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THE RELIGIOUS CULTURE OF POLISH ARMENIANS (CHURCH-PUBLIC STRUCTURES AND RELATIONS)

I

DEFINITION OF THE SUBJECT OF ANALYSIS: THE RELIGION OF THE DIASPORA

The changing political vicissitudes of the lands of the Armenian Upland – its economic, social and religious crises – aroused even in antiquity strong migration movements within its inhabitants, ones that would recur with almost every successive century. The Armenians became a people ceaselessly seeking a new home, wandering from one country to another. This migration determined almost every aspect of their culture. They functioned mainly in busy urban locations, in the world of money, trade and crafts. They acquired the abilities indispensable to a wandering nation. Both in the material and spiritual sense they became a significant element within the system of inter-cultural communication of the Orient and the Europe connected with it. They spread together with the rise of great empires and changes in inter-state boundaries. Their own culture in having preserved the traditions derived from their ancient homeland, acquired an eclectic turn. With each successive homeland they were to change their names, languages and customs. While at the same time they were to retain strong internal ties, the linking element for which was religion – an indigenous form of Christianity. While on the one hand connecting the Armenian enclaves at times far removed from one another and appearing to represent different cultures, it was also to perform another function: for it united this system of ethnic financial-commercial emporia from Peking through to Italy.¹

¹ Krzysztof Stopka, 'Migracje a przemiany tożsamości ormiańskiej w średnio-wiecznej Europie Wschodniej', in Maciej Salamon and Jerzy Strzelczyk (eds.), *Wędrowniacy i etnogeneza w starożytności i średniowieczu* (Cracow, 2004), 355–65.

In the second half of the 11th century the first Armenian merchants appeared in Kievan Rus'. A new era in the history of Armenian migration was opened by the Mongol expansion in the 13th century. Its effect was the rise of a great economic market, with the principalities of Rus' at its north-western flank. The economic profit derived from the Tatar conquest of Rus' was partly consumed by Armenian merchants. After a period of sporadic expeditions they were to settle there for good. The principalities of Rus' were crossed by attractive, intercontinental transit routes, and when Galich-Vladimir Rus' (Red Ruthenia) fell under the dominion of Lithuania and Poland, the local Armenians were presented with a chance of conquering new markets.² The foundation charter of Lwów, the main trading centre of this part of Rus', issued by its new Polish ruler, King Casimir the Great in 1356, mentioned Armenians side by side with Ruthenians, Tatars, Saracens (i.e. Tatar Muslims) and Jews.³

The Polish Armenians created urban communities of a migratory type. Urbanity and diaspora defined the significance of religion in their common life. The Armenian Church had a state and national character even in antiquity. With the loss of independence in the conditions of dispersion, religion and Church organisation was to increase its social function. The role of religion in the life of migratory communities is well-known, and has been many times examined, especially in the new societies of America.⁴ In the case of 19th or

² Mirosława Zakrzewska-Dubasowa, *Ormianie w dawnej Polsce* (Lublin, 1982), 9–12; Krzysztof Stopka, *Ormianie w Polsce dawnej i dzisiejszej* (Cracow, 2000), 16–19.

³ *Akta grodzkie i ziemskie z czasów Rzeczypospolitej polskiej z archiwum tzw. bernardyńskiego we Lwowie* [hereafter: AGZ], ed. Xawery Liske, iii (Lwów, 1872), no. V, 13–14, 17.

⁴ Donald Young, *American Minority Peoples: A Study in Racial and Cultural Conflicts in the United States* (London, 1932), 504–39 (chap. 15: 'The Church and Race Relations'); Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People* (Boston, 1951), 117–43 (chap. 5: 'Religion as a Way of Life'); Willard Johnson, 'Religion and Minority Peoples', in Francis J. Brown and Joseph S. Roucek (eds.), *One America: The History, Contributions and Present Problems of Our Racial and National Minorities* (New York, 1945), 507–14; Charles F. Marden, and Gladys Meyer, *Minorities in American Society* (New York, 1968), 70–96 (chap. 4: 'Religion and Minority Status'); Andrew M. Greeley, *Why Can't They Be Like Us? America's White Ethnic Groups* (New York, 1981), 82–94 (chap. 7: 'Religion and Ethnicity'); John Cogley, 'Varieties of Catholicism', in Norman R. Yetman and C. Hoy

20th century immigrants we tend to discuss mainly the ecclesiastical structures: the attitude of their native Churches towards the phenomenon of migration and the role of the immigrant parish in a new country. The genesis and dimensions of Armenian migrations together with the historical periods during which this phenomenon occurred (the twilight of antiquity, the Middle Ages), makes such an approach appear inadequate in their case – for we are here dealing with the inseparable union of religious identity and the communal life of immigrants; for which the Jewish Diaspora constitutes the closest analogy. The Armenian Church did not so much focus on the realisation of a strategy towards the phenomena of migration, as actually existed within the diaspora. The Armenians had for many years settled amongst the Persians, the Greeks, the Syrians, the Romans and other peoples. The policy of deporting whole ethnic groups as practised by the Byzantine Empire contributed to the rise of distant enclaves of their ethnic settlement. Mass escapes allowed for at least a part of their nation to be saved from annihilation during the time of foreign invasions, while in critical moments the diaspora were to provide their compatriots at home with financial or political support. Hence the medieval Armenian Church did not appraise the phenomenon of migration – as did other European Churches in the 19th century – from the point of view of social morality, in as far as such a way of thinking was possible at all in the pre-modern era not knowing forms of social life removed from religious sanction. In this situation the Armenian Church learnt to act within the conditions of the diaspora as effectively as in a territorially compact structure.

II

RELIGIOUS 'BAGGAGE': ECCLESIASTICAL ORGANISATION, THEOLOGICAL DOCTRINE, LITURGY AND RITES

The Armenian immigrants brought with them their own faith, tradition and rites that considerably differed from the local Christian denominations, namely Catholicism and the Orthodox Church. The

Steele (eds.), *Majority and Minority: The Dynamics of Racial and Ethnic Relations* (Boston, London and Sydney, 1979), 252–60; David Millett, 'Religious Identity: The Non Official Languages and Minority Churches', in Jean L. Elliott (ed.), *Two Nations, Many Cultures, Ethnic Groups in Canada* (Ottawa, 1979), 182–5.

Armenian Church had its own administrative jurisdiction and was not linked by bonds of loyalty to either the patriarch of Constantinople or the pope at Avignon. It was subject to the rule of its own *catholicos* who from the end of the 13th century had resided in Sis, the capital of the Kingdom of Cilician Armenia. In 1441 its attitude towards the Union of Florence was to cause a schism. Alongside the Cilician *catholicos*, there appeared the *catholicos* of Etchmiadzin, in Greater Armenia. The bishops were consecrated exclusively by the *catholicos*. The ecclesiastical hierarchy operated on a single tier, although some bishops bore the titles of patriarchs, metropolitans and archbishops. All the bishoprics were equal and independent of one another. The *vardapets* – that is the educated monks, were not subordinated to bishops. They could even excommunicate the hierarchs or temporarily administer the dioceses, replacing the bishops in their pontifical functions. Thus the Armenian Church was situated somewhere between the federal structure of the Orthodox Church, with its metropolitan archdioceses that shared their competences with the patriarchate, and the centralism of Avignon, with its system of canonical provisions and nominations and interference even in the life of parish communities. In Cilician Armenia the right of investing the *catholicos*, the bishops and priests belonged to the king, and after the downfall of this state (1375), to the local magnates (both clergymen and laymen). Outside Cilicia candidates for the posts of Armenian bishops were chosen by the communes, which constituted a relic of the customs of ancient Christians. In Armenia proper they were frequently the representatives of local magnate families, and in the diaspora – of the families of priests or merchants. The structure of the Armenian dioceses in Greater Armenia and Cilician Armenia was similar to that of the Greek (Orthodox) Church. The control of parishes was exercised by archpriests (*avagyrets*), whose competences were similar to those of Orthodox archpriests (*protopop*) and Catholic rural deans. The Armenian Church was similar to the Orthodox in that it possessed no cathedral chapters. The clergy in Armenia was financed by benefices, tithes and other contributions, just as it was in the Orthodox and Catholic Churches. Within the diaspora the clergy was completely financially dependent on the religious communities. The Armenians were also similar to Orthodox Christians in as far as they chose their bishops from among monks (in the East, however, also the Catholic hierarchy was derived exclusively from

friars – the Franciscans and Dominicans) and as well as in the fact of the lack of celibacy amongst the clergy.⁵

The Armenian Church rejected the decrees of the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451). Chalcedonian Christology on the two natures in the one person of Christ was acknowledged by Armenian theologians as a new version of the Nestorian heresy (two persons in Christ). The Armenian doctrine placed emphasis on the unity of the person of Christ, identical with his one – divine – nature, and in this it was close to Monophysitic Christianity.

In its liturgy, religious writings and formal correspondence the Armenian Church used the classic Armenian language of the 5th century (*Grabar*), recorded in the alphabet created by the monk Mesrop Mashtots. The celebrants did not mix wine with water, and for consecration used unleavened host, and to their hymn *Trisagion* (Holy Lord) added the words ‘who was crucified for us’, which were considered to be Monophysitic. The Armenian Creed did not contain any mention of the origin of the Holy Ghost, and among the heretics excommunicated during the Armenian liturgy were the creators of the Council of Chalcedon with Pope Leo at the head; considered by Catholics and Orthodox Christians as saints. The Armenian liturgy, initially similar to the Byzantine, in the period of the crusades became pervaded, especially in its Cilician version, by Latin elements. It was then also that the Latin mitres and pastorals appeared as the new insignia of the episcopal office, while the old started to be used by the ordinary clergy. At the beginning of the 14th century the Latin *porrectio instrumentorum* was introduced (handing in to the ordained the objects that were symbols of their service), which replaced the older laying on of hands at the ordaining ceremony. An Armenian specificity was the custom of the ritual slaughter of animals at the stone altars inside or near the church (*matagh*). This was done for the peace of the souls of the dead or for various personal intentions. For this reason Orthodox Christians accused Armenians of Judaic leanings. Other Armenian customs – the celebration of the liturgy once a day at one altar, the combination of Baptism with Confirmation and the Eucharist, the cult of icons, the Cross and relics – made the Armenian Church similar to the Greek.

⁵ Ludomir Bieńkowski, ‘Organizacja Kościoła wschodniego w Polsce’, in Jerzy Kłoczowski (ed.), *Kościół w Polsce*, 2 vols. (Cracow, 1968–70), ii, 781–837.

The objects of cult (churches, monasteries, chapels, cemeteries, sacred memorials) had their own style of Old-Armenian origin with a lot of additions from the sacral cultures encountered in diaspora. This element of the religious equipment of the Armenian immigrants was the most visual and distinctive feature of their presence in the multi-ethnic medieval townscape in Poland. The *khachkars* (stone votive crosses) and tombstones covered with a characteristic design of Armenian letters played, in this respect, a special role.

The Polish Armenians also lived in a different rhythm, according to their own calendar, one inherited from their ancestors. Their liturgical year differed from the Greek and Latin. It was divided into two parts: the Paschal cycle and the Nativity cycle. The most important feast of the first cycle was Pascha, or Easter (*Zatik*). It was preceded by Lent which lasted longer than in other Christian Churches, for it started with an initial fasting (*arachavor*), which occurred in the week after the tenth Sunday before Easter. The date of Easter did not always correspond with the calculations of other Churches, since the Armenians used an Alexandrian system of computation (*epact*), i.e. the numbers designating the phase of the Moon on the first day of the year. Hence Armenian Easter sometimes came a week later than in the Byzantine Church. The Armenians considered the Greek Easter erroneous (*tsrazatik*). The Nativity cycle was divided into three smaller periods connected with the feasts of the Assumption of the Holy Mother of God and the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Their celebrations were transferred to the Sundays nearest to the 15th of August and the 14th of September. The last period of this cycle started on the first Sunday of Advent (between the 5th and 21st of November, nearest to the 18th of November) and lasted until the Holy Nativity and the Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Armenian Church did not celebrate any festival connected with Christmas on the 25th of December. The Armenian Epiphany was celebrated for nine days from the 5th to 14th of January, with its culmination on the 6th of January, and combined the liturgical memory of Christmas, the visitation of the Kings to the Infant Jesus, and the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River.

