

ARMENIAN COLOPHONS ON THE TAKEOVER OF SIS (1375)*

by

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1375 marked the year when the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia ceased to exist as a state. In April of that year, the capital Sis was taken by the Mamluk governor of Aleppo, ‘Ashiq Tamur (‘Ashaqtamur). Among Christian sources describing the events of these turbulent years, the principal one is the *Chronique d’Arménie* composed by Jean Dardel several years after the kingdom’s fall¹. Dardel was the confessor-companion of the last Cilician king Lewon V (1374-1375), who was also the Franciscan chronicler’s apparent

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To indicate the collections of Armenian manuscripts, I follow Bernard Coulié’s system of acronyms as given in his *Répertoire des manuscrits arméniens / Census of Armenian Manuscripts. Liste des sigles utilisés pour désigner les manuscrits* (Association Internationale des Études Arméniennes): J = Jerusalem, Armenian Patriarchate, V = Venice, Library of the Mekhitarists, W = Vienna, Library of the Mekhitarists, and LOB = London, British Library. Additionally, in order to facilitate the readers’ use of the present paper, for Venice manuscripts two different numbers are mentioned simultaneously, such as V107/1377: the first number (V107) indicates the manuscript’s inventory number, while the second one is the manuscript’s consecutive number (1377) in the published catalogue.

1. There are two publications of Dardel’s *Chronicle* available in the original French (1906) and in Armenian translation prepared by Karapet Ezeanc’ (1891). Both the edition and the Armenian translation are based on the same manuscript dating from the early 15th century, preserved in the Bibliothèque municipale de Dole. In the present paper, both publications are cited.

source on the kingdom's last days. The colophons of Armenian manuscripts, whose irreplaceable value has been highlighted by scholars on many occasions², here also provide important contemporary accounts of the event in question. This paper furnishes the texts and translations of several manuscript colophons, which among the extant accounts are those closest to the event, written by people who either witnessed the siege and takeover of Sis or heard about it from an eyewitness.

The first of these colophons, dating from 1375, is found in a royal manuscript originally commissioned by king Lewon IV (1320/1–1341) in 1331. The manuscript is preserved in the Mekhitarist Congregation of Venice (V107/1377) and is the earliest surviving copy of the *Assizes of Antioch*, which was translated into Armenian by Smbat Sparapet (known also as Smbat Gundstabl/Constable) in 1265. It also contains another lawbook—*Datastanagirak*³ composed by the same Smbat Sparapet. The events of 1375 are found in a later colophon written by a bishop named Zak'arē, who happened to be in Sis during its fall:

[Fol. 214r] Ի մեծ թուին Հայոց, ի դառն և ի նեղ ժամանակիս ՊԻԳ. [1375], յորում ամի առաւ քաղաքն Սիս, և ես՝ նուստ և սուտանուն եպ(ի)սկ(ո)պ(ո)ս Զաքարէ, պատահեցայ անդ: Բայց զողբ և զողորմագին բանս զոր ետես ակն իմ, ո՞ կարէ պատմել զրոպ, զի տեսի զակունք պայծառ և զարեգակունք, զաստեղս և զլուսինս³ զի կային անկեալ ափի:

In the bitter and vexatious year of the Great Armenian Era, 824 [1375], when the city of Sis was taken, I, the humble and falsely named bishop Zak'arē happened to be there. But who is able to recount in writing the lamentation and pitiable things which I saw with my own eye, for I saw the brilliant luminaries, and the suns, the stars and the moons⁴, that they had fallen to the earth.

2. For the historical value of Armenian colophons, see, for example, the introductions to XAČ'IKYAN 1950 and SANJIAN 1969. See also SANJIAN 1968, 181-195; BAXČ'INYAN 1973, 83-91; DÉDÉYAN 1998, 89-110; SIRINIAN 2014, 65-100; HARUTYUNYAN 2019. See also the contributions in SIRINIAN, BUZI, SHURGAIA 2016.

3. For the word *լուսին* (moon), the crescent sign is used.

4. See the previous note.

The same colophon of bishop Zak'arē appears in another manuscript—W₄₃₉, fol. 65r—which is a 19th-century copy of the above-mentioned *Assizes of Antioch* and *Datastanagirik'*. The exemplar of this Vienna manuscript was the very same manuscript discussed above (V_{107/1377}), and its scribe copied not only its contents and principal colophons (including Smbat's 13th-century colophon and the principal colophon of V_{107/1377} dating from 1331), but also the later colophon added by bishop Zak'arē in 1375⁵.

