third text of Vorotnetsi, which clearly elucidates Vorotnetsi's position against the Filioque.<sup>327</sup> We would like to present only a short segment of Vorotnetsi's response to those who say: 'The Spirit emanated from the Father and the Son'.<sup>328</sup>

O you do you say the Father [is] able in the emanation of the Spirit or unable? If he is able, He emanates the Spirit perfectly and not imperfectly. If it is perfect, the emanation of the Son is superfluous. Whereas if you say the Father is imperfect, and you give the Son as an assistant to Him in the emanation of the Spirit, then, according to you, none exists as God, for that which proceeds from two imperfects is also imperfect.

Grigor Tatevatsi also very actively refers to the question of Filioque in his *Book of Questions*,<sup>329</sup> and refutes those maintaining a pro-Filioque position. As La Porta observes, 'Tatewaci argues that the Spirit of Christ reflects the homoousion of the Trinity, but not the causal relationship: "since everything which is of the Father is of the Son, just as the Lord says [Jn. 16:15], therefore the Spirit of the Father is the Spirit of the Son on account of [their sharing] one essence. Therefore, the Father

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326 For English text see La Porta, 'The Filioque Controversy in Armenia'. *St. Nersess Theological Review* 8, 2004, 101. See Բաղդասարյան: (Baghdasaryan), 1973, 24; M557, 5v-6r).

327 See La Porta, 'The Filioque Controversy in Armenia'. *St. Nersess Theological Review* 8, 2004, 101-102.

328 Ibid., 102.

329 See Գիրք Յարցման (Book of Questions), 61-5).

gave the thing to the Son, but not the relation'.<sup>330</sup> As we see the question of Filioque was not welcomed in Armenian by Tatevatsi's generation.

## 2.6 Latin Missionaries and the Unitor Movement

The reactions we have been examining were occurring within the context of rapid developments on the Latin and pro-Latin side. The initial goal of this movement had been to establish Roman hegemony in Cilicia and in the East,<sup>331</sup> but, as we have seen, by the end of the thirteenth century and in the first decades of the fourteenth, a bitter political-confessional struggle was underway in Eastern Armenia as well. Two religious orders founded early in the thirteenth century, the Franciscans and the Dominicans, played a key role.<sup>332</sup>

Alishan, in a work entitled *Sisakan*, includes a chapter on 'The Unitarian Brethren in the Provinces of Yernjak and Jahkots' which provides a detailed account of the Unitarians, Franciscans and Dominicans and notes that the Franciscans were called *Minork* or *Mnur* (the *Minores*), while the Dominicans were named *Qarozichk* (Predicadores).<sup>333</sup>

The Franciscans were in the field first. The Artaz region, where the St. Apostle Thaddeus Monastery and the School of Tzortzor were located, gained special

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330 See La Porta, 'The Filioque Controversy in Armenia'. *St. Nersess Theological Review* 8, 2004, 104; See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 61.

331 Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Յամալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 327.

332 Ibid., 334.

333 Alishan, *Sisakan*, 1893, 382.

importance. These sites were under the spiritual and secular rule of Zechariah Tzortzoretsi, an ardent advocate of a close alliance with the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>334</sup> Zechariah gathered around him a group of Western and Armenian monks and undertook the translation of the works of prominent representatives of European scholasticism. Under the auspices of Zechariah worked John Tzortzoretsi, Fra Pontius of the Franciscans, and Israel, an Armenian monk who edited Pontius' Armenian writings.<sup>335</sup> By their endeavours in the 1320-1330s a number of significant works were translated from Latin into Armenian, including a part of the so-called *Liber Sacramentorum* of Thomas Aquinas, Nicolaus of Lyra's commentaries on the Gospel of John and on the Pauline Epistle to the Hebrews, Bonaventure's *Life of St. Francis*, and a rituale – the *Book of Liturgy*.

Matters changed in 1318 when Pope John XXII by a special bull made a new division between the mission activities of the Franciscans and the Dominicans. According to this new dispensation, the Dominican friars were given special privileges in spreading the Gospel in Eastern countries. The Franciscans naturally fought bitterly against the decision, denouncing Pope John XXII, the supporter of the Dominicans, and Thomas Aquinas, who had been canonized by him, as heretics. But the Dominicans were eventually to prevail.

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334 Խաչիկեան Լեւոն, Աշխատութիւններ, Չատոր Բ, Երեւան, Գանձասար, 1999 (Levon Khachikyan, *Works*, vol. II, Yerevan, 1999), 341-42.

335 Ibid. 342.

As a part of this settlement, John established, in 1318, an Archiepiscopal seat in the Persian town of Sultania.<sup>336</sup> Franco of Perugia, a Dominican friar, was appointed Archbishop of Sultania with six episcopal sees under him, including three in Atrpatakan – in Tabriz, Maragha and Dehkharkan.<sup>337</sup>

The significant figure here is Bishop Bartholomew of Maragha, who was to play a major role in the cultural history of medieval Armenia. Sources for his activities in Maragha, his move to Yernjak, the foundation of the school in Krna and related issues are the *Book of Orthodoxy* of the Unitor scribe, Mkhitar Aparanetsi and the *Circular Epistle* of Hovhannes Krnetsi, as well as various comments in other manuscripts.<sup>338</sup>

Bartholomew was from Bologna and an adherent of Thomas Aquinas. (He is also known as Bartholomew of Poggio, and is styled in medieval documents Blessed Bartholomew the Little, or Small). He was appointed Bishop of Maragha by John XXII and left for his new see accompanied by two fellow friars, Peter of Aragon and John of Swinford, or John the Englishman. Together they opened a small monastery and launched their mission.<sup>339</sup> Alishan notes that Bartholomew was fluent in Persian,

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336 See Alishan, *Sisakan*, 383; Պետրովիչ Միաբանող Եղբայրները Եւ Չայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360), Petrowicz, ‘The Unitarian Brethren and the Armenian Church’, 366; Isaac Srabyan, Armenia and the Unitarians, «Չանդես ամսօրեայ», 1909, № 11, 321-322)

337 Խաչիկեան, Աշխատութիւններ (Khachikyan, *Works*), vol. II, 344; Oudenrijn, *Linguae Naicanae Scriptores*, 19-20.

338 Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 22.

339 Alishan, *Sisakan*, 383; Պետրովիչ Միաբանող Եղբայրները Եւ Չայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360), Petrowicz, ‘The Unitarian Brethren and the Armenian Church’, 366; Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 508; Chamchyants, *The History of Armenia* III: 336.

and wrote works of his own and translated those of others into Persian. It is acknowledged that he was an interesting preacher, studied Armenian and gathered around him many young Armenian people.<sup>340</sup>

Hovsepyan has shown that in 1321-23, Bartholomew established connections with Zacharias Tzortzoretsi and Hovhannes Yerznkatsi, who had his seat at Tzortzor Monastery at that time. This is when Yerznkatsi translated from Latin Thomas Aquinas's *Seven Sacraments*, assisted by the 'meek and excellent scholar Bartholomew'.<sup>341</sup>

Bartholomew's fame reached not only Yerznkatsi. It also reached the Master of teachers, Yesayi Nchetsi, who was willing to learn of the Latin bishop's doctrine.<sup>342</sup> In 1328, he is said to have commissioned Hovhannes Krnetsi (who had already been awarded a magisterial crosier and appointed the Father Superior of the Yernjak province monasteries) to travel to Maragha to find out what his doctrine was like and even invite that 'Catholic scholar' to Gladzor – though, as we shall see, this may well not be the case.

Krnetsi, in any event, duly travelled to Maragha, listened to Bartholomew's preaching and admired his theological knowledge so much that he immediately changed his confession. After staying in Maragha for a year and a half and learning

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340 See Papken Catholicos Gulesserian. *The Armenian Church*. Translated by Terenig Vartabed Poladian, second edition, New York: AMS Press, 1970, 41.

341 Յովսէփէան, Խաղբականք կամ Պոռոշեանք (Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank*), 284.

342 Alishan, *Sisakan.*, 383-84.

Latin and classical theology, Krnetsi taught Armenian to Bartholomew and his colleagues. He translated several books and decided to convene a council in his native village of Krna in order to unite the Armenian Church with the Catholic. In 1330, twelve theologians (Krnetsi calls them his fellow students) gathered with Bartholomew, Peter of Aragon, John the Englishman and their colleagues from Maragha. The Armenian councillors unanimously decided to submit to the Roman pontiff together with their subject communities, adopt the Catholic confession and cut their ties with the Armenian Church.<sup>343</sup> They also began to proclaim that this union was necessary for salvation.<sup>344</sup>

Gorg, the Lord Baron of Krna, who was Hovhannes Krnetsi's uncle, and his wife joined them, granting them generous financial support. In a couple of months they had built a new church, formed a new religious congregation and founded a new institution of higher education.<sup>345</sup> They called themselves 'Unitarian Brethren with the Church of Rome', *Fratres Unitores* in Latin.<sup>346</sup>

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343 Խաչիկեան, Աշխատութիւններ (Khachikyan, *Works*), vol. II, 345-346; Alishan, *Ibid.*, 1893, 384; Պետրովիչ Միաբանող Եղբայրները եւ Հայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360), Petrowicz, 'The Unitarian Brethren and the Armenian Church', 368; Գ. Ոսկյան, Համառոտ ակնարկ մը քարոզող միաբանող եղբարց պատմության Հայաստանի մեջ, «Բազմավեպ», Venice, 1922, 19, 49; Van den Oudenrijn. 'Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Arménie'. 1. L'Union de Qrnay 1330,' *Oriens Christianus* 40 (1956), 94.

344 See Ոսկյան, 1922, 19. In 1332 Mkhitar Aparanetsi announced that some of the disciples of the great theologian Yesayi had walked towards the 'mother of all knowledge which has a pure and unmixed doctrine from the vast sea of Rome'.

345 See Ոսկյան, 1922, 22-25.

346 Alishan, *Siskian.*, 384; Պետրովիչ Միաբանող Եղբայրները եւ Հայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360), Petrowicz, 'The Unitarian Brethren and the Armenian Church', 368.

During the year and a half in Maragha, Hovhannes Krnetsi translated some works from Latin into Armenian. He also wrote a circular letter on behalf of Bartholomew to his former fellow students of Gladzor (1330), who held offices in various provinces – his famous epistle *To the United Brotherhood of Armenians*, in which he records the history of the foundation of the Yernjak Unitarian Church and attempts to explain his decision to accept the Catholic confession and unification with the Church of Rome. He invites those to whom he writes to gather around Bartholomew and form a new Armenian congregation,<sup>347</sup> ascribes as many as nineteen ‘unpardonable’ errors to the Fathers of the Armenian Church and – as we shall see – records important autobiographical information.<sup>348</sup> He finally declares that the Armenian nation has gone astray from the true way and is sitting in the dark, overlooking her own ignorance.<sup>349</sup>

Krnetsi announces that he and his supporters

have founded an Armenian Dominican Congregation, and henceforth they will be accepted among us as our fathers and leaders and teachers and will be honoured on our part. But these councils shall not be held without Dominican representatives; they shall dwell in all our monasteries. Armenian Dominicans shall be wearing proper garments of Latin priests. And this newborn religious body will be called the ‘Order of Unitors’ (*Fratres*

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347 Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 510; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Աչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 353.

348 This Epistle is published in Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 513-21. See Թռնեցի, Յաղագս Թերակասին (Krnetsi. *About Grammar*), 39.

349 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 510; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Աչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 353.

*Unitores*). And the Holy Church of Rome will be accepted as the mother of all churches.<sup>350</sup>

This was the first ever congregation of the Dominican family formed and officially recognized by Rome, in 1330.<sup>351</sup>

Hakob Krnetsi was – according to his memoirs – in Maragha with Hovhannes and Bartholomew and had also turned to Catholicism. He reports that Hovhannes Krnetsi, instead of returning to Yernjak in Armenia, left for Rome, presented himself to the Pope and received instructions from him.<sup>352</sup> Khacherian suggests that the Pope financed Hovhannes Krnetsi for vigorous Catholic activities in Armenia. In any event, on finally moving to Krna with Bartholomew and the other Latin missionaries, Hovhannes plunged into Unitarian activities. He was elected the ‘regional leader of the Order of Unitors’ and confirmed in this position by Giovanni of Florence, who in his turn, by Papal decree, had settled in Tiflis in 1330, transferring his episcopal seat

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350 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 591-592, 522; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցիկ եւ Գլաճորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 354; see Հասկ (Yearbook of Armenian Studies, 2nd year, 1949-50; Antelias, 200-201).

351 On the rise of the Order of the Brothers of Unity, see Van den Oudenrijn. ‘Uniteurs et Dominicains d’Arménie’. 1. L’Union de Qrnay 1330,’ *Oriens Christianus* 40 (1956), 94-112; ‘Le nouvel athénée,’ *Oriens Christianus* 42 (1958), 110-133; ‘La congrégation des Uniteurs,’ *Oriens Christianus* 42 (1959), 110-119. ‘Les adversaries de l’union,’ *Oriens Christianus* 45 (1961), 95-108; ‘Les Dominicains de Naxijewan,’ *Oriens Cristianus* 46 (1962), 99-116; also Բոնեցի, Յաղագս Թերականիկ (Krneci, *About Grammar*), 5-51; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցիկ եւ Գլաճորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 327-66

352 See MS 2185/57b; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցիկ եւ Գլաճորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 352-53.

from Smyrna.<sup>353</sup> Krnetsi remained in this position until his death on 6 January 1347.<sup>354</sup>

We must, however, note that Khachikyan does not believe either that Hovhannes Krnetsi was commissioned by Yesayi Nchetsi to go to Maragha or that Nchetsi wanted to invite Bartholomew to Gladzor. Khachikyan believes that the Great Rabbi Nchetsi in a number of writings definitely detached himself from the Catholic missionaries sent from the West and instructed his disciples, as well as the Diocesans of the Armenian Church, to reject and persecute all those who adopted a position of hostility toward the Armenian Church.<sup>355</sup> L. Khacheryan also asserts that Yesayi Nchetsi had no connection with the association between Krnetsi and Bartholomew, and this would appear to be confirmed by the *Letter of Hovhannes Krnetsi to the Armenian Brethren*.<sup>356</sup>

There Krnetsi himself mentions that he had been a disciple of the famous teacher Nchetsi and had received his magisterial staff from him, though he had always in his mind cherished union with the Holy Church of Rome. He then speaks about his mission to Maragha and about staying with Bartholomew for about a year and a half, recounts how much he gained from the same ‘wise brother’ and mentions his translations. But there is not a word to the effect that he had been assigned to do all

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353 ‘Dominican bibliographic notes’, *Bazmavep* (Venice) 1922, 138

354 See ՔՆՆԵԳԻ, Յաղագս Թերակալիս (Krneci, *About Grammar*), 39; Խաչիկեան, Աշխատութիւններ (Khachikyan, *Works*), vol. II, 354.

355 See Khachikyan, ‘The Armenian Government of Artaz and the School of Tzortzor’, 203.

356 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 518; Խաչիկեան, Աշխատութիւններ (Khachikyan, *Works*), vol. II, 347.

this by Yesayi Nchetsi, though this mere fact would have been significant in winning new supporters and fulfilling his long-cherished plan of unifying the Armenian and the Roman Churches.

Thus Khachikyan argues that Krnetsi had chosen this course of action well before he appeared in Maragha. In the *Letter* he writes, ‘I have been thinking the same thought all the time; I eagerly craved to be a famous witness of my nation’s conversion to true salvation, so I begged the Latins for help; with heartfelt groans from the depth of my spirit I desired to unite with the Holy Church of Rome’.<sup>357</sup>

Khachikyan considers Krnetsi’s claim to be somewhat disingenuous and shows that the ‘salvation’ of Armenian souls is not all that was at stake, for these words of Krnetsi’s resonate with certain political cravings. Hovhannes was, as we have seen, a nephew of the lord of the large village of Krna, which was located by the famous castle of Yernjak. He was reared in an environment in which, since the middle of the thirteenth century, plans were being incubated toward the possibility of throwing off the yoke of the foreign conquerors with the help of the Catholics.

In 1254, Guillaume de Rubrouck, a Franciscan friar and an envoy of Louis IX of France, was on his way to the Mongol court at Karakorum. Stopping over in Nakhijevan on the way, he fell into conversation with an Armenian bishop from a nearby monastery, who related a legend about the expectations of Armenian liberation. According to this legend, the Franks allied with the Armenians would

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<sup>357</sup> See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 518; Khachikyan, *Works*, vol. 2, 347).

defeat the Tatars, and the King of the Franks would advance to ‘the town of Tabriz and become its king. Then they would Christianise all of the East and the gentiles, thus establishing such a peace on earth that the survivors would bewail the dead who were not destined to see the bliss of this new era.’<sup>358</sup>

Khachikyan notes that one of the main international trade routes passed through Nakhijevan. Many nearby villages (including Old Jugha, Agulise, Shorot, Dasht) were naturally involved in that trade. Merchants from those villages, speaking several languages and linked with both Eastern and Western countries, played an important role in international trade. This provided a very favourable environment for Western missionaries who not only interpreted the doctrinal principles of the Latin Church but floated promises as well – futile though they proved to be in the long run – regarding the chance for the people’s liberation from the foreign yoke.

We can imagine Bartholomew of Maragha in his sermons explaining the grave economic and political situation of Eastern Christians owing to their separation from Rome and lavishing promises of what would come from the unity of the Churches. He writes,

Faithful Christians who were separated from each other and the main seat of Rome were scattered and fell into submission to foreigners. They are like scattered dry bones. When the time of their captivity had lasted too long

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358 See A. Hovhannisyan, *Episodes in the History of the Armenian Liberation Thought*, Yerevan, 1957, 83-6; H. Hakobyan, *Travel Notes*, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1932, 16-7; Խաչիկեան, Աշխատութիւններ (Khachikyan, *Works*), vol. II, 347.

many of them despaired. Oh! You miserable Christians, do not despair, for you desire to get out of this captivity and death; as bones strive to join together with muscles and tendons, so Christians are willing to join together and with the Holy Church of Rome, through holy love, to perform one and the same rite in celebrations and the liturgy. And when they do unite in such love, then the Spirit of God will rest upon them. May we beg Christ to make us worthy and unify us.<sup>359</sup>

The nation's secular and religious leaders launched an uncompromising campaign against the Unitors settled in the Yernjak area. Bartholomew of Maragha noted, quite rightly, that their rival Armenian monks fought against them with armour obtained from the Catholics.<sup>360</sup> In the Armenian translation of his book of sermons, he declares an anathema and curses all who would dare to give to his opponents this work containing his doctrine and views.<sup>361</sup> ‘Many times’, he says, ‘our opponents arm themselves with our statements and fight against us and our truth using our own sword; thus cursed be he who will give this book to the adversary – the narrow-minded Unitarian’.<sup>362</sup> (The last comment is probably a marginal annotation or a gloss by that very ‘adversary’, busy copying out the work for just those purposes.)

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359 See MS 2184, 99b; Խաչիկեան, Աշխատութիւններ (Khachikyan, *Works*), vol. II, 347-48.

360 See Յովսէփեան, Խաղբականք կամ Պռոշեանք (Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank*), 288.

361 See MS 2185/57b; see Յովսէփեան, Խաղբականք կամ Պռոշեանք (Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank*), 288; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցիս եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 352.

362 MS 2185/57b; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Նչեցիս եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 352; Յովսէփեան, Խաղբականք կամ Պռոշեանք (Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank*), 288.

The leadership of the pro-Latin movement was itself divided between moderates and radicals. The moderate wing was headed by Hovhannes Erznkatsi-Tzortzoretsi, while Hovhannes Krnetsi was the leader of the radical wing.<sup>363</sup> Hovhannes Tzortzoretsi never encouraged the idea of a national proselytism as the Unitarians were doing through their divisive actions, especially in Eastern Armenia. These ostentatiously added ‘Fra’ to their names in their writings as though to detach themselves from Armenian intellectual culture and stress their Latin credentials.<sup>364</sup> But even when the Unitarian ideology was at its most inflammatory, raging about national apostasy and indulging in self-denial, Hovhannes Tzortzoretsi never pronounced a word against his national profession of faith nor uttered any curse, whereas Krnetsi, being ‘more papist than the Pope’, saw the Armenian people ‘drowned in a hopeless error’, only for having adopted the Gregorian confession after St Gregory the Illuminator.<sup>365</sup> Unlike Hovhannes Krnetsi, Tzortzoretsi was never caught up with the idea of joining the Church of Rome. What he did favour was introducing some elements of Catholic liturgical rituals into the Armenian Church, as well as some cultural relationship between the two nations.<sup>366</sup> Significantly, Tzortzoretsi’s reverence was mainly directed toward the general and comprehensive knowledge and proficiency of Latin scholars. In translating Aquinas’s work, he particularly praises Thomas as a wise

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363 See Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 355.

364 Ibid., 360.

365 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 518; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 361.

366 See Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցին եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 362.

scholar.<sup>367</sup> It is notable also that he neither prefers Aquinas's work over all others nor opposes it to the similar writings of Armenian authors, thus downplaying the latter, but dedicates his translation 'as a precious treasure to the Armenian Church'.<sup>368</sup>

The Unitarian movement, as divisive and provocative as it was in many ways, had its positive aspects as well. When in 1330 Bartholomew moved to Krna, he along with Peter of Aragon, Hovhannes and Hakob Krnetsi and John the Englishman began to translate and compose liturgical books in Armenian: a 'Breviary (*Zhamagirk*)', 'Missal (*Pataragamatuyts*)' and 'Diurnal' (*Zhamuts book*), as well as prayer books and various doctrinal works. They also translated and created civil codes, books of sermons and commentaries on theological, philosophical and scientific works.

Clemence Galanos observes regarding the last years of Bartholomew's life, 'Blessed Bartholomew together with the holy fathers Hovhannes and Hakob committed themselves to the translation of the Holy Writ (from Latin into Armenian), and Peter of Aragon joined them. And they worked together and translated many books in three years until the death of the blessed Bartholomew, which happened in 1333'.<sup>369</sup> After Bartholomew's death the work was diligently led by Peter of Aragon until the end of

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367 See MS 2515/82; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցիս եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 362.

368 See MS2515/82; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցիս եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 362. Hovhannes Yerznkatsi never became an extreme Unitarian and never applied 'Fra' to his name; Խաչերեան, Եսայի Լչեցիս եւ Գլաձորի Համալսարանը (Khacheryan. *Yesayi Nchetsi and Gladzor University*), 363.

369 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 512; Խաչիկեան, Աշխատութիւններ (Khachikyan, *Works*), vol. II, 348-49; Յովսէփեան, Խաղբակաւ կամ Պոռոշեանք (Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank*), 288-89.

his life (in 1347), with Hakob Krnetsi as his assistant. Translations of important theological and philosophical works completed in these years by the Dominicans and their Armenian colleagues include:

- 1) Albert the Great (Albertus Magnus), *A Brief Collection of Theological Truth* (translated by Peter of Aragon and Hakob Krnetsi in 1344);
- 2) Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* – various sections translated by Hovhannes Krnetsi, John the Englishman, Peter of Aragon and Hakob the Translator; these questions circulated in Armenia under different titles, including *A Brief Collection on the Spirit and New Power*, *On Spiritual Virtue*, *On the Lordship of Christ*, *On the Seven Sacraments of the Church*;
- 3) Bartholomew's *On the Two Natures and the Person of Christ* and *A Book on Hell* (translated by Hovhannes Krnetsi);
- 4) Bartholomew's *Book of Sermons* (translated by Hakob Krnetsi); and
- 5) Peter of Aragon, *A Book on Virtues* and *A Book on Vices* (translated by Hakob Krnetsi).<sup>370</sup>

The barriers presented by the fact that the authors were based in Krna could not prevent these works from soon appearing in the scholastic and educational centres of the Armenian Church nor prevent theologians of the Armenian Church from obtaining and copying most of them. For instance, in 1363, Hovhannes Vorotnetsi gave Grigor Tatevatsi himself the task of copying a manuscript—now Matenadaran

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<sup>370</sup> See Խաչիկեան, Աշխատութիւններ (Khachikyan, *Works*), vol. II, 349-50; Յովսէփեան, Խաղբակաւք կամ Պռոշեանք (Hovsepyan, *The Khaghbakyan or Proshiank*), 288-289; Alishan, *Sisakan*, 1893, 384-85; Պետրովիչ Միսրանող Երբայրները եւ Հայ Եկեղեցին (1330-1360) (Petrowicz, 'The Unitarian Brethren and the Armenian Church'), 465-66; G. Voskanyan, 'A Brief Overview of the History of Unitarian and Missionary Brethren in Armenia', *Bazmavep* (Venice), 1922, February, 49-51.

MS 2383—which was to include the *Dialectics* of Bartholomew, *De sex principiis* by Gilbertus Porretanus and a commentary on the latter by Peter of Aragon. Hakob Ghrimetsi of the Kapos Monastery copied MS 3437 in 1389, which is entirely composed of works emanating from Unitarian circles (Thomas Aquinas, Peter of Aragon and the like). Examples can be multiplied.<sup>371</sup>

Thanks to this activity a vast store of knowledge of natural and social phenomena inherited from the ancient world (and spread across Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries) penetrated into the educational centres of Armenia.<sup>372</sup> Bartholomew of Maragha, for example, aided by Hakob the Translator, composed a voluminous commentary *On the Six-Day Creation*, which provided a comprehensive overview of the plant and the animal worlds and human origins, the structure of the universe and other scientific issues. In this work Bartholomew refers to ancient philosophers such as Anaxagoras, Empedocles, Democritus, Plato, Ptolemy and Strabo<sup>373</sup> and cites from more than ten books of Aristotle now made accessible to the Armenian reader. Among them are *Ethics*, *Physics*, *Metaphysics*, *On Animals*, *On the Heavens*, *On Divination and Sleep*, *On Generation and Corruption* and *On the Soul*. The scholars of medieval Armenia had previously known only Aristotle's works on logic, which makes clear at once how vast a scope of scientific material was now put into wide circulation just through this one book by Bartholomew.<sup>374</sup> Such is the positive impact that these works by Bartholomew and his collaborators had. Of

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371 See ԽԱԿԻԿԵԱՆ, ԱԶԽԱՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐ (Khachikyan, *Works*), vol. II, 350-51.

372 Ibid., 351.

373 Ibid., 351-52.

374 Ibid., 352.

special significance as well was Hovhannes Krnetsi's *Brief Selection of Grammar*, by means of which Armenian grammatical usage broke free from a thousand-year-long deadlock and began the process of becoming the real grammar of the Armenian language.<sup>375</sup> It was edited in 1977 by Khacikyan and Avakyan and is the first scholarly work on Armenian grammar, including an examination of the syntax of the language.<sup>376</sup>

There were, to be sure, some religious and doctrinal writings of this period from the other side, such as *An Instruction in Dogmatics* by Vanakan Vardapet, *A Response to the Letter from the Pope of Rome to King Hethum of Armenia* – a polemical epistle by Vardan Areveltsi – and an ecclesiastical epistle by Mekhitar Skevratsi entitled *A Response on the Equal Glory of the Twelve Apostles*.<sup>377</sup> Despite this, however, the Armenian clergy had not taken the dogmatic initiative in conflict with the Latins in the way they were to do after the 1330s with theologians like Yessai Nchetsi, Mekhitar Sasnetsi, Hovhan Vorotnetsi and Grigor Tatevatsi.

Until the middle of the fourteenth century, Armenian philosophical and theological thought was shaped and developed primarily on the basis of Greek sources which had largely been known since the fifth to eighth centuries, both in the original language and in translation. The writings of Eastern Fathers were in particular much used and well exploited by medieval Armenian writers. But for many centuries, there

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375 Ibid., 353.

376 See Քռնէցի, Յաղագս Թերակախին (Krnetsi. *About Grammar*). There is a very informative introduction about the Monastery of Krna.

377 See Օղլուգյան, 28:

was a dearth of Latin, and the need to access these texts had become more and more apparent. It was through the mission of the Dominicans that the Armenian Church was introduced to Latin theology, and a Latin theological, philosophical and historical heritage became available to Armenians.

Clearly, Latin theology was on the whole welcomed in Armenia, and the Western thought introduced by the Dominicans into Greater Armenia became a draw for Armenian thinkers and writers. Our assumption is that the motivation of this interest toward Bartholomew's work may have three dimensions. Firstly, the young Armenians were no doubt interested in the novelty of theology, philosophy and science which came from the West, and a simple thirst for knowledge would have directed them toward missionaries from the West. Secondly, leaders of the Armenian Church, who wanted to understand more deeply the Church of Rome, might in some cases themselves have sent young Armenians in the direction of the missionaries. Thirdly, in light of the magnitude of Rome in European politics, the young Armenians, at a critical moment in their country's history, may have desired to introduce political changes to their society and for this reason also were drawn to the missionaries who arrived from Rome. Some individuals in the Armenian Church believed that the Papacy offered solace to Armenians during this dangerous time, therefore embracing all things Western. Unfortunately, history shows that the Church of Rome was persistent in its attempts to Romanise the Armenians, but the Papacy was not persistent in its efforts to support the Armenians. However, among the clergymen of the Armenian Apostolic Church were those who were fascinated by the Church of Rome, and with their help Roman missionaries were able to penetrate

among the Armenians and moreover, to convince many of them. We will see shortly how the monasteries of Gladzor and Tatev addressed this growing body of literature, and what impact it had on the leaders of the Armenian Church.

Other translations, in addition to those of the original circle noted above, include further works of Thomas Aquinas – the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, *De Persona et Duabus Naturis Christi* and *De Sacramentis* – a project begun by John Yerzebngatsi in 1327, in Dzordzor. The *Compendium Theologicae* of Albert the Great was translated in 1344 and the *Commentary on the Mass* of Innocent IX in 1354. The *Canons* of St Augustine and works of G. Porretanus, Jacob de Voragine and Ribelin were also made available, together giving a fairly complete and full introduction to Latin theology.

After the death of Bartholomew of Bologna in 1333, his mantle fell to Hovhannes Krnetsi. Under Krnetsi's leadership, the Unitors implemented their extensive programme by opening new schools and Catholic churches and continuing to pursue the production and publication of theological books in Armenian, for they saw clearly that it was only through the use of Armenian that their message would be heard and they would be able to inculcate Catholicism within Armenian society.

This new order of preaching friars began to re-baptize converts and re-ordain priests of the Armenian Apostolic Church. And they were successful, for a number of influential members of the Armenian clergy embraced their ideas. The *Fratres Unitores* gradually began to shift Armenian church rites and rituals toward Catholic

practice, establishing a Dominican Missal (Պատարագամատոյց – *Book of Hours*), breviary and a number of other books and manuals of the Roman Church.<sup>378</sup>

All this resulted in a marked change of attitude toward the Catholics. Unitors were reputed to hunt for converts by various means, ‘even in the baths, in squares, on the roads’, in order to force them to adopt Catholicism.<sup>379</sup> Krnetsi in particular stopped at nothing. We can understand his position – and see why attitudes toward the Catholic Church changed – if we return to the circular letter Krnetsi sent to the Armenian brethren. This important document was published in 1650 by Galanos in Rome.<sup>380</sup> (Clemens Galanos was a seventeenth-century Jesuit who had been sent to the Caucasus by *Propaganda Fide*<sup>381</sup> to learn Armenian, and was then sent, in 1640, to Constantinople on a mission to convert Armenians to Catholicism.<sup>382</sup>) The text of Krnetsi’s letter survives both in Latin and in Armenian. In it he tries to prove the advantages of the Roman Catholic Church, to underline the utter uselessness of the clergy and secular lords of Armenia and to indicate the futility of the intelligentsia, but mainly to underline the inability of the Armenian Church to save souls.

Krnetsi asserts, ‘The Church of God was forced to carry three frightful persecutions—firstly, from the Jews; secondly, from pagans; thirdly, from

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378 See Абебян М. История древнеармянской литературы, т. 2, с. 352 Георг-Месроп. Указ. раб., т. 2, 354.

379 See Товма Мецопеци, 18.

380 See *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana ex ipsis Armenorum Patrum, et Doctorum testimoniis, in duas partes, historicalem et controversialem, divisae*. Pars prima. Chapter thirteen: De progressibus Fratrum Praedicatorum in reducendis ad catholicam fidem Armenis, 508-531.

381 The Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Rome

382 See *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*. Vol. III. Coordinating editor Agop J. Hacikyan, with Gabriel Basmajian, Edward S. Franchuk, Nourhan Ouzounian. Wayne State University: Detroit, Michigan, 2005, 20.

heretics.<sup>383</sup> He adds that there will be a fourth persecution when Antichrist arrives. The third persecution had long been regarded as the worst one, since many had been lost because of the heretics: ‘They were monsters who gave birth to other monsters and infected the Armenians with their poison.’ Krnetsi believes that the Armenians, until the Council of Chalcedon, walked in the light of the faith that had been spread by Gregory of Illuminator. But after the penetration of the heretics he believes that the Armenian Church fell into numerous errors, and in his letter he underlines nineteen of them.<sup>384</sup>

An examination of the letter raises various questions. First, was it really written by Krnetsi? And secondly, if it was his letter, what was his motivation in writing it? Thirdly, why would Krnetsi, who was known as ‘one of the best students of Nchetsi’,

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383 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 518; ԽԱՅԻԿԵԱՆ, ԱՂԽԱՍՏՈՒԹՅԱՆԵՐ (Khachikyan, *Works*), vol. II, 347.

384 1) They believe that there is only one nature in Christ. 2) Like the Greeks, they mistakenly believe that the Holy Spirit does not flow from Son. 3) They believe that the souls of saints do not enter the Earthly Kingdom, and sinful people do not go to hell before the Day of Judgement, but wait for a judgement in the air. 4) They believe that there is no need for purgatory. And there is no such a place as hell. 5) They believe that the Church of Rome does not have superiority over other churches of the world. 6) They condemned Pope St Leo and the Council of Chalcedon. 7) They do not celebrate divine feasts, especially the Lord’s birthday, according to canons of the Church of Rome. 8) They do not keep the fast according to Church’s canons. 9) They do not have seven sacraments, as they celebrate the sacrament of confirmation as the last unction. Concerning the other sacraments they do not know what is an essential. 10) During the divine liturgy they do not add water to the cup. 11) They affirm that there is no need to give Eucharist in dividing bread from the cup, and therefore, they present Christ’s body by dipping it into the divine blood. 12) They celebrate liturgy in wooden or clay vessels. 14) They belong to two patriarchs, and each of them signed as the Patriarch of All Armenians. 15) They ordain priest or bishop by force of a family’s hereditary. 16) They sell sacraments of the church. 17) By pecuniary help they grant a husband to divorce his wife without any cause - against the gospel and the canons of the Church. 18) They do not prepare the special oil for confirmation and extreme unction. 19) They give communion to infants, who have not reached their age of intelligence.

present himself as being so utterly alien to the theology of the Armenian Apostolic Church?

In particular, if we consider Krnetsi's nineteen points, the question arises of how, if this really is Krnetsi's letter, it could be that such a brilliant student of Nchetsi, and one who had studied for many years at Gladzor, should demonstrate such ignorance of the theological position of the Armenian Church. Let us highlight some aspects of the letter which underlie our doubts.

The first point that underlined by Krnetsi concerns the problem of Christ's two natures, which raises the issue of the heresy known as Monophysitism for which the Armenian Church was long blamed. The Council of Chalcedon was, and still is, the most questionable council in the tradition of Eastern Christendom, as it produced the division of the Churches into Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian, or into 'Orthodox' and 'Monophysites'. But the Armenian Church has never been Monophysite in the sense that is ordinarily given to this word – the recognition of only the divine nature in Christ without His humanity, which according to Eutyches was lost in His divinity. But this is precisely the position that the letter attributes to the Armenian tradition. Krnetsi should certainly have known the Christological position of the Armenian Church, and should have remembered that dogmatic theology of the Armenian Church is formed on the teachings of St. Cyril of Alexandria, the Cappadocians and St Athanasius of Alexandria and that in its liturgical texts Eutyches as well as Nestorius is condemned, along with their doctrines.

Moreover, from this letter, it would seem that Krnetsi did not remember why and how the Armenian Church officially came to reject the Council of Chalcedon.<sup>385</sup> He wholly ignores the complicated historical and theological situation of the Armenian Church before and after Chalcedon. The real Krnetsi would have known quite well that the theological orientation of Armenia was always toward the Alexandrine tradition, as can be illustrated by the deep doctrinal analysis and theological treatises of Moses of Koren, the *Homilies* of John Mandakuni, or the *Teaching of St Gregory*. As a pupil of Gladzor, Krnetsi would know that the Armenian Church adopted the dogmas of the Ecumenical Councils of Nicaea, Constantinople and Ephesus. But from the letter it would seem that he had either misunderstood all this, or that, as a leader of a new congregation, he had so fully embraced the new theology that he could misrepresent that of his forefathers.

In short, the letter features many points which make quite apparent that it was written by someone who did not possess a deep knowledge of the Armenian Church. Therefore, we have grave doubts about the authenticity of the document, despite the opposing view advanced by the respected scholar Van den Oudenrijn.<sup>386</sup> Significantly, Van den Oudenrijn pays no attention in his argument to dogmatic issues, only to historical ones. (But his assertion that the translation [1321] of the

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385 The rejection by the Armenian Church of the Council of Chalcedon officially was in the Council of Dvin (506/508), of which the main purpose was to decide for or against the *Henotikon* of Zeno, and as Chalcedon was involved in the controversy that is why it was rejected. See Karekin Sarkissian, *The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church*. New York: A Publication of the Armenian Church Prelacy, 1975.

386 Marc Van Den Oudenrijn, 'Notes Sur Quelques Ouvrages Armeniens De Provenance Dominicaine'. *Bazmavep*, 1982, 53-67.

portion of the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas relating to the seven sacraments was translated into Armenian by Krnetsi in 1321 is in fact wrong.) Dogmatic arguments, which Oudenrijn does not consider, must be taken into account equally.

In the course of denouncing these ‘errors’ of the Armenian Church, Krnetsi – or the author of the letter – tells how he studied in Armenia with the renowned Grand Vardapet Yesayi. Ironically, or subliminally, while recognizing all these ‘errors’, he still calls Yesayi ‘Grand’. Here he relates that after receiving the pastoral staff from his teacher’s hands, he travelled to Maraga in order to see the Dominican priest Bartholomew. This is a revealing statement, since many scholars believe that Nchetsi was the one who sent Krnetsi to Bartholomew, but in the letter we are told that Krnetsi himself decided to visit Maraga in order to ‘finally join the Holy Roman Church’.<sup>387</sup>

From the letter and from the historian Metzopetsi we can identify a number of Krnetsi’s followers, including the Archimandrite Mapgape Otsoptsi, Hayrapet Etnahpyurtsi, Hovhannes Tsuantsi, Nerses Tarsonatsi, Arakel and Lal (or Israel) Artazetsi, Grigor Aprakunistsi and Constantine and Hovhannes Kagyzmantsi. Some time later, the Archimandrite Simeon Hachenetsi Basentsi renounced his native church of Gladzor and became, in 1330, a member of the Dominican Order. They

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387 Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol. I, 518

were joined, after much hesitation, by the well-known writer Hovhannes Yerznkatsi (Tzortzoretsi).<sup>388</sup>

Arevshatyan notes that ‘missioners were able to turn to Catholicism a few Armenian villages such as Jauk, Aprakunis, Gandzak, Kotskashen, Karashush, Kyrna, Shahaponk, Salita, Hoshkashen, and Aparaner in the region of Nakhijevan’ and argues, on that basis, that Catholic propaganda over a period of sixty or seventy years did not enjoy great success.<sup>389</sup> Perhaps it was not ‘great’ success, but it was still a solid achievement for the Catholics, as these villages made up the region of Nakhijevan, quite a large area. And if we consider the fact that Armenians were not known for constantly and readily changing the faith that they had practised for many centuries, we have to admit that it was a fiasco for the Armenian Apostolic Church in this region.<sup>390</sup> The population of Nakhijevan proved to be unstable in their belief, eventually forsaking Christianity and embracing Islam.<sup>391</sup>

The behaviour of the Dominicans finally proved too much for Cilicia to handle. Therefore, King Leo V and the Patriarch Hakob, who had shown a tolerant attitude to the missionaries of Rome, were forced to arrest and exile many supporters of Hovhannes Krnetsi from the country.<sup>392</sup> It is no coincidence that representatives of patriotic intellectuals called Krnetsi the ‘fierce root of bitterness’ and the ‘Judas

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388 See Haghbakyan, vol. II. 256—57.

389 S. Arevshatyan, *On the Philosophical Schools of Medieval Armenia* (1980), 17.

390 It is also interesting to mention that during the Soviet Union Period, Nakhijevan was a part of Azerbaijan; many scholars believe that the population of these villages are descendants of Armenian Catholics.

391 See Khachikyan, ‘The Armenian Government of Artaz and the School of Tzortzor’, 167.

392 See Chamchyants, *The History of Armenia* III: 331.

among the disciples of Christ'.<sup>393</sup> The struggle against the Unitors was intensified after the death of Yesayi Nchetsi, when the anti-Roman movement was led and directed by his famous pupil Hovhannes Vorotnetsi.<sup>394</sup>

As we have observed, it was primarily at the time of the Crusades that the Armenians encountered the Latins. In spite of their common Christian heritage, two different cultures and traditions were brought into contact. Each of them was very proud of its Church; each of them alleged the uniqueness of its faith; each of them cherished the theological inheritance of the past centuries. But the weighting of the categories was different. Here we have a strong example of the relentless struggle between two ancient Christian churches. On the one hand, we can point to an intense conflict – a virtual war – as the result of these troubles, but on the other hand, this was clearly a Christian war, in the sense that not only political, economic and social issues were at stake but also theological, doctrinal and historical modes of thought.

Catholics were venturing everything necessary to achieve what they wanted, and Armenians were intent on keeping, preserving and cherishing what they had. Or we could say, the other way around, that Catholics were keeping, preserving and cherishing what they had, and Armenians were venturing everything necessary to achieve what they wanted. Both, cherishing the Christian faith, wished to prove that only they were right, to the exclusion of others. However, policies, methods and motivations were quite different. The zeal of Catholic missionaries toward unity went too far, making it impossible for them to place themselves in the Armenians' shoes.

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393 See Hahbakyan, vol. 2, sec. 199, note. 3.

394 See K. Kostanyan. *The Armenian Monasteries*. Moscow, 1866, 67-8.

Armenians, who had allowed the existence of Unitors in their territory, refused to tolerate the Catholics' intentions any longer. Aware of their long-suffering history, Armenians, as a Christian nation, decided not to exist within Catholicism, but to preserve and to survive along with Catholics and other Christian Churches. The Armenian Church 'has never tolerated that union should take the guise of domination, nor be mistaken for proselytism'.<sup>395</sup>

The leaders of the Armenian Church, given this agenda, had an urgent problem: how to preserve the independence of their Church. Therefore, it became a necessity by all means to resist the Catholic missionaries and their Armenian followers. The principal step in this rejection of union was the alacritous production of written theological works, the main purpose of which was to publically elucidate the theology of the Armenian Apostolic Church. All this occurred in the era of the Crusades, when the Armenian Church was not in communion with either the Roman Church or the Orthodox Church of Constantinople. A strong sense of identity and the rejection of assimilation into the Orthodox-Byzantine or Roman communities gave people the strength and hope to embrace the Armenian Apostolic Church.<sup>396</sup> Defiantly, one may call this period a time to stand up and be vindicated.

We believe that from an historical point of view, this Latin-Armenian relationship was among one of the most important and impressive periods in the history of the Armenian Church. Due to these complex relationships, Armenian Church leaders were incited to advance their knowledge of Latin sources and seek momentum for

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395 Ormanian. *The Church of Armenia*, 58.

396 Ibid., 3. Atiya, *A History of Eastern Christianity*, 315.

the development of Armenian theological thought. In spite of much human loss and the wanton destruction of many libraries, disagreements and complicated relations between the Latin and Armenian Churches, we do believe that this period may be characterised as an age of innovation and inspiration for Armenians, and that, moreover, it should be recognized as a vital age for the survival of the Armenian Church heritage – which became a fundamental part of the heritage of the Christian Church.