The Armenian hagiography, although inspired by the tradition of other Churches, also had its specific features. The saints were remembered on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays in the periods free from fasting and other feasts. Given the said the Armenian

Calendar did not possess any set dates for the remembrance of specific saints; these were arranged in various blocks and configurations.

III THE RELATION BETWEEN RELIGION AND LAW IN THE PROCESS OF SOCIALISATION

Estate society in the Polish Kingdom was organised on a legal basis. Also the communal organisation of the Armenians, in order to exist, had to gain such a basis. The question arises as to whether the traditional law of the Armenian diaspora in Poland was of equal value to its social organisation as its native religion. There is much to show that religion was more important. In 1356 King Casimir the Great allowed the Armenians in Lwów to retain their own law, or adopt the local one, i.e. the law of Magdeburg. The majority opted for the former, for soon after the king's death there was an Armenian community in Lwów with their own *vogt* at the head. A little later at Kamieniec Podolski things took a similar course. However, in 1462 the Armenian *vogt* in Lwów asked King Casimir Jagiellon to transfer his whole community to Magdeburg law.⁶ This postulate was rejected by the monarch, but it shows clearly that the Armenians themselves did not treat the maintenance of their native law as a condition *sine qua non* of their group existence within a diaspora. In Kiev – belonging to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania – the Armenian community acted on the basis of Magdeburg law.⁷ There were also many cases of the individual escape of more enterprising Armenians from Armenian law to Magdeburg law, although they continued to share in the religious life of their community.⁸ Small groups of believers in the Armenian faith lived within the districts of state jurisdiction exercised by the *starosts* (Lwów, Kiev), which did not recognise Armenian law. The latter, in its version confirmed by King Sigismund I in 1519, was not a religious law, although the Armenians defined it by the word *torah*. It did

⁶ Oswald Balzer, *Sądownictwo ormiańskie w średniowiecznym Lwowie* (Lwów, 1909), 3–41, 178–81; *Privilegia nationum civitatis Leopoliensis (XIV–XVIII saec.)*, ed. Myron Kapral, in *Monumenta Leopolitana* (hereafter: ML), ii (Lviv, 2000), no. 46, 140–1.

⁷ Yaroslav Dachkévytch, 'Les Arméniens à Kiev (de la deuxième moitié du XIII^e au XVII^e siècle)', in Dickran Kouymijan (ed.), *Armenian Studies. Études arméniennes. In memoriam Haig Berbérian* (Lisbon, 1986), 194–6, 199.

⁸ Balzer, *Sądownictwo*, 63–9.

contain some prescriptions of a religious nature, but mostly regulated secular matters and seldom referred to the authority of the Scriptures or ecclesiastical canons.⁹ So it played a different role than the *Torah* and *Talmud* for the Jews or the *Torah* alone for the Karaites. In contrast to religion, this law was to adopt with the passage of time many solutions derived from local (Polish and Magdeburg) law.

In the development of Armenian communities in Poland we can distinguish a few stages, each characterised by different forms of religious life. First of all we have to stress the role of immigrants in the initiation of ecclesiastical practices and structures. The first centres of Armenian pastoral work mentioned in the sources were monasteries. The monks were better adjusted to the missionary conditions in newly arising communities in the diaspora than the lay clergy encumbered by their families. Thus the chronology of the rise of the Armenian monastic centres in principalities of Rus' was co-extensive with the geography of their settlements, and is equally difficult to reconstruct. Seventeenth-century tradition held the earliest Armenian colony to be Kiev (11th century), though its origin could be the renown of this city as the capital of Kievan Rus'.¹⁰ The Armenian church in Kiev was later dedicated to the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God.¹¹ The Kievan Armenian Bishop Hagop (Jacobus) (who from 1371 had settled in Lwów) was a monk.¹² We have more information about two monasteries in Lwów. Both lay to the west of the town, in part later called *Podzamcze* (under the

⁹ *Statuta iuris Armenici*, ed. Oswald Balzer, in *Corpus iuris Polonici*, iii (Cracow, 1906) (hereafter: CIP, iii), no. 215, p. 401–538; Oswald Balzer, *Statut ormiański w zatwierdzeniu Zygmunta I z r. 1519* (Lwów, 1910).

¹⁰ Adolf Pawiński (ed.), *Dzieje zjednoczenia Ormian polskich z Kościołem rzymskim w XVII wieku*, in *Źródła dziejowe* (hereafter: ZD), ii (Warsaw, 1876), 14, 17; *Step'anosi Roškay Žamanakagrowt' iwn kam tarekank' ekelec' akank'*, ed. Hamazasp Oskian (Vienna, 1964), 112, 127.

¹¹ ZD, xxii: Aleksander Jabłonowski (ed.) *Polska XVI wieku pod względem geograficzno-statystycznym*, 11: *Ziemie ruskie. Ukraina (Kijów-Braclaw)* (Warsaw, 1897), 107–8, 572.

¹² August Theiner (ed.), *Vetera Monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia*, i (Rome, 1860), no. 894, 664–5; Edvard I. Ruzhicky, 'Neopublikovannyi dokument XIV veka po istorii armjanskoj kolonii vo L'vove', *Lraber hasarakakan gitowt' yownneri*, 2 (321) (Yerevan, 1970), 106–8; AGZ, iii, no. 22, 49–50; *Pomniki dziejowe Lwowa* (hereafter: PDL), i (Lwów, 1892), 93–5; Franciszek Pawłowski, *Premislia sacra* (Cracow, 1869), 65.

Castle), the first more to the north, the other – more to the south.¹³ Worthy of attention is above all the monastic church situated near the Orthodox St Onuphrius Monastery,¹⁴ whence a road ran to the town. No information about the original *patrocinium* of this church can be found in the sources. Most probably it was dedicated to the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God, which is just like the monastery in Kiev. The Armenians traditionally called it the Khachkatar (*xac'katar*), i.e. a 'monastery', hence in the sources (we have only non-Armenian at our disposal) the nameless forms *monastir*, *monasterium* appear.¹⁵ This fact shows that its monastic function had firmly sunk into the colloquial consciousness. Probably it was the earliest and for a certain time the only object of the Armenian cult. The date of the origin of another monastery, dedicated to St John, appears to be later; it was situated in the market-place of the Ruthenian settlement, around which the Armenians, together with the Tatars, lived still in 1427.¹⁶ An Armenian monastery stood there in the 1370s. Probably as early as the days of the Tatar rule in Podolia (1255–1344) a church dedicated to the Annunciation arose in Kamieniec Podolski. Although we have no confirmation for the said in the sources, this is confirmed by an old and quite credible tradition. According to which, the monks originally lived near the church, and here was a cemetery, so this monastery performed certain pastoral functions.¹⁷ Of the Armenians of Vladimir (Włodzimierz Wołyński) we know only that they had

¹³ Aleksander Czołowski, 'Lwów za ruskich czasów', *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, v (1891), 779–812.

¹⁴ ML, no. 83, pp. 289–90.

¹⁵ AGZ, xiv (1889), no. 2461, p. 319; xv (1891), no. 2217, pp. 295–6, no. 820. See also ZD, ii, 18, 20, 38, 41, 48, 95, 131.

¹⁶ Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registra Supplicationum, 208, c. 100r-v; copy: Registra Lateranensia, 271, c. 234v.–5; summary: *Bullarium Poloniae*, ed. Stanisław Kuraś and Irena Sułkowska-Kurasiowa, iv (Rome, 1992), no. 1894, pp. 150–1.

¹⁷ Antoni J. Rolle, *Zameczki podolskie na kresach multzańskich* (Cracow, 1869), 310; Vartan R. Grigoryan, *Istoriya armyanskikh kolonii Ukrainy i Polshi (Armyane v Podolii)* (Yerevan, 1980), 76; Janusz Kurtyka, *Repertorium Podolskie. Dokumenty do 1430 r.*, *Rocznik Przemyski*, xl, 37 (2004), no. 37, p. 166–7; Minas Bžškeanc', *Čanaparhor-dowt'iw'n ' i Lehastan ew yayl kołmans bnakeals ' i haykazanc' sereloc'i naxneac' Ani k'alak'in* (Venice, 1830), 152–3; Yaroslav R. Dashkevich, 'Armyanskie rel'efnye kresty Lvova i Kamenca-Podol'skogo XIV-XVII vv.', *Istoriko-Filologichesky Zhurnal*, 3 (1980), 124; *idem*, 'Armyanskie kvartaly srednevekovykh gorodov Ukrainy XIV–XVIII vv.', *ibidem*, 2 (117) (1987), 81.

a church, probably in outlying district, near the market-place. At the beginning of the 15th century in Lutsk (Łuck), there was an Armenian street, on which stood an Armenian church dedicated to St Stepanos.¹⁸ Originally, there must have been a monastic community attached to it, since the house next to it was even called 'St Stepanos' Monastery' at the turn of the 17th century.¹⁹

Nothing is known about the community life of Armenians where they constituted small groups deprived of their own church. This is also partly due to the fact that community existence in terms of being remembered was dependant on the writings of clergymen (chronicles and parish books). The dispersed Armenians probably joined in the life of their closest communities only occasionally, and then easily fell away from this faith community. Both spheres of their identity: national and religious, could not survive being separate from one another. Nor did they possess probably any subordinate organisational forms, either legal or ecclesiastical (an equivalent of Jewish minor kahals – *przykahalki* or rural parishes in the Latin and Ruthenian Churches). The only Armenian post of that type was the rural church at Kobaczowce in Podolia, subject to the *avagyretses* of Kamieniec Podolski.²⁰

Another stage in the construction of the Armenian ethnic-religious community was the replacement of missionary monasteries by regular institutions of ministry with the lay clergy, something connected with the expansion and stabilisation of this community in Poland. The Armenian specificity of this process was that the richest communities founded, together with a monastery, a bishopric. The latter, as we know, was subject only to the *catholicos*, i.e. gave the community complete freedom in the ecclesiastical respect. This peculiarity was probably caused mainly by the Armenian method of nominating

¹⁸ Lewond Ališan, *Kamenic': Taregirk' hayoc' Lehastani ew Rumenioy hawastč'eay yawelowacovk'* (Venice, 1896), 5–9, 11–12, 215–17, 221–4; Grzegorz Petrowicz, *La Chiesa Armena in Polonia*, part 1: 1350–1624 (Rome, 1971), 19–20, 24–5, 27, 30, 34; Zygmunt L. Radziwiński and Bronisław Gorczak (eds.), *Archiwum księząt Lubartowiczów Sanguszków w Sławucie*, iii (Lwów, 1890), no. 183, 167; Sadok Barącz, *Rys dziejów ormiańskich* (Tarnopol, 1869), 152–3.

¹⁹ Cracow, Biblioteka Naukowa PAN i PAU, MS 709, 37–8, 41.

²⁰ AGZ, x (1884), no. 1827, p. 121; Yaroslav Dachkévytch, 'L'Établissement des Arméniens en Ukraine pendant les XI^e–XVIII^e siècles', *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, n.s., 6 (1968), 343.

a bishop: he was elected by the local elders and the clergy. Under the diaspora, the most convenient way of carrying out elections was to do it within one urban community. Possibly the material conditions of some Armenian communities allowed them to achieve such high prestige even in the days of the dukes of Rus'. But this was not possible at that time for politico-religious reasons, since the Orthodox Church did not tolerate other hierarchical organisations in its canonical territory. This situation changed when the lands of Rus' fell under the dominion of Catholic Poland and pagan Lithuania, which were not intent on sustaining the religious monopoly of the Orthodox Church.

In the second half of the 14th century Armenian bishoprics arose in Lwów, Łuck, Kiev and Kamieniec Podolski. Perhaps this was a result of both the wealth and ambition of the local communities, or maybe of the complex political situation in Rus' divided between Poland and Lithuania, or else of the personal strife within the Armenian Church. These bishoprics had an ephemeral life. From the 15th century onwards there had been only one bishopric for the Armenians who lived in Poland and Lithuania. This was the archbishopric in Lwów, established in the days of Casimir the Great.²¹ In 1363 a new brick church was erected there, transformed into an episcopal cathedral.²² In 1367 the king allowed Bishop Gregorius to freely profess his faith on condition of his permanent residence in Lwów.²³ The organisational model of the Armenian Church evolved under the influence of the decisions of the local authorities, who dictated the number and place of residence of the bishops. Until the beginning of the 15th century the *catholicoi* addressed the hierarchs of Lwów as

²¹ Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*; Krzysztof Stopka, 'Kościół ormiański na Rusi w wiekach średnich', *Nasza Przeszłość*, 62 (1984), 27–95.