While Zak'arē's colophon reflects the rather emotional impressions of a first-hand eyewitness, another colophon mentioning the takeover of Sis provides more information about the deplorable situation in the city. This colophon appears in a ritual manuscript, Add. 19,548 of the British Museum (now in the British Library)⁶. On folios 28r-29r and 26v, there are two 14th-century colophons dating from 1371 and 1375, respectively. The first is written by a monk Nersēs who, on October 19, 1371, offered this book to archbishop Yovanēs from Melitene / Melitini (present-day Malatya, Turkey), asking the latter to remember him. The second colophon, referring to the events of 1375, is short but informative and reads as follows:

5. For the description of W₄₃₉, see TAŠEAN 1895, 903-906. Compared to Zak'arē's original colophon found in V_{107/1377}, in this later copy there are minor differences, such as “թուխս” instead of “թուխն,” “գայիս” instead of “գային,” and the omission of the word “գողբ.” In the monumental volume of 14th-century colophons prepared by Levon Xaç'ikyan, Zak'arē's colophon is mentioned together with W₄₃₉, which, as said, is a later copy from V_{107/1377}. This is also the case of the selective translation of 14th-15th-century colophons by Avedis Sanjian, whose book is based on Xaç'ikyan's volume. See XAČ'IKYAN 1950, 516; SANJIAN 1969, 99. The original colophon of bishop Zak'arē (V_{107/1377}) has previously appeared in ALIŠAN 1885, 228 (partially); ZARBHANALEAN 1889, 308; ČEMČEMEAN 1996, 758 (with insignificant errors). My transcription of Zak'arē's colophon is done directly from the manuscript V_{107/1377}. I thank the fathers of the Mekhitarist Congregation of Venice for their kindness in providing me access to the Ispēnean Library in October 2014 and February 2019.

6. Following Conybeare's description, this colophon has previously been reproduced in XAČ'IKYAN 1950, 516 and SANJIAN 1969, 99, with slightly different readings than proposed here. Due to the lack of the principal colophon, the exact date of this manuscript is unknown. According to Conybeare, it can be dated to the 13th century (CONYBEARE 1913, 88-90). My ongoing examination of this manuscript suggests a date around late 12th century, based on paleography and the miniature paintings.

[Fol. 26v| Ի Թվիս ՊԻԳ. [=1375] էսս Յաշէի Թամուրն զԹագաւորական քաղաքն զՍիս և եղև սուգ մեծ: Ի սոյն ամի եղև սով սաստիկ ընդ ամ(ենայն) աշխարհս և եղև չ(ա)փ մի ց(ո)ր(ենոյ) ձ. դր(ամ) տահիրի:

In the year 824 [1375], Yaşex T'amur took the royal city of Sis, and there was great mourning. In the same year, there was a severe famine throughout the entire country, and the price for one measure of grain became 100 dr(am)⁷ pure.

Further details about the siege of Sis, as well as the famine and destruction of Christian sacred objects that followed the capture of the city, is described in a colophon written by a certain Pawłos in manuscript V997/1378⁸. This manuscript was written in 1292 and contains a *Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah* by Gēorg Skewřac'ı (i.e. from Skewřay). There are two later colophons written on folios 291r and 291v, dating from 1337 and 1375, respectively. The scribe of the first colophon and new owner of the book was Yovhannēs Klayc'ı (i.e. from Hřomklay), who writes that he offered the manuscript to the Surb Astuacacin (Holy Mother of God) monastery of Drazark, threatening at the same time with anathemas all those who would dare remove it from the holy monastery. The second colophon, which is of interest to us, was written by Pawłos, the next owner of the manuscript, in a vernacular-influenced language. We do not know how Pawłos acquired the manuscript or whether he escaped the anathemas of the previous owner, but he left a detailed colophon about the takeover of Sis, which gives the impression that Pawłos might well have witnessed the fall of the Armenian capital, as had bishop Zak'arē.