Manuk Abeghyan, an outstanding Armenian scholar and armenologist, believed that ‘this Uniates’ literature, certainly, does not have any literary value’.<sup>397</sup> Moreover, he believes that ‘Unitors reshaped the Armenian language in favour of the Latin, by using foreign forms of declension and conjugation, new forms of prepositions; they also copied the Latin arrangements of words and, following the Latin, made new words and expressions.’<sup>398</sup> Unfortunately, Abeghyan is quite reticent regarding his first statement and does not directly explain why he regards the Unitors’ literature as lacking literary value. But from his second assertion, we can infer why. It is known that Abeghyan was very much concerned with Armenian linguistics, and his work in this area included his 1931 book, *Theory of the Armenian Language*. Consequently, for him, a literature full of new grammatical structures and new idiomatic expressions, alien to the Armenian language, was not acceptable. Abeghyan claims that ‘this kind of “strange” Armenian language, which was useless for anyone, misrepresented the Armenian language’.<sup>399</sup>

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397 Abeghyan. *The History of Ancient Armenian Literature*, 549.

398 Ibid.

399 Ibid.

On the one hand, Abeghyan's point is readily understandable, as the Armenian language is one of the ancient Indo-European Languages, and Armenian literature, mostly historical, philosophical and theological, developed and survived in the classical style – in Grabar – and the new tendency could be deleterious for Grabar, which, starting from the fifth century, had already enjoyed a long history of survival. But at the same time, we must remember that the grammar and vocabulary of Armenian have borrowed structures and words from Aramaic, Greek, Northwest Iranian and even Turkic languages. Therefore, a new tendency need not have a huge impact in changing authentic Armenian into a 'strange' Armenian language. By analogy with the Armenian alphabet, which 'was a deliberate invention and was totally not the result of a long evolution',<sup>400</sup> it is clear that an evolution of the language in a 'strange' direction, did not present a risk to Grabar.

Although we must agree that any risk of distorting the original language should be avoided, it does not follow that we must accept Abeghyan's claim that because of its 'strange' language, 'Unitates' literature, certainly, does not have any literary value'. There were and are some rules and standards of writing, but in literature the book is not merely a well-written text. The book is a story, and we believe that a story with substance, one which leaves an impact on a reader, has literary value. This kind of book has a message, instructs its readers, and may even change thought and conduct, as we have seen above. Therefore, the 'strange' Armenian which was used by the Unitors might misrepresent the Armenian language, but first it would mislead minds,

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400 See Robert Thomson. *An Introduction to Classical Armenian*. Caravan Books: Delmar, New York, 1975, 1.

which were formed in Armenian society, nurtured in the Armenian Apostolic faith and educated in Grabar, as the message of the Unitors was new, foreign and even strange. And there is no doubt that the Unitors' literature had a literary value for Armenians who were converted. Therefore, the mere fact that the message of this literature had that kind of impact on Armenian society makes this Uniate literature very valuable for us. How could one examine and elucidate objectively this historical period without valuing the writings of both sides? And finally, how could one, in ignoring foreign literature of the past of importance even to a small portion of Armenian society, build a safe place for the Armenian Apostolic Church in the future? Consequently, we agree with Arevshatyan, who concludes that 'the works which came out of the pen of Catholic authors cannot be separated from the Armenian spiritual culture of this period'.<sup>401</sup> The basis for this kind of belief is the crucial fact that the works of Dominican or Franciscan authors and scribes were created for Armenians and by Armenians – written in Armenian or translated from Latin into Armenian by the authors themselves or by their Armenian followers. In 1980, the scholar Arevshatyan deplored precisely the fact that the scientific literature which was written in Catholic centres in the territory of Armenia, especially the written heritage of Catholic scholars and missionaries and their Armenian followers from the monasteries of south-western Armenia, is not studied or incorporated into the history of science.<sup>402</sup>

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401 See Arevshatyan, *On the Philosophical Schools of Medieval Armenia*, 11.

402 See *ibid.*, 8.

## **Summary**

We have seen how Armenian thinkers of the medieval period – especially Yesayi Nchetsi (1260-1338), Hovhannes Vorotnetsi (1315-1386) and Grigor Tatevatsi (1346-1409), who were representative of three generations and associated with each other, first by teacher-pupil relationships, and secondly by their understanding of the Papacy's intentions – took upon themselves a commitment to stop the spread of Catholic influence and to cherish the Armenian cultural, historical and theological heritage. In spite of the feverish pitch of their struggle against Catholics, Armenian thinkers of the medieval period could distinguish useful and interesting aspects of the literary and scientific heritage of Catholic preachers as well. Their respectable background in the Greek and Latin classics and theologians helped them to defend the Armenian Apostolic Church. Finally, in the struggle with the Unitors, against powerful Westernizing influences they attempted to wield Catholic literature against Catholics.

The following chapters will consider how Gregory Tatevatsi applies these principles in his theology of the sacraments of initiation.

### Chapter Three: Sacrament of Baptism

Archbishop Ashjian presents a translation of Grigor Tatevatsi's commentary on the sacrament of baptism and in his notes and commentaries indicates that Tatevatsi was indebted to Roman teaching. Ashjian's claim rests on the observation that Tatevatsi uncritically appropriates the conclusions of Thomas Aquinas, neither comprehending nor explicating them.<sup>403</sup>

The several definitions Tatevatsi gives in introducing the sacrament of baptism may be found in an extended way, in the *Summa Theologica* (Q. 66, cf. 1). When Thomas explains what baptism is, he considers in the sacrament that which is sacrament only, that which is reality and sacrament, and that which is reality only. As usual, Grigor takes, somehow, the conclusions of Thomas, without trying to understand or to explain them. Some scholars think that Grigor had prepared *The Book of Questions* as a manual for his students, and that what he had written is only a resume. It does not seem a convincing explanation of the general line Grigor follows when he adopts the conclusions of Thomas. Grigor is a kind of 'Thomas'; not that he is a Thomist in his philosophy, but that he is an admirer until he faces a ritual or practical differences.<sup>404</sup>

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403 For Ashjian's translation of Grigor Tatevatsi's Sacrament of Baptism see Mesrob Ashjian. *Armenian Church Patristic and Other Essays*. New York: The Armenian Prelacy, 1994, 53-59; for Ashjian's discussion and comments on Baptism see *Ibid.*, 72-77.

404 *Ibid.*, 74

Moreover, Ashjian contends that, in his dependence on Aquinas, Grigor Tatevatsi in effect relinquishes his own theology:

His love for Thomas leaves Grigor forgetful of his own theology, or, to be more specific, orthodox theology. This is a pity, since he abdicates the rich, deep sacramental theology of the East, which would be so familiar to the Armenian Church. Otherwise, Tatevacı fails to point out how difficult it is for an Orthodox to speak of sacraments as individual and distinct events.<sup>405</sup>

Furthermore, as Ashjian argued, ‘Grigor puts too much emphasis on Original Sin’.<sup>406</sup>

He continues:

The concept is not foreign to classical Armenian theology, but it is not accented so much in the East in relation to baptism. Baptism is regarded, first, as an illumination, a regeneration; entrance into the church and body of Christ; a participation of a person in the new creation. Emphasis on Original Sin renders an individualistic interpretation, which, in the end, removes baptism from its central place and makes of it something personal, a private thing.<sup>407</sup>

Interestingly, Ashjian is not alone in this perception: Vigen Guroian also observes that ‘in [Tatevatsi's] discussion of baptism there is an uncharacteristic accent on

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405 Ibid., 74.

406 Ibid.

407 Ibid.

original sin at the expense of a more traditional emphasis on illumination, regeneration, and entrance into the church and the body of Christ'.<sup>408</sup>

Finally, Ashjian proposes that on the issue of the baptismal formula, Tatevatsi, despite his criticism of the Latin practice, follows the Latin formula and that the two formulas Tatevatsi cites are not substantially different from one another. Ashjian argues that while Tatevatsi criticizes the 'Franks' for their baptismal formula, he himself adopts the term 'with my hands', which is equivalent to the "I baptize" of the Latin formula.<sup>409</sup>

The evidence assembled by Archbishop Ashjian regarding the baptismal theology of Grigor Tatevatsi raises several important issues which invite further consideration. Some of the questions which emerge here require re-examination and further study. This chapter has two main purposes: firstly, to investigate Tatevatsi's theology of baptism, and secondly, to demonstrate that some questions posed by previous scholars should be pressed in new directions. Specifically, an examination of Tatevatsi's major reflections on the sacrament of baptism<sup>410</sup> and a comparison of some aspects of Tatevatsi's theology on baptism with Thomas Aquinas's theology will follow in this chapter. Our examination will put us in a position to elucidate questions of continuing importance to the field of Armenian theology, such as: What

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408 For Guroian's verdict on Tatevatsi see Vigen Guroian. «Armenian Tradition», in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought: Intellectual, Spiritual, and Moral Horizons of Christianity*, edited by Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason and Hugh Pyper. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, 40.

409 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 75-76.

410 See Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 588-93.

is the sacrament of baptism for Tatevatsi? Does Tatevatsi follow Aquinas? What is a tradition for Tatevatsi?

The history of baptismal practice and theology is characterized by different stages of development,<sup>411</sup> and in very general terms we may say that during the New Testament period, on the authority of St Peter's Pentecost sermon,<sup>412</sup> baptism was performed immediately after brief instruction and the confession of faith. Later, this practice changed, and if in the pre-Constantinian era, the catechumenate became significant, in the post-Constantinian era it lost much of that significance, and the normal date for baptism was firmly established as Easter eve. For various reasons, many Eastern and Western church fathers discussed the rite of baptism and prepared instructions for catechumens<sup>413</sup> which treated various dogmatic and pastoral problems arising in the theological tradition. Because the reconstruction of particular texts and rites is beyond the scope of this chapter, we will rescind from questions raised by these fathers of the universal church concerning baptismal theology and practice. Instead, our focus will be an examination of Grigor Tatevatsi's theology of the sacrament of baptism, before which, however, it is important briefly to consider the early Armenian sources.

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411 See *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy*, edited by Maxwell E. Johnson, 3rd edition. SPCK, 2003.

412 See Acts 2: 14-42.

413 See E. C. Whitaker. *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy*. Revised and expanded edition by Maxwell E. Johnson. Alcuin Club Collection 79, SPCK, 2003; St. John Chrysostom: *Baptismal Instructions*. Translation and Annotation by Paul W. Harkins. Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press and London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1963. Everett Ferguson. *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries*. Michigan, Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2009; Everett Ferguson. 'Preaching at Epiphany: Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom on Baptism and the Church.' *Church History* 66. 1, 1997, 1-17;

### 3.1 Armenian Tradition

The fifth-century historian Agathangelos<sup>414</sup> in his *History of the Armenians*<sup>415</sup> and *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*<sup>416</sup> faithfully illustrates baptismal accounts of the fourth century. Agathangelos relates that before performing baptism, Gregory the Illuminator instructed the royal forces to fast and pray for a month.<sup>417</sup> The Armenian Church had, and still has, a tradition of fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays; both baptizer and the individual awaiting baptism were expected to observe this tradition, the roots of which derive from Apostolic tradition,<sup>418</sup> by not partaking of food for these two days. Agathangelos mentions that after a month, St Gregory brought the whole royal army, together with the king, queen and attendant nobles, to be baptized in the River Euphrates.<sup>419</sup> At this point, the river stopped flowing and turned backward. A dazzling light appeared in the likeness of a bright pillar and it stood

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414 On Agathangelos, see Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, Volume I, *From the Oral Tradition to the Golden Age*, 117-18.

415 The *History of the Armenians* is also known as the *History and Life of St Gregory* and is a chronicle of Armenian history from The third century to the beginning of the fourth, which was a crucial period for the Armenian nation. See Ագաթանգեղոս: Պատմություն Հայոց: Աշխարհաբար Թարգմանություն և Երաժականով ու Ծանոթություններով Արամ Տեր-Ղեվոնդյանի: Երևան, Սովետական Գրող, 1977 (Agathangelos, *History of Armenians*. Translation and Commentary by Aram Ter-Ghevondyan. Yerevan: Sovetakan Grog Publishing, 1977); Агагангелос. История Армении. Перевод К. Тер-Давтяна, и С. Аревшатяна. Ереван: Наирн, 2004. (Agathangelos, *History of the Armenians*. Translated from Old Armenian into Russian by Ter-Davtyan, and Arevshatyan. Yerevan: Nairi, 2004.); Agathangelos *History of the Armenians*. Translated from Old Armenian by Robert W. Thomson. Albany, N.Y. 1976. For a short introduction to *History of Armenians* and some extracts from Thomson's translation see Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, Volume I, *From the Oral Tradition to the Golden Age*, 118-148. We will use the Armenian translation by Ter-Ghevondyan (Տեր-Ղեվոնդյան).

416 *The Teaching of Saint Gregory: An Early Armenian Catechism*. Translation and Commentary by Robert W. Thomson. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970. See also Robert W. Thomson. *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, 2nd ed. New Rochelle, NY: St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, 2001.

417 See Agathangelos, *History of Armenians*, paragraphs 829-832.

418 Instructions regarding baptism and fasting appear in the *Didache* 7-8. See *The Apostolic Fathers, Greek Texts and English Translations*, edited by Michael W. Holmes. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007, 355.

419 See Agathangelos. *History of Armenians*, paragraph 832.

over the waters of the river, and above it was the likeness of the Lord's cross.<sup>420</sup> And the oil of anointing which Gregory poured over the people floated around them in the river.<sup>421</sup> Then, the individuals were baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and, dressed in white garments, proceeded joyfully to the Lord's house.<sup>422</sup>

Interestingly, Agathangelos, relating how, once back in the church, Gregory gave the holy body and precious blood of Christ the Saviour to all, did not directly acknowledge post-baptismal chrismation.<sup>423</sup> 'There [Gregory] served [or 'offered'] the blessed liturgy, and administered the sacrament of thanksgiving.'<sup>424</sup> It is clear that Gregory offered the blessed liturgy, and communicated them all with the Blessed Sacrament. On the one hand, the fifth-century historian may not provide a full account of what he thinks happened in church, but on the other, quite a detailed representation of Gregory's work is conveyed, as he 'offered a liturgy',

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420 Referring to the same story, Hovhan Mamikonyan in a collection of stories about the Conversion, completed in the seventh or eighth century, says that Gregory came to Taron, put the relics of John the Baptist on the site of the temples of Demeter and Gisane, which were demolished by his order, and baptized five thousand, and the light sent by the Lord stayed there three hours. See V. Vardanyan. *Hovhannes Mamikonyan: The History of Taron*. Yerevan, 1989, 46.

421 See Agathangelos. *History of Armenians*, paragraph 833.

422 Ibid., paragraph 834.

423 A dispute exists among historians as to whether the Armenian baptismal tradition originated from the Syrian or Byzantine tradition. Gabriele Winkler believes that the accounts of baptism which are introduced in the *History of the Armenians* by Agathangelos, and the *Life of Gregory* prove a Syrian origin for the Armenian baptismal tradition, as there is a lack of a post-baptismal anointing. Ansgar Kelly supports the idea of Greek tradition. See Henry Ansgar Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism. Ritual, Theology, and Drama*. Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1985, 188. We assume, as the theological orientation of Armenia was always towards the Alexandrine tradition, and moreover, Gregory got his education in Caesarea and was ordained in Caesarea, it is more likely that the ritual of baptism originated from Greek tradition. However, this question is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

424 We have consulted the original text of Agathangelos, paragraph 834, in Grabar (published in 1822, 1835, and 1983) and also the translation from Grabar to Modern Armenian by Aram Ter-Levondyann. Agathangelos: *History of Armenians*. Yerevan, 1983, 465.

‘communicated with the blessed sacrament’, ‘gave a communion’, and ‘administered the divine-given grace’. Is a post-baptismal anointing concealed under these descriptions of Gregory’s acts? This is an open question, and we believe that a definite conclusion regarding the absence of the post-baptismal anointing cannot be drawn from this account due to a lack of clarity.

Turning to the *Life of Gregory*, an interesting statement reveals that pre-baptismal anointing was practised at this time. First, King Trdat and three other kings were baptized, and here Gregory signed them with myron. Before they descended into the water, Gregory poured myron and oil into the river and made a cross. Once they were in the water, Gregory laid his hand upon them, and then, with the right hand, immersed them three times, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.<sup>425</sup>

From the *Teaching of Saint Gregory*<sup>426</sup> we see that for St Gregory the most important aspect of baptism is centred in the baptism of Christ, ‘Then He came and was Himself baptized by John; undertaking to write an eternal covenant and sealing it with his own blood [Heb.13: 20], to give life to all by the illuminating and life-giving baptism, He ordered all men born from the earth, all humans, to imitate the divine image of salvation.’<sup>427</sup> Of further importance for Gregory is the fact that ‘He opened the womb of baptism that they might be renewed and born again as children of the

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425 See Gerard Garitte. *Documents pour l'étude du livre d'Agathange*. Vatican City, 1946, 98-100.

426 I have used the English translation by Thomson. *The Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970).

427 *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, paragraph 410. See Thomson, *Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970), 88.

kingdom by baptism.’<sup>428</sup> The image of the womb is highly significant, intimating that baptism entails redemption and enlightenment, in contrast with the idea of the tomb, which is associated with death and resurrection.

From these early accounts we see clearly that one came as a catechumen to be baptized and that an important step in the Armenian rite of baptism was the renunciation without a verbal exorcism. Furthermore, the imagery of the womb is associated with this process. Baptism was performed by triple immersion and, manifestly, followed by communion.

In the *Canons of St Sahak*,<sup>429</sup> a fourth-century Catholicos of Armenia, we read, ‘Priests without wavering may learn to honour the God-receiving table on which is fulfilled the life-giving mystery of our redeeming Lord, and the salutary font of baptism, by birth in which we are renewed unto the hope of the calling of God.’<sup>430</sup> From this statement it is clear that, firstly, the priest can baptize, and secondly, the sacrament is a life-giving mystery.

If we turn to sources of the thirteenth century, we find that, for example, Hovhannes Yerznkatsi still maintains that the priest, who is responsible for all the stages of baptism, must bless the water and drop the myron into the water, forming a cross as a reminder of the cross of Christ. This, as well as the fact that the priest has to baptize

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428 *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, paragraph 679. See Thomson, *Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970), 169.

429 See Fred C. Conybeare. ‘The Armenian Canons of St. Sahak Catholicos of Armenia (390-439 A.D.)’. *The American Journal of Theology* 2.4 (Oct., 1898), 828-48.

430 *Canons of St Sahak*, see Conybeare, ‘The Armenian Canons’, 829.

by triple immersion signifies the three days of the burial of Christ. The notion that ‘the font is the womb’ also surfaces in Yerznkatsi’s homily.<sup>431</sup>

### 3.2 Grigor Tatevatsi

Now let us examine Grigor Tatevatsi’s theology of the sacrament of baptism.<sup>432</sup>

Tatevatsi starts his explanation by proclaiming that ‘baptism is the external washing of the body with water and cleansing away of sins by the words of God.’ And ‘baptism is a conferring of the sacred and a divine birth.’

According to Tatevatsi, baptism must be conducted in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. ‘And there is no need to alter this order so as to name the Holy Spirit first, then the Son, then the Father.’

Tatevatsi states that during baptism, the entire body shall be washed. ‘And the entire body should be washed, and in an emergency, its honourable parts, or washing the face only may suffice.’<sup>433</sup> ‘If the candidate is an adult, particularly faith is required, and if the candidate is a child, the sacrament of the Church is sufficient.’<sup>434</sup>

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431 See M. Baghdasaryan. *Hovhannes Yerznkatsi and his Homily*. Yerevan, 1977, 149-151.

432 See Գիրք Քարգմանսց (Book of Questions), 588-93. Here we will cite our own translation of Tatevatsi’s ‘Sacrament of Baptism’. For a full translation of the whole text see Appendix II.

433 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 588.

434 Գիրք Քարգմանսց (Book of Questions), 588: Appendix II. 2-3.

### 3.3 The Formula of Baptism

Tatevatsi then considers the formula of the sacrament of baptism and states, ‘Baptism must be performed as follows: “The named servant of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, willingly passing from the unbaptized condition to baptism; now is being baptized with my hands in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”’<sup>435</sup>

This introduces one of the most important issues connected with elucidation of the sacrament of baptism -- its formula – an issue by which he is deeply troubled. First of all, Tatevatsi invokes the practice of the Latin church in the baptismal formula:

But the Franks alter this and say: ‘I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,’ which wrong arrangement points to the baptizer and not the baptized. And second, it is inappropriate to say ‘I baptize’, as if the person has come to be baptized not willingly but is forced to. Besides, ‘I baptize’ means the grace is not conferred from the baptizer to the baptized, for no grace is given to the despisers and the unwilling but to those who ask in faith, as it is said: ‘For everyone who asks receives’ and so forth. Thus it is improper to say ‘I baptize’, but as said in the former way the grace of the Spirit shall be granted. And this form should be maintained and no other thing introduced.<sup>436</sup>

Why does Tatevatsi, instead of comprehensively explaining the Armenian form of baptism itself, immediately compare between two forms of the baptismal formula? In

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<sup>435</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 588: Appendix II. 2.

<sup>436</sup> Ibid.

one sense, the answer may seem obvious, given that Tatevatsi in all likelihood could not ignore the discrepancy. In this laconic statement against the Latin formula, we clearly see Tatevatsi's position. For him, 'I baptize you' is unsuitable, as it seems to imply that the candidate has not come by his own desire to be baptized, but under constraint. Tatevatsi states that the gifts of the Spirit will not be given to the disdainful and reluctant, but will be given to those who entreat in faith.<sup>437</sup>

Tatevatsi concludes his argumentation with a simple but powerful citation from Matt. 21: 22: 'And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith.'<sup>438</sup> Therefore, Tatevatsi warns that only in the first formula can the gift of the Spirit be given worthily, as the form shows that the candidate has willingly come to baptism, while the Frankish formula – 'I baptize you in the name of ...' – leads to the misunderstanding that the catechumen came to be baptised under pressure. For Tatevatsi, God bestows the grace only to one who comes willingly. Tatevatsi underlines his view that the form of the Armenia church is right inasmuch as the grace of the Spirit is thereby granted befittingly. That formula should therefore be maintained, and there is no need to include other words.

In order to see the difference between the expressions 'I baptize' and 'with my hands', let us examine what Thomas Aquinas says about the form of baptism. For Aquinas, baptismal character is the *reality and sign*, which remain permanently. The

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437 Ibid.

438 For citations from the Bible, I use primarily *Holy Bible: The Breath of God*. Armenian Church Edition. Revised Standard Version. New York: American Bible Society, 1994.

*reality only* is interior justification ‘with the possibility of being lost’.<sup>439</sup> Aquinas, maintaining the position of Peter Lombard, firmly concludes, ‘The union of the word and the element produces the sacrament, not indeed in the material element itself, but in the man who is washed by it. And this is the very meaning of the word which unites with the element, *I baptize you*.’<sup>440</sup>

Now let us consider the way in which and the extent to which the phrase ‘I baptize you’ is an accurate or even essential element in the baptismal formula for Aquinas. According to Aquinas, ‘It is necessary that the cause of baptism be expressed in the form of baptism, but the cause is twofold: one is the principal cause from which it receives its power, the Holy Trinity; the other is an instrumental cause, the minister of the sacrament who confers it outwardly. Therefore, both ought to be mentioned in the form of baptism.’<sup>441</sup> Clearly, for him, ‘*Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti*’ is as obligatory as the minister whose ‘I baptize you’ constitutes the second cause, or rather ‘in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit’ is the principle cause. Both phrases have their special role. Therefore Aquinas points out, ‘The Lord himself attributed the act of baptizing to the ministers when he said, *Baptizing them*.’<sup>442</sup> Significantly, Thomas also explains that, to avoid the mistakes of the past, Greeks do not credit the act of baptism to the minister. He affirms that the formula ‘May the servant of Christ, N., be baptized in the name of the Father’ is also correct. ‘The sacrament is truly conferred since the form expresses

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439 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 3a, 66. Translation from St Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologiae LVII Baptism and Confirmation (3a, 66-72)*, edited and translated by James Justin Cunningham. London: Blackfriars, 1975, 7.

440 Ibid., 3a, 66.1 (Cunningham, 9).

441 Ibid., 3a, 66.5 (Cunningham, 23).

442 Ibid., 3a, 66.5 (Cunningham, 25).

the act performed by the minister with the invocation of the Trinity.<sup>443</sup> But if the *ego* is not necessary, ‘but is an addition to express the intention more forcefully’,<sup>444</sup> why does Aquinas from the beginning invoke a twofold cause?<sup>445</sup> Does it mean that *in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*, which is clearly the principle cause for Thomas, is the only suitable form for baptism, or to put it simply, does it mean that the instrumental cause is not very important?

Obviously, the power of baptism issues from the Holy Trinity, and the baptizer, who according to Aquinas may if necessary even be a layman, is empowered to perform the act of baptism. Aquinas alleges, ‘in the form of baptism the minister is fittingly designated’<sup>446</sup> through the words ‘I baptize you’. For Aquinas, ‘Since a man might wash himself with water for a variety of reasons, it is necessary that some determination of what is being done be expressed in the words of the form. *In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit* is not sufficient for this, for all things ought to be done in this name, as is pointed out in Colossians [3.17]’.<sup>447</sup> As we see, for Aquinas, the sacrament is conferred if the act of baptism is expressed ‘either as we do or as is the custom of the Greeks.’<sup>448</sup> From Aquinas’s statement it is clear that sacramental words derive from God, and it is not the Church which decides what it should be doing. The words, of course, are received by the Church, but the meaning is what faith gives the words. For Aquinas the sacraments are signs and the

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443 Ibid.

444 Ibid.

445 Ibid., 3a, 66.5 (Cunningham, 23).

446 Ibid., 3a, 66.5 (Cunningham, 25).

447 Ibid.

448 Ibid.

truth of the sacraments is the core meaning of the words, and not a fixed word. Interestingly, Aquinas, while discussing the form of the Eucharist, observes that, ‘the form of the other sacraments are pronounced by the minister speaking in his own person, either as exercising some action, as when he says, “I baptize you”, or “I confirm you”’; or as conveying a charge’.<sup>449</sup>

Archbishop Ashjian, as we have seen, contends that in the question of the baptismal formula Tatevatsi, while criticizing the Latins, follows the Latin formula, and that the two formulas mentioned by Tatevatsi are very similar to each other. Moreover, Ashjian points out, ‘Both [theologians] suggest a secondary cause of baptismal grace, whereas the Orthodox teaching is that the grace of baptism is bestowed by God alone, mediated through Christ’s victorious death on the cross and resurrection.’<sup>450</sup>

It appears that Ashjian identifies the phrases ‘with my hands’ and ‘I baptize’ as being similar in meaning. It must be acknowledged that Ashjian’s statement is less than persuasive, given that Tatevatsi’s text suggests that a logic informs his motivation for arguing against the Latin formula. Tatevatsi clearly distinguishes the two forms from each other and illustrates his point.

Tatevatsi, like Aquinas, recognises that the Lord himself delivered the act of baptism of the ministers by saying ‘*Baptize them*’, but Tatevatsi does not want to give credit

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449 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 3a, 78.1. Translation from St Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologiae* LVIII *The Eucharistic Presence* (3a, 73-78), edited and translated by William Barden. London: Blackfriars, 1965, 165.

450 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 76.

to the act of the minister by mentioning this in the formula, as for him the baptised must be to the fore. If for Aquinas there is a secondary cause, for Tatevatsi there is precisely no secondary cause. Consequently, for Tatevatsi, the specification of the minister's own person in the formula is not necessary. According to Tatevatsi, there is no need to stress *ego* in the formula, as it suggests that one is baptised under pressure, and in that case gifts could not be given to a reluctant candidate who was baptised by force.

Ashjian believes that Tatevatsi uses the formula of the fourteenth century, which was brought to light by his classmate, Gevork Yerznkatsi.<sup>451</sup> Therefore, 'Grigor's argument is weak. It is not based on the authentic Armenian formula.'<sup>452</sup> Unfortunately, Ashjian does not examine the *Commentary of Baptism* by Yerznkatsi, and does not illuminate what he maintains as the formula's authentic understanding. Ashjian does, of course, correctly indicate that the first use of 'with my hands' appears in Yerznkatsi.<sup>453</sup>

Prior to the fourteenth century, the Armenian baptismal formula, still employed today, stated, 'N., servant of God, being saved by the blood of Christ, has come willingly as a catechumen to be baptized, is now being baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' Later, the term 'with my hands' was

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451 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 75.

452 Ibid.

453 Ibid. According to the Archbishop, 'Yerzengazi wrote the Commentary of Baptism, in order to bring into the Armenian Church a uniformity of ritual practices'. See ՃԵՄՃԵՄԵԱՆ Սահակ, Սկրտութեան Խորհուրդի Բանաձեղը, «Բազմավեպ», Վենետիկ, Ս. Ղազար, 6-8, 1967, 135-42: (Sahak Tjemtjemyan, 'The Formula of Baptism', *Bazmavep*. Venice: St. Lazar, 1967, 135-42.)

introduced into the Armenian formula. But why? In order to seek an authentic formula in the Armenian Church's sacrament of baptism and to understand when and how 'with my hands' emerged, let us firstly consider in brief Armenian Mashdots.

Tjemtjemyan explores many manuscripts<sup>454</sup> and established that MS 1001 of the Yerevan Madenadaran, which probably belongs to the tenth century, maintains the 'being baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' baptismal formula. MS 457 in the St Lazar library states, 'I baptize you'. Taking into account the period when manuscript 457 was written, this is a noteworthy fact, as other Mashdots written after it did not repeat this formula. In Tjemtjemyan's view, this could be a scribal error.<sup>455</sup> Tjemtjemyan compared eighty manuscripts in the St Lazar Library, as well as many manuscripts in the Vatican Library and in the Yerevan Matenadaran, and reached the conclusion that the Armenian baptismal formula, prior to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with minor variations maintains: 'N., servant of God, has come willingly as a catechumen to be baptized, is now being baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', and only in a work which was written in 1432, St Lazar 1834 is 'I baptize' used. St Lazar MS 1173, known as the Sis Mashdots, written in 1345, has a Latin formula.

It is instructive to note that 'with my hands' was introduced into the Armenian formula by Gevork Yerznkatsi, who was a contemporary of Grigor Tatevatsi.<sup>456</sup> We

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454 Ibid.

455 Ibid., 138.

456 Ibid., 136. For a complete list of these manuscripts see *ibid.*, 138- 39.

believe that it was an intelligent solution not to fundamentally change the authentic formula, but also not to irritate the Latin Church. Moreover, we believe that ‘with my hands’ did not have for Yerznkatsi the same meaning as ‘I baptize you’.

In the fourteenth century, Nerses Balienc and Simeon of Garin, who were Armenian Unitors, prepared a document entitled ‘*Errores Armenorum*’ and presented it to Pope Benedictus VII.<sup>457</sup> Among its 117 errors was an accusation advanced against the baptismal formula, to the effect that Armenians do not have a fixed formula for baptism, and the bishop or priest contrived the formula. This accusation, in addition to other interesting statements, shocked the Armenian Church. During the Synod of Sis in 1344--1345, the leaders of the Armenian Church discussed the accusations and sent their answers to Pope Clement VI (1342--1352). The formula of baptism holds that the priest puts the child in the font of baptism and takes the blessed water, and when the child is sitting pours the water on to the child’s head, saying, ‘N., servant of God, has come willingly as a catechumen to be baptized, is now being baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit’, and the words ‘This is the formula of our Church’ will be added.<sup>458</sup> In response to the fanciful idea that a bishop or priest invents the formula of baptism during each ceremony, these church leaders were very ingenuous, or even naive: ‘Our formula of baptism is one and not more,

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457 See Mansi, XXV, col. 1185-1188, 1270 and 1188-1190 for the text of the errors.

458 See, Mansi, XXV, 1237-1238. See ՃԵՄԵՄԵՅԱՆ, ՄԿՐՈՒԹԵԱՆ ԽՈՐԻՈՒՐԴԻ ԲԱՆԱԾԵԻՐ (Tjemtjemyan, ‘The Formula of Baptism’), 135-42.

and a kind of baptism in which bishops or priests invent the formula of baptism and baptize, we have not known, have not heard and have not seen'.<sup>459</sup>

Perhaps the disputes within the Armenian Church at that time may be a reason for Tatevatsi using 'with my hands', but theologically it has a different meaning for Tatevatsi.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, one Armenian scholar, while briefly discussing the differences in baptismal formulae between the Latin and Armenian churches, referred to Tatevatsi's *Book of Questions*, and interestingly concluded that the Latin Church, by using 'I baptize', gives more importance to the baptizer than to Christ.<sup>460</sup> We have to acknowledge that it is unfair towards Grigor Tatevatsi, who never even subscribes to the above-mentioned idea. This interpretation also unfairly distorts the theology of the Latin Church, and we have considered above the nuanced explanation of Thomas Aquinas.

### **3.4 Who is honoured to baptize?**

After the issue of the baptismal formula, Tatevatsi poses a second question, which troubles him.

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459 «Բայց թէ եպիսկոպոս մը կամ քահանայ մը ինք իր կողմէ կէ յօրինէ յատուկ պանածել մը ու կը մկրտէ, ասիկա ոչ տեսած ենք, ոչ լսած, ոչ ալ գիտենք»:

460 See Ղեկնղ Դուրեան: Մկրտութեան Խորհուրդը: Վ. Ե. Յ. Տէր-Ներսէսեան, Կ. Պոլիս, 1907, 23 (Ghevond Duryan. *The Sacrament of Baptism*. Constantinople: V and H Ter-Nersesyan Publishing, 1907, 23).

Moreover, it should be known that the schismatic nation of the Franks say: ‘Albeit baptism is the task of the priest but in case there is no priest, whosoever knows the order of baptism may baptize of necessity. And in case there is no man around, and the child is dying, then a woman may baptize if she knows the order of baptism as Christ taught: ‘In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit’; she should pour the water and pronounce: ‘May he be baptized’. This schism is a gross and audacious blasphemy against the orders of the church.<sup>461</sup>

In a complex refutation, based on a literal interpretation of a number of biblical and historical authorities. Tatevatsi advances ten reasons why it is not possible for woman to do priestly work.<sup>462</sup> We would like to pick up some of these.

Tatevatsi in his third point asks, ‘If the grace were given through the woman’s hand, why did not the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, come to her Son’s baptism in the Jordan?’ In the fifth point Tatevatsi poses the question, ‘If a woman could perform priestly duties, why could not the virgin Nune baptize anyone of the Georgians when she converted them to God? Instead, she sent them to Saint Gregory [the Illuminator] and asked him to baptize them for priesthood.’

In the sixth point Tatevatsi asks, ‘if a woman could baptize in times of necessity, then why did not Saint Gregory the Illuminator, much more honourable than any

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461 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 580: Appendix II. 4.

462 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 589-590: Appendix II. 4.1-10.

woman, baptize any of the believers until he was ordained in Caesarea, and only then he came and baptized thousands upon thousands and myriads upon myriads of people in the river?’

Seventhly, ‘the priest's job is to baptize, and priesthood is a ministry unto God. And in this ministry unto God even the idolaters did not practice offerings to their futile idols through women; the same was customary with all the heathen as well.’ And the final tenth point affirms that ‘baptism is a priestly duty, which he does prayerfully.’

As we shall see, Tatevatsi’s position against women is highly exclusive. Consequently, when Grigor maintains that the female sex cannot perform priestly works, he protests against the doctrine of the Latin Church. For Tatevatsi baptism is the duty of the priest, and even in an emergency situation, such as that of a child at risk of death, a woman cannot baptize.

Ashjian avers that ‘Tatevatci here also does not try to understand what St. Thomas has to say on this issue.’<sup>463</sup> We disagree with this statement, as after examination of Tatevatsi’s thoughts we came to the conclusion that Tatevatsi clearly understands Aquinas on this issue.

It is important to mention that for Aquinas, ‘Baptism solemnly and properly celebrated should be received from a priest having the charge of souls, or his delegate. This, however, is not required in the case of necessity when a woman can

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<sup>463</sup> See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 76.

baptize.’<sup>464</sup> Also, for Aquinas, if a man is available, a woman should not baptize; if a cleric or priest is present, a layman should not baptize.<sup>465</sup> For Tatevatsi, this is a profound affront to the Church’s orders.<sup>466</sup> It is worth noting that Tatevatsi did address the question of whether a layman can baptize in the absence of a priest. We believe that Aquinas’ point regarding the provision for a woman to baptize<sup>467</sup> inflames Tatevatsi to the extent that he simply concentrates his attention on the question of women in protest to the Latin Church. The fact that Tatevatsi in ten points broaches a subject, and returns to it once more when discussing the role of the godfather, suggests that Aquinas’s ideas were understood by Tatevatsi and even structured his discussion of this topic. Tatevatsi does understand Aquinas’ consideration of women in the case of necessity, and disagrees with it: even in such a case, for Tatevatsi, women cannot administer the sacrament of baptism. Tatevatsi maintains that since baptism is the duty of the priest, and the priest is the minister of God, a woman cannot be a minister. To be sure, Tatevatsi registers the fact that the Spirit welcomes everyone, but why he is so restrictive toward women? Ashjian remarks that ‘Grigor does not consider women equal to men. We ought not judge him apart from his time. In the fourteenth century Armenia was surrounded by Moslem states. It was not easy to transcend the cultural climate. Nevertheless, Grigor’s views do demean women.’<sup>468</sup>

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464 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 3a. 67.4 (Cunningham, 65).

465 Ibid., 3a, 67.3 and 4 (Cunningham, 61-65).

466 Գիրք Հարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 589: Appendix II. 4.

467 See Aquinas, 3a. 67.4; (Cunningham, 65).

468 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 32.

In order to simplify these facts, let us suppose for the moment that because the atmosphere of medieval Armenian society was enveloped by Moslem culture, Tatevatsi did not want to create new problems and thus did not consider women equal to men. However, this is not simply about Tatevatsi, and was Moslem culture new for Armenians? Indeed, it was not. Tatevatsi's perspective on the role of women has deep cultural roots of which he may not even have been conscious. The key to womanhood, for Tatevatsi, lies in the account of creation: because she was formed from the rib, she lacks the power of speech. Tatevatsi was not overly concerned about women; consequently, while the example of Nune initially seems useful, if Tatevatsi's audience recognized the cultural and theological makeup of the fourth century, the example might not prove helpful. After one hundred years, women still were voiceless. Therefore, in medieval society such argumentation was neither disturbing nor provoking. Tatevatsi's attitude derives from his understanding of the role of the women according to biblical and historical narratives.

In his discussion of the sacrament of baptism, Tatevatsi engages the role of women twice: first, when demonstrating why women cannot baptize in the case of necessity, and second, when considering why a woman cannot be a godfather. Tatevatsi asks whether a woman can be a godfather, and answers in the negative:

She cannot, for we say a 'godfather', not a 'godmother', and because the Church is the mother of the newborn, and the Church is the doer. If a woman cannot be a guarantor and bear testimony, then she cannot be a godfather either.

He then concludes, ‘And yet, women cannot perform priestly works and be a godfather. And not only this but during the baptism a woman shall not stay in the church, as the Virgin Mother of God was not present at the baptism of Christ in the Jordan, as said above.’ In that conclusion we see Tatevatsi introducing the further point that woman cannot even be in the church during the baptism. Here Tatevatsi once more turns to the authority of the Virgin Mary and reinforces the point by adding, ‘as the Virgin Mother of God was not present at the baptism of Christ in the Jordan, as said above’.<sup>469</sup>

After his long justification of why women cannot baptize, Tatevatsi addresses the question, ‘Should a baptized person be re-baptized or not?’<sup>470</sup>

According to Tatevatsi, ‘a baptized person should not be re-baptized for four reasons’.

Firstly, because physical birth is a sign of a spiritual birth, and as physical birth is one, so spiritual birth is one as well.

Secondly, because baptism is against the original sin, and original sin is one, not two.

Thirdly, whoever is baptized is baptized into Christ's death, and Christ died once. But whosoever re-baptizes, ‘crucify to themselves the Son of

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<sup>469</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 591: Appendix II. 8.

<sup>470</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 590: Appendix II. 5.

God afresh, and put to Him to an open shame’, as the Apostle said [Heb. 6: 6].

Fourthly, baptism is the inseparable seal of the Spirit, as are ordination and confirmation; that is why [baptism] is not redone for those who were baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity. But whoever is an Arian or a Macedonian or a Nestorian they do; and also those who renounce the unity of the Holy Trinity must be baptised by the glory of the Most Holy Trinity.<sup>471</sup>

Tatevatsi also relates five effects of the birth of the font: ‘And it should be known that with the birth of the holy regeneration five wonderful things appear which do not exist with the physical birth.’ Citing Is. 66: 8, he points out,

Firstly, that a whole nation can be born at once, thousands and thousands.

And the doer of this is the mighty power of the priest and the advantage of the water

Secondly, that he was born by a virgin birth without corruption, and the doer of this is the Holy Spirit, and the matter of the water which is liquid.

Thirdly, that the firstborn is born, not the younger, that we may have the image of Christ who is the firstborn of the Father.

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<sup>471</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 590: Appendix II. 5.1-4.

Fourthly, that we are always born as a son of God, not as a daughter, for ‘there is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus’, as the Apostle said. And this points to the baptistery at the right hand of the church.

Fifthly, that all of us are born honourable and not as one is honourable and the other is dishonourable, a ruler or being ruled, as the Apostle said: ‘there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free’, for you share the same honour for Jesus Christ and are coheirs of the kingdom.<sup>472</sup>

### **3.5 The Water of Baptism**

Tatevatsi is silent regarding the kind of water required for baptism, and silent as well about the prayer over the water and the priest’s process of blessing the water, which clearly was very important in Tatevatsi’s time as in other periods. However, Tatevatsi does mention, as we have seen, that ‘the entire body should be washed, and in an emergency, its honourable parts, or washing the face only may suffice.’<sup>473</sup>

He concludes this part of his explanation by stating that ‘at baptism the grace of the Holy Spirit washes away the filth of sins, slakes the thirst of the soul by the Spirit of God, and reflects the lost image of God’.<sup>474</sup> But it is interesting that Tatevatsi, while considering the properties of water, suddenly turns to the idea of Holy Spirit in

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472 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 590: Appendix II. 6.1-5.

473 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 588: Appendix II. 2.

474 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 591: Appendix II. 9.

baptism, and seems to repeat in this one sentence his entire exposition of baptism. Tatevatsi stresses once more that without the washing of a physical body with water, the cleansing of sins with the Word of God is not possible. Moreover, he introduces a new and very important idea: this cleansing ‘reflects the lost image of God’. Why is he talking about returning the lost image?

Tatevatsi was greatly interested in the study of the image of God in man. In book V of the *Book of Questions*, Grigor talks about *lost image* and examines such topics as the creation of man, the image of God in man, image and likeness, man in the image of the Holy Trinity, and man in the image of God. Tatevatsi touches on many important doctrinal issues such as creation, fall and redemption, as well as resurrection and life eternal. However, without going into detail, it is clear that for Tatevatsi the vision of God is kept in baptism. Or, it would be better to say, on account of baptism, which enables the reliving of what has happened in the past, Christians may be regenerated, illuminated (clean from original sin) and grow in the faith, and the image of God will be reflected.

Because water is contrary to fire. What is sin, if not a fire, as a wrath of the soul and a lust of the flesh? It is well known that God punishes with torments of fire. Therefore, we baptize with water to put out the fire. Yet again, water washes away filth, slakes thirst, reflects images. Hence, at baptism the grace of the Holy Spirit washes away the filth of sins, slakes the thirst of the soul by the Spirit of God and reflects the lost image of God.

In one of the early manuscripts we meet the idea of a threefold repetition by means of a threefold immersion.<sup>475</sup>

If we turn to sources of the thirteenth century, we will see that, for example, Hovhannes Yerzenkatsi still maintains that the priest, who has to do all the stages of baptism, has to bless the water and drop the myron into the water, forming a cross, which is the reminder of the cross of Christ. This, as well as the fact that the priest has to baptise by triple immersion signifies the three days of the burial of Christ. The idea that ‘the font is the womb’ is also met with in Yerznkatsi’s homily.<sup>476</sup>

Grigor Yerznkatsi, in discussing the water, mentions that it has to be warm.