²² Yaroslav R. Dachkevych and Edward Tryjarski, 'La Chronique de Venise' (hereafter: VCh), *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, xlv (1989), 8, 15, 33; Zdzisław Ober-tyński, 'Die florentiner Union der polnischen Armenier und ihr Bischofskatalog', *Orientalia Christiana*, xxxvi/1, 96 (1934), no. I, pp. 42–3 (foundation act of 1363 translated into Latin); Bžškeanc', *Čanaparhordowt'iwñ*, 104–5 (the same act in Armenian); Jacek Chrzęszczewski, *Kościół Ormian polskich* (Warsaw, 2001), 59 (the Armenian text, and its Polish translation by Andrzej Pisowicz).

²³ Warsaw, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, Zbiór dokumentów pergaminowych, no. 6197; Aleksander Czołowski, 'Cenny zabytek', in *Gregoriana*, 1 (1935), 11–12 (Casimir the Great's document of 1367); see also VCh, 7, 14, 33.

- 'archbishops of the capital city of *Lov*, *Olatemir*, *Lutsk* [i.e.: Lwów, Włodzimierz and Łuck]' (1363, 1374),
 'archbishops of the lands of Ruthenians and Wallachians' (1379),
 'archbishops of the royal metropolis of *Lov* and the dioceses of *Serat* [Siret], *Chechov* [Suceava], *Kamenits* [Kamieniec], *Lutsk*, *Olatemur* [Włodzimierz], *Mankerman* [Kiev], *Ptin* [Vidin or Botoșani], *Enki Salai* [New Sarai] and the land of the *Vlachats* [Wallachians]' (1383, 1388, 1409),
 'archbishops of the God protected metropolis of *Lov*, of *Sechov* [Suceava], *Kamenets* [Kamieniec], *Serat*, *Potishan* [Botoșani], *Mankerman* and *Pelza* [Bełz]' (1466).²⁴

King Sigismund I, while confirming the nomination of the Armenian bishop in 1516, defined his believers as 'our subjects in Lwów, Kamieniec, Kiev and Łuck, towns, lands and districts, wherever they live in our Kingdom and our domains'.²⁵ At the turn of the 16th century there was no more information about the Armenians in Bełz. The bishops of Lwów also ceased to hold their jurisdiction in Sarai on the Volga and in Moldavia, for the latter became a fief of Ottoman Empire. In 1568 the hierarch of Lwów bore only the title *archiepisopus Leopoliensis et Kaminicensis Armenus*.²⁶ In Polish sources the term *metropolita Armenorum*, appears only once (1445).²⁷ In the 16th century the hierarchs were called interchangeably: bishops or archbishops;²⁸ the distinction between those two titles was of no consequence in the Armenian Church.

The bishop exercised his control in strict accord with the members of his community – both clergymen and laymen. Each community chose the candidate for a bishop separately. There did not exist an institution of general election in the period under analysis. In Lwów six elders (*seniores*) of the community and the clergy who currently held their office assembled for this purpose. Then the candidate established

²⁴ Ališan, *Kamenic*, 5, 9, 131–5, 215–17, 221, 225–7; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 19–20, 24, 28, 30, 32, 34–5, 71–2.

²⁵ Obertyński, 'Die florentiner', 50, no. VI.

²⁶ Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 112.

²⁷ AGZ, xiv, no. 1407, p. 175.

²⁸ Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 107, 112, 143, 146, *passim*; Edmond Schütz, 'Armenokiptschakische Ehekontrakte und Testamente', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 24 (1971), 284–5; *Dokumenty na poloveckom yazyke XVI v. (Sudebnyye akty Kamenec-Podolskoi armyanskoj obshchiny)*, ed. Timofei I. Grunin (Moscow, 1967), nos. 20, 86, 128.

in Lwów went to Kamieniec, to enter into long negotiations with the local *vogt*, elders and the clergy, and as a consequence to obtain their final approval.²⁹ The Armenian Church in Poland did not develop any all-encompassing diocesan institutions. Individual communities were united only by a single bishop who would spend a considerable part of the year in Lwów, and the rest of it at Kamieniec or in other communities. Each community had its own religious institutions: presbytery, consistory, school, monasteries, and charitable organisations. The most complete ecclesiastical structures developed in the communities of Lwów and Kamieniec. And we know the most about these communities. Others developed merely the most rudimentary denominational organs, and then in the most modest of forms.

The presbytery (that is the community of priests) was headed by the *avagyrets* (archpriest) who performed the liturgical functions and was jointly responsible for the distribution of ecclesiastical funds together with the seniors. He could also replace the bishop in his administrative functions. His office was combined with the competences of an official who together with the bishop sat on the consistory (or could replace him there). The office of *avagyrets* was not held for life. A new bishop could nominate new *avagyretses*, or confirm those he inherited from his predecessor. Most likely the community elders also participated in these nominations as it was their responsibility to select the members of the presbytery (priests). The latter usually originated from wealthy local families. In the 16th and at the beginning of the 17th century, when the churches in Łuck and Kiev had very few believers, their priests were appointed by the seniors of Lwów.³⁰ The priests were chiefly required to correctly celebrate the liturgy and other religious rites. The duty of delivering sermons rested with the *vardapets*. Individual families chose their own spiritual guides, father-confessors (Armenian: *khosduwanat*, *khostuwan*, *tanerec*, *tsikhater*; Kipchak: *din athasi*), who performed all the pastoral functions in relation to them. The Armenian priests were called by their believers: *yerets*, *kahana* (in Armenian), or *babas* (in the Kipchak language). The Poles and Ruthenians used the word *pop*. The name of the priest was traditionally preceded by *Der*, or *Ter*. The priests

²⁹ Stopka, 'Kościół ormiański', 66–7.

³⁰ Simeon Lekhaci, *Putevye zametki*, transl. Margo O. Darbinyan (Moscow, 1965), 248; Dachkévytch, 'Les Armeniens à Kiev', 205.

had their families,³¹ and they had to have been married before they were ordained as sub-deacons or deacons. Otherwise they were to remain celibate. Holy orders could not be taken without the wife's permission. A widowed priest could not marry again. The unmarried clergy and widowers lived in a community that sometimes was wrongly regarded as a monastery.³² In the 14th century there were at least four priests working in the presbytery of the bishop of Lwów. This figure is confirmed by Benedict Herbest in his account of 1566,³³ 'for they are supposed to be four in Lwów'. With time, this number could have grown a little. In 1565 in Kamieniec Podolski four priests worked together in the local churches. Since Łuck and Kiev had one clergyman each, the total number of Armenian priests in the Lwów diocese can be estimated at about 10. A certain number of deacons, chanters and bell-ringers were also maintained, sometimes surpassing the number of priests. So we can accept that the Armenian communities in Poland maintained from 20 to 30 persons directly involved in the celebration of the religious cult, who together with their families might have numbered about a hundred people. This would not have constituted too heavy a burden considering the level of prosperity within the Armenian community.

The community consistory, headed by the archbishop or *avagyerets* (as an official), consisted of two clergymen and four representatives of the elders. Its administrative work was done by the chancellery of the council of elders, and the entries in the consistory books were prepared by its writer. The position of the laymen in this institution was consequently considerable.³⁴ The consistory's competences embraced matters of clergy discipline, registration of pre-marital contracts, divorces, wills, the permission for virgins to take the veil, guardianship of orphans, the granting of marriage in cases of blood or other relationship forbidden by ecclesiastical law, and

³¹ *Ioannis Lasicii De religione Armeniorum*, in *Michalonis Litvani De moribus Tartarorum* (Basel, 1615), 60.

³² Zdzisław Obertyński, 'Ormianie', in Bolesław Kumor and Zdzisław Obertyński (eds.), *Historia Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce*, i (Poznań and Warsaw, 1974), 257.

³³ Benedict Herbest, *Chrześcijańska porządna Odpowiedź na tę Confessią, która pod tytułem Bráciey Zakonu Chrystusowego niedáwno iest wydana* (Cracow, 1567), c. 367v.

³⁴ Yaroslav R. Dashkevich, 'L'vovskie armyano-kypchakskie dokumenty XVI-XVII vv. kak istorichesky istochnik', *Istoriko-Filologichesky Zhurnal*, 2 (77) (1977), 164.

even the obligation to punish males for wearing women's clothes and vice versa.³⁵

Also in the case of schools it is very difficult to divide the competences of the ecclesiastical from the communal bodies. Armenian law obliged parents to send their sons to school or apprenticeship. The ecclesiastical character of schools is indicated by their location near to the church, their curriculum and the clerical status of teachers; however, the employment and pay of teachers was the responsibility of the community elders. Scholarships for orphans were also paid for by the community treasury. The school curriculum covered the grammar of Grabar with pronunciation, religious texts analysis, the liturgical calendar and church singing. The liturgy, canonical prayers and hymns were learnt by heart.³⁶

The community maintained a hospital (in Lwów even two) and engaged in charitable work (allowances and guardianship of widows and orphans). These matters were the responsibility of the elders and the guardians they appointed, though the bishop was also involved in this activity.³⁷

A very important role was still played by monasteries and monks coming from Armenia and various centres of the Armenian diaspora. However, we know very little about them. In 1363 they were mentioned by *Catholicos* Mesrop.³⁸ In the foundation charter of the Armenian cathedral there appears: *Aristakes kronavor* (i.e. a monk) and *Hovhannes abegha* (i.e. a monk-priest).³⁹ In 1417 among the Armenian payers of municipal tax in Lwów there was *soror Petri monachi*.⁴⁰ In Lwów suburb Krakowskie Przedmieście there were two monastic churches – one dedicated to the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God and called Holy Khachkatar. Simeon Lekhaci's 17th century

³⁵ Yaroslav R. Dashkevich and Edward Tryjarski, 'Tri armyano-kypchakskikh zapisi l'vovskogo armyanskogo dukhovnogo suda 1625 g.', *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, xli (1979), 66; Simeon Lekhaci, *Putevye zametki*, 243; CIP iii, art. 65 (75), 447, 505.

³⁶ CIP, iii, art. 77 (87), 449, 509; Simeon Lekhaci, *Putevye zametki*, 246; Yaroslav Dachkévytch, 'Siméon dpir Lehac'i. Qui est-il', *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, n.s., 12 (1977), 354.

³⁷ Ališan, *Kamenic'*, 5–8; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 20; Dachkévytch, 'Les Arméniens à Kiev', 196.

³⁸ Ališan, *Kamenic'*, 5; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 19.

³⁹ Bžškeanc, *Čanaparhordowt'iw*n, 105.

⁴⁰ PDL, iii (1905), 59.

account seems to show that at the Armenian cathedral there were also a few monastic cells, containing a scriptorium and a library. We do not know whether there were any monasteries in other communities. However, there is evidence which allows us to suppose that monks lived also in Kamieniec Podolski. The monasteries were under the archbishop's charge, which he shared with the community elders. The main occupations of the monks were prayer and work on the farm. They rendered many services to the community. They ran a house for its guests, a hospital and school, preserved, copied and worked as middlemen in the sale of manuscript books. As a result of touring the monasteries of the whole diaspora they brought back valuable manuscripts.⁴¹

From amongst the monks, the *vardapets* were probably the most independent of the community. Some archbishops of Lwów held this title. In Poland the *vardapets* most frequently appeared as *nvirags*, monastic teachers and preachers. There was a school (*vardapetaran*), run by the *vardapets* at the monastery in Lwów. For the community, their function as preachers was the most important.

The Armenian communities in Lwów and Kamieniec were headed by *vogt* and the council of elders, originating from the richest families. The elections to the council were held every year, but they were of a formal character. Those elected to the council were its members for life, replaced by others in case of need. A *vogt* was also elected every year, but only from among the members of the council. The most important official of the council for ecclesiastical matters was the *yeretspokhan*, i.e. the administrator of ecclesiastical property. His position in the hierarchy of the community was very high. In Lwów, after the office of an Armenian *vogt* was revoked in 1469, the *yeretspokhan* became the head of the community.⁴²

The preponderance of *profanum* over *sacrum* in the internal relations of the community resulted from the way its religious institutions were financed. The Armenian Church in diaspora, hence also in Poland, was that of the 'capitalists' – people who had gained their living from trade, brokerage, money-lending, pledges and crafts, and who

⁴¹ Simeon Lekhaci, *Putevye zametki*, 242; Grzegorz Petrowicz, 'I copisti e scrittori armeni di Polonia nei secoli XV-XVIII', in *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant*, 3 vols. (Studi e Testi, 233, Vatican, 1964), iii, 164–5.