[Fol. 291v| Ի ՊԻԳ. [1375] բարկացօ Ա(ստուա)ծ ի վերայ քաղաքին Սիսոյ, ու սղարեցին զբերդն սեպտե[մ]բերէն ու մինչուր ի յապրիլ ժԶ. ու տվին բեր[դ]ն արն ուրբաթ ոչ այլ իրաց՝ քա[ն]ց ի սովոյ. որ մարծպան մի ցորենի Գձ. դր(ամ) շէր ի գտվիլ, որ կերան կատու [ե]վ էշ⁹:

7. Here, meaning *dirham*—silver coin equivalent to Armenian *dram/tram*.

8. This colophon is not included into XAČ'IKYAN 1950 and SANJIAN 1969. Previously, it has appeared in ALIŠAN 1885, 228 (partially); ČEMČEMEAN 1996, 762 (with insignificant differences compared to the transcription given in this paper).

9. “կատու [ե]վ էշ” can also be read as “կատու վէշ.”

Ու այս սա Տէր չԱ(ստուծո)յ աղագս ծովացե[ա]լ մեղաց մերոց
մատնեց զմեզ ի ձեռս թշնամե[ա]ց մերոց: Ով տեսնոյր զմեր խաչերոյն
արհամարհանքն ու զա(ստուա)ծաշունչ գրվոյն կտրտել, զս(ուր)բ
սեղանացն կործանելն:

Ջտառապեալ հոգի Պաւղոս քալ [եպիսկոպոս¹⁰] ըստացաւ զգրոցս
ա(ստուածա)յին կտակիս, յիշեցէք ծնաւդաւք իմաւք որք հանդիպիք,
ով ս(ուր)բ ընթերձաւդք:

In 824 [1375] God poured out His anger upon the city of Sis. And from September until April 16 they blockaded the fortress, and on Friday the castle was surrendered not for any other reasons than famine, because one marçpan¹⁰ of grain was not to be found (even) for 300 dr(am), and (they) had to eat cats and donkeys. And this was by the Lord God's will, who delivered us into the hands of our enemies because of the (great) inundation of our sins. Who could bear to see the contempt to our crosses, the books of divine Scripture torn to bits, and the holy altars destroyed?

O, holy readers, if you come across (this manuscript), remember the afflicted soul of [bishop?] Pawlos, who acquired these scriptures of divine testament, and my parents.

Pawlos interprets the fall of Sis as a result of God's anger at the Armenians because of their innumerable sins. Both Pawlos and the colophon-writer of LOB Add. 19,548 mention the famine of 1375 and other difficulties resulting from it, such as the high prices of grain and the desperate acts people had to recourse to for the sake of survival. In many episodes narrated by Dardel as well, one can find references to how the city dealt with the famine (see below).

In the course of the 14th century, not only Cilician Armenia but the entire East Mediterranean region faced several famines. One of the severest started in the mid-1370s and coincided with the fall of the Armenian state. According to Maqrīzī's *Treaty of Famines*, this famine started during the reign of sultan al-Ashraf Sha'bān, following a flooding of the Nile in 1374, which cut the canal and caused a decline in water level. As a result, prices increased to the point that grain could cost 150 dirham

10. *Marçpan/մարծպան* (also spelled *marzpan/մարզպան*) was a unit of measurement. See ŁAZARYAN & AVETISYAN 2009, 502.

per *ardeb*, barley's price became 100 dirham, and one dirham became the price for bread of one *ratl* and a half¹¹. Pawłos, the Armenian colophon-writer, uses *marcpan* (*marzpan*) as a unit of measurement for grain, which according to him cost 300 dr(am)/dirham¹². This famine lasted two years and was accompanied by an epidemic of plague¹³.

Apart from the famine that coincided with the fall of Sis, Pawłos seems to have witnessed other misfortunes too, such as the destruction of churches, crosses and manuscripts. The information about the loss of holy sites and objects is confirmed by another scribe, cited by Łewond Ališan and likely preserved in a manuscript kept in the Mekhitarist Congregation of Venice¹⁴:

Ի գերութիւն անկան եկեղեցիքն և գրեանքն:

The churches and scriptures fell into captivity.

Coming back to the detailed colophon of Pawłos, we notice that he pays particular attention to the dates of the siege of Sis, which started in September (1374). It appears that the siege of the city started at the very beginning of the reign of king Lewon V who, together with his spouse Margaret of Soissons, was coronated on September 14, 1374, in the cathedral of Saint Sophia in Sis¹⁵. The information provided by Pawłos is in accordance with the chronicle of Jean Dardel, who records that since Lewon's coronation "the Turks were attacking the doors of the city every day, causing great damages"¹⁶. These attacks were apparently happening around the well-fortified fortress of Sis (figs. 1-2)—the royal residence

11. Maqrīzī 1962, 42 (also n. 1 for translator's comments about further sources in Arabic) and 90 for the value of *ardeb/irdabb*.