Tatevatsi underlines the fact that the water cleanses, reflects the image and slakes thirst. Therefore, according to Tatevatsi, in order to extinguish fire, we baptize in water.<sup>477</sup> Though he says nothing about the prayer over the water or about the whole process of blessing the water by the priest, it is clear that from the ninth to the eighteenth century the whole order of blessing the water was the same.<sup>478</sup>

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475 See MS 457: 73 b.

476 See Բաղդասարյան, Յովհաննես Երզնկացիի եվ Նրա Խրատական Արձակը (Baghdasaryan. *Hovhannes Yerznkatsi and his Homily*), 149-151.

477 Գիրք Հարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 501: Appendix II. 9.

478 See Ճեմճեմեան Սահակ, Սկրտութեան Արարողութիւնը Մաշտոցներու Մէջ «Բազմավեպ», Վենետիկ, Ս. Ղազար, թիվ 2-3, 1972 (Sahak Tjemtjemian, ‘The Rite of Baptism in the Ordinals’, *Bazmavep* 2-3 (1972), 199-200.

But he does insist that ‘as for the essence of the saying, “In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit”, it shall be said once and not repeated ignorantly.’ So it would seem that for Tatevatsi these words affirm the sacramentality of Baptism. Also the fact that Tatevatsi insists that it has to be said once, shows that he knew that there was a practice of saying these words three times. And it is interesting to note that Gevorg Yerznkatsi, who introduces the phrase ‘with my hands’, insists that the formula has to be said three times. If Tatevatsi takes up Grigor Yerznkatsi’s statement of the baptism formula, in the question of repeating it three times, he does not.

### **3.6 Original Sin**

As we saw above, Ashjian claimed that Tatevatsi in his discussion of the sacrament of baptism emphasises the concept of Original Sin at the expense of the traditional Eastern emphasis on illumination, regeneration.<sup>479</sup> And we saw that Ashjian is not alone in this perception: Vigen Guroian also concurs with this view.<sup>480</sup> Ashjian is correct in his statement that baptism is firstly illumination. But does Tatevatsi hold another belief? At the very beginning of his baptismal statement, we read: ‘baptism is a conferring (granting) of the sacred and a divine birth. And again, baptism is regeneration, a seal of protection (guarding) and illumination. Yet again, baptism is the pledge of the Holy Spirit, the beginning of another life.’<sup>481</sup> It is clear that Tatevatsi regarded the sacrament of baptism as an illumination, a regeneration, entrance into the Church and body of Christ. How could he explain the participation

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479 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 74.

480 See Vigen Guroian’s position in ‘Armenian Tradition’, 40.

481 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 588: Appendix II. 1.

of a person in the new creation – or, to put it simply, how could he explain the phenomenon of baptism itself – without observing the notion of original sin? Tatevatsi treats original sin only to stress that we are conceived from the corrupted seed of Adam, but in Christ we must be born. Furthermore, Tatevatsi confronts the problem of original sin, elucidating important questions such as: What is the sin of a little child? If the sins of parents are forgiven in baptism, why must those who are born from them be baptized?

To the question ‘what is the sin of a little boy?’ Tatevatsi replies in one sentence, ‘The original sin that has been since Adam’.<sup>482</sup> To the problem ‘The boy does not act of his own will; why does he incur punishment for Adam’s sin?’ Tatevatsi answers, ‘Adam’s sin is his loss of righteousness; he bore his son through sin and lust. And that sin is called original and is not forgiven unless the sinner is baptized into the death of Christ’.<sup>483</sup>

For Tatevatsi there is another important question: ‘Should the children of foreigners [that is, non-Christians]<sup>484</sup> be baptized?’ According to Tatevatsi, ‘The children of foreigners should be baptized, and if they die, they will be delivered of original sin and the torments of hell. But the godfather should not be a foreigner as he has no holy faith and has not renounced Satan, therefore he cannot speak on behalf of the boy or be a guarantor. For, whoever has no faith, cannot intercede for others.’<sup>485</sup>

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482 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 591: Appendix II. 10.

483 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 591: Appendix II. 11.

484 Tatevatsi uses the word ‘foreigners’, but we know that he means non-Christians, as he used this word about Muslims too.

485 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 591: Appendix II. 7.

If for Aquinas there is no huge need to have a godfather, for Tatevatsi a godfather, *Gunkahayr* (*Knqahayr*), is necessary for baptism; moreover, the latter should guarantee the faith of the person being christened before the Church and take him/her under his charge and educate the person according to the right faith. *Gunkahayr* presents the ‘*Yerakha*’ to the priest for baptism. A non-Christian is not acceptable as a godfather under any circumstance, as ‘he has no holy faith and has not renounced Satan, therefore he cannot speak on behalf of the boy or be a guarantor’.<sup>486</sup>

Ashjian in his own translation gives, ‘But the godfather should not be chosen from non-Christians, for the reason that he has not the holy faith, neither has he renounced Satan’.<sup>487</sup> But in the commentary to his translation he points out that, ‘the Godfather should be, according to Grigor, of the same faith as the child’s parents.’<sup>488</sup> That is not right: Tatevatsi does not say that the godfather should be of the same faith as the child’s parents. He is speaking about the baptism of the children of non-Christians. How, then, could he say that the godfather has to be of the same faith as the child’s parents? Tatevatsi clearly states the opposite. It is clear from what he says that it is important for the godfather to renounce Satan, to have a holy faith, in order to have a right to speak for the child, and moreover to guide the child. We therefore believe that Tatevatsi means that the godfather has to have a Christian faith (a point which Grigor Lusavorish discussed). To preach the good news of the death and resurrection

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486 Ibid.

487 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 56.

488 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 77.

of the Lord is the origin and goal of all the sacraments, especially baptism, and a godfather, in order to guide a child, has to be ready.

Tatevatsi explains that a child should not be punished for his parents' sin.<sup>489</sup>

Nobody is responsible for the sin of someone else but every man is punished for his own sins. God asks for righteousness from each person, which he gave in the beginning but Adam lost. Thus the little child is punished not for Adam having lost righteousness but because he himself lacks the same righteousness and is punished thereupon. Hence, the child lacks natural righteousness; he is lawfully denied God's righteousness and punished with the wicked. That is the reason everyone has the original sin because through the person of Adam the whole of our nature became guilty with lust. And nobody is born without sinful lust but only our Lord who was born of a virgin womb and without lust, and had not the original sin.<sup>490</sup>

Tatevatsi also considers briefly why should the child of a Christian be sinful if the father is cleansed with baptism? According to Tatevatsi, the child was conceived from corrupt seed.<sup>491</sup> A person is totally cleansed by baptism, but his seed is unclean. 'Baptism cleanses a man entirely, inwardly and outwardly, yet his seed is being

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489 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 591: Appendix II. 12.

490 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 591-592: Appendix II. 12.

491 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 592: Appendix II. 13.

corrupted with lust.<sup>492</sup> Also it is necessary for everyone to be baptized, and if a father's sin is forgiven with baptism, it has no effect on his children: his offspring have to be baptized too.<sup>493</sup> 'Likewise, all are corrupt as born of a corrupt father Adam. Thus we have two parents: Adam of flesh, and Christ of the spirit. Everyone should be born with the baptism of Christ to be cleansed and delivered from death. Hence, "for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" – those born of Him.'

Tatevatsi also tries to address the question: 'If all die in Adam, how are they ever born alive?' His reply is to say that it is 'like someone showing himself through a window to the world and dying at once'.<sup>494</sup>

According to Tatevatsi, the baptized die because

the penalty for sin is twofold: death for the body and hell for the soul.

The baptized in Christ are delivered from spiritual penalty for their spiritual father but bear the physical penalty for the father according to the flesh. Also, Christ's coming is twofold; the first countered the penalty for the soul, and the second for the flesh, for flesh is inferior to soul.

And 'yet again, Christ himself died physically first, and then rose alive after baptism.

Likewise we die physically first, and then rise alive with resurrection'.<sup>495</sup>

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492 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 592: Appendix II. 14.

493 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 592: Appendix II. 15.

494 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 592: Appendix II. 16. Ashjian did not translate this.

495 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 592; Appendix II.17.

According to Tatevatsi, ‘With the death of Christ sin was forgiven, but we are being baptized for the faith in Christ's death to die with Him and be partakers of His grace and forgiveness.’<sup>496</sup> Also, Tatevatsi points out that there is no benefit for the child if he dies in the mother’s womb, when a pregnant woman is baptized. ‘No benefit; he is not born yet as a second Adam, for one should be physically born first, and then be re-born spiritually.’<sup>497</sup>

The punishment for an unbaptized child is, according to Tatevatsi, ‘only darkness now and in the life to come. For fiery torments are for actual sins and not a punishment for the original sin.’<sup>498</sup> Also, Tatevatsi points out that there is no danger for children born not of righteous wedlock, but of fornication if they accept baptism. ‘Nothing at all if they accept baptism; likewise nothing harms the wheat if it is stolen and sown by a thief’.<sup>499</sup>

In conclusion, Tatevatsi underlines again that everyone is punished for his own sins, and no one is to carry the responsibility for the sins of others.<sup>500</sup> In order to buttress his statement, Tatevatsi cites Ezekiel 18: 20.<sup>501</sup> But ‘in case parents and sons are adherents and partakers in each other's sins, they both are evil-doers, and yet everyone is punished for his own sins and not for those of others.’ Tatevatsi

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496 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 592: Appendix II. 18.

497 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 592-593: Appendix II. 19.

498 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593: Appendix II. 20. Tatevatsi has already affirmed that ‘Everyone is punished for his own sin’. See Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 591: Appendix II. 12.

499 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593: Appendix II. 21.

500 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593: Appendix II. 22.

501 ‘The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son ...’

concludes his whole statement by remembering Exodus 20: 5: ‘I shall revenge the inquiry of the third and the fourth generations, if the father, son and grandson commit the same sin.’<sup>502</sup>

Aquinas, by quoting Romans 6: 3 and 6: 11, asserts that by baptism, a human being is dead to sin and alive to God.<sup>503</sup> Due to baptism, original sin is removed: ‘as St Paul says, the sin of Adam was not as powerful as the gift of Christ which is received in baptism’.<sup>504</sup> But, ‘no sin can be forgiven except in virtue of the passion of Christ.’<sup>505</sup> According to Aquinas, our faith in the passion of Christ and the strong purpose of participating in it, is our reception of the universal medicine not only against original sin, but against all sins, as ‘all sins are removed by baptism.’<sup>506</sup> Here we see how Aquinas stresses that all sins are taken away by baptism, which, being the universal medicine, works through the power of Christ’s passion.

Tatevatsi talks about the image of God, and for him it is not possible for that image to be reflected without a cleansing of original sin.

Tatevatsi, as we have shown, regarded the sacrament of baptism as an illumination, a regeneration, entrance into the Church and body of Christ, a participation in the new creation – the image of God which we find in baptism. Moreover, Tatevatsi talks

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502 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593; See Appendix II. 22.

503 Romans 6: 3: ‘Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?’ Romans 6: 11: ‘So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus’.

504 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 3a. 69.1 (Cunningham, 125).

505 Ibid.

506 Ibid.

about the original sin in order to stress that we have to recognize that we are conceived from the corrupted seed of Adam, and that in Christ we have to be born. We would like to add that our impression is that Tatevatsi does not greatly emphasize Original Sin, but is instead concerned with children in various senses: children of non-Christians, new-born children, children of Christians, children born in fornication. This fact of itself indicates that Tatevatsi, as a pedagogue, placed importance on baptizing children from a young age and keeping them in true faith. He wants his students to understand that all children need to be baptized. Finally, Tatevatsi wants his students to acknowledge that everyone is punished for his sins, and no matter what society dictates, or what others do, each is responsible for himself. Ashjian's statement that Tatevatsi 'puts too much emphasis on Original Sin',<sup>507</sup> seems in this light unjust.

Tatevatsi with one of his students wrote a very interesting text for parents on raising and educating their children, especially those who have a calling to the priesthood.<sup>508</sup> This curriculum is divided into three stages: childhood, adulthood and manhood, and each stage presents ten steps of religious education and spiritual growth to the age of thirty. According to Tatevatsi there are some steps that parents have to follow in the education of their children until they are seven years old, and in order to underline Tatevatsi's attitude towards children, let us consider some of his points. According to Tatevatsi:

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<sup>507</sup> Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 74.

<sup>508</sup> See Arakel Aljalian, Simeon Odabashian and Hratch Tchilingirian. 'Curriculum of Educating Infants who are Called into the Rank of Priesthood: Necessary and Useful Advice Written by Lord Arakel, Bishop of Siwnik and Grigor of Tatew, the Great Rhetor'. *St. Nersess Theological Review* 1.2, 1996, 233-245.

Hence, after the sacrament of baptism, the rebirth and enlightenment of the holy font and the adoption by our Heavenly Father, the parents, as servant and teacher of the Heavenly Father's adopted child, receive the child in their home and educate him in the fear of God ... When the child begins to speak, first they [parents] shall put the blessing of God in his mouth as the prophet David says, 'O Lord, if You open my lips, my mouth shall sing Your praise' ... When he is grown in stature and understands everything, they should show him all the movements of the sky and the course of the heavenly luminaries and their beauty and the changing of the seasons, and through these he should learn of their Creator and the neatness of His beauty' ... 'They shall teach him about the three persons of the One Godhead: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, consubstantial divinity. One nature, one will, one energy, one ruler of everything visible and invisible' ... They shall teach him the ordering of the nine classes of Angels ... They shall reveal to him the creation of our ancestor who was in paradise and his fall by the deceit of Satan ... They shall teach him about the incarnation of the Son of God for our salvation. Beginning from the Annunciation by Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, birth-giver of God ... the baptism of the revelation of God, the opening of heaven and the voice of the Father, and the descent of the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove upon Him, and His coming willingly to suffer on the cross, the miracle-working of Christ, and the wonders which took place during the crucifixion ... They should teach him to go to church, that he might view the liturgical rites and listen to

the voice of the priest, the reading of the scriptures, the prayers... so that he might learn the order of Christianity and grow accustomed to the same always.<sup>509</sup>

From the text it is evident that baptism might be gladly given to infants. Moreover, here we have pastoral advice for parents, with spiritual guidance on how to raise children in the light of Christ. Tatevatsi stands close to a strong tradition of the Armenian Church, illustrated in some manuscripts and supporting the practice of infant baptism.<sup>510</sup> Infant baptism had its origin in the days of the Apostles, and it is acknowledged that the New Testament did not give definite instructions concerning the baptism of children. And for many centuries there were and still are controversies about infant baptism. When the Apostle Paul and Silas were preaching the gospel at Philippi (Macedonia), a certain woman, named Lydia, repented and was baptized with all her household (Acts 16: 15). In the same city, when the prison-keeper accepted Christianity, he was baptized, together with the members of his family (Acts 16: 33). When Crispus, the chief ruler of the Synagogue, was converted to Christianity, he was baptized, together with his household (Acts 18: 8). Of course, there were children in these families, and they would have been baptized along with the adults. Origen emphasises infant baptism in his writings as a system that had originated during the time of the Apostles, in the first century.

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509 Ibid., 235-38. He discusses how children have to go to church -- at first just to hear the music, then they will understand the words, and finally they will understand the meaning of the liturgy: just take, guide and educate.

510 Սահակ Գեմճեմեան, Երեխաների օծումը Հայ Եկեղեցիոց, «Բազմավեպ», Վենետիկ, Ս. Ղազար (Sahak Tjemtjemyan. 'The Baptism of Infants in the Armenian Churches'. *Bazmavep*. Venice: St. Lazarus), 1968, Nos. 1-3, 21-29.

We have seen that to the question about the punishment reserved for an unbaptized child, Tatevatsi answered, ‘Darkness only, both here and in the life to come. For fiery torments are for actual sins and not a punishment for the original sin’ and that it is appropriate ‘to baptize children of infidels, in order that if they die they may be saved from original sin and the punishment of hell’.<sup>511</sup> According to the twelfth-century writer Davit of Ganjak, if the priest is celebrating the sacrament and is summoned in an emergency for the seal and communion, he must conclude the stage he has reached, and to cover the gifts in preparation, and go and give the seal to a child.<sup>512</sup> (Giving the seal may suggest both to baptise and to seal, which for Davit constituted one ritual.)

It is interesting to note that for Aquinas if a child is still under the guardianship of his parents and parents are not believers, there is no reason to baptize, as it will not work. ‘It would be dangerous to baptize the children of unbelievers in such a fashion since they would easily return to their unbelief because of the natural affection they have for their parents.’<sup>513</sup> For Aquinas it is a very sensitive question, as for him it is the same as to baptise an adult against his will. But in the case of health problems Thomas never entertains the possibility of delaying the baptise of children. ‘First of all, because better instruction or even fuller conversion cannot be expected of them. Secondly, there is the danger of death, for no other remedy is available to them

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511 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593: Appendix II. 20, and 591: Appendix II. 7.

512 *Penitential of David of Ganjak*. Translated by C.J.F. Dowsett. CSCO 217, *Scriptores Armeniaci* 4, Louvain, 1961, 28. For the Armenian text see *The Penitential of David of Ganjak*. Edited by C.J.F. Dowsett. CSCO 216, *Scriptores Armeniaci* 3, Louvain, 1961, 33.

513 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 3a. 68. (Cunningham, 113).

except the sacrament of baptism.’<sup>514</sup> It seems that Aquinas, as other theologians, recognizes that an infant who dies without receiving baptism is excluded from heaven because of original sin. But there was a belief that the child will not receive punishment – hence the development of a notion of the existence of limbo (a place of natural happiness).

As we have seen above, Tatevatsi says that if a child dies without being baptized, he will face only darkness, now and in the hereafter. In the *Book of Questions* he rejects purgatory, but what does he mean here by ‘darkness’? Archbishop Ashjian examines this question and suggests that perhaps Tatevatsi is speaking about *limbo*. However, Ashjian is not quite convinced whether darkness does indeed mean limbo for Tatevatsi. We have to agree with the archbishop that it does not seem likely that Tatevatsi is talking about limbo, as presumably he would not then use the word *darkness*. But it is an open question for us too.

### **3.7 Christ Fulfilled the Law**

In Lk. 2: 21 we encounter a short description of Christ’s circumcision: ‘And when eight days were fulfilled for his circumcision, his name was called Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.’

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514 Ibid., 3a. 68.3 (Cunningham, 89).

The origin of the practice of circumcision among the Israelites cannot be clearly determined.<sup>515</sup> One point is clear: the rite had a special religious significance for the Israelites as a sign of the relationship with God deriving from the covenant made with Abraham.<sup>516</sup> In the first century the Jews performed the rite of circumcision, a great ceremony, at home. The object of this religious act was for the child to become a member of the people of God and heir of the messianic promises made to Abraham. It is important to note that at this time the child would also be given his name. It seems that the circumcision of Christ took place in Bethlehem, because of the obligation imposed on the Jews by sacerdotal prescription to have their sons circumcised on the eighth day after birth.

This obligation was very strict, and both theologians, Tatevatsi and Aquinas, agree that Christ underwent circumcision in order to fulfil the Law. The Gospel stresses that the newly born Saviour of the world is the appointed heir of the promise made to Abraham, and that this is confirmed by the rite of circumcision. As we know, on this same occasion He is given the name Jesus, which confirms Him as the Saviour. Tatevatsi and Aquinas believe that the circumcision of Christ shows that the Saviour of the world must be the descendant of Abraham.

As Aquinas points out, 'It was right for Christ not only to fulfil what was prescribed by the Old Law, but also to initiate what would belong to the New Law. And

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515 There is an opinion that probably It is possible that the Israelites received it from the Egyptians, as in the time of Old Kingdom it was practiced in Egypt, or that there was a common source for both the Egyptians and the Israelites and not a direct transmission.

516 See Gen. 17: 10-14, Ex. 12: 43-48, Lev. 12: 3.

therefore, he wished to undergo not only circumcision, but also baptism.<sup>517</sup> It is interesting to note that Aquinas and Tatevatsi discuss the circumcision, and both acknowledge that, as a profession of faith, it was appropriate only for males. Both theologians clearly remark that because of this fact, circumcision did not have the power of baptism, which, on the contrary, is available to everyone.<sup>518</sup> Moreover, baptism is a sacrament of faith, but circumcision was not a sacrament. However, it is important to observe that for Aquinas circumcision is ‘a sacrament’ in the sense of a preparation for baptism.

Both Tatevatsi and Aquinas are, of course, aware that toward the end of the Old Testament period circumcision occupied a very important position in the religious life of the people. Interestingly, Tatevatsi mentions that Ethiopians are also circumcised.<sup>519</sup> Finally, Tatevatsi stresses that ‘we do not circumcise so that we might be distinguished from Jews, but we do not circumcise in order to be differ from pagans.’

### **3.8 The Baptism of Christ<sup>520</sup>**

Grigor Tatevatsi, by introducing short quotations from the Gospel, makes it abundantly clear that Jesus was holy by his nature, by his body, and by his deeds, and

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517 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 3a. 39.1. Translation from St Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologiae* LIII *The Life of Christ* (3a ,38-45), edited and translated by Samuel Parsons and Albert Pinheiro. London: Blackfriars, 1971.

518 See Aquinas, 3a. 70.1-4 (Cunningham, 155-171). See Ոսկեգիրքիկ (*Book of Golden Content*), 164-165. There is a modern Armenian translation in Hakob Qyoseyan, 1995.

519 It is interesting that Tatevatsi, while mentioning Ethiopians, did not mention Coptic Christians, who in imitation of Old Testament Jews were circumcised as well.

520 The baptism of Christ is also discussed in Ոսկեգիրքիկ (*Book of Golden Content*), for a modern Armenian translation of which see Hakob Qyoseyan, 1995.

was baptized not because there was a lack of holiness, but because He, who sanctifies, wanted to be an example for us.<sup>521</sup> Tatevatsi points out, ‘The baptism of Christ was not for a need, since Christ is most pure, holy in essence and sanctifies all.’<sup>522</sup> In order to make clear why Jesus was baptized in the Jordan, Tatevatsi in his statements concerning the sacrament of baptism suggests ten points in reply to this question.<sup>523</sup>

‘First, thereby He took upon himself our sanctification.’<sup>524</sup> ‘Second, he was baptized in order to suffocate the head of the dragon in water.’<sup>525</sup> ‘Third, he was baptized in order to wash away the sin and to bury the old Adam in water.’<sup>526</sup> ‘Fourth, he was baptized in order to sanctify the baptizer and water’.<sup>527</sup> ‘Fifth, he was baptized in order to enable the water to regenerate us.’<sup>528</sup> As we see, the first, fourth and fifth points represent Christ as a mediator in the sanctification of men. According to Tatevatsi, Jesus was baptized in water in order to give power to water, which becomes a gift to effect our rebirth. Here, we see that for Grigor, the water becomes an important symbol of life; it even becomes an instrument of salvation.

The second and the third points, by underlining the consequence of the fourth and the fifth points, introduce Christ as the one who drowns the old Adam. This idea recalls

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521 See Ոսկեփորիկ (*Book of Golden Content*), 166.

522 See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 486, and Ոսկեփորիկ (*Book of Golden Content*), 166.

523 See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 486-89, 166-67.

524 See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 486.

525 Ibid. See Ոսկեփորիկ (*Book of Golden Content*), 166.

526 See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 486.

527 Ibid.

528 Ibid.

the idea of Gregory Nazianzen, who in *Oration 39* declares, ‘Christ was baptized in order that he might plunge in the water the old Adam in his entirety.’ Tatevatsi, in discussing why Christ was baptized, turns aside from the main question and asks what ‘he destroyed the head of the dragon in the Jordan’ from the Book of Job means.<sup>529</sup> On the one hand, this may appear not to be the most logical place in which he might raise the point, as there are still unexamined questions which need further clarification, but on the other hand, by elucidating the question here, Tatevatsi is able immediately to enrich discussion of the main point.

When Adam was deceived, it was the serpent; now in the Jordan, it is the dragon, because the serpent was called a dragon for a long time. Moreover, the serpent is seen upon the face of the earth, while the dragon is in the abyss. Again, the dragon is more harmful than the serpent.<sup>530</sup>

According to Tatevatsi, the snake was long known as a dragon. Here, Tatevatsi compares a dragon with the snake which, according to Grigor, tricked Adam. However, he states that a dragon is more harmful than a serpent, as he lives in abysses and deep places. Jesus, by his baptism, destroyed the evil from the deep places, cleansed the water and changed water into a substance of life and holiness.

He destroyed the head in the Jordan, while the tail was destroyed in the grave and in hell, which brought about corruption and death, devastating it and freeing the spirits. The tail is that which drew to itself one-third of the stars and that concerning which it was commanded to the Apostles to ‘tread upon serpents and scorpions’. The head of the serpent is sin; the

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<sup>529</sup> Ibid., 488-489. Tatevatsi does not mention this in the *Book of Golden Content*.

<sup>530</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 488.

sting is the death of the scorpion. Moreover, the dragon made its habitation in the Jordan, as Job said, ‘The beast sleeps in wet places’ that is, the evil desire.<sup>531</sup>

Obviously, Tatevatsi wants to stress that by demolishing the head of the dragon in the water, an original sin is destroyed. As he points out,

The original sin spreads through the evil desire. However, in his baptism, Christ sanctified water and made it a means to sanctity and life. And so now, by baptism, we destroy the head, that is, the original sin and by other virtues we trample underfoot and so disable the sting, which is the effectual sin and the death of spirits and hell.<sup>532</sup>

The last phrase is very powerful as it elucidates the whole meaning for us of why we need to be baptized, and the phrase ‘in his baptism, Christ sanctified water’ is important here, as Tatevatsi once more makes clear who sanctifies water. And it is obvious that for Tatevatsi, the Holy Spirit does not consecrate waters at the Jordan.<sup>533</sup>

In *The Teaching of Saint Gregory* we read, ‘Then He came and was Himself baptized by John; undertaking to write an eternal covenant and sealing it with his own blood [Heb.13.20], to give life to all by the illuminating and life-giving baptism, He ordered all men born from the earth, all humans, to imitate the divine image of

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531 I do not find this passage in the Book of Job. We may assume that Tatevatsi acknowledged some Bible translation which had this passage.

532 See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 489.

533 In the *Teaching of St Gregory* (from the end of the fifth century), we read, ‘He [the Spirit] Himself came down upon the waters, and made the waters at once purifying and renovating’ (paragraph 411 (Thomson. *Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970), 89)).

salvation.<sup>534</sup> Here we see that for Gregory the most important aspect of baptism is centred in the baptism of Christ. Also for Gregory, ‘He opened the womb of baptism that they might be renewed and born again as children of the kingdom by baptism.’<sup>535</sup> Obviously, the idea of womb is very important here, as it again shows that baptism is redemption, enlightenment, rather than the connotations of death and resurrection associated with the image of a tomb.

The sixth point is very important: ‘He was baptized in order to keep and fulfil the law.’ According to Tatevatsi, this point may be reasonably analysed in terms of Divine Law, as Jesus’ motivation was to follow, keep and fulfil the Law. In the *Book of Golden Content* he considers the institution of circumcision, and while examining its rite and effect, explains in particular why Christ was circumcised.<sup>536</sup> What follows is one of the best examples of Jesus’ motivation to follow and to fulfil the Law. According to Tatevatsi, ‘When Christ was circumcised, there was an order to it, and it was a working of the law’.<sup>537</sup> However, Tatevatsi points out that ‘now is a different time inasmuch as the law is finished and the order of the circumcision has been destroyed.’ Tatevatsi points out that, ‘Christ was circumcised in order to take the law’s heavy weight off from us.’<sup>538</sup> Here Tatevatsi adduces an apposite quotation from Galatians: ‘God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.’<sup>539</sup>

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534 *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, paragraph 410 (Thomson, *Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970), 88).

535 *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, paragraph 679 (Thomson, *Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970), 169).

536 See Ոսկեփորիկ (*Book of Golden Content*), 163-65.

537 *Ibid.*, 165.

538 *Ibid.*

539 Gal. 4: 4, 5.

The seventh point is that Jesus by his baptism became an outstanding example for us: ‘He was baptized in order to be an example for us to come to baptism’.<sup>540</sup> For the institution of baptism we find three separate moments or causes cited. First, there is the baptism of Christ; secondly Christ’s statement to Nicodemus; and thirdly, Christ’s command to the disciples to baptize. Tatevatsi believes that with regard to the institution of baptism, the baptism of Christ should be seen as a crucial turning point in every life. About the primal role of Jesus’ baptism there is already evidence in the *regula fidei* of Ignatius of Antioch, who stresses that Jesus was a seminal model for Christian baptism. Moreover, Winkler has demonstrated that the baptism of Jesus was an inherent article of faith in the early Armenian Creeds.<sup>541</sup> The Armenian text says: ‘We also believe in the Holy Spirit, uncreated and perfect, who spoke in the law, the prophets, and the gospels, who descended into the Jordan, and proclaimed the Sent One, and dwelt in the saints.’ This tradition, which saw the baptism of Jesus as essential to faith, was known also in the later Syrian Church thanks to the *regula fidei* of Philoxenus.

We believe that Tatevatsi, clearly, was inspired not only by these very early statements, but also by *The Teaching of St Gregory*. It introduces the baptism of Jesus as ‘the divine image of salvation’, which has to be imitated. It also says, ‘Then He came and was Himself baptized by John; undertaking to write an eternal covenant and sealing it with his own blood, to give life to all the illuminating and life-giving

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540 See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 486.

541 Gabriele Winkler holds that the Armenian Creed represents an ancient form of belief, and is the oldest and purest tradition. See Winkler, ‘Eine bemerkenswerte Stelle’, 131, 132, 153, 155.

baptism, He ordered all men born from the earth, all humans, to imitate the divine image of salvation.<sup>542</sup> Clearly, Tatevatsi could not ignore this statement.

One of the most powerful points in elucidating why Christ was baptized is the eighth one: ‘He was baptized in order to reveal the mystery of the Trinity there.’<sup>543</sup> Here Tatevatsi highlights the image of Jordan manifesting the Trinity. An extensive section of *The Teaching of St Gregory* on the baptism of Jesus suggests that what happened at creation is reflected at baptism. ‘For in the beginning of the creation of time, the Spirit of the Deity moved over the waters, and thence set out the order of the creatures, and commanded the coming into being and establishing of the creatures. He also ordered to be established the firmament of heaven, the dwelling of the fiery angels, which appears to us as water.’<sup>544</sup>

‘In the same way’, *The Teaching* adds, ‘He came and completed the covenant which He made with our fathers. He came down to the waters and sanctified the lower waters of this earth, which had been fouled by the sins of mankind.’<sup>545</sup> We see that the event, which took place in Jordan, sets a parallel with the creation of the world in the Genesis account.

Tatevatsi’s ninth point is that Jesus was baptized for our profit, or, as he says, ‘in order to show our usefulness’.

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542 *The Teaching of St Gregory*, paragraph 410 (Thomson, *Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970), 88).

543 Գիրք Հարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 486.

544 *The Teaching of St. Gregory*, paragraphs 260, 262, 277. 414 (Thomson, *Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970), 41, 42, 48-49, 89-90).

545 *The Teaching of St. Gregory*, paragraph 413 (Thomson, *Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970), 89).

And finally the tenth point is that ‘Jesus was baptized in order to show His humility.’ Here, in analysing the key passage from the Gospel, Tatevatsi notes the significance of four phrases.

The humility of Christ is made known in four ways; as the Gospel says: ‘Jesus came ... to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him.’ First it says: ‘Jesus came’, that is, the one who gives salvation, not the one who needs it. Second, ‘to the Jordan’, that is, He, the creator of the elements, lowered Himself under the lowly element of water. Third, ‘to John’, that is, the Lord comes to the servant, the king to the waiter, the sun to the moon. Fourth, ‘to be baptized by him’, that is, the source coming to the tributary, the fullness coming toward a drop of water, the pure coming to be cleansed by clay and the sun of the suns to get light from a lamp.<sup>546</sup>

Tatevatsi maintains that the fact that a giver of salvation, a master, a creator of everything came to his servant to be baptized by him testifies both to His freedom and to the range of its effects.

### **3.9 The Effects of Baptism**

At the beginning, Tatevatsi states that ‘the fathers of the church say that there are many effects.’ It is clear that Tatevatsi maintains their views and, simply by saying this, stresses that he fully concurs with the fathers’ statements and does not wish to add to them. However, in describing the efficacy of baptism, Tatevatsi underlines nine points.

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<sup>546</sup> See Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 486-87.

It is important to note that, when considering the efficacy of baptism, Tatevatsi starts immediately from the example of Christ's baptism. Interestingly, in the *Book of Questions*, he speaks of four effects of our baptism.<sup>547</sup> 'The benefit (effect) of our baptism is shown by Christ's baptism in four ways, as it says in the Gospel: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water: and the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him; and a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."' Tatevatsi first explains why the text says, 'went up straightway from the water'. 'Everyone else, who came to be baptized by John, would confess their sins and only then come out of the water. Christ, however, had no sin: that is why he "went up straightway", that is, immediately. It also shows the endowment of graces; the one who is baptized, becomes free of sins and immediately rises to fulfill virtue.'

Second, 'it says, "The heavens were opened", indicating that at the same time the door of the kingdom is opened for the one who gets baptized'.<sup>548</sup> It is obvious that for Tatevatsi, when we are baptized, heaven is opened. Third, 'it says, "the Spirit ... descending upon him"', indicating that by baptism we become the temple of the Holy Spirit through baptism.<sup>549</sup> Fourth, 'the [Father's] voice', 'indicating that we become children of God through baptism, as it says in the Gospel of John, "... born, not of

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547 Ibid., 487.

548 Ibid.

549 Ibid.

blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”<sup>550</sup> Here we are made God’s children.

It is interesting that in the *Book of Golden Content* Tatevatsi starts his explanation of the efficacy of baptism with the second point from the *Book of Questions* and adds five more benefits.<sup>551</sup> The fifth effect is that it cures souls from spiritual illness as ‘Elijah cleansed and washed Naaman’s leprosy, which is the seal of the soul’s sin, in the Jordan river’.<sup>552</sup> By our baptism all works of demons are destroyed and our souls are healed of spiritual illness.

The sixth effect is that ‘it destroys all works of demon as the witches virtually [or ‘in essence’] turn an entity [or ‘image’] of a human into a donkey’s image and vice versa. But in water one undergoes a cure and gets a first image of man.’<sup>553</sup> On the one hand, this may not seem a completely helpful way explaining the efficacy of baptism. But, on the other, we may note that when Tatevatsi refers to regaining the first image of man, he stresses once again that Jesus washed not for himself, but for us.

The seventh effect is that the water of the font extinguishes the fires of hell for those who are baptized, as water quenches fire. The eighth starts from the way in which water swallows a human being; similarly, the water of baptism gulps down Satan in

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550 Ibid..

551 See Ոսկեփորիկ (*Book of Golden Content*), 166.

552 See 2 Kings 5: 14.

553 See Ոսկեփորիկ (*Book of Golden Content*), 167.

the same way that Pharaoh sank into the sea. And as water makes viable saplings and plants, in the same way the water of the font spiritually revitalizes those dead from sin who are baptized to the glory of Christ our God.

*The Teaching of St. Gregory* also says, ‘And He was first understood and known as the true Son of God by the voice of his Father and the descent of the Spirit over Him.’<sup>554</sup> As McDonnell’s has observed, in the *Teaching of St Gregory* ‘the mutual knowing and mutual showing of the Father, Son, and the Spirit are the center of the Jordan event’.<sup>555</sup> A Trinitarian event, over the Jordan, is very important for Tatevatsi too. Clearly, as McDonnell points out, ‘the Jordan is the first full revelation of Jesus’ identity, but we may add that the Jordan is the full revelation of the Unity of the Trinity.’ For Tatevatsi, the baptism of Jesus is a prototype of the Trinitarian economy of salvation; which was manifested at the Jordan.

Turning to Aquinas, we may note that he considers three points which rightly and fully reveal the efficacy of our baptism. The strength of baptism and its efficacy derives from heaven. For him the idea of opening the gates of heaven is directly associated with removing sin.<sup>556</sup> Moreover, ‘baptism opens the gates of the kingdom of heaven to the baptized in so far as it incorporates him into the passion of Christ and applies its power to man.’<sup>557</sup> In support of this statement Aquinas notes, ‘when Christ was baptized, heaven was opened to show that, for the future, power from

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554 *The Teaching of St. Gregory*, paragraph 416 (Thomson, *Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970), 90).

555 See Killian McDonell. ‘Jesus’ Baptism in the Jordan’, *Theological Studies* 56.2 (1995), 209-236, at 215.

556 See Aquinas, 3a, 69.7 (Cunningham, 143).

557 Ibid.

heaven would sanctify baptism.<sup>558</sup> But, in order to be sanctified, we have to make a valuable contribution to the efficacy of baptism, which has to be our creed of faith, because ‘baptism is called the sacrament of faith’.<sup>559</sup> And finally, the fact that at Christ’s baptism the heavens have been opened, duly shows a path and opens a door for the baptized to enter the kingdom of heaven. However, this does not mean that in order to enter the kingdom it is enough just to be baptized. Aquinas, citing Luke 3: 21,<sup>560</sup> concludes that ‘the faithful stand in need of prayer after baptism.’<sup>561</sup> For Aquinas, the baptism of Christ is an outstanding example, which clearly shows whence baptism derives its principal power, and enables us to discern the special manner of entrance to heaven. It also throws light on the fact that baptism is a sacrament of faith, and moreover, illuminates what the believer must do in order to cherish the virtue of the prayer of Christ and to keep the door to the kingdom of heaven open.

But how does Aquinas conceive of faith? And what does it mean, for Aquinas, to live in faith? In the *Secunda Secundae* of the *Summa* we see that he does not maintain that in order to have faith one has to be educated. For him, belief in the existence of God is just a small part of faith. But he stresses that faith relates to the teaching of Christian creeds. It would be erroneous to state that faith is a propositional matter; however, Christians must consent to the ‘articles of faith’.

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558 Aquinas 3a, 39.5 (Parsons and Pinheiro, 35).

559 See Aquinas, 3a, 39.5 (Parsons and Pinheiro, 35).

560 ‘Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened.’

561 Aquinas, 3a, 39.5 (Cunningham, 37).

Aquinas examines the question of whether the time of Christ's baptism was fitting<sup>562</sup> and assembles different examples from the Old Testament in order to show why it was appropriate for Christ to be baptized at the age of thirty.<sup>563</sup> It is interesting that it is by finding parallels between the Old and New Testaments that Aquinas brings the issue of the age of Christ at his baptism to a close. As *The Teaching of Saint Gregory* points out, 'Then after refraining for thirty years from revealing Himself, growing in stature of the body according to the nature of the increase of the flesh, He submitted also to baptism.'<sup>564</sup> However, Tatevatsi leaves this question untouched.

For Aquinas baptism does not have an equal effect in all people, as 'the effect of baptism is twofold: one is the essential effect, the other accidental or indirect.'<sup>565</sup> According to Aquinas, 'The essential effect of baptism is begetting of men in spiritual life'.<sup>566</sup> This means that baptism is, at root, an invitation of a person to a new life, but the size of the ticket, which is the element of grace, depends on how we receive and use the invitation. 'An indirect effect of baptism is something beyond the purpose of baptism which is effected miraculously by divine power.'<sup>567</sup>

Of course, this statement is not applicable to children's baptism, as Aquinas believes that baptism has the same effects for all children inasmuch as 'they are baptized not

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562 Aquinas, 3a, 39.3 (Cunningham, 27-31).

563 See Aquinas, 3a, 39, 3 (Cunningham, 29): 'We read that Joseph was thirty years old when he undertook the government of Egypt. And similarly we read of David that he was thirty years old when he began to reign. Ezakiel, too, began to prophesy when he was thirty years old.'

564 *The Teaching of St. Gregory*., paragraph 408 (Thomson, *Teaching of Saint Gregory* (1970), 88).

565 Aquinas, 3a, 69.8 (Cunningham, 145).

566 Aquinas, 3a, 69.8 (Cunningham, 145).

567 Aquinas, 3a, 69.8 (Cunningham, 147).

in their own faith but in the faith of the Church.’<sup>568</sup> But for Aquinas ‘adults who approach baptism through their own faith are not equal.’<sup>569</sup> ‘For the approach is made by some with greater devotion than is the case with others.’<sup>570</sup> In the case of the child, it is ‘the faith of the whole Church’ which ‘profits the child through the working of the Holy Spirit who unites the Church and communicates the good of one to another’.<sup>571</sup>

Spiritual rebirth which takes place through baptism is in some ways similar to physical birth, in this respect that, as the infant in the mother’s womb does not receive independent nourishment but is sustained by the nourishment of the mother, so also children not having the use of reason, as if in the womb of Mother Church, receive salvation not independently but through the activity of the Church.<sup>572</sup>

If the Church is a community of believers, how can a child be baptized in the faith of adults, who do not receive equal effects, even if they are approaching with the same faith? It appears that some have a greater grace than others, because such effects ‘are dispensed according to the determination of divine providence’.<sup>573</sup> Even in the case of equal grace, ‘it is not equally used; one more zealously advances in grace while another is found wanting through his neglect of God’s grace’.<sup>574</sup> In order to

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568 Aquinas, 69.8 (Cunningham, 145-147).

569 Aquinas, 3a, 69.8 (Cunningham, 147).

570 Ibid.

571 Aquinas, 3a, 68.9 (Cunningham, 111).

572 Aquinas, 3a, 68.9 (Cunningham, 108).

573 Aquinas, 3a, 69.8 (Cunningham, 147).

574 Ibid.

understand this we have to keep in mind that for Aquinas ‘the minimal amount of baptismal grace is sufficient to take away all sins’.<sup>575</sup>

If we turn to the question of whether it was fitting for Christ to receive baptism, we find that Aquinas, quoting patristic authorities, advances three reasons why it was fitting. Firstly, He did it, in order to cleanse water by his sinless flesh and to legate the sanctified waters to us.<sup>576</sup> Secondly, Christ did not need baptism for himself, but did it for us.<sup>577</sup> Thirdly, Christ wanted to be baptized, as he wished to do what he commended to us.<sup>578</sup> In short, according to Aquinas, ‘Christ wished to be baptized in order that by his baptism he might sanctify the baptism with which we were to be baptized.’<sup>579</sup>

To the question as to the ways in which the baptism of Christ and that of John parallel and diverge, Tatevatsi answers, ‘They parallel in the matter (of water) and in the way of immersion.’<sup>580</sup> On the one hand, this seems to be clearly right since both baptisms were obviously conducted in water. But there is, on the other hand, a question as to the nature of that water since, as we have seen, according to Tatevatsi, Christ was ‘in order to wash away the sin and to bury the old Adam in water’<sup>581</sup>, ‘in order to sanctify the baptizer and water’<sup>582</sup>, and ‘in order to enable the water to

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575 Ibid.

576 Aquinas, 3a, 39.1 (Parsons and Pinheiro, 23).

577 Aquinas, 3a, 39.1 (Parsons and Pinheiro, 23-25).

578 Aquinas, 3a, 39.1 (Parsons and Pinheiro, 25).

579 Aquinas, 3a, 39.5 (Parsons and Pinheiro, 35).

580 See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 488.

581 Ibid.

582 Ibid.

regenerate us'.<sup>583</sup> According to Tatevatsi, then, after Jesus' baptism, water receives the power to give us a new birth. It becomes an important symbol of life; it even becomes an instrument to salvation. Therefore, Tatevatsi's answer is not as unproblematic as it might seem at first.