⁴² See Balzer, *Sądownictwo ormiańskie*, 16–41, 100–37.

dealt with money every day. In contrast to the Catholic or Orthodox Churches, the Armenian religious community was mainly financed by the capital funds, coming in the first place from the community's subsidies. The occasional contributions of the believers, in cash or labour, were only a subsidiary source of its income, necessary for the construction or repair of the church, its furnishings, adornments, etc. At the beginning of the 16th century a custom was renewed for each Armenian stall to contribute three pounds of wax for the Church.⁴³ There was also a custom to bequeath to the Church and the clergymen certain amounts of money. From time to time, the Church also benefited from state subsidies. Of least importance were the revenues from real estate. In Lwów this constituted a water-mill in Podzamcze, in the 16th century in Kamieniec a village in the vicinity, and in both cities – houses, tenement buildings, hospitals and cemeteries.⁴⁴ The parish in Kiev had a manor-farm with a water-mill, a fish-farm in a place called 'Syrec' together with a land-plot called Bohdanowszczyzna, nine houses in town, market-places, tenement buildings and stores, as well as a regular income in silver.⁴⁵ Control over Church landed property was exercised by the community authorities.

The size of the sums paid to the Church by the community was a clergymen and elders' secret. In the Bishop *Christinus'* (Khachaturs) agreement with the community of 1467 it was only written that he would be satisfied with what they gave and would not demand any more.⁴⁶ An equally enigmatic formula is found in the text of the oath taken by the clergymen to the community. This issue was many times the source of dispute both as to the size of subsidies and the ways of their management. There were arguments with the archbishop about who was to pay the *vardapets*. In 1569 Sigismund Augustus decided that in the case of their services as preachers this was the duty of the hierarch, while when they were performing the function of *nvirags*, they were to be provided for by the community elders. Later evidence

⁴³ Barącz, *Rys dziejów*, 111.

⁴⁴ Ivan P. Kripyakevich, 'K voprosu o nachale armyanskoj kolonii vo L'vove', in *Istoricheskie svyazi i druzhba ukrainskogo i armyanskogo narodov*, ii (Kiev, 1963), 125; Barącz, *Rys dziejów*, 94; Simeon Lekhaci, *Putevye zametki*, 243, 245.

⁴⁵ *Archiv Yugo-Zapadnoi Rossii*, part 7, i (Kiev, 1886), 106–22; *Źródła do dziejów polskich*, ii (Wilno, 1844), 123–40; Dachkévytch, 'Les Arméniens à Kiev', 196–201, 204; ZD, xxii, 11, 107–8, 572.

⁴⁶ Bžškeanc', *Čanaparhordowt' iwn*, 110; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 73.

shows, however, that in Lwów 'the Armenian elders maintain the chief lector for delivering the sermons'.⁴⁷

Conflicts were also aroused by the relations of laymen and clergymen in the consistory. In Kamieniec Podolski the community was displeased with the behaviour of its bishop, who did not come to the court sittings. In 1557 Bishop Grigor Varaketsi obliged himself to invite the representatives of this community to the sittings of the consistory at Lwów, or to personally come to Kamieniec for the *vogt* court sittings.⁴⁸ The most heated and long drawn out conflict to occur on this basis was to take place in Lwów. Its clearest source phase falls in the second half of the 15th century. Bishop Khachatur tried to hinder the participation of laymen in the proceedings, holding court in places to which the elders had no access. However, the latter succeeded in persuading the hierarch to comply. The agreement he had to sign (1467) obliged him to judge 'the priests together with the Armenian elders in the office of the latter, and not anywhere else'. The bishop promised that 'in every case, both in ecclesiastical and secular matters he [would] not administer justice without the elders', and that he would not marry anybody for money 'if there existed some canon law obstacles to the said'.⁴⁹ Subsequent bishops continued to feel constrained by the overpowering influence of the elders on proceedings and persistently strove to eliminate this factor. However, the former composition of the bench had been sanctioned by Polish monarchs. In 1516 King Sigismund I, while confirming Galust (Kilian) in his bishopric, commanded that the hierarch

should judge the priests of his denomination who enter into a dispute with any of his people or want to go to law in the case of anybody's harm or any other matter, in his own person, or in his absence through his official, together with the Armenian elders, if this order had for so long been observed and lawful.⁵⁰

The Armenian Statute confirmed by the said monarch in 1519 stated that 'the court bench should include clergymen and laymen who

⁴⁷ Simeon Lekhaci, *Putevye zametki*, 245.

⁴⁸ Ališan, *Kamenic'*, 135; Step'anos Roška, *Žamanakagrowt'iw n kam tarekank' ekelec akank'* (Vienna, 1964), 164.

⁴⁹ Bžškeanc', *Čanaparhordowt'iw n*, 110; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 71, 72.

⁵⁰ Obertyński, 'Die florentiner Union', 51, no. VI.

would be present at that time'.⁵¹ Neither the agreements of 1467 and 1557, nor the royal decisions brought this dispute to a close. In 1569, i.e. one hundred years later, it ignited again. Bishop Grigor Varaketsi complained to the king that

the priests under his jurisdiction, against his will, are not given access to Church, until they sign an obligation to the elders, and those punished by him for ecclesiastical offences, against his will, are set free and exculpated.⁵²

So we can see that the elders, in trying to safeguard themselves from the adherents of the bishop, demanded now that every priest sign an obligation to observe the standards established within the domain of ecclesiastical judiciary. Ultimately, the bishop was to also lose the case. The royal verdict of 1569 was preceded by an expert opinion of a specially summoned commission, which consisted of high dignitaries of the Catholic Church: the bishop of Cracow, Filip Padniewski, the bishop of Płock, Piotr Myszkowski, and the Vice-Chancellor of the Crown, Franciszek Krasieński. King Sigismund Augustus decided that the bishop should judge together with at least four elders and only in Lwów. In this way the archbishop's claims were dismissed. The elders were only ordered by the king to respect the bishop's judiciary.⁵³

IV THE CULTURAL FUNCTION OF RELIGION AMONG THE POLISH ARMENIANS

Religion frequently performs the function of a 'replacement' of ethnic or national identity. In innumerable historic situations – especially in multi-ethnic societies – we can see that its functions are orientated towards the preserving of ethnic culture. It then fulfils the role of a promoter of traditional values and customs, a defender of the native culture. The old religion also allows people to familiarise and accept the new world. For an individual it is a mainstay in the moment of crisis that is always caused by migration, and subsequently by life

⁵¹ CIP, iii, art. 55 (56), 444, 499.

⁵² Obertyński, 'Die florentiner Union', 55, no. IX.

⁵³ AGZ, x, no. 1564; Obertyński, 'Die florentiner Union', 55–7.

in a diaspora. It gives one a sense of personal dignity in a society which – even if it accepts the newcomers and enables their some material success – does not afford them a high position within a hierarchy of prestige.

The Armenian Church – formally a fragment of the Christian universal religion – was an ethnocentric denomination and performed this above mentioned function in full. The identification of religion with the nation in the old homeland of Armenians was so deep that a change of denomination was considered to be a change of nationality. Armenians who converted to the Greek or Georgian Orthodox faith were regarded as Greeks or Georgians. The converts to Catholicism, starting from the 14th century, were treated in the same way. The society of their new homeland – Galich-Vladimir Rus’ – also conceived the identity of the newcomers, just as their own – in terms of their religion. The Ruthenians were members of the Orthodox Church. Their towns were also inhabited by Catholics. In those times these were mainly Germans. Due to the ethnic perception of religion all members of the Latin Church were called by the Armenians, in their Kipchak language: *Nemič* (i.e. German in Slavic languages).⁵⁴

The Church, its institutions and people gave the Polish Armenians a relatively complementary offer of culture in its national version: education, literature (religious texts in *Grabar* – the lives of the Saints, later also in the Kipchak language – *taghs*, religious verses, prayers, songs), art (liturgical books, icons), music (hymns, the so-called *sharakans*). We know of attempts made by the clerical milieu to create popular culture in a dialect that was a mixture of *Grabar* and *Ashkharabar*: a farce about tooth-ache by Archbishop Barsam Trabzontsi (died ca. 1584), the praise of harissa soup by Minas Tokatetsi (second half of the 16th century).⁵⁵ However, popular culture could not be created by any ethnic-religious ghetto and in this respect the Polish Armenians benefited from the offer of their new homeland.

Clergymen were the depositaries of national memory. In Kamieniec and Lwów Armenian chronicles arose that combined the history of both homelands: Armenian and Polish (the *Lwów Chronicle*, called

⁵⁴ Marian Lewicki, ‘Le terme *Nēmič* “Polonais, Latin, Européen” dans la langue kiptchak des Arméniens polonais’, *Onomastica*, ii, 2 (1956), 249–57.

⁵⁵ Nerses Akinian, ‘Barsam Trabzonc’i arkepiskopos Leopolsoy’, *Handes Amsorya*, xliv (1930), col. 590–4; *idem* ‘Minas Toxatec’i’, *ibidem*, xxxv (1921), col. 159–62.

'Venetian', and the *Kamieniec Chronicle*).⁵⁶ Contemporary, traumatic national experiences found expression in the works of Minas Tokatetsi, a writer of the Armenian council of elders in Lwów: the lament over the destruction of his native town Tokat in Anatolia and over the persecution of the Armenians by the Moldavian hospodar Ștefan Rareș (1551–2). Polish Armenians also read the copied and imported works about their history that had arisen outside Poland. Their Church also reminded them of pan-Armenian patriotism.⁵⁷

The function of culture has also its opposite aspect, which comes to light when a given religion remaining a guardian of national culture and custom, regarded as a conservative factor, becomes a stiff cover hampering transformations in an ethnically heterogeneous society. Consequently, a question arises about the attitude of the ethnic religion of Polish Armenians to the processes of acculturation and assimilation. To answer it, we have to consider a few questions.

The first is whether religious conversion in the case of Polish Armenians had to lead to a loss of their ethnic identity. The historical situation of those times certainly did not allow the shaping of a secular version of Armenian ethnicity. This was not a time of secular culture; everything in culture was connected with religion and the Church – the school system, literature, customs, historiography and law. This question relates to another eventuality: a situation where the sanction for ethnic identity might not be given solely by one religion, and consequently, a bi- or multi-denominational Armenian community could arise.

At the first stage of acculturation this community must have been under the overpowering influence of the Ruthenian Orthodox Church. In 1565 Antoine Maria Gratiani, secretary to the papal nuncio in Poland, observed that the Armenians preserved their original culture only in big centres, like Lwów and Kamieniec Podolski, while those who lived dispersed all over Ruthenia, adopted 'the faith, rules and ceremonies of the Greeks'.⁵⁸ This stage is, however, not quite

⁵⁶ VCh, 5–48; Yaroslav R. Dachkévytch and Edward Tryjarski, "La Chronique de Pologne" – un monument arméno-kiptchak de la première moitié du XVI^e siècle', *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, xlii (1981), 5–21.

⁵⁷ More extensively, see Krzysztof Stopka, 'Stefan V Salmestecy', in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* (hereafter: PSB), xliii (2004), 152–3.

⁵⁸ Antoine M. Gratiani, *La vie du cardinal Jean François Commendone* (Paris, 1671), 204.

legible in the sources, so we cannot formulate any far-reaching conclusions about it. We know much more about the Catholicisation of the Polish Armenians.

This process started when they were still in the East.⁵⁹ From the beginning of the 14th century there had been Catholic provinces and bishoprics there. The Armenian converts had played an important role in their development, at the same time losing no contact with their own ethnicity. They created a Catholic version of national culture (Catholic liturgy in the Armenian language). Organised communities of Catholic Armenians were also present in Kiev and Lwów in the 14th century. They co-existed with the communities of German Catholics. The rise of a Roman-Catholic bishopric in Lwów in the 1350s should also be associated with Armenians. The Catholic version of Armenian identity gave rise to sharp controversies within their national community. They could be observed in the East, and we can surmise they also appeared in Ruthenia. This might be the reason why in Lwów there were two monasteries that served the Armenians. There is a hypothesis that the ministry at the small church of St John the Baptist outside the Lwów town-walls was established by the monks expelled from the monastery of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God, one true to the traditionalist option. In 1371 the monks from the church of St John the Baptist received a rich endowment in the form of the village of Hodowica near Lwów. Just before this occurrence the Armenian Bishop Hagop (Jacobus) from Kiev settled among them. His close contacts with the Latin clergy show that he was working on the conversion of the whole Armenian nation to Catholicism. He combined these tasks with performing the function of bishop for the German population, for he was the only Catholic bishop residing in Ruthenia before the canonical erection of the Galich metropolitan archdiocese (1375). He died in 1378 and was buried in the Dominican Corpus Christi Monastery in Lwów.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Krzysztof Stopka, *Armenia christiana. Unionistyczna polityka Konstantynopola i Rzymu a tożsamość chrześcijaństwa ormiańskiego (IV–XV w.)* (Rozprawy Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności, Wydział Historyczno-Filozoficzny, 96, Cracow, 2002), 254–72.

