

ARMENIAN COLOPHONS ON THE TAKEOVER OF SIS (1375) ADDENDUM

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In the previous volume of the *Revue des études arméniennes*, I brought together Armenian colophons which mention or describe the Mamluk takeover of Sis in 1375. Apart from several complete colophons, one fragmentary quotation was also included, which was mentioned in Ališan's *Sisuan*: "And the churches and scriptures fell into captivity".¹ In the accompanied footnote, I speculated that, although Ališan did not reveal his source, there should be no doubt about its authenticity, for his work is exclusively based on first-hand material. Soon after the publication of my article, I came across the complete text of that colophon in another monumental study of Ališan.² The present *addendum* provides the English translation of that colophon, while its Armenian text is reproduced as given by the Mekhitarist Father. I was unable to identify the colophon's original manuscript, which probably no longer exists. I believe, however, that the publication of Ališan's little-known collection of Armenian colophons might shed light on this and many other issues.³

Beside documenting the fall of the Armenian capital, this colophon offers some details about the dispossession of religious sites and the circulation of manuscripts through salvage collecting and commerce. It was written by a certain bishop Astuacatur from Erznkay (present-day Erzincan, Turkey), who bought the manuscript from his unnamed compatriot, an

¹ Lewond Ališan, *Sisuan. Hamagrut'wn haykakan Kilikioy ew Lewon Mecagorc* [*Sisuan. A Documentary Study of Armenian Cilicia and Lewon the Great*] (Venice: San Lazzaro 1885), 228; Gohar Grigoryan Savary, "Armenian Colophons on the Takeover of Sis (1375)", *Revue des études arméniennes* 40 (2021): 90.

² Lewond Ališan, *Hayapatum. Patmut'wn Hayoc'* [*Hayapatum. Armenian History*], volume 3 (Venice: San Lazzaro, 1901), 151.

³ For this unpublished work of Ališan, written on 2200 quad sheets, see Gēorg Tēr-Vardanean, "Jeřagrakan mer korustnerə ew anelik'nerə [Our Manuscript Losses and Current Tasks]", in *Eteřnə ew mer jeřagreři korustnern u p'rkut'wnnerə* [The Genocide and the Losses and Survivals of Our Manuscripts] (Mother See of Holy Ējmiacin 2015), 21.

eyewitness of the fall of Sis. The latter managed to buy and collect manuscripts and transfer them from Sis to Erznkay. When Astuacatur became the manuscript's new owner (likely, a Bible or an Old Testament manuscript), he added the Book of Isaiah, which “was missing from it”.⁴

Ի թվիս Հայկական սեռիս ՊԻԴ [1375], ի բազմանալ մեղաց մերոց՝ ի նախանձ շարժեալ սուղրանն Մսրայ, և զորս բազումս առաքեալ ի վերայ անառիկ գղեկին Սիսոյ, և պաշարեալ առին. և գերութեան անկան եկեղեցիքն և գրեանքն. և ծի ոմն ի մեր նաՀանգէս անդ Հանդիպեալ և ի գրեանց զոր գնեալ և զոր ժողովեալ, և եկեալ ի վեր ի մայրաքաղաքս Եզնկաս, ի ծախ Հանեալ. ես նուաստ փանաքի ապիկար եպիսկոպոս Տէր Աստուածատուր՝ փափագող եղեալ գնեցի յիմ Հալալ արդեանց ըզգիրքս զայս ինձ յիշատակ և ծնողաց իմոց և ամենայն զարմից. և Եսային ոչ կայր ի ներս, յետոյ գրեցի:

In the year 824 [1375] of the Armenian nation, because of the multiplication of our sins the malevolence of the sultan of Msr was incited, and he sent many troops to besiege the impregnable castle of Sis and took it. And the churches and scriptures fell into captivity; and someone from our region, who happened to be there, [acquired] some of these scriptures — some by purchase and some by collecting — and came to the city of Eznkay to sell them. I, Tēr Astuacatur, humble bishop of mediocre capacities, desired to [have] this book [and] bought it with my honestly earned means as a memory of me and of my parents and of all [my] relatives. And [the book of] Isaiah was missing from it; I copied it later.

⁴ For the place of the Book of Isaiah in Armenian biblical manuscripts, see Claude Cox, “1.4.7 Armenian Translations”, in *Textual History of the Bible*, Volume 1: *The Hebrew Bible*, general ed. A. Lange, volume eds. A. Lange and E. Tov (Leiden: Brill, 2016); accessed June 20, 2022 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2452-4107_thb_COM_0001040700 In the same volume, see also Peter S. Cowe, “6–9.2.5.1 Isaiah”; accessed June 20, 2022 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2452-4107_thb_COM_0609020501