There is more to be said about the ways in which the two baptisms diverge. 'Others point to the divergence first in the mode, because the baptism of John was given for the one who was to come, while that of Christ was given for the Trinity.'<sup>584</sup> Here Tatevatsi stresses that at the Jordan there was a manifestation of the Holy Trinity. 'Secondly, they differ in renewal, because the baptism of Christ will justify and open the door of heaven, while John's will not. Thirdly, they differ in conclusion, because John was ordained for the baptism of Christ, teaching the multitudes about the one who is the perfect baptism'.<sup>585</sup>

According to Tatevatsi, at the time of Christ's baptism, the key factors in our baptism were shown, that is 'the baptizer, the one to be baptized, the matter, the type and the intent. The baptizer was John, acting like the serving priests. The one to be baptized was Christ, who sanctified the water and enabled it to regenerate us.'<sup>586</sup> Tatevatsi tells us that the matter was water inasmuch as 'it is more convenient for baptism than any other liquid matter'.<sup>587</sup> 'The type was the presence of the Holy Trinity, wherein

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583 Ibid.

584 See *ibid.*, 488.

585 *Ibid.*, 488.

586 *Ibid.*, 487.

587 *Ibid.*

the Father testified, the Son stood there, incarnated, and the Holy Spirit descended like a dove.<sup>588</sup> The Spirit came to point to Christ, but not to sanctify.

He continues:

The intent was to follow the voice of the baptizer, while the Father's voice over the Son implies the Son's excellence.<sup>589</sup>

First it said, 'This ...', indicating the unity of the Logos to flesh. The voice did not say 'This one has ...' or 'These are ...', as if it was distributed, but rather, 'This', meaning one person in essence unified. There are names pointing to the nature, like Adam. And there are names that point to the person, like Peter. There are also names that point to the nature and the person, such as 'this', 'that', 'it'.

Second, when it says, 'is', it shows the eternal nature of that being; accordingly, 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever' [Heb. 13: 8].

Third 'my', pointing to the Father, who eternally lives with Christ. Fourth, 'beloved', in line with the words that 'The Father loves the Son and has given everything to him' [John 13: 35]. Fifth, 'Son' indicates the equality of the Son to the Father. Sixth, 'pleased', indicates the union

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588 Ibid.

589 Ibid.

with the Father. Also, ‘pleased’ as seen in the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Son Incarnate.<sup>590</sup>

From these statements it is clear that, for Tatevatsi, Christ is the ground of our eternal being, as Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life who leads our souls from earth to heaven, to the Kingdom of God. Being proclaimed as the Son of God, Jesus is dedicated to fulfil his mission as the Messiah and Servant of God. Therefore, Christ, by his example, teaches to love God and lifts us up that we might achieve it. Christ is the spiritual and intellectual light who by revealing to us the visible and invisible, fills us with hope and leads us to have victory over sin and recoup an authentic image. Moreover, He – God and true man, possessing perfectly the divine as well as human natures, united in Him without confusion and without division or alteration, harmoniously and ineffably – was sinless, but was baptized in water, a life-giving symbol, for the salvation of men. We may say that these statements of Tatevatsi offer more than propositions concerning the efficacy of baptism, or reasons as to why Jesus was baptized, but in fact also contain a very well-articulated statement of faith.

### **Summary**

Archbishop Ashjian believes that Grigor Tatevatsi, in his discussion of several aspects of baptism, adopts Aquinas’s conclusions without trying to understand or to explain them. Moreover, Ashjian believes that ‘Tatevatsi abdicates the rich, deep sacramental theology of the East, which would be so familiar to the Armenian Church’. We disagree with this statement, as Tatevatsi does not think in the context

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<sup>590</sup> Ibid.

of Eastern or Western scholarship; he thinks in an Armenian context, which he clearly underlines in his statement on baptism. As Taft points out,

The Armenian rite differs from the Roman, Byzantine, and other rites because the lived expression of the Armenian Christian faith now codified liturgically in the Armenian rite was forged in a different cultural matrix. What historians of liturgy call a “rite” is a coherent, unified corpus of liturgical usages followed by Christian churches within a single ecclesiastical conscription.<sup>591</sup>

We believe that Grigor Tatevatsi was deeply interested in Latin theology, and his knowledge could only help him in his investigation of various questions. As a person of a high intellect, who was interested not only in Latin theology, but also knew Armenian and Greek theologians and philosophers, we believe that Tatevatsi clearly understood the nuances of Orthodox theology, and in this question stayed faithful to the theology of his own Armenian Apostolic Church. Otherwise, for example, why would one who was recognized as vardapet argue against a traditional baptismal form, without realizing that there is a difference between ‘I baptize’ and ‘with my hands’.

It is interesting that scholasticism, as a method of teaching, and one based on the study of Aristotelian logic, required as well a significant knowledge of scripture and of the Church Fathers. Clearly, scholasticism brought to the fore a multitude of questions and challenge society intellectually in a whole variety of ways. On the

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<sup>591</sup> Robert Taft, *Divine Liturgies – Human Problems in Byzantium, Armenia, Syria, and Palestine*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001.

basis of Aristotelian logic, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the intelligentsia were confident in the faculty of the human mind, for they believed in its ability to solve cognitive problems.<sup>592</sup> The voice of logic, perhaps better described as the *principle* of logic, evolved into a mainstay of academics at medieval universities. Obviously, Tatevatsi was a part of that generation, which was developed and shaped under oral and written debates, and as an educated person in a medieval society, he was able to wield his logic to effect in the intense arguments in which he was involved.

Tatevatsi offers testimony to the difference between the Western, Eastern and Armenian churches, and articulates his theology on the sacrament of baptism. Baptism is the granting of sacred and divine regeneration. At the same time, baptism is rebirth, the seal of protection and illumination. Baptism is the pledge of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the new life. Tatevatsi deals with various specific aspects of baptism. All the questions surrounding baptism relate to how a person becomes reborn as a Christian. The regenerative aspect of baptism is thus central: the idea of illumination – the formal invitation for a reborn person, illumined by God in Christ through the Holy Spirit, to start a new life. But in order to be granted these sacred gifts, with the aid of divine grace, a person has to pass through a process of washing the body with water and cleansing of sins with words of the Almighty. Grigor Tatevatsi is laconic in his theological analysis, and does not really highlight any one point in the whole nexus of questions about the sacrament of baptism that require explanation. All those questions are, however, related to the way in which a person is

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592 Tatevatsi was deeply interested in Aristotle, and wrote a commentary on Aristotle, for which see the Introduction.

to be reborn as a Christian. In order to be granted the sacred gifts of divine grace, one has to wash the body with water, an act that symbolizes the cleansing of sins.

We do not think that Tatevatsi forgets the ethos of the baptismal rite, as Ashjian would say.<sup>593</sup> Tatevatsi leaves the mechanical aspects of the sacrament of baptism untouched, as there is no focused definition of the rite, which he clearly avoids addressing. However, Tatevatsi, as a vardapet, keeps the baptismal ethos in view in a special way or, rather, in a pastoral and theological way. He considers a very fundamental and universal question: how can one connect with God and receive His grace? According to Tatevatsi, Christian baptism has its roots in Christ's baptism; therefore, the key enquiry is possible only through the imitation of Christ's baptism. It is important to note that, for Tatevatsi, the significance of Christ's baptism lies in its significance for salvation. Simply put, the baptismal message expresses the ultimate meaning of God's plan of salvation, so without baptism there is no salvation.

After examining Grigor Tatevatsi's scholarly dissection of the sacrament of Baptism, we may conclude that his theology is demonstrably based on that of the Armenian Church. He acknowledges the sacrament of baptism as an illumination, a regeneration, entrance into the Church and body of Christ, the participation of a person in the new creation, a recovery of the image of God. According to Tatevatsi, one must realize that he is conceived from the corrupted seed of Adam, but in Christ will be born again.

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<sup>593</sup> See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 74.

Tatevatsi is very much worried about children, and as a pedagogue was sure that children have to be baptised from the young age, and that parents should indoctrinate them in their faith. Tatevatsi does not dismiss baptism from its central role in family and societal life and make it something merely personal.

In his discussion of the sacrament of baptism, Tatevatsi highlights several questions. He wants his students to realise that everyone is punished for his sins, and no matter what society dictates, or what others do, each person is responsible for himself. From his whole text, it is clear that Tatevatsi does not reject his own church's tradition. Moreover, Tatevatsi was clearly inspired by *The Teaching of St Gregory*. The Trinitarian event in the Jordan was very important to Tatevatsi; the baptism of Jesus as 'the divine image of salvation' has to be imitated. Tatevatsi refers to the difference between Western, Eastern and Armenian churches, and provides his theology on the sacrament of baptism within that broad context.

In sum, Tatevatsi, even in his short discussion of the theology of the sacrament of baptism, affirms that there is no life, no salvation without baptism, as there is no future without the birth of new life. Indeed, Tatevatsi encourages the education of his students to facilitate their growth in the right faith, not under the influence of Western or Eastern theology, but within an Armenian ethos.

## Chapter Four: Sacrament of the Seal

Archbishop Ashjian, in his commentary on his translation of Grigor Tatevatsi's sacrament of the seal,<sup>594</sup> discerns few similarities between the teaching of Grigor Tatevatsi and Thomas Aquinas.<sup>595</sup> As Ashjian indicates regarding Tatevatsi's explanation of the seal,

Tatevaci says that confirmation 'consists of the anointing of the brow, the heart and of the backbone'. The anointing of the five senses being for extreme unction, while the anointing of the 'other parts' is symbolic of what other Christians have before baptism ... Our author [Tatevatsi] sees in the confirmation three sets of anointings: first, confirmation proper: brow, heart, backbone; second, extreme unction: the five senses; and third, the practice of the other churches.<sup>596</sup>

Ashjian largely concentrates on how Tatevatsi explains unction, and asserts that Tatevatsi discovers in the sacrament of the seal other hidden anointings, and even other sacraments.

It seems that there is confusion about the parts of the body to be anointed, something which leads Grigor and still many others to see different hidden anointings and sacraments in it. Several theologians,

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594 For Ashjian's translation of Grigor Tatvatsi's treatise on the sacrament of confirmation and for his discussion and comments on confirmation, see Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 77-82 and 59-60.

595 *Ibid.*, 78.

596 *Ibid.*, 80.

following Grigor, see in confirmation either the extreme unction, or the pre-baptismal unction or both together.<sup>597</sup>

Finally, Ashjian claims that Tatevatsi in his understanding of the sacrament of the seal deforms the actual practice of the Armenian Church. According to our author, Tatevatsi wishes to stress that extreme unction actually is present in the practice of the Armenian Church, and locates it in the sacrament of the seal.

Grigor distorts the traditional fact, and in order to show that the Armenians have the sacrament of extreme unction, he finds this in the confirmation. He is aided in this attempt by the fact that the Latins only anoint the forehead. This permits Grigor to argue that the anointing of the other parts of the body are for extreme unction.<sup>598</sup>

These observations by Archbishop Ashjian present some significant issues for investigation. In order to understand the structure, essence and logic of the material, further studies on this topic must be undertaken. Therefore, we will closely explore Grigor Tatevatsi's treatment of the sacrament of confirmation and consider the limitations of Ashjian's statements, in the course of which a new translation of the authentic text will be provided. As a result of our research, the sacrament of confirmation of Grigor Tatevatsi will emerge in a different light, particularly once the following important questions are addressed: What does Tatevatsi say about the sacrament of confirmation? How does Tatevatsi approach the phenomenon of anointing in the Armenian Church? Finally, what is Tatevatsi's motivation?

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<sup>597</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>598</sup> Ibid., 82.

Grigor Tatevatsi, in comparison with Aquinas, is relatively reserved regarding the sacrament of confirmation, which he treats in a mere two pages in the *Book of Questions*. However, Tatevatsi's succinct explanation is important in itself. In order to hear Tatevatsi's true voice, therefore, a full translation of the short text will be presented below. First, we begin our investigation with Tatevatsi on the sacrament of the seal.

#### 4.1 Sacrament of Hope

According to Tatevatsi,

Seal<sup>599</sup> is the sacrament of affirmation which is given to fortify and strengthen man. It is given in the baptism of the Holy Spirit by which the sins are forgiven. And the priest puts this [the seal] with the holy myron on the forehead of the devoted (candidate) by saying, as the foreign churches say: 'Under this form I sign you with the sign of the cross and unite you today to the faith of Christ.' And according to our

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599 Tatevatsi uses the word դրոշմ; *drosbm* means 'stamp', 'seal': this is why we will translate it as the sacrament of the seal. For translation of the word դրոշմ see Ռուբեն Ղազարեան: Գրաբարի Բառարան: Հասոր Ա: Երեւան, Երեւանի Համալսարանի Հրատարակչութիւն, 2000, 383; (Ruben Ghazaryan. *The Dictionary of Grabar*. Yerevan: Publication of State University, vol. I, 2000, 383). The 'seal' is the sign of the cross on the forehead or any other object, also the cross made with oil in the baptismal anointing or confirmation. It is also used of the rite of name-giving on the eighth day. See *Rituale Armenorum: Being the Administration of the Sacraments and the Breviary Rites of The Armenian Church Together with The Greek Rites of Baptism and Epiphany*. Edited from the oldest Mss. By F.C. Conybeare. *The East Syrian Epiphany Rites*, translated by Rev. A. J. Maclean. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1905, 534.

church it is, ‘The fragrant oil in the name of Jesus is poured on you as a seal of the heavenly gifts.’<sup>600</sup>

At the beginning, Tatevatsi answers the question of what it means to anoint with Holy Myron?<sup>601</sup>

It indicates that when Christ was baptized the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, for he is at the head and poured out on the members, his believers, according to ‘It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down upon the beard’.<sup>602</sup> Thus with water we are baptized unto Christ and are called children of God, and with oil we are united in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

And it should be known that when the forehead, and the heart and the back are anointed, that is [the sacrament of] the seal, while the five senses are anointed in the sacrament of the seal profoundly (deeply). But when other parts of the body are anointed, that is the symbol of what other Christians anoint before baptism.

And if anyone says ‘you have not [the sacrament of] the seal as the bishop of the Franks gives it’, we say we perform (do) it like the Greeks, that as the priest celebrates the eucharist and baptizes, also he

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600 See Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593: Appendix III. 1.

601 See Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593: Appendix III. 2.

602 Psalm 133: 2.

seals according to St. Dionysus. And he names the chief priest<sup>603</sup> the one who celebrates the Eucharist, and baptizes and seals, as he is the chief and elder in the performing of the sacrament. And the other priests are assistants and attendants [to avoid the misleading translation ‘servants’] in the sacrament.

Again, we say that our priests are authorized to seal as their bishop does. Thus our priests and their bishops are peers. This is said for the sake of objecting to them.<sup>604</sup> But in truth, the priest has right to perform the seven sacraments of the church, but the bishop has more [authority], for he ordains, and consecrates the church and the table.

It should be known that after the seal, they are dressed with a bright garment, [which symbolizes] the luminous behaviour, bright faith and innocence. And the red and white twisted thread symbolizes the blood and the water of Christ’s side. And the cross to which [Christ] ascended, [we carry] on our neck as a yoke. And climbing to the altar [symbolizes that] after all instructions, Christ ascended to heaven and sat at the right hand of the Father. And communion is given, as the head connected to body, for communion is the fulfilment of everything,

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603 See *The Armenian Version of the works attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite*. Edited by Robert W. Thomson. CSCO 488, *Scriptores Armeniaci* 17, Louvain: Peeters, 1987, 86. For an English translation see *The Armenian Version of the works attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite*. Translated by Robert W. Thomson. CSCO 489, *Scriptores Armeniaci* 18, Louvain: Peeters, 1987, 61.

604 Ashjian translates this as ‘This we say not in a spirit of contempt.’ Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 60.

that is, of ordination, of matrimony, of confession, of baptism, and so forth.<sup>605</sup>

The text cited above may suggest that Tatevatsi derives his information from valuable sources, and evidently Tatevatsi assumes that his reader possesses some background knowledge. Therefore, by summarizing the sacrament of the seal in a short compass, he is able to focus on particular questions, and as a result provides a short explanation of it.

As already noted, Archbishop Ashjian claims that similarities exist between Tatevatsi's views on the sacrament of confirmation and those of Aquinas. Unfortunately, Ashjian does not examine Aquinas' text on confirmation, nor does he identify their shared points on the subject. Instead, Ashjian annotates his translated text with reference to the parallel texts of Aquinas, presumably in order to underline similarities, and possibly to highlight potential sources of influence on Tatevatsi. However, for clarity's sake, let us review particular excerpts from Aquinas on confirmation, seeking to determine whether Tatevatsi and Aquinas express similar views on the sacrament of confirmation.

Thomas Aquinas addresses the sacrament of confirmation in question 72 of the third part of the *Summa Theologiae*.<sup>606</sup> He considers twelve points, which may be divided into three main parts. Firstly, article one considers whether confirmation is a

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605 See Գիրք Հարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593-594: Appendix III. 2-4.

606 See Aquinas 3a, 72. St Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologiae* LVII *Baptism and Confirmation* (3a, 66-72), edited and translated by James Justin Cunningham. London: Blackfriars, 1975, 187-227.

sacrament.<sup>607</sup> Secondly, articles two to seven examine the matter, form, character and effects of confirmation.<sup>608</sup> Thirdly, articles eight to twelve clarify aspects of the administration of the sacrament.<sup>609</sup>

The points advanced by Tatevatsi in his explanation of the sacrament of the seal will be compared with Aquinas' theology on confirmation below. Let us begin by considering the formula of the sacrament of the seal.

#### **4.2 Formula of the Seal**

Grigor Tatevatsi highlights the fact that the formula of the seal in the Armenian Church differs from that of other churches, but approximates to that in foreign churches where the formula is: 'Under this form I sign you with the sign of the cross and unite you today to the faith of Christ'. But why does Tatevatsi not argue against this distinct, Latin formula of confirmation? The reason may be that his argument against the baptismal formula is deemed sufficient for our edification. Therefore, we believe that for Tatevatsi, 'I sign, and I mix' are unacceptable in a similar way to that in which 'I baptize' is unacceptable in the formula of the sacrament of baptism, such that his objection to the Latin formula of baptism may be extended to 'I sign, and I mix' in the sacrament of the seal. In any case, it is evident that Tatevatsi acknowledges the difference between the formulas of the Armenian Church and

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607 Ibid., 3a, 72 (Cunningham, 187-91).

608 Ibid., 3a, 72 (Cunningham, 191-211).

609 Ibid., 3a, 72 (Cunningham, 211-27).

other churches; according to the Armenian Church, the formula is: ‘The fragrant oil in the name of Jesus is poured on you as a seal of the heavenly gifts.’<sup>610</sup>

Ashjian in his translation of the first formula leaves out the word ‘today’,<sup>611</sup> and he neglects to translate ‘on you’<sup>612</sup> in the Armenian formula. Although this does not seem to be a deliberate omission, the absence of ‘on you’ raises a dilemma. It must be emphasized that ‘on you’ was a significant issue for Tatevatsi, as was ‘be baptized’ in the formula of baptism. Granted, in both formulas – of baptism and the seal – Tatevatsi advocates that the candidate is the most important figure: both rites are administered to him and for him, and there is no need for the formula to specify by whom. Earlier we saw that Tatevatsi claims that the formula of the sacrament of the seal in other churches is: ‘Under this form I sign you with the sign of the cross and unite you today to the faith of Christ’. However, Aquinas presents the form that was in use in the West from the twelfth century,<sup>613</sup> and does not include the word ‘today’ in the formula. One may therefore inquire into the derivation of the word ‘today’. It is possible that Tatevatsi had some evidence to hand concerning the word or it may be that ‘today’ appears in Tatevatsi’s process of explanation of the formula. Perhaps Tatevatsi wished to stress the time period between baptism and confirmation, or to acknowledge that confirmation does not always follow baptism in Latin tradition. These are assumptions, however, on which we will not speculate further.

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610 See Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593: Appendix III. 1.

611 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 59.

612 Ibid.

613 See Cunningham’s Appendix 5, 245, in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*. LVII *Baptism and Confirmation* (3a, 66-72).

For Aquinas, the form of confirmation is: ‘I sign with the sign of the cross, I confirm you with the chrism of salvation in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen’. This is appropriate, given that ‘the species of a natural thing comes from its form, so the form of a sacrament ought to contain all the specific characteristics of the sacrament.’<sup>614</sup> Aquinas’s explanation of the formula consists of three points, which must be taken into consideration.<sup>615</sup> First, it is the Holy Trinity which gives the fullness of spiritual strength, as manifested in the words *in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*.<sup>616</sup> Secondly, through the sign of the visible matter, which is the chrism, this spiritual strength is provided to man for his salvation, and *I confirm you with the chrism of salvation* registers this.<sup>617</sup> Thirdly, there is made the sign of the cross for spiritual battle, and this is expressed in *I sign you with the sign of the cross*.<sup>618</sup> According to Aquinas, both the matter and the effect of salvation must be represented in the form of confirmation.<sup>619</sup>

It is important to remember that originally baptism and the seal of the Holy Spirit were administered together. In the West these practices became distinct from one another, and infant confirmation gave rise to many concerns. Furthermore, as Aquinas states, the custom of celebrating baptism and confirmation together is not

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614 See Aquinas, 3a. 72.4 (Cunningham, 201).

615 Ibid., 3a. 72.4 (Cunningham, 201-3).

616 Ibid., 3a. 72.4 (Cunningham, 201)..

617 Ibid.

618 Ibid., 3a. 72.4 (Cunningham, 201-3).

619 Ibid., 3a. 72.4 (Cunningham, 203).

practical because bishops are not always present when priests are baptizing.<sup>620</sup> In Catholic tradition, the liturgy of confirmation begins with the renewal of baptismal promises and the profession of faith, and it is not provided to young children. For Aquinas, the sacrament of confirmation coincides with the recipient's maturity: 'in confirmation a man receives maturity in the life of the spirit.'<sup>621</sup> Therefore, 'confirmation is a special sacrament.'<sup>622</sup>

What age does Aquinas understand to mark spiritual maturity? To answer this question, it is necessary to look more closely at Aquinas' formulation of this issue:

The soul which is the subject of this spiritual birth and spiritual coming of age, is immortal: it is capable of spiritual birth in old age and maturity during the years of youth and childhood because the vicissitudes of bodily age do not affect the soul. Therefore, confirmation should be given to all.<sup>623</sup>

This interesting statement illustrates Aquinas' position that all can receive the sacrament of confirmation regardless of physical age, which is not coincident with spiritual adulthood. Therefore, Aquinas does not specify a suitable age for confirmation.

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620 Ibid., 3a. 72.12 (Cunningham, 227).

621 Ibid., 3a. 72.1 (Cunningham, 189).

622 Ibid.

623 Ibid., 3a. 72.8 (Cunningham, 213).

Another point here merits attention: Aquinas insists that ‘all sacraments are necessary in some way for salvation, but certain of them are indispensable, while others contribute to the perfecting of salvation.’<sup>624</sup> But we might wonder how it can be that, if all sacraments are requisite for salvation, some are simply necessary for salvation, and others are important for its perfection? It is interesting that Aquinas, firstly, states that confirmation is necessary for salvation, but ‘salvation is possible without it, provided it is not omitted out of contempt for the sacrament’.<sup>625</sup> For Aquinas, salvation is possible without the sacrament of confirmation, but the sacrament of confirmation is helpful because it ‘contributes to the perfecting of salvation’.<sup>626</sup>

In order to underline Aquinas’s position once more, it is salutary to turn to article eleven, in which he elucidates more deeply his thoughts concerning the effect of the sacrament of confirmation.<sup>627</sup> Aquinas states that, for the purpose of eliminating evil, the sacrament of baptism is more effective than the sacrament of confirmation, but the latter is more effective with regard to spiritual growth.<sup>628</sup> Here again, this may be understood in light of the fact that for Aquinas the sacrament of confirmation is a complement to the sacrament of baptism.

It is difficult to find proof texts for the formula of the sacrament of the seal in the Scriptures, but the ritual of seal requires the form, and both theologians seek a

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624 Ibid., 3a. 72.,1 (Cunningham, 191).

625 Ibid.

626 Ibid.

627 Ibid., 3a. 72.11 (Cunningham, 223-26).

628 Ibid., 3a. 72.11 (Cunningham, 225).

rational one for their tradition. If, for Aquinas, it is important to express this by the three parts of the verbal formula, for Tatevatsi, there is only one crucial point, which is to emphasize the sealed person. Furthermore, if for Aquinas the sacrament of confirmation is complementary to the sacrament of baptism,<sup>629</sup> for Tatevatsi the sacrament of the seal is placed between the sacraments of baptism and of the Eucharist, and it has a central position in the process of Christian initiation.<sup>630</sup>

According to Aquinas, the expression of the personal pronoun in the form of confirmation is not truly necessary<sup>631</sup> inasmuch as the higher minister does the confirmation, ‘who hold[s] sovereign power in the Church’.<sup>632</sup> As the confirmation is a final perfection of baptism,<sup>633</sup> it is performed by the more dignified minister. Aquinas points out that ‘the sacrament of confirmation is like the final perfection of the sacrament of baptism in such a way that by baptism a man is built up into a spiritual house ... but through the sacrament of confirmation, the house that was built is dedicated as a temple of the Holy Spirit ... thus the conferral of this sacrament is reserved to bishops who hold sovereign power in the Church.’<sup>634</sup> Because the finishing touches are reserved for those of highest office, the minister for the sacrament of confirmation is a bishop.<sup>635</sup>

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629 Ibid., 3a. 65.4. St Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologiae* LVI *The Sacraments* (3a. 60-5), edited and translated by David Bourke. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, 157.

630 See Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594.

631 See Aquinas, 3a. 72.4 (Cunningham, 203).

632 Ibid., 3a. 72.11 (Cunningham, 223).

633 Ibid., 3a. 72.11 (Cunningham, 223-25).

634 Ibid., 3a. 72.11 (Cunningham, 223).

635 Ibid., 3a. 72.11 (Cunningham, 223-25).

According to Tatevatsi, in the Armenian Church priests are authorized to seal. Tatevatsi emphasizes that the sacrament of the seal is to be given after baptism by the priest and not by the bishop, and says,

And if anyone says ‘you have not [the sacrament of] the seal as the bishop of the Franks gives it’, we say we perform (do) it like the Greeks, that as the priest celebrates the eucharist and baptizes, also he seals according to St. Dionysus. And he names the chief priest the one who celebrates the Eucharist, and baptizes and seals, as he is the chief and elder in the performing of the sacrament.<sup>636</sup>

On the basis of this statement, it is evident that this question is very important for Tatevatsi. He underlines the claim that ‘our priests and their bishops are peers’. It is said for the sake to object to them [Latins].’ Tatevatsi draws attention to the fact that in the Armenian Church the priest possesses authority to perform the seven sacraments of the Church, but the bishop has more authority: to ordain and consecrate the church and the table. In the *Canons of St. Sahak*,<sup>637</sup> we encounter the same notion: that only priests shall perform baptism.

But why does Tatevatsi affirm the authority of the Greek Church and St Dionysius by observing that Armenians celebrate the sacrament as do the Greeks? Why does he not simply cite the Armenian father who already established this? In response, we first suggest that this statement sounds like a plea for proper respect, affirming that

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636 See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594).

637 See Fred C. Conybeare. ‘The Armenian Canons of St. Sahak Catholicos of Armenia (390-439 A.D.)’. *The American Journal of Theology*, 2.4 (Oct., 1898): 828-48.

the priest in the Armenian Church has the power to celebrate all sacraments, as does his counterpart in the Greek Church. Secondly, we may assume that Tatevatsi is conscious that St Dionysius exerted considerable influence upon the Latin Church, particularly upon the metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas. Certainly, Aquinas followed Aristotle, and adopted his method of pursuing metaphysical truth, but St Dionysius impacted Aquinas as well, as his writings confirm. Thirdly, St Dionysius was very popular in the Armenian Church, as attested by the significant preservation of his texts in manuscript collections.<sup>638</sup> In Medieval Armenia the Dionysian Corpus greatly influenced Armenian theology and literature. The corpus was a part of the curriculum at the Gladzor monastic school in the province Syunik, as scholars have acknowledged, and St Dionysius was a favourite Greek author.<sup>639</sup> Tatevatsi, we believe, was trying to promote his position by an authority respected by other churches too.

Most importantly, Tatevatsi believes that Armenian priests have full rights to be recognized as fit ministers of the sacraments. If in the Catholic Church a bishop is obliged to perform the sacrament of confirmation, in the Armenian Church this is a duty of a priest. The question is one of structure: in each of these churches, each level of hierarchy has its own statutory order and responsibilities.

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638 Beginning in the seventh century, fragments of the Dionysian corpus appeared in the *Seal of Faith* in Armenian, and already in the eighth century there was a complete translation of the texts by Stepanos of Syunik with the help of Davit Hiupatos. See Thomson, *The Armenian Version of the Works attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite*. and Sergio La Porta. *The Armenian Scholia on Dionysius The Areopagite. Studies on their Literary and Philological Tradition*. CSCO 625, Subsidia 122, Louvain: Peeters, 2008.

639 See Matthews-Sanjian, 1991, 26.

As we saw in the case of the post-baptismal rite, confirmation was reserved for the bishop, and this explains why in the West the sacrament of the seal was separated from baptism: the bishop was unable to be present for the baptismal rite. In contrast, in the Armenian Church the legitimate minister for all three sacraments of initiation is the priest, and Tatevatsi essentially maintains the unity of the three sacraments of initiation, but refers to each of them separately.

In order to understand why priests are ministers of the sacrament of confirmation, the geo-political features of Armenia must be recognized; these played a significant role in the formation of the liturgical rites of the Armenian Apostolic Church. For example, unlike in the Catholic Church, bishops were not granted the right of blessing the oil: instead it is a duty of the Catholicos of all Armenians. This practice developed, firstly, because of political circumstances, and secondly, because of theological concerns. The history of the blessing of oil by the Catholicos is momentous.<sup>640</sup>

### **4.3 Holy Myron**

A number of testimonies about the fragrant liquid, aromatic oil or as it is known, myron appear in the Old<sup>641</sup> and New Testaments.<sup>642</sup> As we know, the Holy Myron (the oil) is the symbol of the Holy Spirit descending on Christ at his baptism (Matt.3: 16, Mark 1: 10, Luke 3: 22). But how does it convey the Holy Spirit which is already

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640 See Vardan Devrikyan. *Holy Myron*. Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, 2008, 42-49.

641 In the Old Testament see Ps. 23: 5; I Samuel 14: 2; Gen. 28: 18-19; Ex. 30: 23-25; Ex. 30: 26-29; Ex. 30: 30-31; I Sam. 10: 1; I Sam. 16: 1; I Sam. 16: 13; I Kings 19: 16.

642 In the New Testament see Mark 14: 3; John 12: 3; Luke 2: 11; Acts 2: 36; Luke 4: 18 (Isaiah 61: 1); I John 2: 27; I John 2: 20; II Cor. 1: 21, 22.

given in baptism? Some New Testament passages suggest that a kind of spiritual character is bestowed as an offering upon the baptized.<sup>643</sup> According to Dionysius the Areopagite, the myron is the symbol of the divine,<sup>644</sup> and Armenian Church history shows that myron was always treated as ‘divine oil’. The symbol of the Holy Spirit is the oil, or Holy Myron.<sup>645</sup> All items connected with Christian worship achieve their holy character only after being anointed with Holy Myron.<sup>646</sup>

The Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts holds a unique medieval Armenian manuscript<sup>647</sup> which presents an interesting story relating how the oil which was prepared by Moses reached Jesus, after which the apostle Thaddeus brought it to Armenia, eventually to be found by St Gregory Lusavorich.<sup>648</sup> According to other ancient sources of the Armenian Church this particular oil was mixed with the first Armenian Myron blessed by Lusavorich, which was used for the first time in the waters of Aratzani during the Conversion of Armenia.<sup>649</sup> In the *History of the Armenians*, it is stated that there was a pre-baptismal anointing during this time. King Trdat and three other kings were first baptized, and here Gregory signed them with Myron.

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643 See Acts 8: 14-19; Rom. 7: 6; Gal.5: 16

644 See *The Armenian Version of the works attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite*. Translated by Robert W. Thomson, 61.

645 For comprehensive information about the symbol, substance, consecration and history of Holy Myron in Armenian Apostolic Church tradition see Սրբալույս Մյուռնոն, Խմբագիր Ֆլորա Կաբաղյան, Մայր Աթոռ Սուրբ Էջմիածին, 2001; (*Holy Myron*, ed. by Flora Kabaghyan, The Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, 2001); Vardan Devrikyan, 2008.

646 For the canons and rites performed with the Holy Myron in Armenian Church tradition, see Devrikyan, 65-71.

647 See Matenadaran, Yerevan, MS 2547, 168b-172b.

648 The whole story in English is presented in Devrikyan, 2008, 19-23.

649 Ibid., 20-23.

As a liturgical text, the Blessing of Holy Myron is exceptionally patriarchal. The Myron should be consecrated by the Catholicos only, and the ceremony of blessing is performed on Holy Thursday.<sup>650</sup> The Council of Dvin of 719, which was called by Armenian Catholicos St Hovhannes III Odznetsi (known as Odzun), adopted thirty-two canons, which are collected in the *Armenian Canon Book*.<sup>651</sup> According to one of the canons, the Catholicos should bless the Myron. Several decades later, in the canons of Sion I Catholicos (767-775), adopted by the council of Partav, it was also declared that the bishop ‘should not dare bless the Myron or add to it on their behalf and then give it to the priests, but rather take it from the Catholicosate’.<sup>652</sup> Indeed, several Armenian theologians and writers reflect on the mystery of the Holy Myron in historical and theological texts. Particularly noteworthy is the tenth-century saint Grigor Narekatsi,<sup>653</sup> who devoted an entire chapter to Holy Myron in his masterpiece, the *Book of Lamentations*.<sup>654</sup> According to Narekatsi, Myron is priceless treasure and irreplaceable wealth.<sup>655</sup>

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650 See the *Armenian Book of Canons* (edited by Vazgen Hakobyan (Yerevan, 1964)), vol I, 519.

651 The canons of the church contained in Hakobyan comprise three parts. The first is the codex formed by John of Odzun in 729, which grouped different classes of legislation, such as apostolic, postapostolic and conciliar and presented the decretals of Armenian and Greek Fathers. The second part comes from the eighth to twelfth centuries; it consists of decretals of Church Fathers and of later conciliar canons. The third part examines matters of civil law and was formed in twelfth century.

652 See *Armenian Book of Canons*, vol.2, 7. For English text see Devrikyan, 44.

653 Grigor Narekatsi or St Gregory of Narek (951-1003), mystical theologian and poet, author of the *Book of Lamentations*, which might be considered as the second most important book for Armenians after the Holy Bible. For a short introduction see Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, volume II, *From the Sixth To the Eighteenth Century*, 274-279.

654 The number of the chapter is ninety-three. For an English translation see Grigor Narekatsi: *Speaking with God from the Depths of the Heart: The Armenian Prayer Book of St. Gregory of Narek [Book of Lamentation]*. English translation and introduction by Thomas J. Samuelian. Yerevan: Vem Press, 2002, 433-71.

655 See *ibid.*, 433.

Comparing the sacraments of baptism and seal, Narekatsi writes that as we believe that we ourselves receive sanctity by washing in the font, similarly do we believe that in being anointed by the Holy oil, without any hesitation, we receive the power of the Holy Spirit in full. In Narekatsi's words:

Now, just as the day is incomplete without night, so the household is incomplete without the staple oil.

For as ordinary, unconsecrated oil illumines the sight of the physical eyes, so the oil sanctified and chosen by the mystery of your breath of grace gives lustre to our invisible souls in a glorious, miraculous way uniting us with you, Lord who cannot be seen.

For as we believe, that by the washing of the body in the glow of holy baptismal font our souls are cleansed, so when anointed with chrism, that oil of hope, we believe, without the least doubt, that we receive through it the Holy Spirit.

And since by your blessed commandment, Lord, you arranged in advance the pardoning of those afflicted with sin, and for those who do not believe in this pardon, you performed before their eyes the miracle of healing as evidence for doubters.

Similarly, this oil of salvation, sanctified with light, is poured on us to anoint our outer temple, and enters us in secret and unseen, whereby the inner man is born again.<sup>656</sup>

The eleventh-century Armenian Church scholar Anania Sanahnetsi, examining the myron in his polemical treatise *Against Dyophysites*, states that the power of the Holy Myron derives from the Holy Spirit.<sup>657</sup> From the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, the subject of Holy Myron and anointing provoked much debate.

Polemic from the Byzantine and Assyrian churches centred upon the fact that Armenian Church leaders were forced to use oils other than olive oil because of a lack of olive trees in Armenia. Sanahnetsi and later Nerses Shnorhali<sup>658</sup> objected to this argument, explaining that olive trees do not grow in Armenia and that, when the patriarch blesses the oil, the Holy Spirit descends and bestows upon it Divine Grace, which is the essential element. Sanahnetsi invokes the example of baptism, which is administered not only in the River Jordan but also in other waters; similarly, he argues, the power does not come from the olive but from the Holy Spirit. In addition, Sanahnetsi contends that the simpler the oil, the more pronounced will be the power in it, offering as an analogy the fact that Christ preached to uneducated apostles rather than the scholars of the time.

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656 Ibid., 436.

657 See Սրբալույս Մյուռոն, Խմբագիր Կաթաղյան (*Holy Myron*, ed. by Kabaghyan), 60.

658 See Սրբալույս Մյուռոն, Խմբագիր Կաթաղյան (*Holy Myron*, ed. by Kabaghyan).

Similarly, Shnorhali, in one of his epistles, states that the reason for deriving myron from the oil of the sesame plant is that cold weather prevents olives from growing in Armenia, but there is no spiritual danger in this. Blessing and prayer combine Divine Grace with the substance of oil; thus no advantage or disadvantage lies in the oil's derivation either from a tree or a plant.<sup>659</sup>

Again, St Nerses of Lambron<sup>660</sup> comments on the Holy Myron:

It [the Holy Myron] does not obtain its sweet fragrance from matter, but it is by the Spirit, through priestly prayers that it is filled with the good spiritual scent. Therefore, the apostle is justified by these words, 'In Christ Jesus, nothing matters save faith which operates by charity.' For it is love that causes the spirit to descend into the imperfect matter; the love of God, of which prayer is the fruit and it is faith which lays the foundation. God, spiritual nature, listens to the prayers of the spiritual men and accepts also its benediction.<sup>661</sup>

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659 See Կիրակոս Գանձակեցի, Հայոց Պատմություն, թարգմանությունը, առաջաբանը և ծանոթագրությունները Վարազ Առաքելյանի, Երեվան, Սովետական Գրող, 1982 (Kirakos Gandzaketsi. *History of Armenia*. Translation, introduction and notes by Varag Arakelyan. Yerevan, 1982), 94-113.

660 Nerses of Lambron, or Nerses Lambronatsi (1153-1198), a son of Herumite prince Oshin II, was an outstanding figure in Armenian literature. He was an orator, politician, theologian, musician and translator. He translated the *Rule of St. Benedict*, the *Dialogues of Pope Gregory the Great* (from the Greek version) and the Book of Revelation (in the fifth century when the Bible was translated into Armenian the Book of Revelation was considered secret and not translated). Lambronatsi is recognized as a champion of Church unity. For his life and work see *St Nerses of Lambron, Champion of the Church Universal: His Synodal Discourse*. Introduction, English Translation, Annotations by Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian. New York: The Armenian Prelacy, 1993, 3-50. For a short introduction see Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, volume II, *From the Sixth To the Eighteenth Century*, 458-61.

661 Ashjian, *St Nerses of Lambron, Champion of the Church Universal*, 91.

As we see, St Nerses of Lambron underscores the fact that without faith, prayer and love, myron would not signify the grace of the Holy Spirit.

According to Tatevatsi, the Holy Myron denotes that when Christ was baptized the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, and with water we are baptized unto Christ and are called children<sup>662</sup> of God, and with oil we are united in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. For Tatevatsi, the sacrament of the seal is ‘the baptism of the Holy Spirit’.

It may be added that in later periods the myron became a symbol of the whole Armenian nation, as a Spirit which connects all Armenians as a Christian Nation.<sup>663</sup>

Thomas Aquinas explains why chrism is suitable matter for the sacrament of confirmation.<sup>664</sup> According to Aquinas, ‘the oil signifies the grace of the Holy Spirit’, and it is, therefore, appropriate to anoint with oil.<sup>665</sup> Because this sacrament bestows

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662 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 59. Ashjian translated ‘sons of the God’, but we believe that Tatevatsi means the children of God, as he uses the word որդիք, which is the plural of որդի which has the meaning of զաւակ, and զաւակ means a child.

663 There is a popular saying among Armenians: ‘Let the green myron of the Armenian be firm on your forehead’. In Armenian tradition after you are sealed with Holy Myron, you are not to wash those parts for three days and only on the third day in the presence of the god-father can you wash the Holy Myron, tis is called *Merohan*, which means the first washing of the baptized after baptism. The water in which the baptized was washed is called *Meronjur*, and as it touches the parts of body with Myron, the water gets some power, and it cannot be poured anyway; it may be poured into the *tonir* (fireplace), which is also a symbol of consistency in the family. Myron is composed mostly of olive oil and the oils of the flowers of balsam and the essence of various sweet flowers.

664 See Aquinas, 3a. 72.,2 (Cunningham, 191-95).

665 Ibid., 3a. 72.2 (Cunningham, 193).

the plenitude of the Holy Spirit, it helps a person to grow spiritually through the years of maturity.<sup>666</sup>

According to Tatevatsi, by the seal the new-born Christian is endowed with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit which are necessary in life for spiritual growth. And, in the growing process, a new-born Christian, who receives all necessary gifts from the Holy Spirit, acquires skills, strength and knowledge which are needed to negotiate spiritual conflicts between good and evil. For Tatevatsi, ‘the Seal is the sacrament of hope, because by hoping in the power of the Holy Spirit we can resist the enemy.’<sup>667</sup>

In Aquinas we read, ‘the Holy Spirit is given in this sacrament as a source of strength in the battle of the spirit.’<sup>668</sup> As Miner points out, ‘*robur spiritualis pugnae*’ – spiritual strength for battle – plays a significant role.<sup>669</sup> At the beginning of 3a. 72.7, Aquinas repeats once more that the sacrament of confirmation ‘gives the Holy Spirit to the baptized for their strengthening just as he was given to the apostles on the day of Pentecost, and as he was given to the baptized through the imposition of hands by the apostles’.<sup>670</sup> According to Aquinas, ‘the sending or giving of the Holy Spirit is

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666 Ibid.

667 «Դրոշմն է խորհուրդ յուսոյ զի յուսալով ի զօրով սբ հգյն կարողանամք ըղեն թշնամոյս»: See Գիրք Ջարգմանց (*Book of Questions*), 587).

668 See Aquinas, 3a. 72.4 (Cunningham, 201).

669 See Robert C. Miner, ‘Aquinas on the Sacrament of Confirmation’, in *Rediscover Aquinas and the Sacraments: Studies in Sacramental Theology*. Edited by Matthew Levering and Michael Dauphinais. Chicago: Hellenbrand Books, 2009, 33-38.

670 Aquinas, 3a. 72.7 (Cunningham, 211).

always accompanied by sanctifying grace. Thus it is manifest that sanctifying grace is conferred in this sacrament.’<sup>671</sup>

We encounter this same idea in Tatevatsi, but several supplementary sources from the Armenian Fathers reveal that Tatevatsi here drew on a considerable tradition; to conclude that Tatevatsi borrows this idea from Aquinas is not warranted in light of its currency in Armenian writing. Moreover, it is important to note that at the heart of the seal is a mystery of the day of Pentecost, which appears in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles and empowered them to go out and act. Although the same inspired strength is remarked upon by Aquinas and Tatevatsi, the assumption that Tatevatsi follows Aquinas here is to deny Tatevatsi the recollection of the apostolic precedent.

#### **4.4 Symbols of the Sacrament of the Seal**

At the end of his testimony, Tatevatsi addresses certain liturgical acts which should accompany the sacrament of confirmation. According to Tatevatsi, after confirmation, the confirmed is clothed with bright garments, which symbolize luminous behaviour, bright faith and innocence.<sup>672</sup> Specifically, the individual after confirmation has to wear a պայծառ garment, which conveys the symbolic appearance of a new-born Christian. Ashjian in translation used the word ‘bright’ for պայծառ, but in his short commentary on this sentence says that Tatevatsi means

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<sup>671</sup> Ibid.