⁶⁰ Krzysztof Stopka, 'Odpust bocheński z 1354 roku i jego ormiański kontekst', in Krzysztof Ożóg and Stanisław Szczur (eds.), *Polska i jej sąsiedzi w późnym średniowieczu* (Cracow, 2000), 55–80; Czesław Lechicki, *Kościół ormiański w Polsce. Zarys historyczny* (Lwów, 1928), 39; AGZ, ii (1870), no. 3, p. 4–5; Władysław Abraham,

We know nothing of the dimensions of this ethnic-religious experiment. However, we know its results: the Armenians converted to Catholicism during this collective mission, were to lose contact with their native ethnicity with the passing of subsequent generations. The predominance of the German element among the Catholic population of the region was growing. The Latin residential bishoprics were granted to Germans, and later, under King Ladislas Jagiello to Poles; the period when the hierarchs were of Armenian descent was over. The Armenian Catholics, just as in Caffa, were subordinated to the local Latin bishop who took over their monastery of St John the Baptist. Absorbed by a multi-ethnic religious community, where apart from Germans and Poles, there were also Ruthenians and Tatars, they ceased to differ in a jurisdictional respect from their co-religionists. Due to marriages, business, subordination to Magdeburg law and participation in municipal politics they also lost, perhaps more slowly, their cultural individuality, that is their ties with the native ethnic community which was to become mono-denominational again.

However, due to the missionary work of the Franciscans and Dominicans, there were still some individual conversions to Catholicism. Even in the 17th and 18th centuries St Valentine's Chapel, called Armenian, within the Franciscan church in Lwów, was graced by the tombs of two Armenian Catholic bishops. It also held a baptismal font where converts were baptised or re-baptised.⁶¹ They were referred to as 'Catholics' or 'baptised Armenians' in the sources.⁶² However, the most eloquent term used in the sources was 'former Armenians' ('quondam Armenus nunc vero catholicus').⁶³

'Uzupełniony katalog dawnych łacińskich biskupów kijowskich', *Collectanea Theologica*, xviii (1937), 414; Paweł Ruszel, *Tryumf na dzień chwalebny Jacka świętego* (Wilno, 1641), 90; Simon Okolski, *Russia Florida rosae et liliis* (Lwów, 1646), 58; Kasper Niesiecki, *Herbarz polski*, ed. Jan N. Bobrowicz, i (Leipzig, 1839), 75; Władysław Abraham, *Powstanie organizacji Kościoła łacińskiego na Rusi*, i (Lwów, 1904), 343–59; Tadeusz M. Trajdos, *Kościół katolicki na ziemiach ruskich Korony i Litwy za panowania Władysława II Jagielly (1386–1434)*, i (Wrocław, 1983), 199–202.

⁶¹ Yaroslav R. Dashkevich, *Ukrainsko-armyanskie svyazi v XVII veke. Sbornik dokumentov* (Kiev, 1969), no. 8, 47; Niesiecki, *Herbarz polski*, 107. See Tadeusz M. Trajdos, 'Dobroczyńcy mendikantów średniowiecznego Lwowa', in Stefan K. Kuczyński (ed.), *Spółczesność Polski Średniowiecznej*, viii (Warsaw, 1999), 249–50; Abraham, *Powstanie organizacji*, 399.

⁶² Balzer, *Sądownictwo ormiańskie*, 60–1.

⁶³ PDL, i, no. 169, p. 26 (1384).

It was through religion that the Armenian immigrants and their descendents expressed their attitude to culture in the new world. Here we reach a subsequent question. We may ask whether those members of the Armenian community who were confronted with different customs and systems of values in a special way, who in striving for career and social advancement married representatives of a different ethnicity, and consequently having undergone cultural change, and in losing their ethnic status, could still retain their contact with the religion of their ancestors, or whether they were determined to break away from it?

There are only a few cases mentioned in the sources where an Armenian who aspired to a higher social position that would liberate him from the ethnic 'ghetto', would retain his religion at the same time. We know only of two such cases in Poland. Gregorius, the interpreter of the Polish envoy, Skarbek of Góra, who was sent to the Turkish sultan Mehmed I (1415), after returning from his mission was ennobled and received the villages of Laszki and Sroki (1421). The sources call him *miles*. Most probably he did not change his denomination, since the Armenian community of Lwów appealed to the court of justice for the return of his daughter, who had been abducted by the nobleman Mikołaj Zasowski.⁶⁴ Another case concerns Iwaszko Tychnowicz, whose father, an Armenian merchant of Lwów, together with his descendents was granted Magdeburg law by Ladislas Jagiello (1427). He owed his relationship with the royal court to several missions he conducted as an envoy to the Tatars and Turks. He enjoyed the great confidence of Casimir IV Jagiellon. Having been granted the title of *cubicularius* before 1454, he became as a result of royal favour the proprietor of several estates and was nominated the *vogt* of Przemyśl. He appears many times in the sources as a *nobilis*. His descendents, however, were still burghers, because they did not change their denomination. All the other ennoblements of Armenians in Poland were connected with their simultaneous conversion to Catholicism, and resulted in their full integration with the Polish gentry.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Anna Sochacka, 'Skarbek Jakub z Góry', in PSB, xxxvii (1997), 14–15; Bolesław Stachoń, *Polityka Polski wobec Turcji i akcji antytyureckiej w wieku XV do utraty Kili i Białogrodu (1484)* (Lwów, 1930), 40–3; Marian Biskup (ed.), *Historia dyplomacji polskiej, I* (Warsaw, 1982), 350; PDL, iii, 27, 35–6; AGZ, ix (1883), no. 28, p. 38.

⁶⁵ AGZ, v (1875), no. 42, p. 57; Krzysztof Stopka, 'Siekierzyński Ambroży, zwany Ormiańczykiem', in PSB, xxxvi (1996), 575–6.

The Armenians who were ennobled in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania equally in only a few cases retained their ethnic religion. In the first half of the 16th century in Kiev Soltan Albeerich alias Albeiev was the king's interpreter and received landed estates. He was the progenitor of the noble Sołtanowicz-Halepski family. In 1622 his descendent, Fedor Halepski, still appeared as a representative of the Kiev Armenian community in the document that handed over a local church to the Lwów Armenians.⁶⁶ Nothing certain is known about the change of denomination of other Armenian interpreters from Kiev who received land grants and joined the gentry estate.

The process of acculturation was going on also among the non-Catholic Armenians. The directions it took before the 14th century are signalled (for a lack of other sources) by linguistic changes. The fact that the Armenians who lived on the Black Sea coast quickly adopted the Kipchak language shows that they were easily stimulated to acculturation. This fact so surprised researchers that there even arose a hypothesis about the conversion to the Armenian denomination of a tribe of Kipchak steppe nomads.⁶⁷ If we are to believe this, then we would have to accept that the community of Polish Armenians consisted in a large measure of Kipchaks of the Armenian denomination. Quite the opposite opinion was held by the 15th century Polish chronicler Jan Długosz, who supposed that the Tatars were derived from the Armenians.⁶⁸ In Ruthenia the Armenians had to master the Ruthenian language, which found its reflection in the transformations of the Armenian-Kipchak tongue. They adopted names derived from Ruthenian (Hrehor, Lazar, Iwaszko, Jurko), but in the sources they were written in a Polish phonetic form, with the letters 'sz', 'cz', and the diminutive forms characteristic of the Ruthenian and Polish names (Chaczko of Khachatur/Khaczadur, Popko of Petros/Bedros), retaining their rich resources of names, which even earlier were etymologically

⁶⁶ *Akty odnosyashchiesya k istorii Yuzhnoi i Zapadnoi Rossii*, ii (Saint Petersburg, 1865), no. 48, pp. 73–5.

⁶⁷ Gerard Clauson, 'Armeno-Qipčaq', *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, 34 (1971), 7–13. For objections to this theory, see Yaroslav R. Dachkevych, 'Who are Armeno-Kipchaks? (On the Ethnical Substrate of the Armenian Colonies in the Ukraine)', *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, n.s., xvi (1982), 357–416; Stopka, 'Migracje', 355–65.

⁶⁸ *Joannis Dlugossii Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae*, ed. Jan Dąbrowski et al., lib. v-vi (Warsaw, 1973), 142.

very heterogeneous.⁶⁹ There are also many Ruthenian borrowings in the lexis and syntax of the Armenian-Kipchak language.

The third stage in the acculturation processes is connected with co-existence in the multi-ethnic towns of the Polish Kingdom. The progress of linguistic Polonisation and the deepening political loyalty towards the new state that can be called Polish patriotism can best be seen in the 17th century, which goes beyond the framework of this analysis.⁷⁰ Acculturation processes also consisted of following the trends that appeared in Polish society, which, paradoxically, in one case even strengthened Armenian ethnicity. In the 16th century in the religious practices of the Polish Armenians there appeared their colloquial language (Kipchak prayer books), as a rival to *Grabar*. This was an imitation of the transformations taking place in the culture of Polish towns, where Latin was being ousted by Polish.⁷¹ The general context of this phenomenon was the advancement of national languages in the days of the Protestant and Catholic Reformation.

This linguistic acculturation did not arouse conflicts with religion. Even the Armenian clergy was embraced by it. However, the Armenian community which maintained its bishop, a separate Church and communal administration, was perceived as Armenian regardless of their language.

V

ORTHODOXY: THE ATTITUDES OF THE POLISH ARMENIANS TOWARDS THEIR NATIVE CHURCH IN THEIR OLD COUNTRY AND IN DIASPORA

The Armenians conceived orthodoxy as faithfulness to the *catholicos* and their rite. The Armenian Church in Lwów was founded for the

⁶⁹ Edward Tryjarski, 'Les noms de personnes dans les écrits arméno-kiptchaks: un essai de classifications', in *Actes du XI^e Congrès International des Sciences Onomastiques*, Sofia 1972, ii (Sofia, 1975), 365–81; Dachkévytch, 'Les Arméniens à Kiev', 200; *idem*, 'Kipchak Acts of the Armenian Law Court at Kamenetz Podolsk (1559–1567) as a Cultural and Historical Monument', *Ural-Altäische Jahrbücher*, xxxvi, 3–4 (1965), 306–9.

⁷⁰ Krzysztof Stopka, "Nasza polska nacja". Kształtowanie się patriotyzmu polskiego wśród Ormian w okresie staropolskim', in Andrzej Nowak and Andrzej A. Zięba (eds.), *Formuły patriotyzmu w Europie Wschodniej i Środkowej od nowożytności do współczesności* (Cracow, 2009), 37–54.

⁷¹ Petrowicz, *I copisti*, 164–5.

followers of 'the rite of Gregor the Enlightener, who obey the *catholicos* and the Armenian bishop as well as the Armenian seniors [elders]'.⁷² St Nicholas' Church at Kamieniec was dedicated to 'the Holy Throne of the Enlightener [that is *catholicos*] and the head of the diocese [that is the bishop]'.⁷³ Thus in order to retain orthodoxy one had to be in regular contact with the *catholicoi*, and this was at the time of rivalry between two *catholicosates*. The Polish Armenians at first observed their obedience to Sis, and later passed under the jurisdiction of Etchmiadzin.