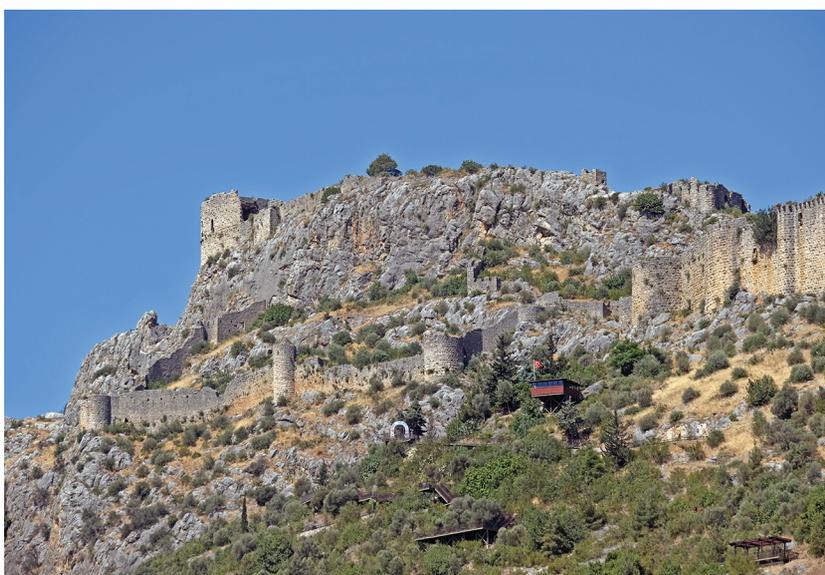
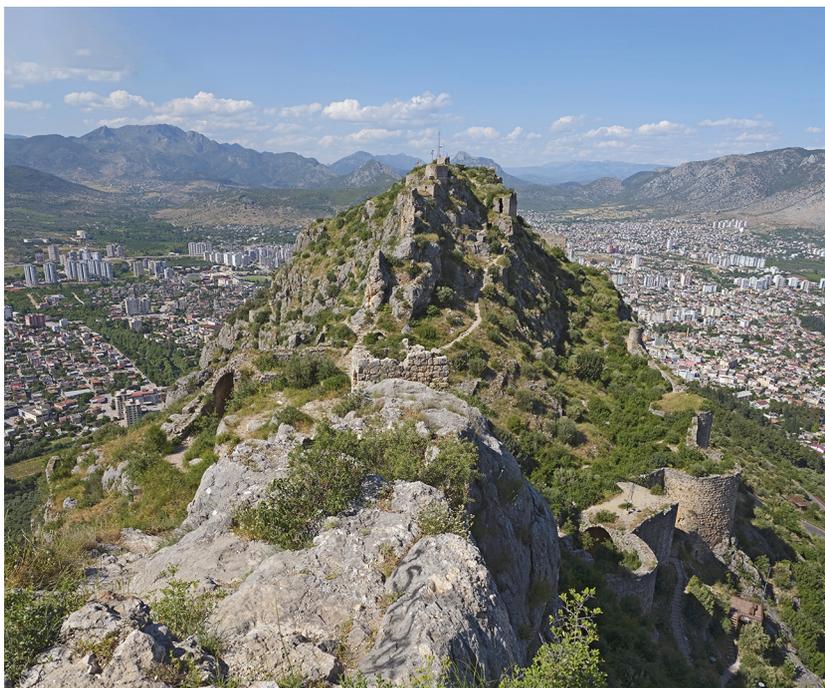
12. To compare with the grain prices at the beginning of the 14th century, see COUREAS 2009, 319-338; OTTEN-FROUX 1996, 165.

13. Maqrīzī 1962, 42. On this famine, see also De GUIGNES 1758, 239-240, and the entry "Schaban II" to *Encyclopédie catholique* 1846, esp. 39.

14. ALIŠAN 1885, 228. It is well known that Ališan rarely mentions his sources, but the scrupulosity of his scholarly work, as well as the scholarship undertaken during the past two centuries, leaves no doubt that his work is exclusively based on first-hand material.