<sup>672</sup> See Գիրք Հարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594: Appendix III. 4.

‘the white clothes’.<sup>673</sup> A discrepancy exists between these two statements. The word պայծառ means ‘bright’, ‘pure’, ‘clear’, ‘shiny’, and does not mean ‘white’. For the word ‘white’ Tatevatsi might use սպիտակ, սպիտակագոյն, ճերմակ, but not պայծառ.<sup>674</sup> There is a possibility that Ashjian used *The New Dictionary of Armenian Language*, which suggests that պայծառ means ‘(the most) white’, but it also evokes the idea of ‘bright’, ‘clear’.<sup>675</sup> If we think that Tatevatsi means ‘the white clothes’, we have to take into account the fact that he used the same word, պայծառ, with faith, as he says պայծառ հաւատս, which in that case would have to be translated ‘white faith’. Therefore, we argue that Tatevatsi means ‘bright’, ‘pure’, or even ‘fresh’ and ‘pristine’.

The ritual of the seal requires that the baptized has to wear the white and new clothing; if the sealed is a child, the godfather will get the burning candles, but if an adult he or she will receive these candles.<sup>676</sup> It may be noted that Stepanos of Syunik

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673 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 60; 78.

674 Ռուբեն Ղազարեան: Գրաբարի Բառարան: Հատոր Բ: Երեւան, Երեւանի Համալսարանի Հրատարակչութիւն, 2000, 383; Also Ռուբեն Ղազարեան: Գրաբարի Հոմանիշների Բառարան: Երեւան, Երեւանի Համալսարանի Հրատարակչութիւն, 2006, 575. (See Ruben Ghazaryan. *The Dictionary of Grabar*. Yerevan: Publication of State University, vol. 2, 2000, 383; Ruben Ghazaryan. *The Dictionary of Synonyms of Grabar*. Yerevan: Publication of State University, 2006, 575).

675 Նոր Բառգիրք Հայկազեան Լեզուի: Հայր Գաբրիէլ Աւետիքեան, Հայր Խաչատուր Սիւրմէլեան, Հայր Մկրտիչ Աւգերեան Հայր Գաբրիէլ Աւետիքեան: Տպարան ի Սրբոյն Ղազարու, Վենետիկ, 1837, 1759-1769; (*The New Dictionary of Armenian Language*, 1837, Venice: Saint Lazar, 1837, 1759-1760).

676 See Mashtots [*Book of Rituals*], 68.

mentions the symbols of the white garment and cross: ‘The white cloth of the baptized persons is a symbol of our forefather's garment.’<sup>677</sup>

If Tatevatsi is indeed speaking of bright clothes, we may conclude that he was one of the few theologians from the Armenian Church who does not specify a white cloth,<sup>678</sup> but rather indicates that after confirmation, ‘the confirmed is clothed with bright clothing’, which, as he explains, symbolizes illuminated behaviour, bright faith and innocence.<sup>679</sup>

According to Aquinas, ‘The white robe is given to the newly baptized not because he ought not to use other clothing, but as a sign of the glorious resurrection to which men are born through baptism, and to designate as well that purity of life which he ought to observe after baptism: *We should walk in newness of life* [Romans 6: 4]’. As Cunningham says, ‘His explanation of the symbolism of the white robe given to the newly baptized is less complex than that of many of the early Fathers’.<sup>680</sup> Aquinas simply acknowledges that the white colour signifies the resurrection and the purity of the new Christian life.

Ashjian translates the continuation of Tatevatsi’s explanation as, ‘The cross symbolizes the yoke of the neck; the climbing to the altar symbolizes the fact that after all the unlawfulness Christ rose to the heavens and sat at the right side of God

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677 Խաչատրյան Պողոս և Զյոսեյան, Հակոբ: Ընտրանի Հայ Եկեղեցական Մատենագրության, Ս. Էջմիածին, 2003 (Poghos Khachatryan, Hakob Qyoseyan. *The Selection of Armenian Church Literature*. Holy Etchmiadzin, 2003, 252.

678 Mkhitar Susnetsi also mentions the shining garment.

679 See Գիրք Հարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594: Appendix III. 4.

680 See Aquinas, 3a. 66.10, with Cunningham, 47 and 241.

the Father.<sup>681</sup> The first part of the sentence, ‘the yoke of the neck’, is an interesting translation which in all likelihood does not fully represent Tatevatsi’s expression. Tatevatsi does not directly mention the sign of the cross during the anointing, but we assume that the reason he does not refer to it is that the practice was simply presumed.

In the last part of his discussion of the sacrament of the seal, Tatevatsi insists that the confirmed must have a cross on his neck. ‘And the cross to which [Christ] ascended, [we carry] on our neck as a yoke.’<sup>682</sup> It is interesting that in the eighth century Syunetsi, citing Romans 8: 17, states that the cross on the neck symbolizes joining Christ (sharing in his sufferings) and reigning with Him (share in His glory).<sup>683</sup> Tatevatsi’s short statement about a cross<sup>684</sup> on a neck is of great value in helping us to understand that, for him, the sealing with the cross is an important step in the theology of the sacrament of the seal. In fact, Tatevatsi mentions a cross on a neck in what is virtually the conclusion of his discussion of the sacrament of the seal -- understandable inasmuch as it completes the ritual, but also because of its symbolic value.

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681 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594: Appendix III. 4.

682 «Եւ խաչն զոր եբարծ ի լուծ պարսւնցիս» (ibid.). Ashjian translates, ‘The cross symbolizes the yoke of the neck’ (Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 60). Unfortunately he omits the word եբարց; therefore, Tatevatsi’s idea that the symbolism of carrying the cross means Christ’s ascending of the cross, is missed in Ashjian’s translation.

683 Ընտրանի հայ եկեղեցական մատենագրության, 252.

684 Armenians make the sign of the Cross by joining the first three fingers of the right hand and touching the palm with the other two fingers. They place the right hand, as described above, first on the forehead saying, ‘In the name of the Father’, then a little below the chest, saying, ‘and the Son’, then on the left side of the chest, saying, ‘and the Holy, then on the right side of the chest saying, ‘Spirit’, and ending with the palm in the centre of the chest, saying, ‘Amen’.

The cross brings together many questions that were addressed by Tatevatsi in his consideration of the sacraments of baptism and the seal. The cross on the neck of a confirmed individual signifies the renunciation of Satan, conversion to Christ, cleansing from original sin, recognition among Christians and protection from evil and is a pledge of the Holy Spirit, a promise of heavenly gifts and of the beginning of a new life in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. For Tatevatsi, we would say, the baptized must have the cross on his neck because it symbolizes that the Saviour Jesus Christ has reconciled the faithful with God by dying on the cross, that the power of evil was crushed by Christ's cross.

But what precisely does he mean by 'And the cross to which [Christ] ascended, [we carry] on our neck as a yoke'? Tatevatsi in this short statement probably employs the image of a yoke in order to encourage the acknowledgement of the cross as the yoke of Christian tradition, which must be carried for one's entire life. Undoubtedly, for Tatevatsi, the locus of the Crucified Lord is the cross. As Conybeare observed, 'The Armenians held that when Christ "laid down his soul" for man, he deposited it inside the cross, where it has remained ever since.'<sup>685</sup> Thus it would be meaningful for Tatevatsi to envision a sign of the holy cross in the soul.

Turning to the blessing of the cross<sup>686</sup> in the canon we find that the priest makes the sign of the cross with the holy oil (Myron), first on the eye of the cross, and then on the four wings and says, 'May this cross be blessed, anointed and hallowed in the

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<sup>685</sup> See Conybeare, *Rituale Armenorum*, 52, footnote.

<sup>686</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-53.

name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever'.<sup>687</sup> This rite has deep historical roots.<sup>688</sup> From John of Odsun's time, the idea was current that the cross must be given to the priest for blessing and anointing with holy oil, because only after this does the cross become an instrument of the divine mystery and possess divine power. As John of Odsun explains:

Because in them [crosses] the Holy Spirit dwells, and through them dispenses among men acts of preservation, and the grace of the healing of the diseases both of souls and of bodies. If moreover it shall be any one's fate to die in behalf of the same at the hands of the heathen, he shall not avoid it; for to such an one is held out and assured a vast hope, and he is reckoned among the martyrs.<sup>689</sup>

#### **4.5 Anointing**

According to Tatevatsi, the priest places the Holy Myron on the brow of the candidate and says, 'A fragrant oil poured out in you in the name of Jesus, seal of heavenly gifts.'<sup>690</sup> He specifies the parts of the body that should be anointed with myron, explaining,

And it should be known that when the forehead, and the heart and the back are anointed, that is [the sacrament of] the seal, while the five senses are anointed in the sacrament of the seal profoundly (deeply).

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687 Ibid., 46.

688 For a short introduction to the history of cross see *ibid.*, 51-3.

689 Ibid., 51.

690 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593: Appendix III. 1.

But when other parts of the body are anointed, that is the symbol of what other Christians anoint before baptism.<sup>691</sup>

Ashjian translated this as: ‘It should be known that confirmation is the anointing of the brow, the heart and the backbone, the anointing of the five senses is for (extreme) unction, and the anointing of the other parts is as a symbol of what the other Christians do before baptism.’<sup>692</sup> This translation can be contested because Tatevatsi uses the word *tsatskapes*, which firstly means ‘secretly’, and it appears that Ashjian, by focusing on the word, misrepresented the idea of the whole sentence. The word *tsatskapes* is taken by Ashjian to mean ‘secretly’, and he therefore suggests that Tatevatsi evokes three stages of anointing. According to Ashjian, Tatevatsi mentions extreme unction, and moreover identifies the sacrament of extreme unction with the sacrament of confirmation.

Bishop Galstanyan in his fundamental work *The Problem of the Sacrament of Anointing of Sick in the Armenian Church*, dedicates an entire section to Tatevatsi’s consideration of the last unction.<sup>693</sup> Analysing the passage in question on the sacrament of the seal by Tatevatsi, Galstanyan advocates that it clearly opposes Makar’s and Odznetsi’s canonical instructions, which state that each sacrament has

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691 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 593: Appendix III. 2.

692 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 59-60.

693 Տես Բագրատ Գալստանյան: Օծումն Յիւանդաց Խորհրդի Խնդիրը Չայ Եկեղեցում: Ս. Էջմիածին, Մայր Աթոռ Սուրբ Էջմիածնի Չրատարակոթյուն, 2010 (Bishop Bagrat Galstanyan. *The Problem of the Sacrament of Anointing of Sick in the Armenian Church*. Etchmiadzin: Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin Publishing, 2010), 80-92.

its own integrity and by no means may be mixed or united with other sacraments.<sup>694</sup> Galstanyan believes that Tatevatsi in this paragraph addresses the anointing of the sick and the baptized. The author supports his interpretation with the fact that, for Tatevatsi, ‘if any one asks if anointing is a sacrament, why then we do not have it, we say we have the sacrament of anointing, profoundly, as for baptism we said above that we perform the seal as the first and the last anointing to the baptized.’<sup>695</sup> In Galstanyan’s view, Tatevatsi does not reject the sacrament of unction. Galstanyan, like Ashjian, highlights the word *tsatskapes*, which for him proves that the sacrament of unction exists by itself. If for Ashjian, it is three stages of anointing, for Galstanyan it is two anointings.

It can be argued because the word *tsatskapes* also conveys the idea of deep down, to the depths, and can refer to something that has deep roots. If we consider this connotation, Tatevatsi’s idea develops another dimension, as we will discover later.

Ashjian, as we have seen, thinks that in the text cited above Tatevatsi distinguishes three aspects of anointing: ‘first, confirmation proper: brow, heart, backbone; second, extreme unction: the five senses; and third, the practice of the other churches.’<sup>696</sup> We agree with Ashjian that Tatevatsi’s treatment of confirmation raises questions, but we do not see those same sets of anointings in Tatevatsi’s text. But we would like to pursue the question of why Tatevatsi mentions the anointing of only three parts of the body and stresses the five senses separately.

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694 Ibid., 84.

695 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 604: Appendix V. 2.

696 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 80.

Archbishop Ashjian's claim was that

Grigor distorts the traditional fact, and in order to show that the Armenians have the sacrament of extreme unction, he finds this in the confirmation. He is aided in this attempt by the fact that the Latins only anoint the forehead. This permits Grigor to argue that the anointing of the other parts of the body are for extreme unction.<sup>697</sup>

That claim requires close attention. As Ashjian rightly points out, 'The key is in the chapter of the extreme unction.'<sup>698</sup> Here is Ashjian's short translation of Tatevatsi's explanation of last unction:

The extreme unction is a sacrament of the church, which is given to the sick in the day of agony, to the eyes, mouth, hands, the loins and the sole of the feet, with the form: 'This seal which is in the name of Christ, may it enlighten thine eyes, that thou mayest not sleep death', and for the other senses the appropriate words are used. And if you ask, since unction is a sacrament, why the Armenian Church does not practice it? We answer that we have this sacrament embodied in baptism in a hidden way. For, as we said, after baptism we perform the confirmation, i.e., the first unction, as well as the extreme unction.<sup>699</sup>

Compare our translation of the same passage:

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697 Ibid., 82.

698 Ibid., 80

699 Ibid.

Last unction is a sacrament of the church given to the sick people on the day of mortal agony (agony of death), on the eyes, on the ear, on the mouth, on the hands, on the side, on the sole of the feet, by saying: 'With this holy anointing and His mercy God forgives you, for you sinned by vision.' Likewise he says for the other human senses. This is according to foreign churches.

But according to our church it says now: 'May this seal illuminate your eyes in the name of Jesus that you shall not die.' The same he pronounces for other senses according to each.

The act of this sacrament is the forgiveness of other venial sins. And this at the time of the person's death-pangs. But if he survives from death, it will cause an immediate recovery, as James the Apostle said: 'Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord ... And if he committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.' And the prayers of the priests will alleviate feebleness (weakness).

And if anyone asks if anointing is a sacrament, so why do we not have it, we say we have the sacrament of anointing profoundly (deeply), as for baptism that we said above, that we perform the seal the first and the last anointing to the baptized. Also we have this anointing for the

foot-washing, and also on the revelation day of the Lord's baptism, and also we have this anointing for the deceased.<sup>700</sup>

Ashjian's investigation is marked by several limitations. The first is that Ashjian, in focusing his attention on Tatevatsi's comments on anointing, does not offer a thorough enough explanation to demonstrate his point. The translated passage from Tatevatsi provided by Ashjian does not illustrate Tatevatsi's full conception, and is not, therefore, in itself a convincing example. The sentences are removed from context and treated separately from the main body of the text. Moreover, the details omitted by Ashjian in his translation of this passage on last unction are significant for our understanding of Tatevatsi's central insights not only on the last unction, but also on the sacrament of the seal. Another limitation to the study is Ashjian's attempt to demonstrate that Tatevatsi embraces extreme unction by all means, contrary to the practice of the Armenian Church. Ashjian's research is generalist in complexion, evoking the first impression that the reader may form without pursuing further detail and without capturing Tatevatsi's 'voice'. Unfortunately, Archbishop Ashjian underplays the full story as told by a teacher. We do not want to exaggerate Archbishop Ashjian's misinterpretation, but it seems that Ashjian's statement is not justified. However, Ashjian is not alone in his perspective: according to Galstanyan, for Tatevatsi the anointing is not an anointing of the sick, but a sacrament of preparation for death.

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<sup>700</sup> Գիրք Հարցման (Book of Questions), 604: Appendix V. 1-3. For a translation of the whole of Grigor Tatevatsi's text on Unction see Appendix V. 1-8.

Moreover, Tatevatsi emphasizes, ‘if anyone asks if anointing is a sacrament, why then do we not have it, we say we have the sacrament of anointing profoundly, as for baptism we said above that we perform the seal and the first and the last anointing to the baptized.’<sup>701</sup>

In order to confirm our hypothesis, we have noted several supplementary sources on the practice of the rite of baptism and the seal, which provide context for understandings of the sacrament of the seal. Tatevatsi, in an intellectual way, indicates that whereas other churches practice this rite, the Armenian Church does not. A baptized individual, for Tatevatsi, is already signed, has received the Holy Spirit and is prepared for the sacrament of communion, awaiting a new life.

As this chapter has demonstrated, the parts of body specified and the formula, as mentioned by Ashjian, were not intelligible within Armenian practice. Tatevatsi himself indicates, ‘This is according to foreign churches.’<sup>702</sup> To further underscore this, it is necessary in closing to attend to Tatevatsi’s reference to anointing on the ‘side’, which was translated by Ashjian as ‘loins’.<sup>703</sup> This is a direct rejection of any kind of allusion to Armenian practice. Moreover, it must be registered that the form of extreme unction is expressed by means of prayer; indeed, in Catholic tradition, the formula of extreme unction is a prayer.

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701 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 604: Appendix V. 3.

702 ‘This is according to foreign churches’ sums up the passage. Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 604: Appendix V. 1.

703 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 604: Appendix V. 1.

‘Last unction is a sacrament of the church given to the sick people on the day of mortal agony, on the eyes, on the ear, on the mouth, on the hands, on the side, on the sole of the feet.’ Here is proof of the misplaced nature of Ashjian’s claims, for, by adding ‘This is according to foreign churches’, Tatevatsi clearly indicates that he is referring to other usages. Moreover, Tatevatsi explains that ‘according to our church it says now: “May this seal illuminate your eyes in the name of Jesus that you shall not die.” The same he pronounces for other senses according to each.’<sup>704</sup> Here Tatevatsi means the sacrament of the seal, not extreme unction. In presenting the sacrament of last unction, Tatevatsi turns back to his own statement about the sacrament of the seal. Here in the explanation of the last unction, he fulfils it by asserting that extreme unction is not necessary because, in the Armenian Church, we are sealed in the sacrament of the seal.

To understand the practice of sacraments in the Armenian Apostolic Church, we have throughout our discussion appealed to various sources.<sup>705</sup> In order to highlight our conclusions, let us briefly compare what we have seen in Tatevatsi with the baptismal rite as presented by Conybeare. Here we read that, ‘First on the forehead he says, “A fragrant oil poured out in the name of Christ, the seal of heavenly gifts”. Next the eyes, saying: “This seal which is in the name of Christ, may it enlighten

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704 Ibid.

705 For the official ritual of the Armenian Church -- the actual practice of anointing in confirmation -- see Դերենիկ Եպիսկոպոս: Հայաստանեայց Առաքելական Սուրբ Եկեղեցւոյ Խորհուրդները: Տպարան Կ. Տօնկեան, Պէյրուս, 1957 (Bishop Derenik. *The Sacraments of the Holy Armenian Apostolic Church*. Beirut: K. Tonikyan, 1957), 11- 24. It is an excellent source as Bishop Derenik, on the basis of Mashtots which were published in 1807, 1876, 1905 and 1933, represents how the sacraments are performed currently in the Armenian Apostolic Church.

thine eyes, that thou mayest not ever sleep in death”” and so for other parts of the body.<sup>706</sup>

Tatevatsi did not continue beyond the eyes because for him this was primitive and obvious.<sup>707</sup>

Tatevatsi by no means advocates that there is a need for the sacrament of extreme unction. Instead, he hastens to remind, teach and propound an alternative, for he as a teacher wished his students to understand that confession is more important. Tatevatsi stresses, ‘if anyone asks if anointing is a sacrament, why then do we not have it, we say we have the sacrament of anointing, profoundly, as for baptism we said above that we perform the seal as the first and the last anointing to the baptized.’<sup>708</sup>

If we follow Ashjian’s logic, what are we to make of the continuation?

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706 The text continues, ‘3. The ears: May the anointing of holiness be for thee unto hearing of the divine commandments. 4. The nostrils: May this seal of Christ be to thee for a sweet smell from life to life. 5. The mouth, saying: May this seal be to thee a watch set before thy mouth and the door to keep thy lips. 6. The palms of the hands, saying: May this seal of Christ be for thee a means of doing good, of virtuous actions and living. 7. The heart: May this seal of divine holiness establish in thee a holy heart, and renew an upright spirit within thine interior. 8. The backbone: May this seal which is in the name of Christ be for thee a shield and buckler, whereby thou mayst be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. 9. And the feet: May this divine seal guide thy steps aright unto life immortal’ (Conybeare, *Rituale Armenoum*, 98). (We have examined parallel material in Mashtots (Etchmiadzin): Canon of seal, 66-67).

707 Other parts of the body which must be anointed are also indicated in a discussion of the seal (in the baptismal rite) by an eighth-century Metropolitan of the province of Syunik.

708 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 604: Appendix V. 3.

Also we have this anointing for the foot washing, and also on the revelation day of the Lord's baptism, and also we have this anointing for the deceased priests.

Ought we to believe that Tatevatsi recognizes other stages of anointing or, following Ashjian's logic, even other sacraments? He is here clearly speaking of the washing of the feet, Epiphany and the burial of priests. He then adds,

And why is it not evident, as it is with foreigners? We say that because of the tricks (ruses, artifices) of the evil one, people took away confession (which was essential) and relied upon their belief that on the last day they would be anointed with balm oil and be justified. As the Greeks and the Georgians and the Syrians have done, but no man can be justified without confession ...

Again, a deadly sin is washed away by the word through the priest, and likewise a venial sin is washed away by the word and prayer of the priest, as James said: 'Let him call for the elders of the church ... And if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.' With this in mind we – the priests – gather and pray from evening to dawn, and we celebrate the liturgy, and bless and make the holy cross both for the living and for the deceased. Consequently, the priest's word in the name of God cleanses of venial sins.<sup>709</sup>

Ashjian also overlooks Tatevatsi's statement that

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709 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 604: Appendix V. 4-5.

we have the ordinance of anointing for deceased priests, for we anoint them as wrestlers so that they may fight the evil demon of the air. And if anyone asks whether this anointing of the deceased is the first or last one, we reply that as death is the end of this life and the commencement of the future life, likewise this anointing is the last one which washes slender and venial sins, and is the first one for the new warfare ahead. And if they still argue that only the body is being anointed, and how does it affect the soul, we answer that when the soul was with the body, all the body members were being affected with it together. But now, as it is apart, it receives the entire holiness by parting. Otherwise let it be known that the whole order of burial is of no good to the souls of the deceased ...<sup>710</sup>

Tatevatsi says explicitly that

the last unction of the sick does not cleanse of the deadly sins but the venial sins only; whereas confession cleanses of deadly and venial ones, as if one cut the roots, and the branches will wither. Therefore, confession is more important than unction.<sup>711</sup>

We hold the view that Tatevatsi does not address the practice of extreme unction in the Armenian Church; moreover, he does not locate the sacrament of extreme unction in the sacrament of the seal, as Ashjian and Galstanyan insist. His motivation

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<sup>710</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 605: Appendix V. 8.

<sup>711</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 604: Appendix V. 5.

is different: his goal is to teach his students all aspects of the last unction, and to guide their attention towards confession.

### **Summary**

Tatevatsi's doctrine of the divine image, or the image of God in man, is directly connected with his baptismal theology: the image of God in man is lost due to Adam's Fall, and in baptism we receive the image of God. It is the fact that Tatevatsi discusses the sacrament of the seal which makes this most interesting. According to Tatevatsi, 'with the water we are baptized in Christ and we are called sons of God; with the oil we are united in the Grace of the Holy Spirit.' As we noted, for Tatevatsi the seal of the divine image is related to the bright, shining garment which symbolizes illuminated behaviour, bright faith and innocence; and the red and white thread symbolizes the blood and water issuing from Christ's side. The anointing of the brow, heart, backbone and other parts which are presumably recognized by Tatevatsi signify that the baptized person receives the sign of the cross on his body.

We assume that in all likelihood, in the fashion of the West, Tatevatsi was asked a question regarding the definition of extreme unction by his students. But while presenting his thoughts, in appreciation of the rich tradition of the sacraments of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Tatevatsi decided to stress confession, insisting that extreme unction is unnecessary. His goal was to affirm that the Armenian Church is distinct not only from the West but also from the East: it has its own tradition of sacraments, but at the same time, it may acknowledge the existence of other practices for its own profit. This does not imply that Tatevatsi forsakes his own tradition. On

the contrary, Tatevatsi's statements underline his deep appreciation not only of his traditions but those of others as well.<sup>712</sup> Moreover, all this shows that he inherited his theology from his teachers and is not about to forsake that heritage; at the same time, he is open to attractive, novel ideas deriving from other churches even if alien to the Armenian Apostolic Church. If questions are raised, they must be answered.

After examining Tatevatsi's thoughts regarding the sacrament of confirmation, we conclude, firstly, that for Tatevatsi confirmation is solidly a sacrament of affirmation; secondly, that the formulas are different in the Armenian and other churches; thirdly, that in confirmation we place hope in the power of the Holy Spirit, because we 'are united in the grace of the Spirit'; fourthly, that the symbol of confirmation is myron; and fifthly, that the priest has the power to be a minister of confirmation.

Most importantly, Tatevatsi, by highlighting two different forms of the sacrament of the seal, exposes differences from the Latin understanding and performing of this sacrament regarding both the form of the sacrament of the seal and the performer of this sacrament. The acknowledgement of these two features is very important for understanding Tatevatsi's reflections on the sacrament of confirmation. For Tatevatsi, the sacrament of the seal appears to be a valuable part of the initiation of the baptized person. It is clear that the separation of seal from baptism is not a loss, but rather that the sacrament of the seal, as a separate rite, empowers a person to become a Christian in the full sense, as the believer in his union with Christ in his death and resurrection is sealed with the Holy Spirit for a day to come. The

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<sup>712</sup> Mkhitar Sasnetsi offers a long and beautiful explanation of confession.

specification proposed by Tatevatsi for the sacrament of the seal helps to elucidate its relationship with Baptism and Eucharist. Tatevatsi concludes his statement thus: ‘And climbing to the altar [symbolizes that] after all instructions, Christ ascended to heaven and sat at the right hand of the Father.’<sup>713</sup> And communion is the fulfilment of everything. Tatevatsi distinctly mentions that after baptism and confirmation, the sacrament of the communion, as the climax of Christian initiation, must take place.

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<sup>713</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594: Appendix III. 4.

## Chapter Five: The Sacrament of Communion

Throughout the centuries, the liturgical traditions of the Armenian Church attracted different kinds of historical and theological argumentation, resulting in unique liturgical usages concerning various aspects of the theology of the universal Church. The sacrament of the Eucharist is a shining example of the Armenian Church's distinctness of attitude in this regard. We do not of course intend to represent the whole story of the liturgical usages of and controversies surrounding the sacrament of the Eucharist in the history of the Armenian Church, as these issues are beyond the scope of this chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to examine Grigor Tatevatsi's theology of the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Archbishop Ashjian contends that Tatevatsi, in following Aquinas, accepted the doctrine of transubstantiation, and for this reason departed from the traditional teaching of his Church.<sup>714</sup> According to Ashjian,

In accepting the doctrine of trans-substantiation, St. Grigor Tatevacı made an enormous concession to the Latins. He [Tatevatsi] accepted without criticism the belief that, after the Words of Institution, the bread and the wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. He ignored the whole tradition of the Eastern Church. The role of the Holy Spirit which is such an important factor in Eastern theology is hardly evident in what he had to say.<sup>715</sup>

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<sup>714</sup> See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 89-90.

<sup>715</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

Ashjian claims that Tatevacı approaches the Eucharist as a philosophical issue. He says,

The Lord's table is not and was not understood as a philosophical issue which divides the Eucharist into categories of 'form' and 'essence' or 'accidents' and 'substance'. The Eucharist is not discussed under such questions as 'what remains', or 'moment' or 'formula' or 'validity', etc. And yet Grigor moves demonstrably in these directions.<sup>716</sup>

According to Ashjian, Tatevatsi deviates significantly from his Church's perspective on the meaning of the Eucharist.<sup>717</sup> Ashjian maintains in particular that Tatevatsi adopted the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation and disregarded his own tradition.<sup>718</sup> He concludes, 'Tatevacı adopted the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation and unfortunately transmitted its inadequacies and distortions into the modern era.'<sup>719</sup>

Ashjian is not alone in his interpretation of Tatevatsi's theology of the Holy Communion: Vigen Guroian also acknowledges the incorporation of Catholic doctrine in Tatevatsi's theology, and his particular debts therein regarding the language of the doctrine of transubstantiation. Guroian contends that 'while [Tatevatsi] championed Armenian orthodoxy against the Latins, his theology

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716 Ibid.

717 Ibid., 91-2.

718 Ibid., 90-3.

719 Ibid., 93.

incorporates much of their thinking (notable among these influences are writings of Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure).<sup>720</sup> According to Guroian, Tatevatsi, as an Armenian Scholastic,<sup>721</sup> ‘adopted the language of transubstantiation in his Eucharistic theology’.<sup>722</sup> Moreover, Guroian concludes, ‘In any case the distinctively Latin flavor of St Gregory of Datev’s theology lends positive proof of cultural and theological transmigrations between the Christian east and west more widespread than has sometimes been assumed.’<sup>723</sup>

Ashjian’s and Guroian’s remarks on the Eucharistic theology of Grigor Tatevatsi draw attention to important issues. We will approach these issues by addressing the following questions: What is the sacrament of communion for Tatevatsi? To what extent does Tatevatsi adhere to Western theology? And what is a tradition for Tatevatsi? These questions will be addressed by means of an examination of Grigor Tatevatsi’s main writings on the sacrament of communion,<sup>724</sup> as compared with the theology of Aquinas, culminating in our own interpretation of Tatevatsi’s theology of the holy sacrament.

## 5.1 The West

Before examining Grigor Tatevatsi’s theology of Communion, however, we must briefly delineate what kind of debates arose over Eucharistic theology in Western

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720 Guroian, ‘Armenian Tradition’, 40.

721 ‘The 14th century produced the Armenian scholastic, St Gregory of Datev (Tatavatsi)’ (ibid.).

722 Ibid.

723 Ibid.

724 Above all Գրիգոր Չարսմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594-600.

Christianity. In Western Christianity, the first serious intellectual struggle over the understanding of the Eucharistic presence was initiated by the eleventh-century theologian Berengar of Tours, who objected to the ninth-century theologian Paschasius' dominant Eucharistic theology.<sup>725</sup> The Eucharistic Controversy arose during the Gregorian era, and later in the period between 1000 and 1250 the Berengarian debate moved through many iterations as the Eucharist became the object of much contention.

The newly discovered metaphysics of Aristotle informed theological works as they sought to elucidate how the Eucharistic presence could occur.<sup>726</sup> Major theologians in Western Christianity became newly precise in their definitions, and the Eucharistic presence was represented in innovative theological terms and technical language. A number of serious theological questions were contemplated, such as: How could the body of Christ be present in such a way that it would not be sensed as present? How could the body of Christ be broken and delivered to believers? How could the whole Christ be under the sacrament of the Eucharist? How could the bread and wine be

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725 On Berengar of Tours and the Eucharistic Controversy see Jean de Montclos. *Lanfranc et Béranger: La controverse eucharistique du XI siècle*. Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, Études et documents 37: Louvain, 1971; Charles Radding and Francis Newton. *Theology, Rhetoric, and Politics in the Eucharistic Controversy 1078-1079*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

726 See Miri Rubin. *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991; G.J.C. Snoek. *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist: A Process of Mutual Interaction*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995; Paul Bakker. *La Raison et Le Miracle: Les Doctrines Eucharistiques (c.1250-c.1400)*, 2 vols. Nijmegen: P.J.J.M. Bakker, 1999; Gary Macy. *Treasures from the Storeroom: Medieval Religion and the Eucharist*. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1999; David Knowles. *The Evolution of Medieval Thought*, 2nd edition. London, : Longman, 1988. For a short introduction to the Aristotelian background see, Marilyn McCord Adams. *Some Later Medieval Theories of the Eucharist: Thomas Aquinas, Giles of Roma, Duns Scotus, and William Ockham*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, 4-28.

changed into the body and blood of Christ? This intellectual curiosity led theologians to pursue different avenues of explanation.<sup>727</sup>

As a result of this complex debate, the new term *transubstantiatio* emerged in the twelfth century and became a pressing topic for investigation in the thirteenth.<sup>728</sup>

Goering states that the term *transubstantiatio* first appeared around 1140 in Paris, and that the English theologian Robert Pullen was the inventor of this term.<sup>729</sup> Pullen was the first to describe the process of how the substance of Christ replaces the substances of the bread and the wine.<sup>730</sup> Later, the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 employed the verb *transubstantiare* in its opening creed, to specify the means by which the real presence occurred in the Mass.<sup>731</sup> However, this did not amount to a formal definition, and it was hardly understood by thirteenth-century theologians.<sup>732</sup>

A variety of terms – *co-existence*, *substitution*, *transmutation* – were adopted in accounts of the Eucharistic change. The third of these terms provided the greatest opening for Aristotle's philosophy, as theologians were able to compare different kinds of change identified by the great philosopher with the change that occurred in the sacrament of the Eucharist.<sup>733</sup> Aristotle presents reality in terms of 'substance',

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727 For a short but very informative presentation of the theology of the Eucharist in the Western Christian thoughts in the High Middle Ages see, Gary Macy. 'Theology of the Eucharist in the High Middle Ages.' In *A Companion to the Eucharist in the Middle Ages*, edited by Ian Christopher Levy, Gary Macy and Kristen Van Ausdall, 365-398. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012; 365-398.

728 See Joseph Goering, 'The Invention of Transubstantiation,' *Traditio* 46 (1991): 147-148.

729 See *ibid.*, 158.

730 *Ibid.*, 147-170.

731 See *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, *Nicaea I to Lateran V*, ed. Norman P. Tanner SJ. London: Sheed & Ward, 1990, 230.

732 See Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 12-35.

733 Bakker. *La raison et le miracle*.

and ‘accidents’. For example, the body contains an invisible substance of ‘bodyness’, as well as the visible accidents of eyes, hair and so on. In the sacrament of the Eucharist, an invisible change occurs when the substance of the bread changes into the substance of the body of Christ, and similarly, in the case of wine, the substance of the wine is changed into the substance of the blood of Christ. Because this is a substantial change, it became known as *transubstantiation*. This term significantly impacted the theology of the Eucharist, as Macy observes: ‘For the ordinary Christian, the *transubstantiation* must have been something like quantum physics for non-scientists today.’<sup>734</sup> The strongest advocate of transubstantiation was Thomas Aquinas, who advances the first significant explanation of the concept.

## 5.2 Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas, in his discussion of the Eucharistic presence, raises six questions,<sup>735</sup> and in considering Holy Communion, examines five questions.<sup>736</sup> Our aim is not to review all of these questions, but selectively to examine those which will help elucidate the extent to which Grigor Tatevatsi followed Thomas Aquinas.

According to Aquinas, ‘the Eucharist contains something sacred in itself absolutely, which is Christ’.<sup>737</sup> That is, it contains Christ, who suffered for us, in reality. Christ

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734 See Macy. ‘Theology of the Eucharist in the High Middle Ages’, 378.

735 See St. Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologiae* LVIII. *The Eucharistic Presence* (3a.73-78) Latin text, English translation, Introduction, Notes, Appendices & Glossary by William Barden O.P. London: Blackfriars, 1965.

736 See St. Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologiae* LIX. *Holy Communion*. (3a.79-83) Latin text, English translation, Introduction, Notes & Glossary by Thomas Gilby O.P. London: Blackfriars, 1975.

737 See Aquinas, 3a. 73.1 (Barden, 57).

has not left believers without his bodily presence; instead, he conjoins believers to himself 'in the reality of his body and blood'.<sup>738</sup> The sacrament of the Eucharist is a spiritual food, and spiritual refreshment.<sup>739</sup> Citing John 6: 55, Aquinas stresses that two elements, spiritual food and spiritual drink, make this sacrament complete.<sup>740</sup> Therefore, the purpose of this sacrament is to refresh spiritually.<sup>741</sup> Also 'the spiritual food changes man into itself'.<sup>742</sup> This sacrament contains Christ himself, so it grants grace.<sup>743</sup> Christ 'by coming to man sacramentally causes the life of grace'.<sup>744</sup>

According to Aquinas, the Eucharist is established when the matter of this sacrament – bread and wine<sup>745</sup> -- is consecrated.<sup>746</sup> 'In this sacrament the consecration of the matter consists in a miraculous change of the substance, which only God can bring about.'<sup>747</sup> According to Aquinas, 'In this sacrament the body is offered for the salvation of our body and the blood for that of our soul, though in fact each works for the salvation of both body and soul, since the whole Christ is under each.'<sup>748</sup>

Aquinas underlines that according to the Catholic faith, the entirety of Christ is in this sacrament. He explains that there are two respects in which 'a part of Christ can

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738 Ibid., 3a. 75.1 (Barden, 57).

739 Ibid., 3a. 73.1 (Barden, 5); 3a. 73.,3 (Barden, 9).

740 Ibid., 3a. 73.3 (Barden, 9): 'My flesh is food indeed and my blood is drink indeed'.

741 Ibid.

742 Ibid., 3a. 73.3 (Barden, 13).

743 Ibid., 3a. 79.1 (Gilby, 5-7).

744 Ibid., 3a. 79.1 (Gilby, 5).

745 Ibid., 3a. 74.1 (Gilby, 25-29).

746 Ibid., 3a. 73.,1 (Barden, 7); 3a. 73.2 (Barden, 9); 3a. 74.2 (Barden, 31); 3a. 78.1 (Barden, 165).

747 Ibid., 3a. 78.1 (Barden, 165).

748 Ibid., 3a. 79.1 (Barden, 7).

be in it'. Firstly, 'it is as an immediate result of the sacramental sign', which is a change signified by the words 'This is my body', 'This is my blood', and the whole body of Christ is a result of the sacramental sign, 'the bones and nerves and all the rest'. And secondly, 'by a natural concomitance' which shows 'whatever is found to be actually joined to the term of the conversion'; as a result of this, the soul of Christ is in this sacrament. In order to illustrate how the whole Christ is in this sacrament, Aquinas indicates that we must understand 'wherever two things are actually joined together, wherever you have one, the other has to be'. For Aquinas it is only in our minds that we divide things which are joined together: 'The change of the bread and wine does not have as its term either the godhead or the soul of Christ.'<sup>749</sup> And because of this, as a result of the sacramental sign, neither the godhead nor the soul of Christ is in this sacrament by the power of the sacrament (*ex vi sacramenti*), but 'they are there by a natural concomitance'.<sup>750</sup> By means of the sacramental sign, under the form of bread, the body of Christ is present, and by a natural concomitance the blood is also there.<sup>751</sup> Furthermore, as an effect of the sacramental sign, under the form of wine the blood of Christ is present, and by a natural concomitance the body of Christ is present. Consequently, 'the whole Christ is under each of the sacramental species, but in different ways'.<sup>752</sup>

Aquinas explains the background of the two species: during Christ's Passion, the blood was separated from the body, and upon consecration it is stated that the blood

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749 Ibid., 3a. 76.1 (Barden, 95).

750 Ibid.

751 Ibid., 3a. 76.2 (Barden, 99).

752 Ibid.

was poured out, and now availos as a spiritual drink for the salvation of the soul.<sup>753</sup>

‘Hence, the consecration of the wine does not directly bring about the presence of Christ’s body; it is a concomitant of the direct effect.’<sup>754</sup>

For Aquinas, ‘This is my body’ and ‘This is the chalice of my blood’ is the form of this sacrament. Aquinas points out that the minister is merely pronouncing the words in this sacrament, and the form expresses Christ himself speaking.<sup>755</sup> He argues that ‘the form of this sacrament implies only that the matter is being consecrated, and this is the transubstantiation which takes place when the priest says the words, “This is my body”, or “This is the chalice of my blood”’.<sup>756</sup> Aquinas asserts that ‘the form of consecration of the bread ought to signify the actual change of the bread into the Body of Christ’.<sup>757</sup>

Because Aquinas highly esteemed Aristotle,<sup>758</sup> he adopted the Aristotelian doctrine of substance, underlining three factors: ‘the change itself’, ‘the starting point’, and ‘the point of rest’.<sup>759</sup> Because, for Aquinas, the Eucharistic change is instantaneous,<sup>760</sup> it can be understood in two ways: first as the ‘process of becoming’,

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753 Ibid.

754 Ibid., 3a. 76.2 (Barden, 101).

755 Ibid., 3a. 78.1 (Barden, 165).

756 Ibid., 3a. 78, 1 (Barden, 165); 3a. 78.2 (Barden, 171-73); 3a. 78.3 (Barden, 177-183).

757 Ibid., 3a. 78.2 (Barden, 171).

758 Fernand Van Steenberghen. *Thomas Aquinas and Radical Aristotelianism*. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1980.

759 See Aquinas, 3a. 78.2 (Barden, 171-73)

760 Ibid., 3a. 75.7 (Barden, 81-85); 3a. 78.2 (Barden. 171).

then as the ‘fact of having become’.<sup>761</sup> The Eucharistic form must designate the change not as the process of becoming but as the fact of having become. Having become is the final effect of the consecration but not the becoming, as ‘the becoming is telescoped into the having become’.<sup>762</sup> According to Aquinas, the starting point in the change does not maintain its substantial nature when ‘having become’ is reached. The form of the Eucharist must signify the final effect of consecration with the verb in the present tense.<sup>763</sup> Given that ‘in the Eucharistic form the change should be expressed as accomplished’,<sup>764</sup> for Aquinas the most appropriate form of consecration of the bread is ‘This is my body’.<sup>765</sup>

But why is the form ‘This is the chalice of my blood’ suitable for the consecration of the wine?<sup>766</sup> According to Aquinas, these words are an essential part of the form, while ‘of the new and eternal testament, the mystery of faith, which will be shed for you and for many for the remission of sins’, as part of the complete phrasing, supplies more information regarding the affirmation.<sup>767</sup> Aquinas points out that, ‘all these words belong to the essence of the form’ and render the phrase complete. According to Aquinas, ‘This is the chalice of my blood’ signifies the change of the wine into the blood in the same way as occurs in the form of the consecration of the bread. Clearly, Aquinas underscores that the form of consecration of the wine ought

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761 Ibid., 3a. 78.2 (Barden, 171-173).

762 Ibid., 3a. 78.2 (Barden, 171-173).

763 Ibid., 3a. 78.3 (Barden, 173).

764 Ibid., 3a. 78.2 (Barden, 171).

765 Ibid., 3a. 78.2 (Barden, 171-173).

766 Ibid., 3a. 78.3 (Barden, 177-183).

767 Ibid., 3a. 78.3 (Barden, 177).

to signify the actual change of the wine into the blood of Christ. The words which follow indicate ‘the power of Christ’s blood which was shed in his passion’.<sup>768</sup> In order to underline this statement, Aquinas cites three purposes of this power.<sup>769</sup> Aquinas also explains that the cup allows for two interpretations: first, ‘the blood of Christ in this sacrament is consecrated as the drink of the faithful’, and second, as ‘a symbol of the passion of Christ’.<sup>770</sup> Aquinas believes that the Lord, by saying ‘let this cup pass from me’, envisioned his Passion as a cup, resulting in the idea, ‘This is the chalice of my passion’.<sup>771</sup> The Passion of Christ is thus represented in this sacrament, and ‘by his Passion ... Christ opened for us the entry to eternal life’.<sup>772</sup> According to Aquinas, the Passion of Christ is represented in the separate consecration of the blood, as ‘it is at the consecration of the blood that the effect of Christ’s passion is mentioned rather than at the consecration of his body, which was the subject of that passion’.<sup>773</sup> Aquinas affirms that the consecration of the blood separately from the body clearly represents the Passion suffered by Christ for us.<sup>774</sup> The blood of Christ

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768 Ibid.

769 Ibid., 3a, 78.3 (Barden, 177-179). The first is that to achieve an eternal inheritance for us, inasmuch as ‘we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus’ (Heb. 10: 19), for which the words of the form include ‘of the new and eternal testament’. The second purpose is justification through grace by faith, for which he cites Rom. 3: 25, 26 (‘whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith ... to prove that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus’) and for which the form includes the words, ‘the mystery of faith’. The third purpose is to cleanse our sins, which come between us and the first two effects just mentioned. Here he cites ‘the blood of Christ will purify your conscience from dead works’, this is from sins, from Heb. 9: 14). To signify this, the form includes ‘which shall be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins’.