Every nominee to the Lwów bishopric had to go to the *catholicos* to receive the holy orders. The first of them to be mentioned in sources was Hovhannes, the *catholicos* from Sis, who met the Lwów Bishop Stepanos at Kamieniec Podolski in 1485.⁷⁴ We may surmise that he wanted to restore his jurisdiction over the Polish Armenians. In 1549 the newly elected Armenian patriarch of Constantinople, Stepanos I, stayed and taught at Kamieniec, and perhaps also at Lwów.⁷⁵ The Etchmiadzin *catholicos*, Stepanos V Salmastetsi, during his 'grand tour' of Western countries also came to Lwów, died there and was buried in 1552.⁷⁶ The Etchmiadzin *Catholicos-Coadjutor* Stepanos Arindjetsi stayed at Kamieniec and Lwów in 1552–63.⁷⁷

Poland was visited more often by the hierarchs' representatives i.e. *nvirags*. Arakel Davrijetsi wrote:

in the tradition of our Armenian nation there is such order and custom, according to which the patriarch of the nation, i.e. *catholicos*, once every three years sends his *nvirag* from his see to tour all the countries of Armenians, distribute the Chrism and collect offerings and alms from parishioners and bring them to his Holy See.⁷⁸

Apart from that *nvirags* performed other functions that were specific to the competences of the *catholicos* or bishop, if a diocese had no

⁷² Bžškeanc', *Čanaparhordowt'iw*n, 104–5.

⁷³ Chrzęszczewski, *Kościoły Ormian*, 36–7.

⁷⁴ Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 76.

⁷⁵ Ališan, *Kamenic'*, 18.

⁷⁶ Stopka, 'Stefan V', 152–4.

⁷⁷ Ališan, *Kamenic'*, 32.

⁷⁸ Arakel z Tebryzu, *Księga dziejów* [*Girk' patmowteanc'*], transl. from Russian Witold Dąbrowski and Andrzej Mandalian, introduction: Wojciech Hensel (Warsaw, 1981), 335 (chap. 30).

such dignitaries. The community of Polish Armenians was considered both wealthy and generous, for as Simeon Lekhaci said:

apart from that, every year we are visited by collectors: *vardapets*, bishops, priests, monks ... one of them says: a monastery should be erected, another – a church.⁷⁹

In 1485 Kamieniec was visited by the *nvirags* of the *Catholicos* Sargis III, Astvadzadur and Nerses. In 1495 Bishop Der Simon came to Lwów from Etchmiadzin, followed by the *vardapet* Lazar in 1505, a few *nvirags*, including Bishop Der Hovhannes in 1506 or 1507, and Bishop Grigor and Friar Hagop in 1514, a *nvirag* of unknown name in 1525, Der Nigol in 1529, and Bishop Der Stepanos in December 1532. In the same year Kamieniec was visited by the *vardapet* David and Friar Der Melkised, and in 1551 by the bishops Makar and Hagop, and Friar Markos.⁸⁰

The ceremonial of the *nvirags'* stay was defined by tradition. In Lwów they were first placed in the Khachkatar Cloister (monastery), and three days later a council of elders, after a conference with priests, sent two seniors to the visitor who inquired about the aim of his visit. After presenting their credentials from the *catholicos*, the *nvirags* were led with much ceremony to the town. We know from the account of the legation of Luke, a *nvirag* of Jerusalem, that their next residence was the archbishop's palace in Lwów. Simeon Lekhaci wrote:

there is a law that when a *nvirag* comes from Holy Jerusalem or Etchmiadzin, he is given many presents and offerings, in the first place a gold and silver cross, a consecrated chalice and incense, then his liturgical and other gowns, as well as about four or five hundred *kurushes* [Turkish currency], in such a way that they give the visitor separately the alms in cash, and separately the *chukha* [a coat of rough material], and a *phelonion* [an outer liturgical garment], etc.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Simeon Lekhaci, *Putevye zametki*, 247.

⁸⁰ VCh, no. 27, p. 35, nos. 35 and 38, p. 36, no. 55, p. 38, no. 80, p. 41, no. 94, p. 42, no. 113, p. 45; Jean Deny, *Larmeno-coman et les Ephémérides de Kamieniec (1604–1613)* (Wiesbaden, 1957), 38–9; Ališan, *Kamenic'*, 16, 18; Lewond M. Ališan, *Hayapatowm*, ii (Venice, 1901), 388, 587–90; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 76, 87.

⁸¹ Simeon Lekhaci, *Putevye zametki*, 246–7.

Sometimes he also received beautifully illuminated books. However, the reception offered the *nvirag* was not always so generous. *Catholicos* Theodoros II in his *kondak* (i.e. bull) of 1388 wrote that the bishop of Lwów Grigor threw out his first legate, put to death another and appropriated the money collected by the third.⁸²

VI CONFRONTATION AND DIALOGUE: THE CHURCH OF POLISH ARMENIANS AND OTHER LOCAL CHURCHES

Apart from the problem of conversions (discussed above), the sources contain a lot of evidence on the relations between various ecclesiastical institutions and the role played in them by theology, municipal self-government and state power.

In the religious mosaic of the South-Eastern region of the Polish Kingdom the Armenians made up one of the sides of a non-isosceles triangle consisting of three Christian Churches. Their relation towards the remaining two groups – the Orthodox and Catholic – was the resultant of several factors. The heritage of the past in the Middle East, from where they had come, contained the memory of their long rivalry of many centuries with the Church of Constantinople and their episodic alliances with the Church of Rome.⁸³ The political situation of the Armenians re-kindled the ideas of their Union with the Papacy. A delegation of the Cilician *catholicos* had taken part in the Council of Florence (1439). The socio-economic relations in Polish towns gave rise to tensions that frequently emerged on a religious plane, since the group in power differed from others by its denomination. This scheme of things brought the Armenians closer to other dominated groups, chiefly the largest, the Orthodox. The attitude of both the great Churches (Catholic and Orthodox) to the Armenians was equivocal: sometimes principally critical, sometimes tactically friendly, and in everyday practice, missionary. The Armenians, on the other hand, showed a tendency to make light of confessional divisions. Although their liturgy retained the anathemas addressed

⁸² *Ibidem*, 242; Aleksandr Harkavec', *Virmeno-kipchac'ki rukopisi v Ukraini, Virmenii, Rossii* (Kiiv, 1993), 77, 80; Ališan, *Kamenic'*, 10–11; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 30, 132.

⁸³ More extensively: Stopka, *Armenia christiana*, 103–47.

to 'Chalcedonians', they made no obstacles to participating in the ceremonies of other Christian denominations.

The Armenians were witnesses to a great political change in Ruthenia that was to reverse the hierarchy of denominations. The prevalence of the Orthodox Church came to an end when those lands fell under the dominion of the Polish Kingdom, which developed there the structures of the Latin Church. Consequently the prestige of the Orthodox Church declined. Towards the end of the period under analysis (16th century) a new form of confrontation appeared: the Protestant Reformation, which first helped to relieve the inter-confessional tensions, but later caused Counter-Reformation pressure. It was the greatest concern of the Armenian Church to retain its distance towards these changing developments, to manifest its ecumenical attitude to the Catholics, to avoid demonstrating its theological convictions, lest it be accused of heresy, and to secure the protection of the Polish State that stabilised religious peace in its territory.

The 14th and 15th century sources contain a few mentions about the attitude of the Orthodox theologians to the Armenian faith. The Metropolitan of Kiev, Maxim (1283–1305) warned the believers to keep away from the 'Armenian heresy'. Metropolitan Cyprian (1378–1406) considered 'the Armenian heresy the worst of all' and forbade the believers any contact with the Armenians. In 1591 the patriarch of Constantinople, Jeremiah, in reply to the question of the Kiev Metropolitan Michael Rahoza wrote that mixed marriages could be allowed only when the Armenians renounced their 'heresy', were baptised and adopted the Orthodox faith. In a multi-ethnic society it was impossible to avoid marriages between representatives of different denominations. The Orthodox Church accepted them on condition they were concluded and dissolved at its altars. It was also impossible to keep religious practices completely separate. The Armenians visited Orthodox churches, either out of curiosity, or piety. Sixteenth-century Armenian graffiti have been preserved in St Sophia's Church in Kiev. On their way to Moscow, Armenian merchants from Poland bequeathed legacies for Orthodox churches and monasteries.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ 'Pamyatniki drevnorusskogo kanonicheskogo prava', part 1, in *Russkaya Istoricheskaya Biblioteka*, vi (Saint Petersburg, 1880), 141–2, 251, 454–5; Dachkévytch, 'Les Arméniens à Kiev', 188–9, 331–2; *Akty otnosyashchiesya*, ii, 190–1; Almut Bues (ed.), *Die Aufzeichnungen des Dominikaners Martin Gruneweg (1562 – c. 1618)* (Wiesbaden, 2008), 888–97.

The relations between the Polish Armenians and Catholics were initially dominated by the phenomenon of conversion. The Armenian religion was regarded as schismatic and heretic to the same extent as the Orthodox Church or Hussitism. We see those three denominations listed on one level in the justification of a request for exemption from participation in the Council of Siena, made by the archbishop of Lwów, Jan Rzeszowski (1423).⁸⁵ In the next decade of the 15th century the Armenian Bishop Gregorius from Lwów gave his credentials to the delegation of the Armenian Church from Caffa which took part in the Council of Florence. After the Union was proclaimed (1439), Pope Eugene IV sent a *breve* to this hierarch, encouraging him to popularise the Union in his diocese. It is quite probable that Gregorius did not go to the Council because of the attitude of the Latin episcopate of Poland, who did not recognise either that pope or that council. Soon after the Armenians of Kamieniec deserted the Union-oriented *catholicos* of Sis, in favour of its opponent, the *catholicos* of Etchmiadzin. The Armenian bishop of Lwów Avedik set out to him with a letter of recommendation from the Latin bishop of Kamieniec, Paweł of Bojańczyce. This is the only case when the influence of a Latin bishop was used by the Armenians in their relations with their own *catholicos*. The attitude of the Latin Church to the Armenians in that century is well illustrated by its practice concerning mixed marriages. We may find the list of requirements posed by this Church in the dispensation issued in 1451 by the archbishop of Lwów, Grzegorz of Sanok, to the Armenian, Leonardus *de Turchia alias de Galatha*, who married a Tatar Catholic woman (*de genere Tartarorum*) Margaretha. They could settle down in Lwów on condition their children would be raised in the Catholic faith, the husband would guarantee his wife would not attend a Armenian or Ruthenian Church or follow the Armenian ritual concerning the sacraments, fasting and celebration of feast-days, and would even help to convert her husband to Catholicism (1451).⁸⁶ There were more cases like that.⁸⁷

We know more of the attitude of Polish Catholic theology in the 16th century Poland. The current concepts put the Armenians beyond the borders of Christianity. *Statuty prawa ormiańskiego* [The Statutes

⁸⁵ Janusz Kurtyka, 'Rzeszowski Jan', in PSB, xxxiv (1992), 65.

⁸⁶ AGZ, ix, no. LXXXIV, 116–17.

⁸⁷ I.A. *Caligari nuntii apostolici in Polonia epistolae et acta. 1578–1581*, ed. Ludwik Boratyński, in *Monumenta Poloniae Vaticana*, iv (Cracow, 1915), no. 298, p. 540.

of Armenian Law] (1528) state: 'if an Armenian child kills a Christian child' (art. 3/13); 'if an Armenian sells a Christian' (art. 21/31); etc. Some theologians questioned this. A son of a burgher from Bochnia, Andrzej Lubelczyk, canon of Lwów and cathedral preacher, author of a polemic treatise against Philipp Melanchthon, established contact prior to 1544 with the Armenian priest from Lwów, Martin Wartik. They translated into Latin together and published in print the Armenian liturgy and the rites of baptism and a woman's purification after childbirth. In the 'Introduction' to this edition Lubelczyk, on the basis of Wartik's information, emphasises that the Armenian *catholicos* received the 'authority of keys' from Pope Sylvester, that the Armenians can be more easily inclined to unity than the Greeks, that the Armenian rite 'very little, only in some details, differs from the Roman, but in essential matters it agrees with it very well'.⁸⁸ He also appealed to Leonard Słończewski, the Latin bishop of Kamieniec, to make the Lwów Metropolitan Piotr Starzechowski act for the sake of the Union of both the Churches. The addressee of this appeal, Słończewski, had good contacts with the Armenian community of Kamieniec. On the Day of the Holy Assumption in 1547 he delivered sermons in its Church of the Holy Mother of God⁸⁹ and there is nothing to show that the Armenians regarded it as some religious pressure. The authors of the Armenian *The Kamieniec Chronicle* called him Der Leonard, a man of noble birth and excellent orator; they remembered he invited Armenian priests home to dinner, and while informing of his death, they prayed: 'May Our Merciful Lord place his soul among the chosen and holy vardapets'. A sceptic might ask whether this ecumenical friendship was not devoid of its material basis. The Kamieniec diocese was one of the worst endowed in Poland, while the Armenians of Kamieniec were among the richest 'capitalists' of the town. However, the facts of the bishop's life⁹⁰ direct our attention to other motives of his attitude to the Armenian Christianity. Słończewski was a well-known critic of the primacy of the pope, and of celibacy; he corresponded with Martin Luther and had a book with the Reformer's handwritten dedication; for this reason he was accused

⁸⁸ Andrzej Lubelczyk, *Baptismus Armenorum* (Cracow, 1544); *idem, Liturgia seu missa Armenorum ritu* (Cracow, 1549).