15. Jean Dardel 1906, 66; Jean Dardel 1891, 114.

16. Jean Dardel 1906, 67; Jean Dardel 1891, 115.



Figs. 1-2 – Fortress of Sis (present-day Kozan, Turkey)
Photographs by Hrair Hawk Khatcherian, May-June 2019.

and the actual territory over which Lewon's reign prevailed. Indeed, the testimony of Pawlos about the siege refers not to the entire region of Sis but the fortress and likely its surroundings¹⁷. All attempts of the new king to establish an agreement and to ameliorate the situation were in vain: already in autumn 1374 his messengers were imprisoned, and the chariots with food and other necessities were prevented from reaching the capital¹⁸. Dardel ascribes blame for this dire situation to Armenian lords, for they "liked the Turks more than the Christians"¹⁹, but then adds that during the night the Armenians organized a counter-attack and managed to capture "much cattle and other food, which was enough to feed the city for a while"²⁰. The attacks continued for three more months, and although Dardel exaggerates in representing Lewon victorious against an army 12,000 persons strong, he must be right in underlining the crucial role of the royal archers in defending the city ramparts²¹. The three-month battle was concluded with an agreement, according to which the supply chain was re-established and Lewon had to continue paying taxes as before²². Soon afterwards, another army was sent out, now led by Abū Bakr (in Dardel's spelling Boudbaquir, also Budbēk'ir), which surrounded Sis and once again blocked the inhabitants' access to supplies²³. Abū Bakr's attack took place on the night preceding the feast of the Theophany (January 5, 1375), causing much destruction and taking many captives²⁴. On February 24, 1375, by order of the Mamluk sultan, yet another army arrived, now led by 'Ashiq Tamur²⁵, the emir of Aleppo, joining with the forces of Abū Bakr in the area surrounding Sis. Dardel twice mentions that the enemies' army consisted

17. The control over the rest of the region was already lost in the last years of the 1360s, when several attacks were organized on Sis. For these attacks and corresponding sources, see ALIŠAN 1885, 226-227; MUTAFIAN 2012, 219, n. 11; TER-PETROSYAN 2007, 444-445.

18. On the capture of the king's messengers and the prevention of necessities from entering the city, see Jean Dardel 1906, 68; Jean Dardel 1891, 117.

19. By "Christians" Dardel means the Catholics.

20. Jean Dardel 1906, 68; Jean Dardel 1891, 117.

21. Jean Dardel 1906, 68; Jean Dardel 1891, 118.

22. Jean Dardel 1906, 68; Jean Dardel 1891, 118.

23. Jean Dardel 1906, 69; Jean Dardel 1891, 120.

24. Jean Dardel 1906, 69-71; Jean Dardel 1891, 120-123.

25. Dardel calls him Mellech.

of 15,000 soldiers²⁶. The city managed to overcome this attack as well, and its final takeover was postponed for another two months. By this time, the “great famine”—as described by our chronicler—had reached the royal castle, where the wounded king lay in his bed in the tower castle, situated in the extreme south of the fortress²⁷.

In general terms, the date of the final takeover of Sis mentioned in the colophon of Pawłos corresponds to Dardel’s account. The chronicler gives the date of an episode that took place a few days after the city’s fall: according to him, on the day of Easter 1375 (April 22), Lewon V, accompanied with twenty other royal prisoners, left Sis and headed for Aleppo, ‘Ashiq Tamur’s city²⁸. Pawłos, however, is more precise, mentioning not only the month but also the date and weekday when the royal castle was surrendered—Friday, April 16²⁹.

One rare Armenian primary source, however, offers another account, according to which the takeover of Sis by ‘Ashiq Tamur took place on April 12. It is a fragmentary but very informative text, written shortly after the fall of the capital. The account is found in the voluminous manuscript J1255, which contains a Lectionary, originally copied in 1341 in the church of the Holy Archangels in Jerusalem. The first folios of the volume were later filled in with various narratives, among them a passage briefly recording the event in question. This short account seems to be an excerpt from a brief chronicle (rather than a colophon) and contains information that is both new and slightly different from what has been discussed so far. In this text, the takeover of Sis by “the horsemen of Šam [i.e. Syria]” (that is ‘Ashiq Tamur’s troops) is dated to April 12. The author of this text then mentions the capture of two religious leaders, namely the Armenian catholicos and the Syriac patriarch³⁰. Only after these two is

26. Jean Dardel 1906, 72, also 71 (about the number of Mamluk soldiers); Jean Dardel 1891, 124, also 122. See also ALIŠAN 1885, 227. For other sources (with a different number of soldiers), see CHEVALIER 2009, 666, n. 592.