770 See Aquinas, 3a, 78.3 (Barden, 179).

771 Ibid.

772 Ibid., 3a, 79.2 (Gilby, 9).

773 Ibid., 3a, 78.3 (Gilby, 179).

774 Ibid., 3a, 78.3 (Barden, 181).

is given to us in two ways: firstly, in the Old Testament, in figure;<sup>775</sup> secondly, in the New Testament, in reality,<sup>776</sup> this being 'the blood of a new covenant'.<sup>777</sup>

Aquinas stresses that there is 'a certain created power which brings about the sacramental change'.<sup>778</sup> For Aquinas, this is an instrumental power which issues directly from Christ himself, as these are Christ's words.<sup>779</sup> It is through Christ's will that the words derive this power.<sup>780</sup> According to Aquinas, 'When we say that it is by the power of the Holy Ghost and by it alone that the bread is changed into the body of Christ, we do not rule out the presence of an instrumental power in the form of this sacrament ...'<sup>781</sup>

### **5.3 The Eucharist in Armenian Church Tradition**

There is only a limited amount of commentary to be found in the writings of Armenian ecclesiastical leaders and Church Fathers from the early period on the ritual life and traditions of the Armenian Church. But there is enough to indicate something of the ritual traditions and liturgical practices of the Armenian Church, many of which are recorded in Armenian canons.<sup>782</sup> And there is of course much to

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775 Aquinas cites Ex. 24: 7-8.

776 Aquinas cites Heb. 9: 15: 'He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred...'

777 Ibid., 3a, 78.3 (Barden, 179-181).

778 Ibid., 3a, 78.4 (Barden, 185).

779 Ibid.

780 Ibid.

781 Ibid., 3a, 78.4 (Barden, 185). 'Just like when we say that it is only the craftsman who makes the knife, we do not exclude all power from the hammer'.

782 Սոփերք հայկականք, Ե. Վենետիկ, 1853, 153.

indicate the centrality of the eucharist in Armenian Church tradition. A few examples will suffice.

An early text preserved in the Armenian Canon Book is from Sahak Partev (358-439), who affirms that ‘on the holy table the celebration is with bread and wine, as these are the examples of body and blood of Christ’.<sup>783</sup>

Around the turn of the eighth century, the Armenian theologian Stepanos of Syunik (735) wrote, ‘It is not a delegate who pronounces the Gospel, or even an angel, but the Lord of heaven and earth himself, saying, “I came from the Father and have come into the world” (Jn 16: 28).’ Christ is thus revealed in the reading of the Gospel in the liturgy, corresponding to his revelation by means of his body and blood in Holy Communion.

The fourteenth-century clergyman Basil Shnorhali or Mashkevorts, <sup>784</sup> in his commentary on the Gospel of Mark 14: 22-25, <sup>785</sup> asserts that the holy sacrament must be performed as Jesus taught: that is, to blessing the bread, proclaiming the whole saving dispensation and then dividing the bread and taking by faith in atonement of our sins. <sup>786</sup>

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783 See, *Armenian Canon Book*, A, ed. by Vazgen Hakobyan, Yerevan, 1964, 392. On the nature of Christ see Գիրք թղթոց: (*Book of Letters*), Tiflis, 1901, 480.

784 Basil Shnorhali or Mashkevorts was an advanced and prestigious clergyman who took part in the council of Sis 1343. See Ընտրանի հայ եկեղեցական մատենագրության, Ս.Էջմիածին, 2003 (*Selected Works of Armenian religious literature*, Holy See of Etchmiadzin, 2003), 641.

785 See Բարսեղ Շնորհալի, Մեկնութիւն սրբոյ Ավետարանին, որ ըստ Մարկոսի, Կոստանդինուպոլիս, 1826: (Basil Shnorhali Constantinople, 1826).

786 See Բարսեղ Շնորհալի 1826, 276. (Basil Shnorhali, 1826, 276).

According to Basil Shnorhali, the breaking of the bread reflects the death of Christ: ‘when [Christ] divided, it was the human nature which is to be recognized, as the body can be divided into many parts.’<sup>787</sup> And according to Shnorhali, Christ also predicted his death on the cross: ‘And the fact that he did not order anyone else to divide the bread and himself divided the bread shows that suffered (bore) the death by his will and gladly suffered the death’.<sup>788</sup> Basil Shnorhali, ‘from the spiritual (sacred) point, the bread strengthens the human heart, becomes the body of Christ, while the wine, which is the blood of the grape, becomes the blood of Christ.’<sup>789</sup>

Mkhitar Sasnetsi, in the fourteenth century, states that the incarnation of the Word of God had an incorrupt birth, and that Christ truly and voluntarily accepted death, died for our sins and arose from the grave incorruptibly; it was by distributing his incorrupt body and blood as food that Christ became the source of salvation.<sup>790</sup> It is interesting that Sasnetsi, addressing any doubts regarding the equivalence of the bread and wine to the body and blood of the Son of God, raises two arguments: the first relates to the execution of divine commands, and the second to the divine actualization of miracles.<sup>791</sup>

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787 Ibid.

788 Ibid.

789 Ibid.

790 See Mxitar Sasneci, *Theological Discourses*, CSCO 542, 543, *Scriptores Armeniaci* 22, 23, ed. and tr. S.P.Cowe (Louvain: Peeters, 1993), 542, 72-73 (Armenian).

791 See *ibid.*, 543, 90-91 (English); 542, 78-79 (Armenian).

#### 5.4 The Use of Pure Wine

An important Eucharistic tradition, and one that is distinctive of Armenian practice, is that of celebrating the liturgy with pure wine rather than with wine mixed with water. That holy tradition was often contested in the history of the Armenian Church and constituted a substantial point of ritual which distinguishes the Armenian Church from all other Christian churches. It is a tradition passed down from Gregory the Illuminator. Unfortunately, an authentic text of Gregory on this point of ritual practice does not survive or has not yet been discovered.<sup>792</sup> However, from the end of the seventh to the beginning of the eighth century, defenders of Armenian Church traditions clearly defer to the authority of St Gregory, to whom they attribute the holy tradition of the celebration of the liturgy with pure wine.<sup>793</sup>

One of the homilies on the Gospel of Matthew by St John Chrysostom played a significant role in shaping the attitude of the Armenian Church toward the pure cup. Chrysostom's commentary on Matt. 26: 29<sup>794</sup> attracted different interpretations by the Latin, Byzantine and Armenian Churches. If Armenians discerned an important directive regarding the use of a pure cup, other churches insisted that Chrysostom did not actually address mixing water in the cup, but instead referred to the practice of

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792 Սրբոյ հօրն մերոյ Գրիգորի Լուսաւորչի Յաճախապատում ճառք եւ արօթք, Վենետիկ, 1838, 1-219. See text introduction, and commentary by A. Ter Miqueleyan. Etchmiadzin, 1894, 1-313 and translation, introduction, and commentary by Sen Arevshatyan, Etchmiadzin, 2007, 31-227. See also G. Ter-Mkrtychyan, S Kanayean. *The Agantaghelos Armenian History*. Tprghis, 1909, 134-372.

793 See Գիրք թղթոց (*Book of Letters*), 1901, 416. See Sahak Vardapet (Mrut) Jerusalem, 1994, 5-6; Sahak Vardapet (Mrut), 2012, 1-103; and see Գիրք Հարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 596: Appendix IV. 2.5.

794 See Յովհաննու Ոսկեբերանի Կոստանդինուպօլսի եպիսկոսապետի յԱլեքսարանագիրն Մատթէոս, Վենետիկ, 1826, 106. For English text see: A select library of the Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, edited by Philip Schaff, vol. X, Saint Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of Matthew*. Michigan, 1983, 492; for the Greek text see *Patrologia Graeca* 58, 740.

heretics<sup>795</sup> who eschewed wine for water in the celebration of the Eucharist.<sup>796</sup> Chrysostom's commentary, in the Armenian sources, was first appropriated by Catholicos Sahak Zoraporetsi.<sup>797</sup> Quoting Chrysostom, Zoraporetsi<sup>798</sup> concludes, «Տեսանես զի չար հերձուած ասէ զայն, որ զջուրն խառնեն ի սուրբ խորհուրդն».<sup>799</sup> He does not prove the mixing of water. Zoraporetsi's statement is «զի են ոմանք, զի ի սուրբ խորհուրդն ջուր խառնեն».<sup>800</sup> So արկանեն was changed into խառնեն, which as Baghumyan indicates, 'clearly shows the understanding of the Armenian Church'.<sup>801</sup> Chrysostom's commentary on the Gospel of Matthew was discussed in the Quinisext Council.<sup>802</sup> Referring to the Armenian Church's custom of celebrating the Eucharist with pure wine without adding water, canon 32 of that Council contests the Church's

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795 The heretics who celebrated the Eucharist only with water were called Aquarians, for example: Encratites, Ebionites, see *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 2nd edition. Edited Everett Ferguson. New York, London: Garland, 1997, 1179; Eznik Vardapet Petrosyan, *Patristic Studies*, part 1, (2-3 centuries), Etchmiadzin, 1996, 235-236; Srbazan Pataragamatuys hayos, 19-21. Movses Erznkaci, 86.

796 See Բաղումյան Չաքարիա, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում, Մայր Աթոռ Սուրբ Էջմիածին, 2013. (Zakaria Baghumyan. *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup in the Armenian Church*. The Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, 2013, 113).

797 See Գիրք թղթոց (*Book of Letters*, 1901), 479; Sahak Vardapet (Mrut) 98; Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 113.

798 See Գիրք թղթոց (*Book of Letters*), 1901, 479-480; Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 56 footnote; See Sahak Vardapet (Mrut) Jerusalem, 1994, 5-6.; See also the translation of the text by Samuel Aghoyan, Jerusalem, 2012, pp. 1-103. See *Etchmiadzin*, 1997, 171-172, Sahak Zoraporetsi et Sahak Mrut. Yerevan 2004, 174-180; Robert Thomson, *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*. New Rochelle, NY: St. Nerses Armenian Seminary, 2001, 54-55.

799 Գիրք թղթոց (*Book of Letters*), 1901, 479.

800 See Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 113.

801 Ibid.

802 The Quinisext Council (or the Council in Trullo), was held in 692 by Justinian II in Constantinople. See Ormanian, *Azgapatum*, vol. A, 885-86; Kartashev, *Ecumenical Councils*. Klin, 2002, 562-570.

interpretation of Chrysostom's statement, asserting that the Church Father meant something different.<sup>803</sup>

Apart from holy writings, patristic and canonical arguments, the refusal to mix wine with water has Christological significance for the Armenian Church, a significance which in certain respects determined its attitude. But for many centuries, proponents of pure as well as mixed cups cited patristic and other theological works in support of their own ritual practices.

We acknowledge that, in the tenth century, Khosrovik Targmanich (Khosrovik the Translator) also cites Chrysostom's commentary.<sup>804</sup> Yesayi Nchetsi also points out that Chrysostom speaks of adding water and not celebrating with water: «...տեսի, բանզի ստոյգ օրինակն, զի զջուր արկանել ասէ և ոչ ջուր մատուցանել».<sup>805</sup> It is clear that Chrysostom's point was taken by various Armenian theologians to concern celebrants who mixed water in the cup and not those who observed the Eucharist only with water.<sup>806</sup> As Findikyan points out, 'The tradition of unmixed cup

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803 See *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, edited by George Nedungatt, Michael Featherstone. Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1995, 106-108; Moses Erznkaci, 79-80; Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 119-120.

804 See Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 113.

805 See Matanadaran MS 9622, fol. 364b and Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 117.

806 See Գիրք թղթոց (*Book of Letters*), 479. See Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 113. See Matanadaran MS 9622, fol. 364b, and, For a quotation from Nchetsi, see Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 117.

is as old among Armenians as the tradition of mixed cup across the ancient Mediterranean'.<sup>807</sup>

The fifth-century historians Pavstos Byzand and Eghishe remark only upon the using of wine, providing no information about the water. Eghishe considers the sacrament of the Eucharist twice in his works. In his discussion of the ceremonies of the transfiguration of Christ, Eghishe mentions that wine was used during the sacrament of the Eucharist,<sup>808</sup> and in other works he makes a similar statement.

The second statement of importance regarding the pure wine is that of Odznetsi (717-728) in the course of his dispute with the Assyrian Church leader Atanas, Patriarch of Antioch. The Council of Manazkert (719) states in its eighth canon, 'As Grigor Lusavorich proclaimed we have to do communion with unleavened bread and pure wine ...'<sup>809</sup> As we see, Odznetsi not only upholds the tradition of pure wine, but also states that changes to this are unnecessary. This statement became crucial for other generations, as it elucidates that the tradition of pure wine derives from St Grigor; subsequently, therefore, many Armenian Church leaders and Fathers referred to this statement.<sup>810</sup> Oghlugyan records that in the Armenian Church the tradition of

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807 See Michael Findikyan. 'Liturgical Usages and Controversy in History: How Much Diversity Can Unity Tolerance?' *St. Nerses Theological Review* 1/2, 1996.

808 «Չիք նոցա գինի ի սափօրս, բայց եթէ ի սպաս տերունեան բաժակին» See Սրբոյ հօրն մերոյ Եղիշէի վարդապետի մատենագրութիւնք, Վենետիկ, 1859, 237.

809 «Կրժան է զհացն անխմոր և զգինին անապակ հանել ի սուրբ սեղանն ըստ աւանդելոյ մեզ սրբոյն Գրիգորի և չխոնարիել յայլ ազգաց քրիստոնէից յաւանդութիւնս, զի սուրբ Լուսաւորիչն յարինականէն բերեալ զայս առաքելաբար հրաման ետ կատարել իւրոյ վիճակելոցն... և մեզ ի նմին պարտ է յարամաւ և չթողուլ և ի բաց, և չառնել նորաձևս ինչ»: See *Armenian Canon Book*, vol A, 519.

810 See ARMAT HAVATO. 259. Movses Yerznkatsi, 122. Handisaran, 343.

applying unmixed wine in the communion cup was definitively resolved by the 726 Manazkert Council, and that the issue was directly related to the resolution of the centuries-old controversy between the adherents of Severus of Antioch and those of Julian of Halicarnassus over the alleged corruptibility of Christ's body. Indeed, in this connection he notes that both the Armenian Church's tradition of consecrating unleavened bread and that of consecrating unmixed wine are related to the confession of Christ's incorruptible body rather than the Byzantine teaching on the Lord's natures. However, one should not seek a semantic relation between the Armenian words for *unmixed* (անապակ) and *incorruptible* (անապական), for the former derives from the word ան-ապու, meaning *arid*.<sup>811</sup> Notice what Odznetsi writes: 'The unleavened bread and unmixed wine ought to be put onto the altar according to the tradition consigned by St. Grigor rather than acquiescing in the traditions of foreign Christians because the St. Illuminator assigned it according to the law of the old'.<sup>812</sup>

Vardan Aygektsi, relating how on 6 January 1198 he personally was present at King Levon II's coronation, mentions that the bishop who arrived from Rome for the event celebrated the liturgy with pure wine.<sup>813</sup> Moreover, the text reveals that not only did

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811 See Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 32-33.

812 See Կանոնագիրք Յայոց»-ը բազմաթիվ ձեռագրերի համադրությամբ և քննությամբ երկու հատորով հրատարակեց Վազգեն Յակոբյանը, Երևան, 1964 (Vazgen Hakobyan. *Book of Canons*. Yerevan, 1964), 519. (See Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 32).

813 «Եւ մեծ արհի եպիսկոպոսն, որ եկն ի Յոռմայ և ձեռնադրեալ էաւ զԼևոն թագաւորն Յայոց առաջի մեր, անապակ գինով արար պատարագն, և ասաց զմեզ, թե այս Յոռմա սովորութիւն է, որ ի ձեռնադրումն թագաւորի անապակ գինով մատուցանեմք զպատարագն»: For this text see Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Յայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 69; see Անասյան (Anasyan), 1987, 217.

the bishop celebrate with pure wine, but did so in observation of a Roman custom whereby the liturgy was celebrated with pure wine during a coronation. This is a highly significant detail, and as Baghumyan points out, Aygektsi's account has escaped many scholars' attention.<sup>814</sup> Scholars have long puzzled over whether King Levon's coronation reflected Armenian or Roman tradition. There is no definite answer to this question. Davtyan, in his fundamental work on the canon of the blessing of kings in the Armenian Church, observes that 'the contemporaries of king Levon mention that he was crowned by Armenian ritual by the Armenian Catholicos, but when the Latin influence grew in the Cilician kingdom, it is said that Levon was crowned by Latin ritual'.<sup>815</sup> However, after the fall of Cilicia, when the struggle for national and spiritual identity intensified, Armenian historians averred that Levon was crowned in accordance with Armenian ritual.<sup>816</sup> And Davtyan, on the basis of his examination of the historical sources, concludes that that was indeed the case.

Unfortunately, as noted by Baghumyan, Davtyan did not examine the aforementioned statement by Aygektsi.<sup>817</sup> We agree with Baghumyan that Aygektsi's statement is quite significant. First, it suggests that Levon was crowned by a Latin bishop and, secondly, it claims that the Latin Church used pure wine during coronation in that period. Baghumyan supposes that 'we do not need to take it

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814 Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 6.

815 See Derenik Davtyan, *The Canon of Blessing the King in the Armenian Church*. Etchmiatsin, 2001, 33; Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 70.

816 See Davtyan, *The Canon of Blessing the King*, 33; Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 70.

817 Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 70.

literally, as the idea of “crowning” may suggest that the bishop only brought the crown from Rome and just took part in the process of crowning only by that action, which does not exclude the celebration of the liturgy with pure wine’.<sup>818</sup> This may be the case, but it raises a question: Why does Aygektsi point out that, according to the Latin bishop’s statement, the custom of Rome is to celebrate the crowning of a king with pure wine? Anasyan, examining Aygektsi’s statement, offers a possible explanation: the reference to pure wine during coronation may have been a clever attempt to please the Armenians.<sup>819</sup>

The tradition of pure wine, as noted earlier, was passed down from St Gregory the Illuminator. St Gregory, we must assume, adopted this ritual from early church tradition. As Baghumyan contends, ‘St. Gregory undoubtedly took into account the traditional habit of the Armenians of drinking wine, which became one of the reasons of using the pure cup.’<sup>820</sup> We do not know the precise bases for St Gregory’s decision on pure wine for the celebration of the Eucharist, but it is doubtful that among these is the Armenians’ habit of wine drinking. This is not to say that St Gregory did not pay heed to the traditions of Armenians, but rather that, because the mixed cup was foreign to the Armenian fathers, it could not signify the blood of Christ, only something mixed. We believe in fact that St Gregory the Illuminator recognized, developed and passed down this tradition of celebrating the Eucharist with pure wine

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818 Ibid., 71.

819 See Անասյան (Anasyan), 1987, 292. He adds that Cardinal Giovanni Bona states that theologians deem it to be certain that, even if the water is neglected, the consecration is valid.

820 Բաղումյան, Անապակ Բաժակի Խնդիրը Հայոց Եկեղեցում (Baghumyan, *The Issue of the Unmixed Cup*), 153.

in observation of Christ's own words as well as the universal tradition of the early Church based on apostolic tradition.

Some general considerations may be brought to bear. According to Garsoyan, 'Armenians belonged to Iranian "barbaric" world in the classic meaning of this word, and probably drank wine as it was customary in Iran, without mixing water with wine.'<sup>821</sup> Baghumyan, as we have just seen, also maintains this idea. However, the taking of wine in traditional Armenian culture often symbolized the source of life during rituals. According to archaeological data, by the third millennium BC wine had already become important to ancient Armenian social life.<sup>822</sup> Over the centuries, winemaking and viticulture developed significantly, contributing to country life and urban economics. The ancient historian Herodotus imparts remarkable information about Armenian wine, mentioning that merchants transported red wine from Armenia to Babylon.<sup>823</sup> In later periods, it is known that many vineyards belonged to lay structures as well as to monastic complexes.<sup>824</sup> Archaeological studies confirm that various artistic objects and historical monuments feature the symbol of grapes or grape vines, which suggests the significance of this fruit over and above others. Grapes were associated with plenitude, and wine achieved rich symbolic properties in Armenian spiritual and secular life. Among these are the image of Jesus on the cross as life-giving wine, cleansing sinful mankind with his blood. Furthermore, in

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821 See Գարսոյան Նինա, Հաղորդության Սուրբ Բաժակի (Սկիիի) Անապակ Գինին Հայոց Եկեղեցում, «Էջմիածին» (Nina Garsoyan. 'The Communion to the Holy Cup (Chalice): The Unmixed Wine in the Armenian Church.' *Etchmiadzin Monthly* 7 (2010): 12-30, at 20. (Translation by Azat Bozoyan.)

822 See *Wine in Traditional Armenian Culture*. Idea by Armenuhi Sahakyan, Boris Gasparyan. Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development: Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of NAS RA.

823 *Ibid.*, 24.

824 *Ibid.* 26-30.

the Armenian language, *aygi* ('garden') refers to wine. Synonyms of wine, which in Armenian is *ghini*, include grape blood, grape water, Jesus water and red water.

When Grigor Tatevatsi, in the *Book of Questions*, investigates what it means to drink wine for the purpose of blessing and showing gratitude, he says that 'as in the upper room when Christ blessed the cup, the cup became something to be drunk by Christians, so when we drink wine we remember the blessing of the Christ'.<sup>825</sup> Moreover, Tatevatsi points out that other religions did not possess this habit, and thus learned it from us. It is not fully clear, in Tatevatsi's discussion of remembering Christ, why he mentions that other religions learned it from us. It might seem from his wording that he is referring to the fact that non-Christians have had to learn it from us, but we should assume that Tatevatsi means that other Christian churches learned it from the Armenian Apostolic Church. This interpretation is corroborated by his later observation that Evagrius (probably Ponticus) commands monks to avoid wine altogether, and instructs laymen, if they drink, to bless the Lord.<sup>826</sup> According to Tatevatsi, there are two types of drinkers: those who drink, get drunk and behave badly, thus committing sin, and those who before drinking bless it and after drinking give thanks, thus avoiding sin. When we drink with this kind of restraint, we partake of 'heavenly wine', which is God's wisdom, regarding which our Lord enjoins us to 'eat and drink from my father's table'.<sup>827</sup>

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825 See Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 655.

826 Ibid.

827 Ibid.

Another consideration is that the earliest Christians were Jewish converts, and at least until the early second century, they continued the liturgical traditions of their forefathers, reorienting them in the spirit of the new Christian faith. Therefore, it is hard to imagine that they were mixing wine with water.

The twelfth-century scholar Nerses Lambronatsi<sup>828</sup> (1153-1198) also confirms that the Armenian Church does not mix water and wine in the chalice, as other nations do: ‘We do not add water, in recognition that the Saviour accomplishes the mystery which He has transmitted to us with wine, and because he subsequently added that he would not again taste the fruit of the vine.’<sup>829</sup>

In July 1289, Nicholas IV sent a letter to Hethum II discussing the priority of the Church of Rome and the supremacy of the Papal authority.<sup>830</sup> The interactions of Hethum II with the Roman Catholic Church assumed official status when Nicholas IV (a former Franciscan friar and a fellow monk of Hethum) acceded to the papal throne. However, this did not halt Hethum II’s imposition of wilful reforms and innovations upon the Armenian clergy for the sake of effecting the intended union: first at the Council of Tzrazatik in 1292, and then at the Council of Sis in 1307. In relation to this issue, the historical data at Abel Oghlugyan’s disposal shed some light on the activities of the Catholicos Grigor VII Anavarzetsi, a personality behind the throne of Hethum II. Grigor VII himself became Catholicos at Hethum’s wish and

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828 For Nerses Lambronatsi see Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, vol. II, *From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century*, 458-461.

829 See *ibid.*, 474.

830 See Galanus, «Հայոց սուրբ եկեղեցու միավորումը Յոռմի մեծ սուրբ եկեղեցուն», Յոռմ, 1690, Ա. 404-410; Մ. Օրմանյան, «Ազգապատում», Բ, Երուսաղեմ, 1914, 1715-1716; Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 30.

used the royal power to promote unification.<sup>831</sup> Grigor Anavarzetsi was the one who provided materials for the king to facilitate the implementation of reforms and innovations in the canon of festivities and rituals of the Armenian Church. This is apparent from his epistle *To the Priestly King Hethum*,<sup>832</sup> which is also known in the Armenian literature as ‘The Epistle of Grigor to King Hethum’. Clemens Galanus testifies that Grigor Anavarzetsi kept in touch with the Pope to promote the unification of the Churches and received written instructions from Rome.<sup>833</sup> Both writings penned by Anavarzetsi (the *Epistle* and the *Will*) engage the issue of mixing wine with water, complicated significantly by the fact that testimonies, both relevant and extraneous, are drawn mostly from works by foreign authors and church traditions.

The rule determined by Odznetsi at the Manazkert Council proved decisive for the further tradition as testified by the following excerpt from a homologous letter to Grigor Anavarzetsi written by a group of Eastern theologians headed by Stepanos Orbelian and Nchetsi: ‘Again on the Council of Manazkert, Hovannes Odznetsi closed with a heavy curse the heresy caused by Yezr and kept us away from Rome’.<sup>834</sup>

We should note that it would not have been easy for Anavarzetsi to revoke national ecclesiastical traditions. Therefore, he called on king Hethum to convene a Council

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831 See Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 30.

832 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, 435-450; Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 30.

833 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, 434-435; Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 31.

834 See «Գիրք ժողովածու ընդդեմ երկաթնակների», Նոր Ջուղա, 1688, 465-66; Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 32.

to endorse mixing water, as well as certain other issues.<sup>835</sup> Interestingly enough, Anavarzetsi is concerned not with the anathema of the Armenian Church and Armenians in general but with the anathema of the Catholic Church.<sup>836</sup> About himself Anavarzetsi admits: ‘When I celebrate a holy mass I apply water secretly until it is approved by a Council.’<sup>837</sup> However, Anavarzetsi failed to see his cherished idea realized; he died in December 1306 or January 1307.<sup>838</sup> Unfortunately, his death did not prevent Hethum II from convening the intended Council on the 19 March 1307, in the Cathedral of St Sophia in Sis. A chronicler reports on this occasion: ‘In that year Lord Hethum called the council, and they united with the Church of Rome and agreed to celebrate the Nativity on the 25 of December ... Also, to apply water to the Holy Communion. This happened in 1307, on the holy Easter.’<sup>839</sup> This one-day meeting elected Catholicos Constantine III of Caesarea, and then in the presence of bishops, priests and rulers of Cilicia, Anavarzetsi’s aforementioned *Will* was confirmed. The first four of the proposed reforms and innovations bear no dogmatic interpretation and constitute a rather jejune list. The whole burden of theological explanation fell on the issue of mixing wine with water.<sup>840</sup>

Interestingly, it was not only Armenian theologians (vardapets) who denounced the decisions of the Sis Council but also the local clergy and people. The local

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835 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, 438; Օղլուգեան, 33: (Oghlugyan, 33).

836 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, 439; Օղլուգեան, 33: (Oghlugyan, 33).

837 See Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, 438; Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 33.

838 Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 34.

839 See Ս. Անեցի, Պատմություն, Վաղարշապատ, 1893, 155; Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 155.

840 Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 39-40.

population's resentment was gradually changing to anger on account of the revisions of centuries-old rooted traditions. The unionistic decisions of the Council of Sis proved tragic for their perpetrators. According to M. Chamchyan and H. Ajaryan, people enraged with the ritualistic novelties and some of the Armenian landlords conspired in the assassination of both Hethum and Leo III by the Tartar Bilarghu Khan.<sup>841</sup> The general attitude toward the Council of Sis is described in a manuscript, dated 1307, and copied in the St Toros desert:

And the senior lord of Cilicia, named Hethum, summoned the bishops in Sis, and by his order, some, driven by their own glory and some by fear, accepted the foreign custom of mixing wine at the Holy Communion, the Nativity, and all other holy days, and the fish which St. Basil called 'beast', and Paul called 'flesh', they called 'water' and decreed lent meal. And there can be no lament more inconsolable than this, for we war against ourselves; thus not only alien Christians contest our faith but also our own King and Catholicos strive to alienate us from the traditions of St. Grigor and others.<sup>842</sup>

In 1308 in Adana, then in 1309 in Sis, crowds led by the opposing clergy protested against these ritual changes and demanded their abolition. The Roman Catholic King Oshin with the approval of the Catholicos and the landlords did not hesitate to

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841 See Հր. Աճառյան, «Հայոց անձնանունների բառարան», Բ, Բեյրութ, 1972, 423; Մ. Չամչյան, «Պատմություն Հայոց», Գ, Վենետիկ, 1786, 311; Օղլուգեան (Oghlughyan), 43.

842 See Ն. Պողարյան, «Մայր ցուցակ ձեռագրաց Սրբոց Հակոբյանց», Երուսաղեմ, Դ, 1969, 536-537; Օղլուգեան (Oghlughyan), 44.

impose the decisions of the Council forcibly on the troubled people. Eyewitness testimonies of these violent actions survive.<sup>843</sup>

The thirteenth-century theologian Movses Yerznkatsi strongly objected to the decision of the Council of Sis.<sup>844</sup> His letter, 'Ընդդիմադրութիւն սակս ջրոյն խառնման ի սուրբ խորհուրդ ի թուիս Յայոց ՉԾԸ [=1309]', was written at the time when the king Hetum along with the Catholicoi Gregory the Seventh Anavarzetsi and Constantine the Third, under the influence of Latin ritual traditions, aimed to introduce further changes to the rituals of the Armenian Church and is of great significance historically, not least in regard to the issue of adding the water.<sup>845</sup> It should be noted that Yerznkatsi's *Epistle* is ritualistic rather than dogmatic, as Yeznik Vardapet Petrosyan frames it in the title of his study.<sup>846</sup> The letter was firstly presented to the attention of philologists by Arshak Ter-Mikelyane.<sup>847</sup> Later, in 1901, Ter-Mikelyane fully published Movses Yerznkatsi's letter.<sup>848</sup>

Yerznkatsi's *Epistle* consists of four parts. In the first part, he introduces the decision of the Council of Sis, and in the fourth part, he presents his strong objection to that decision of the council.<sup>849</sup> We will note some of the points he makes.

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843 See Ս. Անեցի, «Պատմություն», Վարդաբազար, 1893, 156, 165-166; Բաբկեն Կյուլեսերյան, «Պատմություն Կաթողիկոսաց Կիլիկիո», Անթիլաս, 1939, 11; Օղլուգեան (Oghlughyan), 45.

844 See Petrosyan, 37-42.

845 Ibid., 37.

846 See Ե. վրդ. Պետրոսյան, 'the dogmatical epistle': Սովսես Երզնկացի, «Ջրի խառնմանը Սուրբ խորհրդի ժամանակ հայոց ՉԾԸ [1309] թվին», «Էջմիածին», 1974, 33; Ա. Օղլուգեան, (Oghlughyan) Ibid., 1829).

847 See Arshak Ter-Mikelyan, 1893, 298-300. Here the author, as documentary evidence about the internal resistance against the Council of Sis in 1307, briefly mentions the letter.

848 See Arshak Ter-Mikelyan. *The Councils of Sis and Adana*. Luma, 1901, 290-317.

849 See Պետրոսյան (Petrosyan), 37-42.

Yerznkatsi states that when the Apostle John speaks of ‘spirit, water and blood’ (I John 5: 8), the Catholic Church understands this as adding water in the cup.<sup>850</sup> However, Yerznkatsi contends against this interpretation, that the phrase ‘spirit, water and blood’ does not concern adding water, but is instead a proclamation that Jesus is the Son of God. Yerznkatsi states that the water on the cross is understood by the Armenian Church as a symbol for the sacrament of baptism<sup>851</sup> and so the fact that blood and water issued from his side does not lead to the conclusion that during the holy sacrament the water must be mixed in the cup.<sup>852</sup> Rather, the water and blood from the side evoke the living Deity and lifeless body of the Lord on the cross, instead of being an image of adding water in the cup.<sup>853</sup>

According to the Latin Church tradition, which Yerznkatsi rejects, the word ‘cup’ does not designate pure wine, but a cup of mixed water and wine. Furthermore, Solomon’s prophecy is fulfilled on the cross when blood and water flows from Christ’s side. This proves, for the Latin tradition, that the Eucharist cannot be celebrated only with water or wine, but instead with wine and water mixed.<sup>854</sup> For Yerznkatsi, Solomon’s words do not concern water and mixing, but rather the unity of the Old and the New Testaments.<sup>855</sup> Furthermore, according to Yerznkatsi, the mixture of water and wine symbolizes the blending of divinity and humanity in Christ.

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850 Ibid., 38.

851 Ibid., 41.

852 Ibid., 38; Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 111.

853 Petrosyan., 41, 49.

854 Պետրոսյան, (Petrosyan), 39; Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 111-112.

855 See Petrosyan, 41, 49.

Regarding the claim that the Catholic Church must be obeyed by other churches, as the body obeys the head, and that therefore, as the Catholic Church adds water, so other churches should do the same,<sup>856</sup> Yerznkatsi offers no comment and seems not to have wished to examine this. Finally, he states his belief that the Council of Sis is anti-canonical, unauthoritative and senseless – a false instead of a holy council.<sup>857</sup>

From the ancient texts of Armenian literature and discussions in native and foreign secondary literature it is clear that the imperative mood in recognition of its own Church tradition was the exclusive message of the Armenian Church fathers. Armenian fathers were convinced of the consecrated nature of their tradition according to the rule defined by Odznetsi: ‘Bow not to the traditions of foreign Christians’.<sup>858</sup> The fathers of the Armenian Church, in affirming their faith, always encourage the necessity of keeping it pure, as the true identity of the Armenian Church is generated from it. For many centuries, this cherished purity of belief was considered a pre-condition of being a true Christian of the Armenian Church. As Movses Yerznkatsi beautifully put it, ‘The old custom is sweet for everyone’.<sup>859</sup>

### **5.5 Grigor Tatevatsi on the Eucharist**

According to Tatevatsi,

Communion is a sacrament containing Christ in the form of bread and wine therein, and both elements together are the whole Christ. The

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856 See Պետրոսյան, (Petrosyan), 39; Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 115.

857 See Պետրոսյան, (Petrosyan), 42.

858 See *Canon Book*, 1964, 519.

859 See Օղլուգեան (Oghlugyan), 99.

material of this sacrament is the bread made of wheat, and the wine made from the vine. And the form of this sacrament on the bread says: ‘This is my body’, and on the cup it says: ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood’.<sup>860</sup>

Tatevatsi states that the sacrament of communion is for ‘grace to abound’, and ‘it is a remedy for persistent sins.’ And the minister of this sacrament is the priest only.<sup>861</sup>

In this opening section, Tatevatsi makes clear that communion represents the death of Christ. In the forms of unleavened bread and pure wine Christ is presented totally. The effect of communion is a remedy for daily sins, and to add grace. Christ is the centre, and communion between God and his believers is established in Christ. Finally, only the priest is minister of the sacrament of communion.

From the beginning, Tatevatsi insists that ‘No water shall be applied to the sacrament.’<sup>862</sup> He notes that the followers of Chalcedon, who, according to Tatevatsi, commit evil heresy by straying from the truth, add water to the pure cup of the blood of Christ.<sup>863</sup>

In support of his position regarding unmixed wine, Tatevatsi invokes several testimonies.<sup>864</sup> Firstly, he considers the testimony of his opponents, ‘for Albert says

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860 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594: Appendix IV. 1.

861 Ibid.

862 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594: Appendix IV. 2.

863 Ibid.

864 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594-597: Appendix IV. 2.1-7.

in book one, chapter eleven: “Spirit of Holiness, blood of salvation, and water of washing”<sup>865</sup>. Tatevatsi also cites Albert from iv.20 of the same work: ‘He gave His body to eat, His blood to drink, His soul as ransom, the water from His side to wash’.<sup>866</sup> And in the same chapter (iv.20), which specifies eight virtues of Christ’s passion, he identifies the fourth as ‘Blood and water flow for our washing’.<sup>867</sup>

Secondly, Tatevatsi elicits from the Gospel of Mark testimony from Christ himself when He gave his blood in the form of wine and said, ‘I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.’<sup>868</sup> Tatevatsi concludes, ‘Whereas water is not a fruit of the vine’.<sup>869</sup>

Thirdly, Tatevatsi recounts stories from the Old Testament in which the testimony of prophets such as David,<sup>870</sup> Jacob,<sup>871</sup> Moses<sup>872</sup> and Abraham<sup>873</sup> registers only wine, not water. Tatevatsi also turns to the authority of the New (Testament) Gospel, where

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865 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594: Appendix IV. 2.1. The reference is to Albertus Magnus, *Compendium Theologicae Veritatis* i.11. The original text is quoted by Ashjian: ‘Est autem alia per quam regeneramur, scilicet spiritus, aqua, et sanguis. Spiritus, inquam, sanctificationis, aqua absolutionis, sanguis redemptionis.’ See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 99.

866 ‘... qui dedit nobis carnem suam in cibum, sanguinem suum in potum, animam in pretium, aquam lateris in lavacrum ...’

867 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594: Appendix IV. 2.1. The original text is quoted by Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 59: ‘Lateris apertionem propter effusionem pretii nostrae redemptionis et abluitionis. Exivit enim sanguis, et aqua’.

868 Mark 14: 23-25.

869 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 595: Appendix IV. 2.2.

870 See Ps. 23: 5, Ps. 104: 15.

871 See Gen. 49: 11.

872 See Ex. 29: 40.

873 See Gen. 14: 18.

he finds that the Apostle Paul asked, ‘The cup of blessing which we drink, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?’<sup>874</sup> Furthermore, the Apostle Peter confirmed that ‘You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.’<sup>875</sup>

Fourthly, a testament from the ‘apostolic rules’ states: ‘You shall put a hot bread and a pure cup on the table that we may be saved with the pure blood of Christ; and cursed be whosoever adds water.’<sup>876</sup>

Fifthly, Tatevatsi highlights that patriarchs such as Athanasius the Great, John Chrysostom, Saint Basil and St Gregory the Illuminator wrote about the sacrament of the Eucharist without mentioning water.<sup>877</sup> Unfortunately, Tatevatsi does not provide further detail, and it is quite difficult to extrapolate which texts he examined.

Sixthly, he considers the evidence of the opening of the side of Christ, as water and blood flowed separately, not mixed. But if one were to suppose that these flowed in mixed form, just as water would be added to the wine, so would wine be added to the water at baptism. According to Tatevatsi, clean water is necessary for baptism for the same reason that pure wine is for communion.<sup>878</sup>

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874 I Cor. 10: 16.

875 I Pet. 1: 18-20; Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594: Appendix IV. 2.3.

876 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 595: Appendix IV. 2.4.

877 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 595: Appendix IV. 2.5.

878 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 595: Appendix IV. 2.6.

Seventhly, Tatevatsi explains that if the opponents claim, ‘The wine will not be corrupted because of a little water, we say, “The matter may be little but the substance is equal”.’ According to Tatevatsi, the wine will be corrupted because of a little water, rendering it neither pure wine nor pure water.<sup>879</sup> ‘And if they say, “That water signifies the Church”, we say that the Church has adopted the communion of Christ with love and faith and not with water’. And ‘if they say: “Water is of twofold property”, that it cools and washes, we say that properties are contingent, whereas the mystery is in the substance, which is one, and not in contingencies, which are numerous.’<sup>880</sup>

As we observed, for Tatevatsi communion has a divine constitution: Christ himself instituted it at the Last Supper, and later the blood and water poured out from Christ’s side. He examined scriptural materials from the Old and New Testaments, and these passages proved for him that the materials for this sacrament are unleavened bread and pure wine. Tatevatsi clearly states that even a little water will corrupt the wine; therefore, he only pure wine is to be used during communion, as Christ himself established this.

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879 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 595-596: Appendix IV. 2.7.

880 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 596: Appendix IV. 2.8.

Tatevatsi also argues that the phrase ‘blended her wine in the chalice’ (Prov. 9: 2) means not mingling water and wine but pouring the wine into the chalice.<sup>881</sup> Blending evokes the merging of the wisdom of God with humankind, for they achieved union ‘by blending with the Word, as Saint Dionysius says. Also, Christ united the old wisdom with the new by blending (mixing) them: that is, the sample (symbol) with the truth, and the mystery with the substance.’<sup>882</sup> This is the blending of the wine in the crater of wisdom. Tatevatsi asks, ‘What is water a mystery of?’ – that is, what does it signify sacramentally? For by saying, ‘This is my body’, it showed the mystery of bread (the essence of bread is cut),<sup>883</sup> and by saying, ‘This is my blood’, it transformed the substance of wine. But water remained water and imperfect.’<sup>884</sup>

Tatevatsi also addresses the question: Why do some mix water and dough? For Tatevatsi, those ‘who want to call Christ's body corrupt add dough and water’. He explains that in observance of the Virgin-born, incorrupt body of Christ, ‘we administer the sacrament of His body and blood with unleavened bread and incorrupt cup’.<sup>885</sup> Tatevatsi further discusses the incorrupt body of Christ in another part of the

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881 Ibid.

882 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 596: Appendix IV. 2.9.

883 Tatevatsi uses the word կտրեց which means ‘cut’, ‘divide into pieces’. Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 63, translated, ‘when he says, “This is my body”, the substance of the bread is changed; when he says, “This is my blood”, the substance of the blood is changed”. Tatevatsi says, զեռւթի հացին կտրեց, զեռւթի գինւոյնս փոխարկեաց, which means, literally, the ‘essence of bread is cut’, and ‘the essence of wine is changed’.

884 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 596: Appendix IV. 2.9.

885 Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 596: Appendix IV. 3.

*Book of Questions*.<sup>886</sup> He there states that before the crucifixion the body of Christ was incorrupt; in support of his statement he cites Fathers of the church such as John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Athanasius of Alexandria and others who testified that the body of Christ was incorrupt.<sup>887</sup> Tatevatsi states that according to these patristic writers, ‘if someone, without explanation, names the body of Christ was corrupt let him be anathema.’<sup>888</sup>

In the discussion of the sacrament of the Eucharist Tatevatsi briefly states that the Armenian Apostolic Church does not add leaven, and administers the sacrament of His body and blood with unleavened bread and incorrupt cup. In this section, Tatevatsi does not go into detail regarding why the Armenian Apostolic Church uses only unleavened bread. It seems that he chooses not to pursue this because the practice also occurs in the Catholic Church, concentrating his efforts instead on points of difference between the Armenian and Catholic Churches. However, Tatevatsi raises this topic elsewhere in the *Book of Questions*, and in ten points emphasizes that leavened bread is unacceptable for the Armenian Church, and that Greeks and Assyrians are wrong in using leavened bread during the sacrament. According to Tatevatsi, the leavened bread chiefly evokes the old malice (fury), which should be renounced and made good. The leavened bread signifies self-admiration, which should not be mixed with goodness. It is purulent and sour, eliciting the taste and smell of sin. It is not alive, it contrast with the life-giving blood contained in unleavened bread. It shows anger of heart, and it is mixed, whereas

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886 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 498-501.

887 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 498-499.

888 Ibid.

unleavened bread is clear, embodying the sacredness of the heart. Finally, the use of leavened bread falsely signifies that the body of Christ is corruptible.<sup>889</sup>

Tatevatsi highlights four essentials of the sacrament of the Eucharist: ‘first is the priest, second is the samples of bread and wine, third is the determination – or intention – of the celebrant, and fourth is the words of Christ which say. “This is my body” and “This is my blood’. ‘If any one of these is missing, the sacrament will not be complete.’<sup>890</sup>

Tatevatsi next raises the question: Why do we consecrate one host in the church, whereas others consecrate many?<sup>891</sup> According to Tatevatsi, one host is constitutive of the mystery – the sacrament – and many hosts are not.

First, because Christ took one loaf of bread and blessed, and also one cup of wine. Second, He ordered in the singular, ‘This is my body’ and ‘This is my blood’, which means one bread. Third, the Apostle said to the Corinthians, ‘For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.’ Fourth, there was one bread and one roast lamb which they [the children of Israel] put on the table [at the first Passover] together with a cup of wine.<sup>892</sup>

For Tatevatsi, this is proper way to celebrate -- with one host and one cup of wine.