⁸⁹ Ališan, *Kamenic'*, 17; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 139.

⁹⁰ Halina Kowalska, *Słończewski Leonard*, in PSB, xxxiv (1999), 30–4.

of heresy. Lubelczyk referred to Słończewski's non-conformism, while calling the schism between the Christian Churches 'a shameful division that arose between us and them due to neglect and iniquity of our spiritual authorities'. Hence, the source of the rapprochement between the Polish and Armenian clergy may rather be sought in the spirit of the Reformation era.

The visit of a Polish bishop to an Armenian church was not an unusual event. In 1561 the Latin archbishop of Lwów, Piotr Tarło, visited the Armenian community in Kamieniec. The Armenian priests welcomed him with gifts. Soon after, the papal nuncio Giovanni Battista Commendone paid two visits to Lwów and Kamieniec (1563, 1564). He was also welcomed with great solemnity by the Armenian clergy who received him in their churches and showed him their treasures. The learned Italian viewed there an old codex with an exegesis of Isaiah's prophecy written by Ephraim the Syrian, John Chrysostom and Cyril of Alexandria – a valuable fragment of a joint theological heritage. He asked for a copy, which he took to Rome where it is preserved to this day in the collections of the Casanatense Library (Biblioteca Casanatense).⁹¹

Benedict Herbest, the son of a burgher from Nowe Miasto near Dobromil, a graduate of the Cracow Academy, in the years 1555–8 rector of the municipal school in Lwów, was a well-known anti-Protestant polemist. When he was still the canon of Poznań, he expressed very favourable opinions about Armenians in his work directed against the Bohemian Brethren: *Chrześcijańska porządna Odpowiedź [...] [‘An Honest Christian Reply to this Confession which under the title of the Brethren of a Christian Order has recently been issued’]*.⁹²

We have learnt it for sure that the Armenians are of one faith with us – he wrote, adding that – they openly avow the supremacy of the archbishop of Lwów over their bishop and priests, they willingly go to our churches and are present at Mass, and finally, when need be, they receive the Sacraments in our churches.⁹³

⁹¹ Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 145.

⁹² Cf. footnote 33.

⁹³ Herbest, *Chrześcijańska*, c. 366r-v. He cites an example of 1565 when an Armenian merchant Jurek fell seriously ill during a fair at Mościska, made his confession to a Latin priest, received the Eucharist from his hands and was buried according to the Catholic rite.

Herbest took his information from two Armenian priests: *avagyerets* Simon Ilovetsi, in his younger years deacon to the *Catholicos* Stepanos V on his journey to Rome and witness to the service he celebrated in one of the Roman churches rendered accessible to him by the pope, and Mikael, a copyist and translator of the New Testament into the Kipchak language. They were both sent to Herbest by their bishop when he learnt that the former mentioned Armenians in his sermon. This shows that the Armenians happened to attend Catholic sermons. This bishop was Grigor Varaketsi, a pupil of *Catholicos* Stepanos V who came to know the Papacy in the same circumstances as Simon Ilovetsi. Perhaps the later author had him in mind when he wrote that the Armenian bishops took part in the Latin archbishops' celebrations in the Catholic cathedral.⁹⁴ Herbest set out to visit the Armenians and was greatly impressed with what he saw there:

[the Armenian priest] celebrated the liturgy in our presence with great honesty and solemnity ... though under a different external ecclesiastical ritual, they are of the same faith with us ... we could observe with our very eyes their due obedience to the Holy Papal See ... and which Catholic would not find comfort in seeing such confirmation of his Catholic faith everywhere, in defiance of those people of the new Gospel, finding that in one faith there are various rituals, which confirms the unity of our faith. For our adversaries should be ashamed to say that the Mass was invented by the popes, and with it the remembrance of the saints, dead and alive, since this Mass (though in another external manner) is [said] by the Armenians and Greeks, in Ruthenia and Moscow.⁹⁵

Observations he made in the Armenian church filled him with joy, since they allowed him to repudiate the theses of the 'mullahs of the New Gospel', the 'new-believers'. He said: 'the confirmation of the faith of the Roman Church in the Armenian Church is great indeed'. In the Armenian library he found the same writings of the Church Fathers that had nourished the Catholic theology, and which had 'started to be despised by Luther': Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, Saint Basil the Great, John Chrysostom.

In 1569 there appeared at the church of the Kamieniec Armenians other Catholic dignitaries. The archbishop of Lwów, Stanisław Słomowski assisted by the bishop of Kamieniec Dionizy Secygniowski

⁹⁴ Dashkevich, *Ukrainsko-armyanskie svyazi*, no. 8, p. 47.

⁹⁵ Herbest, *Chrześcijańska*, 367–8.

‘watched as we celebrated the Mass, dispensed the sacrament of baptism with due ceremony and in this connection they asked us many questions’ – noted the chronicler Der Hovhannes. On the occasion of Secygniowski’s death (1576), the following note appeared in this chronicle:

May Our Lord have mercy on his soul; he was a mild and humble bishop, a mediator and benefactor of the Armenian nation; may God crown him and place him among all the holy bishops.⁹⁶

In the early summer of 1574 in the Armenian cathedral of Lwów appeared Jan Łasicki, a Calvinist activist, who maintained extensive intellectual contacts with the whole of Europe. He did not find there the Archbishop Grigor Varaketsi, since that hierarch, at variance with his flock, had departed for Constantinople. Łasicki was received by two Armenian priests, ‘honest, human men, open, generous and eloquent, but very circumspect, elegant, and worldly’, who informed him about the origin of their religion, liturgy and rites. He learnt from them that ‘since the times of Calixtus [III, 1455–8] they have not taken anything from the Pope of Rome, or regarded him as the Head of the Church’. He learnt the Armenian doctrine about the nature of Christ in its original version, not assimilated to the Catholic. He found the Armenian Sacrament of the Eucharist, fasting, cult of the saints and the Mother of God similar to the Orthodox. He learnt of their processions that they were not arranged with the Sacrament, but ‘in memory of Christ who went here and there’. His inquiry about the question as to what was essential to the Calvinists who believed in justification by faith and the Lord’s grace, and not through human deeds,

was answered by the younger, but wiser [priest] ... only Christ is the justification of any believer, still people should retain their piety, for a tree may be known by its fruit, whether it is good or bad.⁹⁷

The Armenians, while giving shrewd answers to Łasicki, obviously knew who they were talking to.

The representatives of the Orthodox Church also proposed solidarity to the Armenians within the internal Christian confrontations

⁹⁶ Ališan, *Kamenic’*, 35, 38–9, 47, 54; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 149–50.

⁹⁷ *Ioannis Lasicii De religione*.

of the day. In 1583 the Ruthenian and Armenian clergy in Poland was addressed by the patriarch of Constantinople, Jeremiah II, who encouraged them to jointly fight the new calendar of Gregory XIII. However, the Armenians did not join the fight against Catholic innovations and were reproached for this by the Ruthenians.⁹⁸

In Poland the Catholic Counter-Reformation gained the upper hand, which brought about a change in attitude to the Armenians. The ideology of this new period was heralded by the work of Piotr Skarga 'On the Rule and Unity of the Church of God under a single Shepherd'.⁹⁹ Skarga, who had spent some part of his life in Lwów (as canon, chancellor of the chapter, and cathedral preacher), did not rely on the tactical stories of the Armenian clergymen, who showed in them their Oriental circumspection. He had a good historical-theological education. He knew well that

the Armenians, led astray by the heretic Sergius, pupil of Eutyches, could not understand what was the meaning of person, or nature, and did not accept Leo's letter in which Eutyches was condemned,

that they regarded Pope Leo as heretic, cursed the Fourth Council, and 'punished by God's hand [fell] under the Turkish yoke and were dispersed over many kingdoms', that they 'renounced *filioque*'.¹⁰⁰ A year after the proclamation of the Catholic-Orthodox Union in Brest (1597), the Latin bishop of Kamieniec, Paweł Wołucki, came to the Armenian church of St Nicholas, but not alone. He was accompanied by the *starosta* of Kamieniec, Jan Potocki, the Polish municipal authorities and a great crowd of people. The Armenians were quizzed on their traditions, ceremonies and laws.¹⁰¹ This visit was characteristic of this era of Counter-Reformation and *The Kamieniec Chronicle* does not speak about it with the same warmth as was the case previously.

⁹⁸ *Archiv Yugo-Zapadnoi Rossii*, part 1, xi, 5–6; Łucja Charewiczowa, *Ograniczenia gospodarcze nacyj schizmatyckich i Żydów we Lwowie XV i XVI wieku* (Lwów, 1925), 43–4.

⁹⁹ Piotr Skarga, *O rządzie i jedności Kościoła Bożego pod jednym pasterzem* (Cracow, 1590). This was the second edition of his famous work *O jedności Kościoła Bożego* [On the Unity of the Church of God], published in 1577.

¹⁰⁰ Skarga, *O rządzie*, part 2, chap. 18, pp. 263–4, 273–4.

¹⁰¹ Ališan, *Kamenic*, 61; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 151.

For the Armenian clergy ecumenism was a form of defensive tactic. At least to a certain extent, as we cannot question the voluntary nature of some of their religious practices; something which testified that they recognised the Catholic religion as a rightful one. We know that they visited the Catholic sanctuaries outside Poland, such as that of Santiago de Compostela. These pilgrimages found approval on the part of the priests of the Armenian cathedral in Lwów. In its most ancient, 14th century part, on the left side of the former window embrasure, the figure of Saint James was painted with a bag, stick and flask in hand, in a black hat decorated with a shell, the characteristic attributes of the pilgrims who visited this sanctuary. In front of the saint a kneeling figure of the picture's founder was presented – an Armenian who probably also made this pilgrimage.¹⁰² The Observant Franciscan church in Lwów was visited by devout Catholics, members of the Orthodox Church and Armenians alike, who prayed at the grave of John of Dukla, an Observant who died surrounded by an aura of holiness (1484).¹⁰³

Yet at the same time we can observe in the Armenian Church a tendency to separate themselves from Christians of other faith. In 1572 the community of Lwów asked the *Catholicos* Mikael Sebastatsi for a permanent dispensation to marry their close relatives, so as to avoid the necessity of marrying Catholics or members of the Orthodox Church, since this would lead to a 'split in the faith'.¹⁰⁴ Endogamy was justified by a religious argument. Religious exclusiveness was not manifested openly. The adherents of the Armenian religious ghetto applied evasive tactics, for their attitude was not politically correct. External observers of this attitude emphasised that it was kept in secrecy: 'they marry among themselves, they sustain their own commonwealth in secret' (Sebastian Petrycy, 1605),¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Bohdan Janusz, 'Odkrycie fresków średniowiecznych w katedrze ormiańskiej', *Słowo Polskie*, 161, 163 (1925); VCh, 13, 20, 47. Armenian merchants used to go on business from Poland to Portugal where they had their business representatives; Simeon Lekhaci, *Putevye zametki*, 244.

¹⁰³ *Memoriale Ordinis Fratrum Minorum a fr. Ioanne de Komorowo compilatum*, ed. Xawery Liske and Antoni Lorkiewicz, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, v (Lwów, 1888), 248. See Trajdos, 'Dobroczyńcy', 244.

¹⁰⁴ Ališan, *Kamenic'*, 230.