27. Lewon was wounded in the face during the February attack. On this, see Jean Dardel 1906, 73-75; Jean Dardel 1891, 126-130.

28. Jean Dardel 1906, 84; Jean Dardel 1891, 148.

29. Ališan however proposed that April 6 instead of 16 should have been written in the Venice manuscript. See ALIŠAN 1885, 228, n. 1.

30. During the reign of king Het’um I (1226-1269/70), patriarch Ignatius II established a Syriac patriarchate in Sis. See ALIŠAN 1885, 221-222. When narrating some

the name of king Lewon listed. The author's wording "բերին" — "(they brought)" — might suggest that he was in Syria at the time of writing, when the eminent prisoners were brought by "the horsemen of Šam"³¹. We also learn that on July 11 of the same year the catholicos went back to Cilicia, accompanied by some lords. Despite Dardel's very hostile and subjective attitude towards the catholicos and his supporters, once again his chronicle proves to be generally credible, for it confirms the information that the catholicos was allowed to return to Sis, "together with those Armenians who were expelled from Sis with the king"³².

In the excerpt found in J1255, further interesting information is to be found, which refers to an activity undertaken by queen Mariun on August 6. Mariun was the widow of king Kostandin I (1344-1362/63) and former queen of Armenia, who actually governed the state during 1363-1364 and 1373-1374. Although in our excerpt the sentence mentioning Mariun is complete, the verb is omitted—a not unusual practice in medieval Armenian texts. Nevertheless, it can be supposed that this episode refers to her travel from Cairo to Jerusalem, which, according to Dardel, took place after July 9, 1375. Thus, Dardel writes that the royal prisoners, comprising of "*the king and the queen [Lewon V and Margaret of Soissons], their children, the former queen of Armenia [Mariun], who was the spouse of the tyrant king Kostandin I, sir Sohier Doucart and his countess [lady Remye], as well as Armenian barons and great men from the city of Sis, altogether twenty persons,*" left Sis and arrived Cairo on July 9. We learn from the same source that, after receiving an appropriate accommodation, it was decided that Lewon would stay in Cairo with a daily subsistence of 60 silver drams, while the former queen Mariun, together with Sohier Doucart and his spouse lady Remye, would head for Jerusalem according

events of 1275, Bar Hebraeus writes about "the little monastery of our patriarch which is in the suburbs of Sis." See Bar Hebraeus 1932, 453.

31. As mentioned above, the manuscript was created in Jerusalem, where it is preserved until now. If the author of this excerpt is also the scribe, then one can speculate that at some point after 1341 the manuscript was moved to Syria and brought back to Jerusalem. It is however more probable that it was never moved out of the Armenian congregation, and the scribe of the cited lines has simply narrated the events by copying the original text from a narrative that was initially composed in Syria shortly after the fall of Sis.

32. Jean Dardel 1906, 87; Jean Dardel 1891, 154.

to their own request³³. The excerpt of J1255 comes to add further information, namely an activity undertaken by Mariun on August 6—most probably her travel to the Holy Land, described by Dardel and other 14th-century sources³⁴. The passage of the excerpt ends with the mention of the reigning sultan al-Ashraf Sha‘bān³⁵:

[Fol. 5] Առին զՍիս Շամայ հեծելն թղ. ՊԻԳ. [1375] ապրիլ ամս. ԺԲ., բերին զԿ(ա)թ(ո)ղ(իկոս) տ(է)ր Կոստ(անդին) եւ զասորի պատրիարզն, զթ(ա)գ(աւոր) Լեւոն: Յուլիս ԺԱ. դարձաւ ի յետ Կ(ա)թ(ողիկոս) եւ այլք յիշխանացն ու? Մարիուն թագուհին, յօգոստոս ամիս Զ.: Էր սուլտան Մարայ Աշրաֆ՝ մելիք Նասրի թոռն, ամիր Հ(ա)սանայ տղայ?:

On April 12, 824 [1375] the horsemen of Sam [i.e. Syria] took Sis and brought catholicos Kostandin and the Syriac patriarch, (as well as) king Lewon. On July 11 the catholicos returned, also other lords and (?). On August 6, queen Mariun [the verb is omitted]. The sultan of M(i)sr [i.e. Cairo, Egypt] was Ašraf, grandson of melik‘ Nasr and son of emir H(a)san³⁶.