Christ himself took one bread and, using singular ‘this’, consecrated it. And, he adds,

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889 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 356.

890 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 597: Appendix IV. 4.

891 Ibid.

892 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 597: Appendix IV. 4.

if anyone<sup>893</sup> claims that a priest is able to bless many loaves, ‘we say that ability is (directed) towards intention, and intention is (directed) towards the end, which is one bread, as it is said, ‘This is my body’’, so then he cannot bless many loaves.’<sup>894</sup>

To support that, he meets the objection that, if a priest can baptize many in an hour, why can he not consecrate many loaves. The answer is that Christ used the plural when he said, ‘Baptize *them* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.’ But he used the singular in saying, ‘*This* do in remembrance of me’, and not ‘these’.<sup>895</sup>

Tatevatsi then turns to the important question, ‘How can it be the body and blood of Christ?’

According to Tatevatsi, the accidents and quality remain those of bread and wine, but the substance (or essence) is changed to the body and blood of Christ. And he gives four reasons why the accidents remain.<sup>896</sup> ‘First, we reach substance (essence) through our senses and through accidents, for these are inseparable determinations of

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893 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 83, believes that Tatevatsi while explaining his thoughts, makes clear that ‘the communion given by the Franks is invalid’. ‘One host should be consecrated ... Christ by using the singular form took one bread and consecrated it ... and the priest’s power of the intention, and the intention is in the limits of one bread. Therefore, the communion given by the Franks is invalid’. Tatevatsi did not say anything about ‘Franks’ in this passage; he simply says, ‘if anyone says that a priest is able to bless many breads ...’. Anyone can be anyone, but Tatevatsi asks ‘if all bread is blessed today, why bless again? Thus, either the consecrated bread shall be blessed anew, which is wrong, or not all bread is blessed but only one.’ (Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 597.) Perhaps this question of Tatevatsi’s had an effect on Ashjian.

894 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 597: Appendix IV. 5.

895 Ibid.

896 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 597-598: Appendix IV. 6.

substances.’ There must, then, be accidents of some sort, since it is through the sensible that our minds are able to apprehend substance. And, secondly, the reason why it is the accidents of bread and wine that we encounter is that ‘if it were real flesh and blood, no one would dare approach’. The third reason is ‘that we may be rewarded by faith, for faith is unto the invisible, which is the substance. For that, we should see the sensible with the eyes, and observe the intelligible with the mind and be blessed.’ This is supported by the words of Christ to Thomas in John 20: 29, ‘Because you have seen me, you have believed: blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed’. Fourthly,

we may learn thereby that the incarnation of the Word was in two modes. As the bread is the same by its form, but the substance has become Christ’s body, likewise the apparent image is the same by form but the nature has united to the God the Word and become God. Yet again, as the host as a whole is one body, and each part of the division is the whole and perfect body of Christ, so is the whole body and soul one God, unified with the Word, and all parts together are integral and perfect God. Therefore, the Spirit of Christ is God, and His body is God, and His blood is God. Thence, we partake the body and blood of God, and not of a human, and by enjoying them we become, as it were, a God, and not a human.<sup>897</sup>

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<sup>897</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 598: Appendix IV. 6.

Mkhitar Sasnetsi, an influential figure of the first half of the fourteenth century,<sup>898</sup> makes a similar point:

Surpassing everything as to His divine ability and power is the unfathomable union we have with Him through the sacrament, which He achieved miraculously far above the nature of existent being; for ‘My body is real food and My blood is real drink. Whoever eats My body and drinks My blood dwells in Me and I in him’. This is superior to all the gifts He offers, actually to unite with God through tasting His body and blood. It also excels every union since nothing of existent beings is seen to equal this, for the uncreated God to unite with humanity in an existent body from a virgin. Moreover, for men with an existent nature to unite with the uncreated God is far more lofty and superior to all ineffable miracles.<sup>899</sup>

Tatevatsi then asks ‘Why do we conjoin the sacrament of the body and the blood?’ – that is, receive the two elements together – and offers three reasons.

First, because blood is a liquid matter and is not to be given like other forms; no one should be deprived of the saving blood. Thus it should be conjoined with body and given to men, for as the body is shared, so the blood is shared too. Second, bread alone sometimes signifies the Word descended from heaven, and wine signifies the humanity, as it is said, ‘By His proximity He communed with body and blood. And sometimes

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898 For Mkhitar Sasnetsi’s biography see S.P. Cowe, in Sasneci, *Theological Discourses*, CSCO 543, v-xvii.

899 See Mxitar Sasneci, *Theological Discourses*, CSCO 543, 89.

bread signifies the sacred body, and blood signifies the immortal vitality. Despite this, we conjoin them and confess God the Word incarnate, inseparable from His body. Those who do not conjoin manifest the Word separate from His body, as the Chalcedonian dyophysites do. Third, we bless the bread and the cup separately, and then enjoy them together, for the blood flowed away from the body, yet He united it with Him and to His body, and did not did not let it waste away. That is why we conjoin the sacrament.

But to all those who prattle as if it is the 'dipped sop' of Judas, we say: 'The vile person will speak villainy, and his heart will work iniquity.' Thus you would better never to communicate men so that they do not become a Judas. And when you, wicked priests, separate blood from the body, you all are Judases, for they are joined in the same way internally and externally because food and drink mingle inside'. 'This is what we heard from the Scriptures – that Judas tasted the food unworthily, and not that he tasted the body and blood together.'<sup>900</sup>

Tatevatsi notes a variety of opinions on the dipped morsel that Judas took. He says:

Some say the Apostles sat at a regular supper, and from an ordinary table He gave the dipped piece of bread to Judas, and then He washed the disciples' feet and then shared His body with them all; and when they had sung a hymn, they

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<sup>900</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 598-599: Appendix IV. 7.1.

went out to the Mount of Olives. This is what Matthew and Mark tell; but Luke and John mention the dipped morsel after the supper. Some say He dipped it in water and washed off the blessing, but this is an unacceptable view. Yet others assert that, although it was after the supper, He took it not of the blessed bread and wine but from the table and dipped it in water or wine and gave it. And as He had given dry pieces of the consecrated bread to the others and a dipped piece to Judas, that caused his betrayal. And this is true.

As for the dipped morsel, the betrayer, insolent in the face and defiled in mind, hastened to the Rabbi with a plate of food. And Christ gave him the morsel of bread which He held in His hand. *[There is here a lacuna in the text.]* This is how teachers of the Church interpret in general. And this is what Augustine, the teacher of the Franks, said in chapter 81 of the Book of Sacraments: first, Christ shared the sacrament of the body and blood and gave it to Judas, and after that pointed to the betrayer with the dipped piece. And this is the truth; of the consecrated bread which He shared among the disciples nothing was left over; and also the blessed cup was shared, and nothing was left over. And it is well known that the dipped morsel was not of the body and not of the blood but was taken from other food of the table, dipped and given to point to the betrayer.<sup>901</sup>

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901 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 599: Appendix IV. 7.

Tatevatsi then turns to the Catholic practice of normally giving only the host to the laity in communion and contrasts it with the practice of the Armenian Church, in which both the bread and the wine are received at the same time. And here his tone is quite polemical.

Now I ask you, ungodly nation of Franks, why do you deprive people of the communion of the body and blood of Christ, for openly you do not give the blood and secretly (you do not give) the body because you do not give of the consecrated matter but mere bread which is on the altar. And if they say that all the hosts on the altar are consecrated, we reply that all the hosts on the altar and in the aumbry are consecrated today, but you will consecrate them again tomorrow. So why do you consecrate again?

And if they are not consecrated, why do you give them as consecrated body to the people and mislead them? And if it is consecrated, then why do you not give the blood? And if they say that the body only is enough for the people, for they must believe that the body of Christ comprises also blood jointly, and the spirit equally, and divinity together; and they are likewise conjoined in the blood, we reply that, first of all, the body is not given to the people but merely bread and wine, for Christ's body was the only one consecrated, as shown above.

Yet again we say: why do you preach faith to the people and you do not believe in tasting of the blood? You do not taste and believe the blood is joint with the body. Also, did not the Lord Himself give command, 'My flesh is food indeed,

and my blood is drink indeed; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood, dwells in Me, and I in him'? Also, if you believe that the blood is joint with the body, do not take the blood to the altar, but just consecrate the host, and it will be Christ's body and blood.

Blood is with the body, as you said, likewise, body is with the blood, and the spirit co-equal, and divinity with it. Thus if you deprive men of blood, you deprive them also of things which are connected with blood, namely, the body, the spirit, and divinity. Therefore, openly and in secret, you deprive men of the communion with Christ; you fail to give the blood openly, and the body in secret, for you give mere bread, and not the consecrated one.

If they ever put forward any justification, let it be known that they do not communicate infants until the age of twelve and many remain uncommunicated and die deprived of Christ. And if they bring Solomon's words in justification: 'My beloved shall eat, and my lovely one shall get drunk', we reply that Solomon's words do not deprive any of communion in the blood, for all who deserve the body deserve the blood as well, but all believers generally are beloved by good works, and the ascetic virgins and the martyrs are the lovely.

Indeed, everyone is commanded to feed and do good works, and the lovely and the martyrs are commanded virginity and martyrdom who take this obligation willingly, for this is asceticism to death. With this mind our Lord shared His

body in the Upper Room and gave it to the Apostles, and put the blessed cup in front of them to drink willingly, as when He asked the sons of Zebedee, ‘Can you drink this cup?’; but He did not give it to them only and forbid the other Apostles.<sup>902</sup>

## **5.6 Tatevatsi and Eucharistic Controversy**

### ***The Issue of Pure Wine***

After this survey of Grigor Tatevatsi’s treatment of the Eucharist, above all in the *Book of Questions*, we are in a position to appreciate where he stood in the Eucharistic controversies of the day. The main polemics which arose over the sacrament of the Eucharist in the history of the Armenian Church related to the use of pure wine and unleavened bread. Ashjian observes that ‘Tatevatsi dedicates almost one third of his presentation on the sacrament of communion to a relatively minor question, that of adding water to the cup’.<sup>903</sup> As we have seen, Tatevatsi in fact engages the issue of the use of pure wine deeply and rejects the adding of water for many reasons. We do, though, agree with Ashjian’s statement that ‘it is obvious that for Grigor it is a very important thing’.<sup>904</sup> However, Ashjian also states, ‘Theologically it seems that it is not a major issue, and comparing it with the use of unleavened bread, there is less discussion on this particular point in Christian literature’.<sup>905</sup> Ashjian does not really say why he thinks that, in general, the lack of discussion in Christian literature on this point implies that, theologically, it is not a

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902 Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 599-600: Appendix IV. 8.1-3.

903 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 84.

904 Ibid.

905 Ibid.

major issue by comparison with the use of unleavened bread. Nor does he explain how this relates to a particular time and a particular theologian.

He does, however, suggest that ‘the reason of [Tatevatsi’s] insistence is that after the twelfth century only the Armenian Church maintained her tradition of using pure wine’ and ‘Grigor adheres to it for it has become a symbol of Armenian particularism.’<sup>906</sup> On the one hand, we agree with this statement: as we noticed above, it was a longstanding tradition of the Armenian Apostolic Church not to add water to the cup, and Tatevatsi’s insistence on this question clearly indicates that he distinctly maintains the tradition of the Armenian Church. But on the other hand, we disagree that Tatevatsi ‘adheres to it’ inasmuch as ‘it has become a symbol of Armenian particularism’. In Tatevatsi’s time the tradition of the Armenian Church to celebrate the Eucharist with a pure cup induced much argumentation, and was still a matter of controversy for other churches as well.

Tatevatsi ‘adheres to it’ because it was a very real question in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and Tatevatsi remained devoted to it not because it was an issue of exclusive adherence, or ‘a symbol of Armenian particularism’, but because his active advocacy was in support of the very principle behind the theological issues. In other words, it is not a matter of it being a major or a minor issue: beyond its habitual and practical value, it held theological significance for Tatevatsi. Therefore, Tatevatsi’s dedication of ‘almost one third of his presentation on the sacrament of

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<sup>906</sup> Ibid.

communion to ... adding water to the cup' amounts to a theological explanation relevant to his time.

The issue possesses a Christological dimension, as Tatevatsi, underlining the question's importance, argues that the Armenian Church does not need to add water to the pure cup of the blood of Christ, as do the followers of Chalcedon. For Tatevatsi, there is no need to add water, as Christ himself gave His blood in the form of wine to drink, and water is not the fruit of vine. Tatevatsi gathers several testimonies from apostolic rules as well as from the Old and New Testaments to support his position, and also turns to the authority of Fathers of the Universal Church and to Gregory the Illuminator.

One of the main proofs of the unmixed cup for Tatevatsi is the evidence of the opening of the side of Christ, when water and blood flowed out, not mixed, but separately. Ashjian says, 'Tatevatsi sees in the use of pure wine (and unleavened bread) a sign of incorruptibility of Christ's body.'<sup>907</sup> We may add that not only Tatevatsi, but also various other Armenian theologians made that point. For example, Mkhitar Sasnetsi states that in the incarnation, the Word of God had an incorrupt birth and that Christ really accepted death itself voluntarily, died for our sins and rose from the grave incorruptibly, and by distributing his incorrupt body and blood as food became the source of our salvation.<sup>908</sup>

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907 Ibid.

908 See Mxitar Sasnetsi, *Theological Discourses*, CSCO 542, 72-73.

According to Aquinas water should be mixed with the wine. Firstly, Aquinas turns to Proverbs 9: 5 and comments that the Lord, by instituting the sacrament of the Eucharist according to the custom of that country, ‘probably’ (*probabiliter*) used wine mixed with water, as we read, ‘drink of the wine I have mixed’.<sup>909</sup> Secondly, Aquinas resorts to the assertion of Pope Alexander that ‘neither wine alone nor water alone should be offered in the chalice of the Lord, but the two mixed together, because we read that both flowed from Christ’s side in his passion’.<sup>910</sup> Thirdly, adding water to the wine has the effect of uniting Christians to Christ, as the effect of the sacrament of the Eucharist is the union of Christ’s people to Christ. In order to stress this statement, Aquinas turns to Pope Julius’s notion that ‘in the water we see the people signified and in the wine we see the blood of Christ. Therefore, when water is added in the chalice to the wine, Christ’s people are united to him’.<sup>911</sup> In discussing this, Aquinas says that, insofar as the last effect of the sacrament of the Eucharist is entry into life eternal, the addition of water is fitting (*competit*), as Ambrose says, ‘the water is added to the chalice and it leaps up into life eternal.’<sup>912</sup> Aquinas adds that while in baptism water has a cleansing purpose, in the Eucharist it is used as refreshment, which he supports by appealing to Psalm 22: 3, ‘he has led me by waters of refreshment’.<sup>913</sup> For Aquinas the purpose of the Eucharist is to refresh spiritually.<sup>914</sup> The water is not necessary for validity, but, when it is added, ‘the water must be added to the wine when the Eucharist is being celebrated, and if

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909 Aquinas, 3a. 74.6 (Barden, 43).

910 Ibid.

911 Ibid.

912 Aquinas 3a. 74.6 (Barden, 45).

913 Ibid.

914 Ibid., 3a. 73.3 (Barden, 9).

water were to be added to the cask of wine, the sacramental symbolism would not be preserved'.<sup>915</sup>

Among the most important factors in Tatevatsi's rejection of water in the cup is his wholesale disagreement with the idea that the water signifies the Church: 'if they say, "That water signifies the Church", we say that the Church has adopted the communion of Christ with love and faith and not with water.'<sup>916</sup> To the opponents' statement that 'the water is of twofold property', that it cools and washes, Tatevatsi responds that 'properties are contingent, whereas the mystery is in the substance, which is one, and not in contingencies, which are numerous'.<sup>917</sup> Ashjian also notes that Tatevatsi rejects the view that the water signifies the Church.<sup>918</sup> Here we agree with Ashjian, who supposes that Tatevatsi has in mind Aquinas's notion.<sup>919</sup>

Certainly, for Aquinas, water mixed with wine signifies 'the people united to Christ'.<sup>920</sup> According to Tatevatsi, 'Christ united the old wisdom with the new by blending (mixing) them: that is, the sample (symbol) with the truth, and the mystery with the substance.'<sup>921</sup> This is the blending of the wine in the crater of wisdom'.<sup>922</sup>

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915 Ibid., 3a. 74.7 and 74.8 (Barden, 51).

916 Գիրք Քարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 596; Appendix IV. 2.8.

917 Ibid.

918 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 85.

919 Ibid.

920 Aquinas, 3a. 74.7 (Barden, 45-47).

921 Ashjian translated this as 'the mystery with reality'.

922 Գիրք Քարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 596; Appendix IV.

Ashjian points out that whereas for Tatevatsi, this is one of the major issues of his sacramental theology, ‘at any rate, this is a minor question for Aquinas’ and for him ‘the adding of water is not essential to the sacrament’.<sup>923</sup> For Aquinas, adding water to the cup was reasonable inasmuch as ‘it was how the Eucharist was instituted’;<sup>924</sup> ‘it helps to bring out the effect of this sacrament which is the union of the Christian people to Christ’,<sup>925</sup> ‘this fits in well with representing our Lord’s passion’;<sup>926</sup> ‘it harmonizes with the last effect of this sacrament, which is our entering into eternal life’.<sup>927</sup> But, while ‘the shedding of blood was a part of Christ’s actual passion ... the issue of water did not follow necessarily on the passion; its purpose was to show forth the effect of the passion which is to wash away our sins’.

Mkhitar Sasnetsi in *Theological Discourse* vii refers to the question of the mixed cup and leavened bread, and declares that there is no need to add water in the cup, and leavened bread is not to be accepted.<sup>928</sup> This discourse contains very important elements. Firstly, to support his statement Sasnetsi presents evidence from the Old and New Testaments, and contends that St Gregory the Illuminator himself celebrated with pure wine and unleavened bread. The source of this is the incorrupt Christ himself, who cannot have corrupt blood and body. Furthermore, Sasnetsi in order to underline his case invokes the authority of St Nerses Snorhali, and asserts

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923 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 85.

924 See Aquinas, 3a. 74.6 (Barden, 43).

925 Ibid.

926 Aquinas points out, ‘For this reason Pope Alexander writes, neither wine alone nor water alone should be offered in the chalice of the Lord, but the two mixed together, because we read that both flowed from Christ’s side in his passion’. Aquinas, 3a. 74.6 (Barden, 43).

927 Ibid., 3a. 74.6 (Barden, 43-45).

928 See Mxitar Sasneci, *Theological Discourses*, CSCO 543 94-102 (English); For the Old Armenian text see Mxitar Sasneci, *Theological Discourses*, CSCO 542, 82-88.

that the great Nerses himself in many of his didactic discourses celebrates the fact that the tradition of unmixed wine and unleavened bread is alive among us due to St Gregory Illuminator and other saints.<sup>929</sup>

### ***5.7 The Holy Spirit and the Form of the Eucharist***

Archbishop Ashjian, in his notes to Tatevatsi's discussion of the form of the sacrament, refers to a number of texts of Aquinas on the form of the Eucharist, in support of the claim that Tatevatsi maintains the same position that Aquinas did.<sup>930</sup> Ashjian's notes are of course correct insofar as Aquinas does in these sections discuss the form of the Eucharist, but it is not clear why he makes these specific comparisons. Tatevatsi advances his view on the form of the Eucharist in one short sentence, whereas Aquinas discusses the form in no less than six articles.<sup>931</sup> We do not think that in one short sentence Tatevatsi includes everything that Aquinas says about the form of the Eucharist, and moreover the detailed examination of Aquinas's text shows that views on the form of the Eucharist are not those expressed in Tatevatsi's brief sentence.

Ashjian hurls reproaches at Tatevatsi,<sup>932</sup> as he complains that 'The role of the Holy Spirit which is such an important factor in Eastern theology is hardly evident in what

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929 Ibid., 543, 101.

930 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 99.

931 For Tatevatsi, 'The form of this sacrament on the bread says: 'This is my body', and on the cup it says: 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood' (Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 594; 597), and when Tatevatsi mentions four essentials of the sacrament, he says that the words 'This is my body' and 'This is my blood' belong to Christ. For Aquinas on the form of the Eucharist see 3a. 78.1-6 (Barden, 163-195).

932 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 90-93.

he [Tatevatsi] had to say.<sup>933</sup> So Ashjian argues that Tatevatsi ignores the role of the Holy Spirit, and in order to stress that ‘Tatevatsi deviates from the tradition in his Eucharistic theology’,<sup>934</sup> presents the testimony of three Armenian Church fathers who commented on the transformation of the elements in the Eucharist.<sup>935</sup> These are very good examples of commentary on the liturgy, stating how the Holy Spirit is invoked and affects and changes bread and wine into the incorruptibility of the Body and Blood of Christ.<sup>936</sup> And Ashjian then concludes that Tatevatsi deviates from this tradition.<sup>937</sup> Ashjian’s position is based on the fact that there is no direct discussion of the role of the Holy Spirit in Tatevatsi’s explanation of the sacrament of communion. And he is indeed right in observing that Tatevatsi did not explain the role of the Holy Spirit, but Ashjian’s conclusion that Tatevatsi deviates from the tradition in his Eucharistic theology creates a misleading impression.

It is true that Tatevatsi does not discuss the role of the Holy Spirit in detail or in any specific sense, and we may, moreover, add that Tatevatsi does not comment on the heart of the Eucharist in all ancient Christian traditions – the Anaphora or Eucharistic Prayer. However, it is not fair to state that Tatevatsi ignores the role of the Holy Spirit in the Liturgy. Are we to conclude that he ignores the importance of the

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933 Ibid., 90.

934 Ibid., 92.

935 For these commentaries on the Liturgy by Chosrov Antzevatsi, St Nerses of Lambron and Vartan the Great see Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 92-93.

936 For Chostov Antzevatsi’s text see *Commentary of Chosrov Antzevaci*. Venice, 1869, 39-40. For St Nerses of Lambron’s text, written in 1177, see St Nerses of Lambron, *Commentary on the Mystery of the Holy Sacrifice*. Jerusalem, 1842, 108. For Vardan the Great’s text see, Galanus, *Conciliationis Ecclesiae Armenae cum Romana*, vol 2, pt.2, 549.

937 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 91-3.

Eucharistic Prayer? The role of the Holy Spirit in the Liturgy was very important and was always recognized in the theology of the Armenian Church.<sup>938</sup>

In fact, if we read Tatevatsi's entire statement on the sacrament of communion we clearly recognize that Tatevatsi understood the Eucharist as an amalgamated, united act of worship, in which the role of the Holy Spirit is not only important but of primary importance. Tatevatsi as a good teacher not only knew of this, but taught it as well. Moreover, Tatevatsi was the first of his generation to collect all the hymns or sharakans of different centuries of the Armenian Fathers on 'The Holy Spirit in the Liturgy' and 'The Significance of the Hymns for Pentecost' – a most interesting text. Through all his explanation of Holy Communion, Tatevatsi focuses on issues which are impossible without the Holy Spirit. When the priest takes unleavened bread and wine and offers them to God, it is not difficult to assume that Tatevatsi believes that the priest asks God to sanctify them by his Holy Spirit and change them into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, for our communion with him. Each of the ancient Churches had its own repertory of individual Eucharistic prayers, which were similar in literary structure and theme but different in content. Most of them were written by Church Fathers such as St Athanasius, St Basil, and others who inspired Armenian theological thinking.

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938 Abraham Terian. 'The Holy Spirit in the Liturgy of the Armenian Church: The Significance of the Hymns of Pentecost'. *St. Nersess Theological Review* 4:1-2 (1999), 33-49.

The greatest mystic poet of the tenth century, Bishop Khosrov Andzevatsi,<sup>939</sup> is known in Armenian history by his major work, *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*.<sup>940</sup> In his *Commentary* Andzevatsi states:

To bless this bread and make it truly the body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and bless this cup and make it truly the blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, believing that [the Holy Spirit] taking the bread He unites it to the Son of God and likewise the cup to become truly Christ's body and blood.

This is what we pray for, believing it takes place, since Christ's word is not false when He told us to perform this following His institution as a memorial of Him until His coming.<sup>941</sup>

We would argue that Tatevatsi not only knew about this, but also taught it to his students, as Andzevatsi was an influential figure and the first in the history of the Armenian Church to write a commentary on the liturgy. Therefore, Tatevatsi here did not explicitly pursue the role of the Holy Spirit with his students because they already knew from other Church Fathers' writings that the Eucharistic prayers bring

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939 For a brief introduction to Khosrov Andzevatsi in English see Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, vol II, *From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century*, 243-49; see also Khosrov Andzevatsi. *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, translated from Old Armenian into Modern Armenian by Gevorg Saroyan and Mkrtich Proshyan. Etchmiadzin, 2001, 9-19.

940 Khosrov Andzevatsi. *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, translated from Old Armenian into Modern Armenian by Gevorg Saroyan and Mkrtich Proshyan. Etchmiadzin, 2001; see also Khosrov Andzevatsi. *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, translated from Old Armenian into English and edited by Peter Cowe. New York, 1991.

941 See Hachikyan et al., *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, vol II, *From the Sixth to the Eighteenth Century*, 245.

together all of these dimensions of the Divine Liturgy: thanksgiving, worship, commemoration, sacrifice, Holy Communion and the celebration of salvation.

In the Divine Liturgy the invocation of the Holy Spirit is of central importance because it asks the Holy Spirit to change the bread into the Body, and the wine into the Blood of Christ, following the exact words of the Institution at the Last Supper by Jesus himself. Judging from Tatevatsi's works as a whole, we may conclude quite firmly that Tatevatsi did not ignore the role of the Holy Spirit. It might be more reasonable to ask why Tatevatsi did not speak directly here of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist. Tatevatsi had many students around him, and taking into the consideration the influence of Latin theology, Tatevatsi, as a teacher, had his own agenda: to keep students far from the foreign influence. And some issues of the sacrament of communion were more strongly underlined than others. But we do believe that Tatevatsi himself could not even have imagined that after many centuries he would be suspected of not understanding the Eastern theology of the whole role of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist.<sup>942</sup> As a teacher, Tatevatsi educated many students, and if we believe that Tatevatsi ignored the role of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist, we may wonder what kind of a 'heretic generation' he would have left after him.

### ***5.8 Transubstantiation***

Ashjian states that Tatevatsi adopted the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation and neglected his own tradition.<sup>943</sup> Ashjian's own question, 'Why did Grigor deviate so

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942 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 90.

943 *Ibid.*, 90-93.

far from the understanding of his Church on the meaning of the Eucharist?<sup>944</sup> receives an unclear answer: ‘There are non-theological factors.’<sup>945</sup> In order to strengthen his argument about ‘non-theological factors’, Ashjian indicates the constant pressure from the Latin side to accept Roman doctrine and practice. Here we are given a picture of a Tatevatsi who seems to have adopted the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation under pressure and was, moreover, intimidated because this deviated from the understanding of the Armenian Church on the meaning of the Eucharist. Ashjian is right in one respect: a continual pressure existed and, as we saw in Chapter Two, brought many problems to the inner life of the Armenian Church, but Tatevatsi was the one who as a teacher clearly and defiantly understood his mission, which was to teach the theology of the Armenian Church.

Ashjian concludes that Tatevatsi accepts the doctrine of transubstantiation following Aquinas, and thinks that at the words of Institution, the bread and the wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Ashjian points out that in the Armenian Liturgy ‘the word which is used for change in Armenian is *pokharki* [փոխարկի], which is best translated into English as “to transposit”’.<sup>946</sup> But Tatevatsi uses this word, փոխարկի, many times when explaining his meaning. And we have already seen how Mkhitar Sasnetsi and Lambronatsi use the same word *pokharki*

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944 Ibid., 91.

945 Ibid. Ashjian points out that ‘in the years 1145, 1205, 1307, 1317, 1330, 1341, for example, and at every possible occasion in discussion of Church union the Eucharistic question was brought up and acceptance of the doctrine of trans-substantiation was made a prerequisite for intercommunion’. Here we see that Ashjian ignores the fact that only in the thirteenth century was the doctrine of transubstantiation specifically formulated. And a systematic dogmatic language was dogmatically only developed by Aquinas.

946 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 91.

[փոխարկի], best translated into English as ‘to transform’ or ‘to change’. Tatevatsi does not say anything more or less than other Armenian Fathers did; he simply presents his thoughts in more modern terms, which in no way change the idea or meaning of the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Mkhitar Sasnetsi, while explaining how the bread and wine became body and blood, also uses the cognates փոխարկեաց<sup>947</sup> and փոխարկելով.<sup>948</sup> He points out:

The bread which he said was His body was so in reality, as He created Adam from dust in His own image and produced bread from fire in likeness of His incorrupt body. Likewise, from the fruit of the vine, which he said was His blood, this too is worthy of acceptance without dispute as being true. He transformed (changed) the water into wine as the creator of existent beings, not only into its likeness, but in true reality.<sup>949</sup>

Moreover, Sasnetsi concludes:

As a result, He amazes our sight, smell and taste, since afterwards he said that it was His blood as a symbol for the true vine, in that ‘I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener’. Thus, as it is true that he transformed (changed) the water into wine and the nature of fire into bread, the Lord’s sayings are true when he said that His body and blood were from the wheat harvest and the fruit of the vine. For there His commands were effective and His actions were

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947 See Mxitar Sasneci, *Theological Discourses*, CSCO 542, 78.

948 *Ibid.*, 79.

949 *Ibid.*, 91.

realized. Moreover, for those who truly confess him as God, what the Lord said does not have the appearance of doubt and deficiency.<sup>950</sup>

As mentioned above, Ashjian states, ‘The Lord’s table [in Eastern theology] is not and was not understood as a philosophical issue which divides the Eucharist into categories of “form” and “essence” or “accidents” and “substance”. The Eucharist is not discussed under such questions as “what remains,” or “moment” or “formula” or “validity,” etc. And yet Grigor moves demonstrably in these directions.’<sup>951</sup> It would seem that Ashjian is here reflecting Aquinas’s discussions, but what he observes is irrelevant to Tatevatsi. Tatevatsi does not divide the Eucharist into categories of ‘form’ and ‘essence’ or ‘accidents’ and ‘substance’, and he does not discuss ‘what remains’ or ‘moment’ or ‘formula’ or ‘validity’. He simply uses other language. Therefore, Ashjian introduces Tatevatsi as someone who is using the language of transubstantiation. And Ashjian is not alone in his statement: Vigen Guroian called Tatevatsi the Armenian Scholastic, and believes that his ‘theology incorporates much of their [he means Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure] thinking and that Tatevatsi adopted the language of transubstantiation in his Eucharistic theology, and in his discussion of baptism there is an uncharacteristic accent on original sin at the expense of a more traditional emphasis on illumination, regeneration, and entrance into the church and the body of Christ.’ Guroin does not seem to have made a deep and independent study of Tatevatsi’s writings on the Eucharist and Baptism.

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950 Ibid.

951 Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 90.

He wrote the Foreword to Ashjian's book, and he seems to repeat most of what Ashjian states about Tatevatsi.<sup>952</sup>

The understanding of transubstantiation was shaped, as we have seen, by eleventh-century debates and the contributions of philosophy. The term must be understood specifically against the philosophical revival of the thirteenth century. Aquinas adopted it to illustrate that Jesus is truly, wholly, entirely and *substantially* present in the Eucharist. This was the systematic language in which 'transubstantiation' was dogmatically defined by Aquinas and is the sense in which he uses it in the context of medieval Scholastic-Aristotelian philosophy. The dogma of transubstantiation was formulated using the language of Scholastic theology; consequently, it is helpful to understand the term 'substance' within that specific context. Certainly, the substance is the underlying metaphysical nature of a thing. It is not its physical form. It is not its molecular structure. Jesus is really and substantially present in the Eucharist.

This way of looking at things was very foreign for Tatevatsi, but Ashjian is right up to the point that Tatevatsi does indeed use the words 'substance' or 'essence'. This does not mean, however, that he accepts Aquinas's explanation of transubstantiation. In a question on the presence of Christ, Tatevatsi offers a simple explanation which cannot be taken as an acceptance of transubstantiation. Moreover, he did not say anything about transubstantiation. According to Tatevatsi, 'In bread and wine remain the occurrence and the quality but the substance transforms to the body and blood of

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952 For Guroian's statement about Tatevatsi see Vigen Guroian. 'Armenian Tradition', 40.

Christ.’<sup>953</sup> Here he uses the word ‘substance’. However, he does not say or mean what Aquinas says and means, ‘The complete substance of the bread is converted into the complete substance of Christ’s body, and the complete substance of the wine into the complete substance of Christ’s blood. Hence this change is not a formal change, but a substantial one. It does not belong to the natural kinds of change, and it can be called by a name proper to itself – “transubstantiation”.’<sup>954</sup>

Tatevatsi encountered the works of Latin theologians, and it could be suggested that he had a clear understanding of these ‘creative ideas’, but he did not present this innovation in his teaching. The questions which were raised about the nature, matter, teaching and celebration of the Eucharist in the thirteenth century and reached their answers in the fourteenth century in the Latin Church must have been clearly understood in the time of Tatevatsi by the theologians of the Armenian Church, given the theological and polemical contacts which we documented in Chapter Two.

Grigor Tatevatsi discusses Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist, but he does not turn to Aristotelian doctrine of substance and accident, which proves to be most helpful for Thomas Aquinas in articulating his theology of Christ’s presence in Eucharist.<sup>955</sup>

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953 Գիրք Հարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 597: Appendix IV. 6.

954 See Aquinas, 3a. 75.5 (Barden, 73).

955 See Fernand Van Steenberghen. *Thomas Aquinas and Radical Aristotelianism*.

Aquinas' teaching on the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist rejects co-existence and substitution, and states that transmutation or 'transubstantiation' is the only acceptable way of understanding the Eucharistic change. Tatevatsi does not echo the language of those philosophical underpinnings.

### **Summary**

Grigor Tatevaci in his discussion of the sacrament of the Eucharist in the *Book of Questions* underlines several issues which were current in his time and for his students. His priorities are dictated by the historical context in which Armenian Church found itself. Tatevatsi as a pedagogue adopts this procedure for the benefit of his students in order to keep them within the ambit of the Armenian Church. There is no doubt but that Tatevatsi was interested in the novel theology of the Eucharist in Western Christianity, and, as we saw above, in some cases does not hesitate to criticize Latin theology. However, Tatevatsi does not simply indulge in recrimination against the Latin Church tradition, but tries to identify and understand the differences between the Latin and Armenian Church traditions.

The fact that Tatevatsi concludes his explanation of the sacrament of Holy Communion with the issue 'of not communicating the people' may suggest that he really wanted to underline once more the difference between the Armenian and Catholic Churches. He stresses that in the Armenian Church believers receive both the bread and wine at the same time, and reinforces this by appeal to Christ's command: 'My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood, dwells in Me, and I in him.' We also saw in that section

Tatevatsi raises many questions for Catholics. But our impression is that Tatevatsi is actually posing these questions to his students. At the end of Tatevatsi's teaching, there is clear guidance from their teacher, but, interestingly, Tatevatsi, does not offer conclusions in his very final statements but instead finishes his exposition of Holy Communion with questions. This gives his audience a chance to analyse his statements one more time and to reach the conclusion that their path is the right one and there is no need to turn from it, as the alternative is unacceptable.

The evidence we have presented makes evident the fact that in the question of the pure wine and in that of the consecration of the host, Tatevatsi definitively upholds the Armenian Church tradition. In the question of the conjoint sacrament there is no doubt what the tradition is for Tatevatsi, as 'to blend means to join the blood with the body, as our custom is'.<sup>956</sup> But if Tatevatsi was faithful to his roots, why, we might ask, does he use the word substance or essence? The answer is very simple: each age has its own language. In saying this we literally mean this. In particular places the terminology may be the same, but the ideas different. According to the most basic meaning of substance, for Tatevatsi, 'substance' was just a word, to be used alongside essence, matter or material. And we have to add that these words were not used in a technical sense in discussion of the eucharistic presence, which would have been alien to the Armenian Apostolic Church where sacramentality was the only acceptable path to speaking of the Eucharistic. Tatevatsi did not say anything about transubstantiation, how it is effected and how it works, and, moreover, there is no investigation of it in a scholastic manner. In short, we fundamentally disagree with

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<sup>956</sup> Գիրք Յարցմանց (*Book of Questions*), 596: Appendix IV. 2.8.

Ashjian and Guroian, who believe that Tatevatsi dedicated his presentation to minor questions such as adding or not adding water to the cup and that he adopted the doctrine of transubstantiation and departed from his tradition of the Eucharist.

For Tatevatsi, Holy Communion is a sign of the union of each member of the Church with the other and with God. Holy Communion requires the unleavened bread and pure wine that the Church has inherited from the Lord Jesus. For Tatevatsi, the blessing, breaking and distribution of the bread was a model for us to accept of what Christ did for us. Holy Communion shows that the salvation believers celebrate is a new and never-ending condition where mankind can live in everlasting, joyous communion with its God. Tatevatsi states that the sacrament of communion was established by Jesus Christ at the time of the Last Supper. His birth as a human being, and his death and resurrection have brought about this climax in humanity's relationship with God -- the new life God has given us by his Son. God accomplished all of this out of his great love for his creatures. We sense from the tenor of his discussion that for Tatevatsi worship is an undertaking of the Church, the community of people who have been blessed with God's promises. The gathering together of that community was important for Tatevatsi. For him the Eucharist is a giving of thanks: we give thanks to the Lord because he has saved us and cares for us. For Tatevatsi the meaning of the sacrament of communion is the participation and unity of believers with each other and with God. He tells us that the Christian community considered the observance of this ritual, instituted by Jesus Christ himself, to be its most important Christian obligation. For Tatevatsi it was a way to 'be one' with Jesus Christ and to recall the mystery of perfect and everlasting life with God -- the

life that he himself was: ‘I am the way and the truth and the life’ (John 14: 6). Jesus Christ gathered his followers together for one final meal with them, and blessing, breaking bread and sharing a cup of wine is a clear and simple account of what Jesus himself, by His own example, proclaimed: ‘This is my body which is for you’; ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.’

After the examination of Grigor Tatevatsi’s theology of the sacrament of communion we should conclude that in this very important question of the Eucharist, Tatevatsi did not follow Latin tradition. We disagree with Guroian’s statement that Tatevatsi’s theology possessed a distinctive Latin flavour. Grigor Tatevatsi does not provide an example of ‘cultural and theological transmigrations between the west and east’.

In his short explanation of Holy Communion, Tatevatsi guides his students to cherish the inherited heritage. He definitely underlines the fact that the tradition should not be changed. Grigor Tatevatsi stayed faithful to the tradition of the Armenian Apostolic Church.<sup>957</sup> He acknowledged and examined, but did not embrace the modern, sophisticated tendency that was coming from the West. Tatevatsi, in the question of Holy Communion, simply attempts to restore a treasured past which had been handed on to him by his ancestors and teachers. The most important thing is

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957 Nerses Lambronaci writes that ‘Իսկ նա եկեալ յանուն Քրիստոսի, և նովաւ և ի նմանէ զհացս արար մարմին Քրիստոսի. այսինքն ոչ ըստ որակութեան փոփոխեալ ի միս և յարիւն . այլ զի՞նչ . համանունաբար անուանին և են մարմինք ի չորից տարերց բաղկացեալք , որպէս միսն և հացն , և որպէս զինին և արիւնն և չէ ի սոսա բնութեանց զանազանութիւն , այլ որակութեանց միայն:

that Grigor Tatevatsi was using scholastic language against scholastic theology, but he did it with an ecumenical understanding of the question and without fanaticism.

## **Conclusion**

The aim of this dissertation has been to investigate the theology of sacraments of initiation of Grigor Tatevatsi (1346-1409), one of the most prominent ecclesiastical leaders of the Armenian Apostolic Church, against the wider cultural background of the mission of the Latin Unitors.

Grigor Tatevatsi has been recognized as a ‘second illuminator’ of the Armenian Church during this crucial period for Armenian Christianity. The first chapter examined Tatevatsi’s life, education, works and deeds. We elucidated how Tatevatsi not only deeply understood the historical and theological heritage of his tradition, but was knowledgeable in Greek and Latin theology as well. We observed how Tatevatsi was fully aware that vardapets were custodians of the traditions and teachings of Armenian Church, and how Tatevatsi guided his students to understand and revere the works of the Armenian Church fathers. We showed how, for Tatevatsi, this knowledge served to protect the Armenian Church from foreign influences. The ultimate example of this is the literature we ourselves have inherited from the great teacher, whose teaching was assiduous.

The second chapter documented a crucial period for Armenian Christianity as it faced political, social, intellectual and ecclesiastical changes. We examined how at the beginning of the fourteenth century, on the basis of a Roman missionary programme, inroads were successfully made by the Latin Church in Armenia. Furthermore, this chapter investigated the functions of the Dominican Order in Grand Armenia and the origin of the Unitors, the Latino-Armenian Brotherhood, in the

fourteenth century. As the Armenian Church faced massive changes, the leaders of the Armenian Church initiated a defence against Latin theology. It was noted that Grigor Tatevatsi, following his teacher Vorotnetsi, became one of the dominant figures of the Armenian Church in taking up the intellectual side of that defence.

Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian, in *Armenian Church Patristic and Other Essays*, examined Tatevatsi's sacraments of initiation and concluded that Tatevatsi assimilated many important doctrinal ideas from Aquinas and even in some respects forsook his own tradition. This study has challenged Ashjian's conclusions, and by examining pertinent political, historical and theological contexts as well as Aquinas's contributions, revealed a different side of Tatevatsi's sacraments of initiation.

The last three chapters provided a new translation of the original texts of the sacraments of initiation of Tatevatsi. In order to analyse the theology of Tatevatsi's sacraments of initiation and to elucidate the extent of Tatevatsi's fidelity to the Armenian Apostolic Church, it was necessary to consider the theological and historical aspects of the Armenian Apostolic Church, to the extent that these shaped the sacrament of initiation before Tatevatsi's time. Our main concern, however, was to examine and the theological arguments raised by Grigor Tatevatsi himself.

An analysis of Grigor Tatevatsi's primary writings on the sacrament of baptism<sup>958</sup> and a comparison of some aspects of Tatevatsi's baptismal theology with that of Aquinas were provided in the third chapter. Archbishop Ashjian's interpretation of

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958 See Գիրք Չարքմանց, 588-93: (*The Book of Questions*, 588-93).

Tatevatsi's baptismal theology was also scrutinized in this chapter. As a result of our examination, we concluded that Tatevatsi's argument against Latin church formula is not weak, as was suggested by Ashjian, and that Tatevatsi's logic is clear and discernible. The third chapter also illustrated that Tatevatsi does not place a great deal of emphasis on Original Sin, as Ashjian argued. Tatevatsi invokes Original Sin not in isolation but to illuminate a larger chain of causes. Having examined Tatevatsi's sacrament of baptism, we may conclude that his theology is based solidly on that of the Armenian Church. Tatevatsi acknowledges the sacrament of baptism as an illumination and a regeneration, an entrance into the church and body of Christ, and a personal participation in the new creation and in regaining the image of God. The Trinitarian event over the Jordan is very important for Tatevatsi: the baptism of Jesus as 'the divine image of salvation' is to be imitated. The text as a whole makes evident that Tatevatsi does not reject his own tradition.

The fourth chapter of this dissertation elucidated Tatevatsi's theology of the sacrament of the seal.<sup>959</sup> We demonstrated that for Tatevatsi the sacrament of the seal appears to be a valuable part of the initiation of the baptized person. The specification proposed by Tatevatsi for the sacrament of seal helps to clarify its relationship with Baptism and Eucharist. The acknowledgement of two key dimensions--the form of the sacrament of the seal and the performer of the sacrament--is very important for understanding Tatevatsi's thoughts about the sacrament of the seal. In the fourth chapter, we examined Archbishop Ashjian's consideration of Tatevatsi's explanation of the seal. We challenged Ashjian's

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959 See Գիրք Հարցման, 593-94: (*The Book of Questions*, 593-94).

contention that Tatevatsi discerns in the sacrament of the seal other hidden anointings, and even sacraments. As a result of our research, the sacrament of the seal of Grigor Tatevatsi emerged in a different light. In order to understand the structure, essence and logic of the material, we elaborated Tatevatsi's account of this sacrament, compared it with Aquinas' statements and challenged Ashjian's argument. We hold the view that Tatevatsi does not locate the sacrament of extreme unction in the sacrament of the seal.