¹⁰⁵ Cit. from Barącz, *Rys dziejów*, 116.

many among them stick to the heresy of Eutyches about two natures mixed in Christ, however this is secret and upheld only by the more educated ... however this viper is concealed in their bosom, although they try not to show it in public, unless they think it convenient (archbishop of Lwów, Jan Andrzej Próchnicki, 1622).¹⁰⁶

The latter observer says that when an attempt was made in Zamość to organise a public discussion about the 'errors of Eutyches' with the participation of an Armenian *vardapet*, 'the Armenians immediately concealed his explanations so that they would not come to light, fearing they would appear as open heretics, the charge of which they persistently defy'. The 'ecumenism' of the Armenian community may appear more clearly in the light of the 17th century information that the Armenians of Lwów re-baptised anybody 'who had previously been baptised by Catholics'.¹⁰⁷

The Polish state was well-disposed to the Armenian Church; this attitude started with Casimir the Great and was continued by the Jagiellons. This was also the attitude of the Hungarian and Lithuanian rulers who temporarily reigned in lands with some Armenian communities. A significant phenomenon, when we juxtapose it with the practices of neighbouring countries (e.g. the Orthodox Moldavian *hoșpodar* Petru Rareș forced the Armenian priests to eat meat during the Armenian Christmas fast).¹⁰⁸

The Polish monarchs did not interfere with the elections of Armenian bishops, only confirmed them in their office (before or after consecration) and sometimes endowed them. In the 14th century Jan Kmita of Wiśnicz, the Ruthenian *starost* of the Polish kings, granted Hodowica village to the Armenian-Catholic priests of Lwów.¹⁰⁹ In 1374 the Governor of Ruthenia, Duke Ladislas of Opole, in the name of Louis I of Hungary granted them a garden, land around their church, a road leading to the castle, and exempted these grants from tax or any charges envisaged by ducal law.¹¹⁰ The Armenian Church in

¹⁰⁶ *Litterae Nuntiorum Apostolicorum Historiam Ucrainae illustrantes*, i, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj (Rome, 1959), no. 55.

¹⁰⁷ Stanisław Rachwał, *Jan Alnpek i jego 'Opis miasta Lwowa' z początku XVII wieku* (Lwów, 1930), 19–20, 43.

¹⁰⁸ VCh, 12, 19, 46.

¹⁰⁹ AGZ, iii, no. 3, pp. 4–5.

¹¹⁰ Ruzhicky, 'Neopublikovannyi', 107–8.

Kiev gained some undocumented privileges from the Polish kings, and the grand dukes of Lithuania: Casimir IV Jagiellon, Alexander Jagiellon (1496, 1499), Sigismund I (1511, 1513, 1535) and Stephen I Báthory.¹¹¹ The Armenian Church at Łuck owned the Ceperów village, granted to Bishop Avedik in 1445 by the Lithuanian Duke Swidrygiella, a privilege confirmed by King Sigismund II Augustus (1560, 1569).¹¹² The latter king abandoned the annual Easter tax paid to him (180 *groshes*) by the Armenian community of Lwów to the *Catholicos* Stepanos V, who was in Poland at that time.¹¹³ Another form of endowing the Armenian Church by the Crown was its exemption from the tax duties charged of the clergy. The Armenian priests of Lwów were granted exemption from any charges and contributions, both municipal and royal by King Sigismund II Augustus in Wilno on 25 July 1562, who confirmed this in Piotrków on 15 March 1565. According to the colophon of one Armenian manuscript, the king 'freed the Armenian priests from the royal tributes' due to the endeavours of the papal nuncio in Poland, Giovanni Battista Commendone.¹¹⁴ King Henry of Valois promised to pay the Armenian clergy an annual subsidy of 200 *zlotys*, but as he fled to France in June 1574, he did not keep this promise.¹¹⁵ The Armenian priests were of course obliged to pay the *subsidiūm charitativum* imposed by the Sejm on all the Christian clergy of the kingdom. Sometimes, some part of this tax was paid for them by the Armenian community.

¹¹¹ Dachkévtych, 'Les Arméniens à Kiev', 195.

¹¹² ZD, xix: Aleksander Jabłonowski (ed.), *Polska XVI wieku pod względem geograficzno-statystycznym*, 8: *Ziemie ruskie. Wołyń-Podole* (Warsaw, 1889), 105; Barącz, *Rys dziejów*, 152–3; Abraham, *Powstanie organizacji*, 359, note 1; Zdzisław Obertyński, 'Legenda jazłowiecka. Przyczynek do krytyki podań ludowych w wiekach XVI–XVIII', *Studia Źródloznawcze*, vii (1962), 73; AGZ, x, no. 1694; Sadok Barącz, *Żywoty sławnych Ormian w Polsce* (Lwów, 1856), 344–8.

¹¹³ Cracow, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, MS 5445, c. 33. Cf. Stopka, 'Stefan V'.

¹¹⁴ AGZ, x, no. 1246, p. 83, no. 1299, p. 86; *Matricularum Regni Poloniae summaria* (hereafter: MRPS), 5 vols. (Warsaw, 1905–61), v, part 2, no. 9512, p. 300; Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 144. The privileges granted by Sigismund II Augustus in 1565 and 1566 were confirmed by Henry of Valois in Cracow on 22 April 1574: AGZ, x, no. 1755, p. 117. The document of 1562 related only to the Armenian priests of Lwów. King Stephen Báthory lifted the taxes on the Armenian priests of Kamieniec Podolski in 1576. Franciszek Pułaski, *Opis 815 rękopisów Biblioteki Ordynacji Krasieńskich* (Warsaw, 1915), 686.

¹¹⁵ *Ioannis Lasicii De religione*, 60.

The Polish kings sometimes appeared as arbitrators in the ecclesiastical disputes between the Armenians. In 1363 the Cilician *Catholicos* Mesrop in his letter to the Polish communities forbade accusing a bishop before the court of a 'foreign ruler', threatening them with excommunication, and their priests, additionally, with degradation to a secular status.¹¹⁶ We detect in these formulations a trace of some religious conflict among the Armenians of Lwów (probably between their traditionalist and Catholic orientation), which was arbitrated by Casimir the Great, but of which we find no mention in the sources. I have already written about other cases of resorting to the Polish monarchs as neutral and friendly arbitrators in the disputes between the communities and bishops.

In public relations the Catholic Church enjoyed higher prestige in the eyes of Polish monarchs than did the Armenian Church. This can be seen in the different titles used in state-ecclesiastical correspondence: the Catholic bishops were addressed as *reverendissimus*, while the Armenian as *venerabilis*. However, it was more important that the rulers protected this small community against persecution on religious pretext or grounds, and their Church against the abuses on the part of the public institutions that remained in Catholic hands. In 1512 Sigismund I admonished for this reason the Latin Archbishop Bernard Wilczek, and the councillors of Lwów, and in 1519 he punished the Lwów authorities for an unprecedented act of judging 'sacrilege', allegedly committed by an Armenian. In 1566 in Lublin Sigismund II Augustus demanded from the Sejm deputies of Lwów to take an oath that their city would respect the privileges of the Armenian clergy.

The function of the ruler as a bestower of religious truce – *treuga regis* – had also another side. The king listened to and arbitrated in the cases of believers in other faiths who complained about abuses on the part of the Armenians. In 1499 Grand Duke of Lithuania Alexander Jagiellon forbade the Armenian merchants' concubinage with Kiev townswomen under a penalty of 720 *groshes*.¹¹⁷ Half a century later we come across another episode that illustrates this phenomenon. Pastoral zeal involved *Catholicos* Stepanos V, then holding his office in Lwów, in a conflict with the Orthodox bishop of Galich, Lwów and Kamieniec,

¹¹⁶ Petrowicz, *La Chiesa*, 19–21.

¹¹⁷ *Akty otnosyashchiesya*, i (Saint Petersburg, 1846), 195.

Arsenii Balaban, who accused him before the king of kidnapping two boys, probably born into a mixed family (mother – Ruthenian, and father – probably Armenian). The *catholicos* or his *avagyrets*, whose name is not known, re-baptised the boys, ‘in defiance of the rules of the Greek religion and the principle of religious freedom’. On 19 May 1551 Sigismund II Augustus by his order from Cracow commanded Stepanos V to deliver the boys to the Orthodox bishop and their mother.¹¹⁸

The municipal institutions also exerted their influence on the religious life of the Armenians. The urban space, limited in area and enforcing a close neighbourhood, imposed on any believer passive participation in the religious practices of other communities. This did not only concern Catholic processions but also Jewish funerals, which in Lwów always followed one route, along the Ormiańska (Armenian) street, close to the Armenian cathedral.¹¹⁹ Different liturgical calendars organised the professional activity of the Armenians and other Christians in different rhythms. The Catholic Christmas Day was a normal day of work for the Armenian merchants. This gave rise to competition and conflicts, and in the shadow of which ecclesiastical jurisdictions became involved. In 1512 the archbishop of Lwów, Bernard Wilczek, forbade Catholic cart-drivers from providing any service whatsoever to Armenian merchants.¹²⁰ This was an isolated incident. The Armenians appealed to the king and obtained his repeal.

In some cases religious intercourse resulted from a wish to participate in the life of municipal institutions as a result of their economic role. As a consequence people had to adjust to the Catholic character of those institutions and their rites. The Armenian craftsmen managed to penetrate the guilds that operated within the municipal system governed by Magdeburg law. They took part in the Catholic services held by the guild – processions, masses and funerals. The guild statutes required of all the masters participation in the Catholic services, and nobody could be released from this duty, even by payment. In 1529 the Catholic merchants of Lwów sued the

¹¹⁸ Stopka, ‘Stefan V’, 153.

¹¹⁹ Majer Bałaban, *Żydzi lwowscy na przełomie XVI i XVII wieku* (Lwów, 1906), 208.

¹²⁰ MRPS, iv, part 1, no. 1688, 100; Cracow, Biblioteka Czartoryskich, MS 253, c. 52v.

Ruthenian merchants, accusing them of absence from the funerals of their brotherhood and from the Requiem Masses. The Armenians gave evidence against the Ruthenians, which suggests that they themselves obeyed the rule. In Kamieniec Podolski the guild of furriers consisting of Poles, Ruthenians and Armenians marched together in the Latin Corpus Christi procession.¹²¹

Most religious conflicts were those with the municipal authorities of Lwów. In 1512 King Sigismund I reproached the local councillors: 'you oppress the Armenians, and bring their priests before your courts'.¹²² In 1566 the Armenian priests complained that the city did not respect their tax privilege.¹²³ In 1518 the city saw an event that took a tragic course. Its victims were: the Armenian Iwaszko, the son of the earlier mentioned royal *cubicularius*, a rich merchant and the king's interpreter, then already a widower, and a Polish woman Zofia, his servant. Their relationship of many years became an easy pretext for the municipal establishment, ethnically chiefly German, to get rid of this wealthy and influential Armenian. The council declared that he had committed a sacrilege by cohabiting with a Catholic. Since by virtue of the royal privilege he was subject to Magdeburg law, they summoned him before their court. The case was decided on the basis of the so-called 'red-handed' law, which deprived the family and his co-religionists of the possibility of blocking the proceedings. Iwaszko and the pregnant Sophia were burned at the stake. Nobody spoke up for the Polish woman, but the cruel death inflicted on the Armenian under a religious pretext aroused the king's anger. Sigismund I acknowledged the council's decision as a usurpation of his competences. He ordered the whole council to be imprisoned, charged them with a fine for the sake of the state and the Armenian community and a high rate of compensation for the murdered man's heirs (no compensation for Sophia's family was mentioned in the verdict). The Armenian community ostentatiously

¹²¹ Jan Ptaśnik, *Miasta i mieszczaństwo w dawnej Polsce* (Cracow, 1934), 152, 298; Łucja Charewiczowa, *Lwowskie organizacje zawodowe w czasach Polski przedrozbiorowej* (Lwów, 1929), 143–4; Feliks Kiryk, 'Z dziejów późnośredniowiecznego Kamieńca Podolskiego', in *idem* (ed.), *Kamieniec Podolski. Studia z dziejów miasta i regionu*, 2 vols. (Cracow, 2000–5), i, 73.

¹²² Cracow, Biblioteka Czartoryskich, MS 253, c. 323.

¹²³ AGZ, x, no. 1353.

returned to the council the shameful *besserung* for the life of their brother in faith.¹²⁴

All known cases of municipal interference in the religious life of the Armenians ended the same. The domination of the urban majority stopped within the city walls, its usurpations were short-lived, and were quashed by royal verdicts. To perceive the above-mentioned episodes within the perspective of religious persecution, would be jumping to an overhasty conclusion. Religion was here merely a pretext, while the real reason was economic competition. It would also be wrong to think that the inter-ethnic relations in the city were dominated by these facts. These relations developed against a background of intensive co-operation within the tenancy partnerships and commercial (caravans) and financial enterprises established jointly by the rich believers of Armenian Christianity, Catholics, Orthodox Greeks and Jews.

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(proofread by Guy Torr)

¹²⁴ Djonizy Zubrzycki, *Kronika miasta Lwowa* (Lwów, 1844), 139–42; Barącz, *Rys*, 110.