The testimonies of the colophons discussed above and of the excerpt found in J1255 provide a window into the situation at Sis and the experience of its inhabitants who lived in the crucial time when the Armenian state ceased to exist. The minor texts assembled here are not the only ones about the event in question, since the story of the fall of the Armenian capital was copied, re-narrated, re-interpreted and romanticized in the centuries that followed³⁷. As explained, my rationale in choosing the texts

33. Jean Dardel 1906, 84-86; Jean Dardel 1891, 148-154.

34. For Mariun’s sojourn and death in Jerusalem, see GRIGORYAN SAVARY 2021.

35. I did not have the possibility to consult the manuscript J1255 personally. The text found on folio 5 is reproduced as it appears in POŁAREAN 1969, 424, expanding only the abbreviations.

36. These are sultan al-Ashraf Sha‘bān’s father al-Nāšir Ḥasan and grandfather al-Nāšir Muḥammad Ibn Qalāwūn, both of whom intermittently reigned as sultans of Egypt.

37. For later sources related to the events discussed above, see for example my translation of two passages found in the 17th-century *Chronological History of Armenian Cilicia* authored by Yakob erēc‘ Ssec‘i: GRIGORYAN SAVARY 2021. The identification

gathered here is due to their closeness to the historical event, both temporally and geographically. Our principal chronicler, Jean Dardel, even with his highly subjective attitude towards the members of the royal court, provides us with precious information, offering a broad overview of the events. The minor texts discussed here describe the same events from another, more socially instructive angle, giving us the opportunity to imagine certain realities of the time not discussed in the chronicle. Pawlos' description also reflects a Christian believer's point of view³⁸, one who could not remain indifferent to the destruction of altars, crosses and sacred manuscripts that he witnessed. His interpretation that all this happened because of the immense sins of the Armenians echoes similar ideas prevalent throughout the entire (Armenian) Middle Ages, when disaster was seen as a message from the divine³⁹.

of the chronicler was made by Gēorg Tēr-Vardanean, who has also prepared the text of the *Chronological History* to be published soon (private communication with Gēorg Tēr-Vardanean, who also informed me about a relevant soon-to-be-published article entitled «Յակոբ Սսեցու ժամանակագրությունը և նրա պատմագիտական արժեքը» / “The Chronicle of Yakob Ssec'i and Its Significance for Historiography”).

38. In some other colophons of Cilician royal manuscripts as well, the final takeover of Sis is described as loss of Christians. See the later colophons of J2027 and of the now-lost Gospel manuscript originally belonging to king Kostandin I (1344-1362/63), reproduced and translated in GRIGORYAN SAVARY 2021.

39. To give an example from the period of the Cilician state, the 13th-century royal chancellor and chronicler Vahram Rabuni concluded his *Rhythmic History of the Rubenean Family* with pages-long reflections about the meaning of the suffering continuously experienced by Armenians. In response to those who complained of the misfortunes that befell the country, saying, “How is this judgment justifiable, which has come upon us? Are we the only sinners of all the inhabitants of the earth, that we should be singled out from all others?” (Ասեն՝ զիսորդ է ճշմարտեալ այս դատաստան՝ որ մեզ հասեալ մի թէ՛ միայն մեք մեղուցեալ քան զոր յերկրի են բնակեալ, զի յամենից առանձնացեալ), Rabuni brings several Biblical examples to justify the reason for suffering. His explanation and justification are constructed through the lens of believers' capacities for patience and penitence and their impeccable faith, “for God chastens the one [whom] He loves” (քանզի խրատէ Տէր զոր սիրէ). See Vahram Rabuni 1859, 237-242. In the English translation of Vahram's *History*, a substantial part of these concluding reflections is missing, because Charles Friedrich Neumann, who prepared the otherwise scrupulous translation of this chronicle, found Vahram's reasoning groundless, useless and repetitive. See Vahram's Chronicle 1831, 59-60 (also n. 86 for the translator's explanations in not translating that part of the chronicle). In the French translation of Vahram's *Rhythmic History*, both the text and the translation appear without abbreviations. See Vahram d'Édesse 1869, 493-535.

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