The fifth chapter examined Tatevatsi's theology of the sacrament of communion and established that in this is the fulfilment of everything.<sup>960</sup> On the basis of our examination of Tatevatsi's entire account of the sacrament of communion, we may firmly conclude that Tatevatsi represents the Eucharist as an amalgamated, united act of worship, in which the role of the Holy Spirit is not only important but fundamental. In this final chapter we evaluated Ashjian's argument that adopted the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation and neglected his own tradition.<sup>961</sup> We investigated Tatevatsi's text, compared it with that of Aquinas, challenged Ashjian's statement and concluded that Tatevatsi did not actually address transubstantiation, as Ashjian claimed. We discovered that Tatevatsi did not adopt the doctrine of transubstantiation, nor did he depart from the Armenian tradition of the Eucharist; rather, Tatevatsi appropriated scholastic language in opposition to scholastic theology. Tatevatsi, as a teacher, clearly understood his mission, which was to instruct in the theology of the Armenian Church. The best example of this is his statement concerning the pure wine, which reinforces the traditional approach of the Armenian Church fathers. In the question of the joint sacrament there is no doubt

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960 See Գիրք Յարցմանց, 594-600: (*The Book of Questions*, 594-600).

961 See Ashjian, *Armenian Church*, 90-3.

what constitutes tradition for Tatevatsi: ‘to blend means to join the blood with the body, as our custom is’.<sup>962</sup> Tatevatsi, in the question of the Holy Communion, simply attempts to restore a treasured past bestowed to him by his ancestors and teachers. We should acknowledge that in this very important question of the Eucharist, Tatevatsi did not follow Latin tradition; instead, he stayed faithful to the tradition of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Tatevatsi, in his theology of the Eucharist, preserved all of the features so important in Armenian church fathers’ writings. We compared the theology of Grigor Tatevatsi’s sacrament of initiation with that of Thomas Aquinas, showing how Tatevatsi engages with Aquinas not to renounce Armenian theology but to defend it within the context of wider Christian practice, comparing Latin, Greek and sometimes Syriac practice to show that Armenian theology reads the early Christian tradition in ways that sometimes differ from the other traditions, but are not inferior to them.

Finally, we would like to consider a question posed by Grigor Tatevatsi in his commentary to the Song of Songs: what does the kiss mean? Although it may appear strange to turn to this now, since it appears unrelated to our topic, we believe that the overarching message of this passage truly represents Tatevatsi’s love of the theology of the sacraments of initiation:

The kiss means six things. First, it is the sign of love that we have to each other, and the love is not hidden. Second, it means equality between those who kiss and those who are kissed, and this happened by the humanity of Word. Third, it is closeness of two lips, and this

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<sup>962</sup> See Գիրք Յարցմանց, 596: (*The Book of Questions*, 596).

happened by the birth of Christ who was kissed by parents, families and the magi. Fourth, they associate, that is why it is called a kiss, because many become one by association. Fifth, it quenches the longing, as the Lord says: 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink' (Jn.7.37). Sixth, conciliation of enmity, and this was shown in the kiss to the prodigal son. And one asks for the kiss of the mouth for three reasons. First, words are spoken by the mouth immediately. Second, it means the sweetness of life that eating the flesh and blood gives. Third, it means flowing of gifts of the Spirit. And one must know that now we kiss Christ through mediation and immediately, i.e. by inner sense immediately by six ways, i.e. by intelligence, prayer, faith, hope, love and regret and the anointing of grace by means of the priestly minister: by these we kiss God immediately through inner sense. Similarly we kiss in six ways by external senses, i.e. by lips, as we kiss the cross and church, kissing Christ by eating flesh and blood and confessing, and hearing word of God, by vision of eyes, smell, touch; so by mediation Christ is kissed now and perfectly in the coming life.<sup>963</sup>

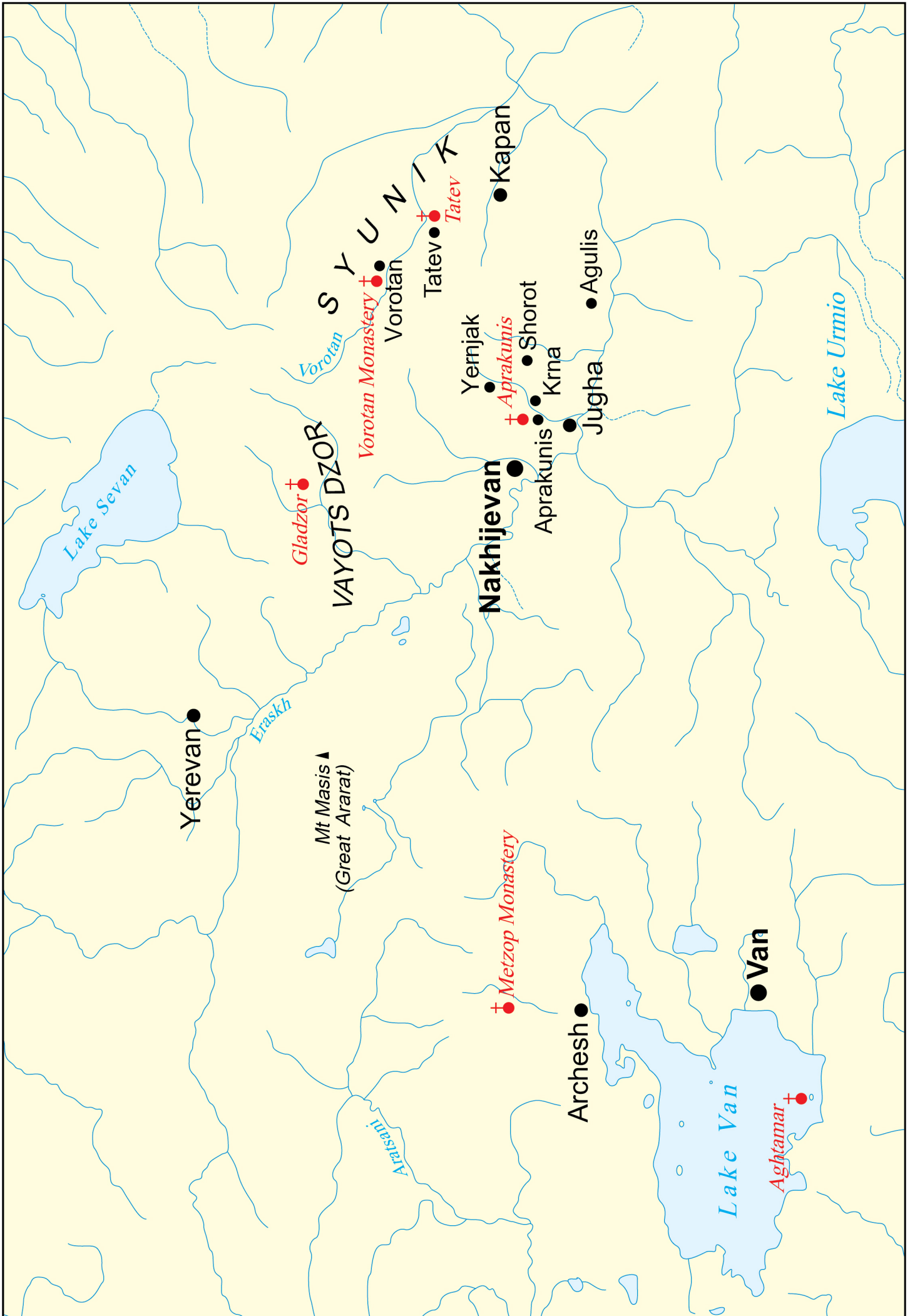
Grigor Tatevatsi was an honest, sensitive, highly educated and humble thinker in Armenian Church tradition. Taking into consideration the larger context of Tatevatsi's times--Muslim invasions, Latin missions, corruption in society and Armenian converters--we do believe Tatevatsi, even in his short discussion of the theology of the sacraments of the initiation, conveys that there is no life and no

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<sup>963</sup> St. Grigor Tatevatsi. *Commentary on the Books of Solomon*. Translation from Old Armenian by Kh. Grigoryan, edited by Z. Grigoryan. Yerevan: Ankyunacar Publishing, 2012, 152.

salvation without baptism. He establishes that no chance exists to receive the holy gifts without the seal, as there is no future without the Eucharist. As a scholar of great erudition, Tatevatsi does show that the Armenian Apostolic tradition was the equal of the both the Latin and the Greek traditions in Scriptural exegesis, understanding of the Early Fathers, liturgical tradition and logic, as well as in pastoral practice and in piety. Tatevatsi, as a great teacher, was worried about the generation to come, which should possess solid knowledge of Western and Eastern theology but also remain faithful to its historical and theological heritage as developed in the Armenian land, shaped in Armenian schools, written in the Armenian language, and intrinsic to the Armenian ethos.

In sum, we would like to state that we have experienced a most brilliant journey with a great teacher, who invited us to his world, full of wisdom, knowledge and faith. And our wish is that Grigor Tatevatsi, as the great theologian of Armenian Apostolic Church tradition, as a genuine role model of Christian thinking and education, one day will find his universal acknowledgement, and will achieve his rightful position in the Universal Christian heritage.



## Appendix I: The *Book of Questions*

Գիրք Չարցմանց (*Book of Questions*) was written by Tatevatsi over seventeen years. The original manuscript is an autograph written by Tatevatsi himself and dated 1397.<sup>964</sup> Գիրք Չարցմանց was published in Constantinople in 1729 and reprinted in 1993 in Jerusalem. The first published edition (Constantinople, 1729) was of good quality and probably ran to between 150 and 200 copies, a considerable print run for the eighteenth century.

The work consists of ten chapters, divided into forty sections.

The *Book of Questions* is presented in the form of answers to questions from students. Such theological topics as creation, incarnation, resurrection and eschatology, as well as the sacraments of the Church, are elucidated. I have examined the six manuscripts of the book which were written by or under the supervision of Tatevatsi. All six are in the Matenadaran.

Տարբեւացի Գրիգոր, Գիրք Չարցմանց Ձեռագրեր: (Tatevatsi, Grigor.

Manuscripts of *Book of Questions* )

MS 3616 (small Book of Questions) (autograph by Tatevatsi, 1387) Shahaponq Castle; scribe -- the author, Tatevatsi; *page makeup* - ter Stepan.

MS 813 (1401) Tatev; scribe Hunan, Sargis -- *edited* by the author.

MS 4072 (1406) Tatev; scribe and receiver Grigor Vrastantsi.

MS 3104 (1407) Tatev; scribe and receiver Tovma Metzopetsi.

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<sup>964</sup> See further Arevshatyan's introduction to the *Book of Questions* in the Jerusalem edition of 1993, i-xi.

MS 9247 copied 1407 by Tatevatsi's pupil Tovma. Taking into consideration the date and place of writing it may be assumed that the work was copied under Tatevatsi's direction.

MS 918 (1407) Jerusalem by Karapet:

MS 921 (1409) Tatev, Kharabast, Metzop, scribe and receiver Sargis.

Thirty-seven copies in all are known to exist, in museums and libraries all over the world.

In theme and style it is the first Armenian book of systematic theology and was clearly written for Tatevatsi's own pupils and for other Armenian monks. However, thanks to its organised structure and clear language, I believe that it was also intended to be a helpful pedagogical textbook for people all over Armenia, who, in difficult circumstances and under the influence of Latin missionaries, wanted to understand the theology of the Armenian Apostolic Church and be introduced to some of the theological questions raised by the Catholic Church. Tatevatsi must have realised that the *Book of Questions* would survive and become a guide for future generations, and so it was presumably from the first intended to serve as a sort of encyclopaedic manual. The text is, for that reason, written in a practical way.

The *Book of Questions* has often been compared in style and content to the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, and has been called an Armenian *Summa*.<sup>965</sup> But Ashjian rightly points out that 'the *Book of Questions* is not a classical summa, as it is often called in western scholarship, for it does not dispose of the questions with

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<sup>965</sup> See Mesrob Krikoryan. *Grigor of Tatev. A Great Scholastic Theologian and Philosopher*, 327. Also see Leon Arpee, 'High-Lights of Armenian Mediaeval Ecclesiastical Literature.' *Church History* 13.4, Dec. (1944), 278.

objections, arguments and solutions. Rather, the answers follow the questions: Grigor lines up all his arguments, sometimes in a hyper analytical system, giving as many as forty or more arguments, testimonies, indications, quotations, etc.’<sup>966</sup>

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<sup>966</sup> Ashjian, 110.

## Appendix II: Baptism<sup>967</sup>

*Grigor Tatevatsi, Book of Questions, pp. 588-593*

### 1. What is baptism?

Answer: ‘Baptism is the external washing of the body with water and cleansing away of sins by the words of God.’ Also, baptism is a conferring of the sacred and a divine birth. And again, baptism is regeneration, a seal of protection and illumination. Yet again, baptism is the pledge of the Holy Spirit, the beginning of another life.

2. Baptism must be performed as follows: ‘The named servant of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, willingly passing from the unbaptized condition to baptism; now is being baptized with my hands in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.’ But the Franks alter this and say: ‘I baptize you in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,’ which wrong arrangement points to the baptizer and not the baptized. And second, it is inappropriate to say ‘I baptize’, as if the person has come to be baptized not willingly but is forced to. Besides, ‘I baptize’ means the grace is not conferred from the baptizer to the baptized, for no grace is given to the despisers and the unwilling but to those who ask in faith, as it is said: “For every one who asks receives’ and so forth. Thus it is improper to say ‘I baptize’, but as said in the former way the grace of the Spirit shall be granted. And this form should be maintained and no other thing introduced. And there is no need to alter this order so

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<sup>967</sup> Section numbers have been added for ease of reference and appear neither in the manuscript tradition nor in the printed editions.

as to name the Holy Spirit first, then the Son, then the Father. As for the essence of the saying, 'In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit', it shall be said once and not repeated ignorantly. And the entire body should be washed, and in an emergency, its honourable parts, or washing the face only may suffice.

3. Again, it is required that the baptized have an idea that he may be baptized thoughtfully as the whole Church. If the candidate is an adult, particularly faith is required, and if the candidate is a child, the sacrament of the Church is sufficient.

4. Moreover, it should be known that the schismatic nation of the Franks say: 'Albeit baptism is the task of the priest, but in case there is no priest, whosoever knows the order of baptism may baptize of necessity. And in case there is no man around, and the child is dying, then a woman may baptize if she knows the order of baptism as Christ taught: 'In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit'; she should pour the water and pronounce: 'May he be baptized''. This schism is a gross and audacious blasphemy against the orders of the church.

4.1. First of all, there is not such a vicious heresy (sect) in other Christian Churches.

4.2. Secondly, in the Creation God gave the sign of this sacrament to Adam, not the woman, when He brought every beast and every fowl to Adam that he would name them.

4.3. Thirdly, if the grace were given through the woman's hand, why did not the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, come to her Son's baptism in the Jordan?

4.4 Fourthly, by the hand of Philip the Apostle, one of the seven deacons, the Spirit did not descend upon the eunuch until he reached Azotus, and then the Spirit came upon the man he had baptized. How can the grace of the Spirit be given to a woman through washing?

4.5. Fifthly, if a woman could perform priestly duties, why could not the virgin Nune baptize anyone of the Georgians when she converted them to God? Instead, she sent them to Saint Gregory [the Illuminator] and asked him to baptize them for priesthood.

4.6. Sixthly, if a woman could baptize in times of necessity, then why did not Saint Gregory the Illuminator, much more honourable than any woman, baptize any of the believers until he was ordained in Caesarea, and only then he came and baptized thousands upon thousands and myriads upon myriads of people in the river?

4.7. Seventhly, the priest's job is to baptize, and priesthood is a ministry unto God. And in this ministry unto God even the idolaters did not practice offerings to their futile idols through women; the same was customary with all the heathen as well. If the heathen acted with such dignity, how much more should it be done in the Church, which is a true ordinance and a law of holiness!

4.8. Eighthly, if women have no commandment to offer sacrifices, as a distinction of bodily holiness, why is it proper to command them unto the order of spiritual holiness?

4.9. Ninthly, inasmuch as baptism is a priestly duty, and the priests are free and under nobody's service, whereas the woman is a servant and 'as a foot' of the man, so a servant should not perform his master's job, as it is written in the book of the Nicene rules: 'Servants shall not be heirs of the church if they are not freedmen

according to their master's will, like Onesimus.' If the patriarchs ordered those who were under slavery not to approach the orders of the Church, how much more then is it discordant for women when God said: 'You shall submit to your husband, and he shall rule over you', to allow them to do the priest's duty which is due for the freedmen, not the servants!

4.10. Tenthly, if baptism is a priestly duty, which he does prayerfully, and women are commanded by the Apostle to cover their heads for the angels -- namely for the priests called angels in the Scripture -- so what a perdition it is to command them to dare to perform a priestly duty.

There are many other testimonies as well in the writings of the saints where such schisms are refuted as false and vain. And let it be known that baptism is for cleansing the souls from all sins, if there are any, natural or actual; and of punishment for sins, so that in case a newly baptized person dies, he might fly immediately to eternal life. As for the nature of baptism, we have commented already on the baptism of the Lord under number twenty-five.

5. Question: Should a baptized person be re-baptized or not?

Answer: A baptized person should not be re-baptized for four reasons.

5.1. Firstly, because physical birth is a sign of a spiritual birth, and as physical birth is one, so spiritual birth is one as well.

5.2. Secondly, because baptism is against the original sin, and original sin is one, not two.

5.3. Thirdly, whoever is baptized is baptized into Christ's death, and Christ died once. But whosoever re-baptizes, 'crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put to Him to an open shame', as the Apostle said [Heb. 6: 6].

5.4. Fourthly, baptism is the inseparable seal of the Spirit, as are ordination and confirmation; that is why [baptism] is not redone for those who were baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity. But whoever is an Arian or a Macedonian or a Nestorian they do; and also those who renounce the unity of the Holy Trinity must be baptised by the glory of the Most Holy Trinity.

6. And it should be known that with the birth of the holy regeneration five wonderful things appear which do not exist with the physical birth.

6.1. Firstly, that a whole nation can be born at once, thousands and thousands: As it is said: 'Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.' And the doer of this is the mighty power of the priest and the advantage of the water.

6.2. Secondly, that he was born by a virgin birth without corruption, and the doer of this is the Holy Spirit, and the matter of the water which is liquid.

6.3. Thirdly, that the firstborn is born, not the younger, that we may have the image of Christ who is the Firstborn of the Father.

6.4. Fourthly, that we are always born as a son of God, not as a daughter, for ‘there is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus,’ as the Apostle said. And this points to the baptistery at the right hand of the church.

6.5. Fifthly, that all of us are born honourable and not as one is honourable and the other is dishonourable, a ruler or being ruled, as the Apostle said: ‘there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free’, for you share the same honour for Jesus Christ and are coheirs of the kingdom.

And this shows the same form of speech which is the naming of the Trinity and the same confession of faith, etc. As for the regeneration birth, see Chapter 19, verse 12, to Sarah.

7. Question: Should the children of foreigners (non-Christians) be baptized?

Answer: The children of foreigners should be baptized, and if they die, they will be delivered of original sin and the torments of hell. But the godfather should not be a foreigner as he has no holy faith and has not renounced Satan, therefore he cannot speak on behalf of the boy or be a guarantor. For, whoever has no faith, cannot intercede for others.

8. Question: Can a woman be a godfather or not?

Answer: She cannot, for we say a 'godfather', not a 'godmother', and because the Church is the mother of the newborn, and the Church is the doer. If a woman cannot be a guarantor and bear testimony, then she cannot be a godfather either.

And yet, women cannot perform priestly works and be a godfather. And not only this but during the baptism a woman shall not stay in the church, as the Virgin Mother of God was not present at the baptism of Christ in the Jordan, as said above.

9. Question: Why do we baptize with water?

Answer: Because water is contrary to fire. What is sin, if not a fire, as a wrath of the soul and a lust of the flesh? It is well known that God punishes with torments of fire. Therefore, we baptize with water to put out the fire.

Yet again, water washes away filth, slakes thirst, reflects images. Hence, at baptism the grace of the Holy Spirit washes away the filth of sins, slakes the thirst of the soul by the Spirit of God, and reflects the lost image of God.

10. Question: What is the sin of a little boy?

Answer: The original sin that has been since Adam.

11. Question: The boy does not act of his own will; why does he incur punishment for Adam's sin?

Answer: Adam's sin is his loss of righteousness; he bore his son through sin and lust. And that sin is called original and is not forgiven unless the sinner is baptized into the death of Christ.

12. Question: It is written: 'The child does not bear the iniquities of their fathers.' Why should a child be punished for his parents' sins?

Answer: Nobody is responsible for the sin of someone else but every man is punished for his own sins. God asks for righteousness from each person, which he gave in the beginning but Adam lost. Thus the little child is punished not for Adam having lost righteousness but because he himself lacks the same righteousness and is punished thereupon. Hence, the child lacks natural righteousness; he is lawfully denied God's righteousness and punished with the wicked. That is the reason everyone has the original sin because through the person of Adam the whole of our nature became guilty with lust. And nobody is born without sinful lust but only our Lord who was born of a virgin womb and without lust, and had not the original sin.

13. Question: Why should a Christian's son be sinful if his father is cleansed with baptism?

Answer: Because the child is born of corrupt seed, as it is said: ‘Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?’, and ‘I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.’

14. Question: If a man is totally cleansed by baptism, why is his seed unclean?

Answer: Baptism cleanses a man entirely, inwardly and outwardly, yet his seed is being corrupted with lust. Likewise, wheat is sown bare but grows with grass and husk.

15. Question: If father's sins are forgiven with baptism, why are his offspring being baptized?

Answer: For instance, if the dough is corrupt with poison, all the bread made of it is deadly. Likewise, all are corrupt as born of a corrupt father, Adam. Thus we have two parents: Adam of flesh, and Christ of the spirit. Every one should be born with the baptism of Christ to be cleansed and delivered from death. Hence, ‘for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive’ – those born of Him.

16. Question: If all die in Adam, how are they ever born alive?

Answer: Like someone showing himself through a window to the world and dying at once.

17. Question: If baptism delivers from punishment, why do the baptized die?

Answer: The penalty for sin is twofold: death for the body and hell for the soul. The baptized in Christ are delivered from spiritual penalty for their spiritual father but bear the physical penalty for the father according to the flesh.

Also, Christ's coming is twofold; the first countered the penalty for the soul, and the second for the flesh, for flesh is inferior to soul.

Yet again, Christ himself died physically first, and then rose alive after baptism. Likewise we die physically first, and then rise alive with resurrection.

18. Question: If sin is forgiven with the death of Christ, why are we being baptized?

Answer: With the death of Christ sin was forgiven, but we are being baptized for the faith in Christ's death to die with Him and be partakers of His grace and forgiveness.

19. Question: When a pregnant woman is baptized, is it a benefit for the child if he dies in his mother's womb?

Answer: No benefit; he is not born yet as a second Adam, for one should be physically born first, and then be re-born spiritually.

20. Question: And what is the penalty for the unbaptized boy?

Answer: Only darkness now and in the life to come. For fiery torments are for actual sins and not a punishment for the original sin.

21. Question: What are the dangers for children born not of righteous wedlock but of fornication?

Answer: Nothing at all if they accept baptism; likewise nothing harms the wheat if it is stolen and sown by a thief.

22. Question: Are the sins of parents dangerous for offspring, or the sins of offspring for their parents?

Answer: It is written: 'Every man shall bear his own burden,' and no son bears the burden of his father, and no father bears the burden of his son. Joseph was not harmed with his father's errors, yet the son became wicked too. And in case parents and sons are adherents and partakers in each other's sins, they both are evil-doers, and yet everyone is punished for his own sins and not for those of others. For it is written: 'God shall visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation', when the father, the son, and the grandsons commit the same sins.

This much of baptism.

## Appendix III: The Seal

### *Grigor Tatevatsi, Book of Questions, pp. 593-594*

1. Question: What is the Seal?

Answer: Seal<sup>968</sup> is the sacrament of affirmation, which is given to fortify and strengthen man. It is given in the baptism of the Holy Spirit by which the sins are forgiven. And the priest puts this [the seal] with the holy myron on the forehead of the devoted (candidate) by saying, as the foreign churches say: ‘Under this form I sign you with the sign of the cross and unite you today to the faith of Christ.’ And according to our church it is, ‘The fragrant oil in the name of Jesus is poured on you as a seal of the heavenly gifts.’

2. Question: What does it mean to anoint with Holy Myron?

Answer: It indicates that when Christ was baptized the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, for he is at the head, and poured out on the members, his believers, according to ‘It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down upon the beard.’<sup>969</sup> Thus with

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968 Tatevatsi uses the word դրոշմ; droshm means stamp, seal: this is why we will translate it as the sacrament of the seal. For translation of the word դրոշմ see Ռուբեն Ղազարեան: Գրաբարի Բառարան: Հատոր Ա: Երեւան, Երեւանի Համալսարանի Հրատարակչութիւն, 2000, 383: (See Ruben Ghazaryan. The Dictionary of Grabar. Yerevan: Publication of State University, vol. I, 2000, 383). The ‘seal’ is the sign of the cross on the forehead or any other object, also the cross made with oil in the baptismal anointing or confirmation. It is also used of the rite of name-giving on the eighth day. See *Rituale Armenorum: Being the Administration of the Sacraments and the Breviary Rites of The Armenian Church Together with The Greek Rites of Baptism and Epiphany*. Edited from the oldest Mss. By F.C. Conybeare. The East Syrian Epiphany Rites, translated by Ref. A.J. Maclean. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1905, 534.

969 See Psalm 133: 2.

water we are baptized unto Christ and are called children of God, and with oil we are united in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

And it should be known that when the forehead, and the heart and the back are anointed, that is [the sacrament of] the seal, while the five senses are anointed in the sacrament of the seal profoundly. But when other parts of the body are anointed, that is the symbol of what other Christians anoint before baptism.

3. And if anyone says ‘you have not [the sacrament of] the seal as the bishop of the Franks gives it,’ we say we perform (do) it like the Greeks, that as the priest celebrates the Eucharist and baptizes, also he seals according to St Dionysius. And he names the chief priest the one who celebrates the Eucharist, and baptizes and seals, as he is the chief and elder in the performing of the sacrament. And the other priests are assistants and attendants in the sacrament.

Again, we say that our priests are authorized to seal as their bishop does. Thus our priests and their bishops are peers. This is said for the sake of objecting to them. But in truth, the priest has the right to perform the seven sacraments of the church, but the bishop has more [authority], for he ordains, and consecrates the church and the table.

4. It should be known that after the seal, they are dressed with a bright garment, [which symbolizes] the luminous behaviour, bright faith and innocence. And the red and white twisted thread symbolizes the blood and the water of Christ’s side. And the cross to which [Christ] ascended, [we carry] on our neck as a yoke. And climbing to

the altar [symbolizes that] after all instructions, Christ ascended to heaven and sat at the right hand of the Father. And communion is given, as the head connected to body, for communion is the fulfilment of everything, that is, of ordination, of matrimony, of confession, of baptism, and so forth.

## **APPENDIX IV: Eucharist and Holy Communion**

*Grigor Tatevatsi, Book of Questions, pp. 594-600*

1. Question: What is the sacrament of communion?

Answer: Communion is a sacrament containing Christ in the form of bread and wine therein, and both elements together are the whole Christ. The material of this sacrament is the bread made of wheat and the wine made from the vine. And the form of this sacrament on the bread says: 'This is my body', and on the cup it says: 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood'. The minister of this sacrament is the priest only; this sacrament is for 'grace to abound', and it is a remedy for persistent sins.

2. No water shall be applied to the sacrament. But let it be known that the followers of the vicious sect of Chalcedon, wandering astray from the truth, add water to the pure cup of the blood of Christ. Such things are proven false by numerous testimonies.

2.1. Firstly, testimony from there, from the opponents, for Albert says in book, one chapter eleven: 'Spirit of Holiness, blood of salvation, and water of washing'. Also, in book four, chapter twenty, he says: 'He gave His body to eat, His blood to drink, His soul as ransom, the water from His side to wash'. And in the same discourse

where he states eight virtues of Christ's passion, in the fourth he says: 'Blood and water flow for our washing'.

2.2. Secondly, we have testimony from Christ when He gave blood in the form of wine and said: 'I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.' Whereas water is not a fruit of the vine.

2.3. Thirdly, we have the testimony of the prophets and the apostles; as David the prophet said: 'My cup is running over' and: 'Wine that makes glad the heart of man', and mentions no water. And Jacob blessed Judah his son and said of Christ: 'Binding his foal to the vine, and his ass's colt to the choice vine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes', and mentions no water. Also, Moses the prophet used to put a roast lamb and a quarter of an ephah of wine on the table every day and put no water; it was the sacrament of the eternal Lamb, and bread and wine are the sacred body and blood. Thus is truth: that no water shall be applied.

Also, Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine for Abraham, and not water; this symbolized the true sacrifice of Christ, so then no water shall be mixed. This much from the Old Testament.

Also, in the New [Testament] the Gospel says: 'And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, "This is my blood"', and mentions no water. Also, [Paul] the Apostle said: 'The cup of blessing which we drink, is it not the

communion of the blood of Christ?’ And Peter the Apostle said: ‘You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.’

2.4. Fourthly, testimony from the rules, for in the apostolic rules of Clement and Macarius and others it is said: ‘You shall put a hot bread and a pure cup on the table that we may be saved with the pure blood of Christ; and cursed be whosoever adds water.’

2.5. Fifthly, the testimony of the patriarchs who wrote on the material of the sacrament, of Athanasius the Great and John Chrysostom and Saint Basil and our Illuminator. These spoke of the idea of the sacrament and mentioned no water.

2.6. Sixthly, the evidence of Christ's side pierced open. First, water and blood flowed separately, not mixed; also, we know that water and blood have different notions. Second, if you say they flowed mixed, and you add water to the wine, then add also wine to the water and baptize in it. If you do not, clean water is for baptism, and pure wine is for communion.

2.7. Seventhly, testimony according to substances; for a pure cup for the immaculate blood of Christ is much better than adding water and corrupting it. And if our opponents say: ‘The wine will not be corrupted because of a little water’, we say: ‘The matter may be little but the substance is equal.’ Therefore, even if a little water

is added, the substances of wine and water are being corrupted, for it is no longer pure wine and no longer pure water.

2.8. And if anyone says: 'They drink no wine with water in Jerusalem', we reply that formerly water had been added not according to the sacrament, as it was not customary amongst us that a seller should mingle wine with water; and Christ did not mix as well. And if they say: 'That water signifies the Church', we say that the Church has adopted the communion of Christ with love and faith and not with water. And if they say: 'Communion is the sign of Christ's death wherefrom blood and water flowed,' we say that blood is the mystery of the communion and water is the mystery of baptism, and the death of the Lord is proclaimed thereof; according to [Paul] the Apostle: "As many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into His death.' And if they say: 'Water is of twofold property', that it cools and washes, we say that properties are contingent, whereas the mystery is in the substance, which is one, and not in contingencies, which are numerous. And if someone says: 'Blended her wine in the chalice', we say it is not mingling water and wine but pouring the wine into the chalice, as it is said elsewhere: 'Filled with pure wine'. which is still blended, for to fill means to blend, and to blend means to pour the wine into the chalice.

Also, to blend means to join the blood with the body, as our custom is.

2.9. Yet again, blending is the wisdom of God with humankind, for they united by blending with the Word, as Saint Dionysius says. Also, Christ united the old wisdom with the new by blending them, that is: the sample with truth, and the mystery with the substance. This is the blending of the wine in the chalice. And if you consider applying water as fleshly and insist on the contrary, we say to you that blending means not only water but also milk and honey and wine in the chalice, as Saint Dionysius wrote in the Epistle to Titus: ‘But you mingle these with the mystery of the liturgy, for you are an expositor and a follower of the Scripture.’ Also, the Apostles and the holy Fathers, their successors, did not know the chalice. But you have learned and you mix water; thus you shall be under their curse, as shown above. Also, this is what we ask you: What is water a mystery of? For by saying, ‘This is my body’, it showed the mystery of bread, and by saying: ‘This is my blood’, it transformed the substance of wine. But water remained water and imperfect.

3. Question: Then why do some mix water and dough?

Answer: The right answer is that those who want to call Christ's body corrupt add dough and water, albeit they reason differently. But we confess the orthodox order: the Virgin-born incorrupt body of Christ; hence we administer the sacrament of His body and blood with unleavened bread and incorrupt cup.

4. Question: How many essentials of the sacrament are there?

Answer: They are four, and if any one of these is missing the sacrament will not be complete: first is the priest, second is the samples of bread and wine, third is the determination of the celebrant, and fourth is the words of Christ which say, 'This is my body' and 'This is my blood'.

5. Question: Why do we consecrate one host in the church, whereas others consecrate many?

Answer: One host is the mystery, and not many. First, because Christ took one loaf of bread and blessed, and also one cup of wine. Second, He ordered in the singular: 'This is my body' and 'This is my blood', which means one bread. Third, the Apostle said to the Corinthians: 'For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.' Fourth, there was one bread and one roast lamb which they put on the table together with a cup of wine. This is the true way to put one host and one cup of wine. And if anyone says that a priest is able to bless many loaves, we say that ability is towards intention, and intention is towards the end, which is one bread, as it is said, 'This is my body'; so then he cannot bless many loaves. And still, if they say that a priest can baptize many boys in an hour, so he can bless many loaves as well, we say that Christ gathered many to baptize and thus said: 'Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost'; but here he commanded one by saying: 'This do in remembrance of me', and not 'these'. And again, we say if all bread is blessed today, why bless again? Thus, either the consecrated bread shall be blessed anew, which is wrong, or not all bread is blessed but only one.

6. Question: How can it be the body and blood of Christ?

Answer: In bread and wine remain the occurrence and the quality, but the substance transforms to the body and blood of Christ for four reasons. First, we reach substance with our senses and through accidents, for these are inseparable determinations of substances. Second, that we may approach sanctity, that is why the accidents remain, for if it were real flesh and blood, no one would dare approach. Third, that we may be rewarded by faith, for faith is unto the invisible, which is the substance. For that, we should see the sensible with the eyes, and observe the intelligible with the mind and be blessed. As He said to Thomas: 'Because you have seen me, you have believed: blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed.' Fourth, that we may learn thereby that the incarnation of the Word was in two modes. As bread is the same by its form, and the substance has become Christ's body, likewise the apparent image is the same by form, but the nature has united to God the Word and become God. Yet again, as the host as a whole is one body, and each part of the division is the whole and perfect body of Christ, so is the whole body and soul one God, unified with the Word, and all parts together are integral and perfect God. Therefore, the Spirit of Christ is God, and His body is God, and His blood is God. Thence, we partake the body and blood of God, and not of a human, and by enjoying them we become, as it were, a God, and not a human.

*7. Of the joint sacrament*

7.1. Question: Why do we conjoin the sacrament of the body and the blood?

Answer: For three reasons. First, because blood is a liquid matter and is not to be given like other forms; no one should be deprived of the saving blood. Thus it should be conjoined with body and given to men, for as the body is shared, so the blood is shared too. Second, bread alone sometimes signifies the Word descended from heaven, and wine signifies the humanity, as it is said: 'By His proximity He communed with body and blood'. And sometimes bread signifies the sacred body, and blood signifies the immortal vitality. Despite this, we conjoin them and confess God the Word incarnate, inseparable from His body. Those who do not conjoin manifest the Word separate from His body, as the Chalcedonian dyophysites do. Third, we bless the bread and the cup separately, and then enjoy them together, for the blood flowed away from the body, yet He united it with Him and to His body, and did not let it waste away. That is why we conjoin the sacrament.

But to all those who prattle as if it is the 'dipped sop' of Judas, we say: 'The vile person will speak villainy, and his heart will work iniquity.' Thus you would be better never to communicate men so that they do not become a Judas. And when you, wicked priests, separate blood from the body, you all are Judases, for they joined in the same way internally and externally because food and drink mingle inside. This is what we heard from the Scriptures – that Judas tasted the food unworthily, and not that he tasted the body and blood together. Thus, uniting the holy sacrament is not a novelty for us but Saint Athanasius, who commanded the ordinance of liturgy, taught so. And the holy Illuminator who was there at the time ordered this for our Church, and we have it since then. And this was how Saint Basil of Caesarea gave gifts to

men, as it is written in his *History*: on the 1st of January he saw a Jew giving raw, bloody meat to the people, yet he repented, and fell to the feet of the Saint and got baptized.

### 7.2. *Of the dipped morsal*

Opinions differ on the dipped morsel. Some say they sat at a regular supper, and from an ordinary table He gave the dipped piece of bread to Judas, and then He washed the disciples' feet and then shared His body with them all, and when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. This is what Matthew and Mark tell; but Luke and John mention the dipped morsel after the supper. Some say He dipped it in water and washed off the blessing, but this is an unacceptable view. Yet others say, although it was after the supper, He took it not of the blessed bread and wine but from the table and dipped it in water or wine and gave it. And as He had given dry pieces of the consecrated bread to the others and a dipped piece to Judas, that caused his betrayal. And this is true.

As for the dipped morsel, the betrayer, insolent in the face and defiled in mind, hastened to the Rabbi with a plate of food. And Christ gave him the morsel of bread which He held in His hand ... This is how the teachers of the Church interpret in general. And this is what Augustine, the teacher of the Franks, said in chapter 81 of the *Book of Sacraments*: first, Christ shared the sacrament of the body and blood and gave it to Judas, and after that pointed to the betrayer with the dipped piece. And this is the truth; of the consecrated bread which He shared among the disciples nothing

was left over; and also the blessed cup was shared, and nothing was left over. And it is well known that the dipped morsel was not of the body and not of the blood but was taken from other food of the table, dipped and given to point to the betrayer.

#### *8. Of not communicating the people*

8.1. Now I ask you, ungodly nation of Franks, why do you deprive people of the communion of the body and blood of Christ, for openly you do not give the blood and secretly (you do not give) the body, because you do not give of the consecrated matter but mere bread which is on the altar. And if they say that all the hosts on the altar are consecrated, we reply that all the hosts on the altar and in the aumbry are consecrated today, but you will consecrate them again tomorrow. So why do you consecrate again? And if they are not consecrated, why do you give them as consecrated body to the people and mislead them? And if it is consecrated, then why do you not give the blood? And if they say that the body only is enough for the people, for they must believe that the body of Christ comprises also blood jointly, and the spirit equally, and divinity together, and they are likewise conjoined in the blood, we reply that, first of all, the body is not given to the people but merely bread and wine, for Christ's body was the only one consecrated, as shown above.

8.2. Yet again we say: why do you preach faith to the people and you do not believe in tasting of the blood? You do not taste and believe the blood is joint with the body. Also, did not the Lord Himself give command, 'My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood, dwells in Me, and I

in him'? Also, if you believe that the blood is joint with body, do not take the blood to the altar, but just consecrate the host, and it will be Christ's body and blood.

Blood is with the body, as you said; likewise, body is with the blood, and the spirit co-equal, and divinity with it. Thus if you deprive men of blood, you deprive them also of things which are connected with blood, namely, the body, the spirit, and divinity. Therefore, openly and in secret, you deprive men of the communion with Christ; you fail to give the blood openly, and the body in secret, for you give mere bread, and not the consecrated one.

8.3. If they ever put forward any justification, let it be known that they do not communicate infants until the age of twelve and many remain uncommunicated and die deprived of Christ. And if they bring Solomon's words in justification: 'My beloved shall eat, and my lovely one shall get drunk', we reply that Solomon's words do not deprive any of communion in the blood, for all who deserve the body deserve the blood as well, but all believers generally are beloved by good works, and the ascetic virgins and the martyrs are the lovely. Indeed, everyone is commanded to feed and do good works, and the lovely and the martyrs are commanded virginity and martyrdom, who take this obligation willingly, for this is asceticism to death. With this mind our Lord shared His body in the Upper Room and gave it to the Apostles, and put the blessed cup in front of them to drink willingly, as when He asked the sons of Zebedee, 'Can you drink this cup?'; but He did not give it to them only and forbid the other Apostles.

This much of the Holy Communion.

## **Appendix V: Last Uncction**

*Grigor Tatevatsi, Book of Questions, pp. 604-605*

1. Question: What is last unction?

Answer: Last unction is a sacrament of the Church given to the sick people on the day of mortal agony, on the eyes, on the ear, on the mouth, on the hands, on the side, on the sole of the feet, by saying: ‘With this holy anointing and His mercy God forgives you, for you sinned by vision.’ Likewise he says for the other human senses. This is according to foreign churches.

But according to our church it says now: ‘May this seal illuminate your eyes in the name of Jesus that you shall not die.’ The same he pronounces for other senses according to each.

2. The act of this sacrament is the forgiveness of other venial sins. And this at the time of the person's death-pangs. But if he survives from death, it will cause an immediate recovery, as James the Apostle said: ‘Is anyone sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord ... And if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him’ [James 5: 14]. And the prayers of the priests will alleviate feebleness (weakness).

3. And if anyone asks if anointing is a sacrament, why then do we not have it, we say we have the sacrament of anointing, profoundly, as for baptism we said above that we perform the seal as the first and the last anointing to the baptized. Also we have this anointing for the foot-washing, and also on the revelation day of the Lord's baptism, and also we have this anointing for the deceased priests.

4. And why is it not evident, as it is with foreigners? We say that because of the tricks (ruses, artifices) of the evil one, people took away confession (which was essential) and relied upon their belief that on the last day they would be anointed with balm oil and be justified. As the Greeks and the Georgians and the Syrians have done, but no man can be justified without confession. That is why the fathers of the church took away the proper unction lest it becomes an appendix, rather than banning confession without which no one can be forgiven of actual sins.

5. Again, the last unction of the sick does not cleanse of the deadly sins but of the venial sins only; whereas confession cleanses of deadly and venial ones, as if one cut the roots, and the branches will wither. Therefore, confession is more important than unction.

Again, a deadly sin is washed away by the word through the priest, and likewise a venial sin is washed away by the word and prayer of the priest, as James said: 'Let him call for the elders of the church ... And if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.' With this in mind we – the priests – gather and pray from evening to dawn, and we celebrate the liturgy, and bless and make the holy cross both for the

living and for the deceased. Consequently, the priest's word in the name of God cleanses of venial sins.

6. And if any one says the priest's hand should reach the organs of senses, we say about this that always when the priest's right hand reaches the Christian's head, which is the root of all senses, and the priest's hand is anointed and cleansed with myron, that is why he imparts the grace of Holiness to him whom he reaches. And as many and numerous are the venial [sins] which are in the senses and in mind, so the priesthood grants manifold forgiveness by laying hands and cleansing with word.

7. And if any one says that we lack the first anointing before baptism, we say we do have it profoundly, because as the myron is poured cross-like into the basin, so this is, firstly, for this sacrament, and secondly, that our baptism is not in John's water but unto the death of Christ. So we do not have various oils for this but the Holy Myron lest the priests dare to introduce consecration of oil into our church. Thus we consecrate the oil on Maundy Thursday so that the Holy Myron is not applied to all.

8. Also, we have the ordinance of anointing for deceased priests, for we anoint them as wrestlers so that they may fight the evil demon of the air. And if anyone asks whether this anointing of the deceased is the first or last one, we reply that as death is the end of this life and the commencement of the future life, likewise this anointing is the last one which washes slender and venial sins, and is the first one for the new warfare ahead. And if they still argue that only the body is being anointed, and how

does it affect the soul, we answer that when the soul was with the body, all the body members were being affected together with it. But now, as it is apart, it receives entire holiness by parting. Otherwise let it be known that the whole order of burial is of no good to the souls of the deceased; then you do argue that no prayers, no priestly order or sacrifices do any benefit to the soul, and thus these all are utter deceit and evil heresy.

This much of anointing.

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