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## **ARMENIAN TRACES IN SPAIN**

This paper studies manuscripts as time witnesses of past mobility between Armenia and Europe, bringing light onto social and historical context of that mobility and highlighting written or printed material as an important heritage object. The present study focuses on scoping out the Armenian traces in Spain, particularly in the cities of Seville and Cadiz in the Late Medieval and Modern periods. The study was constructed around the material of a XVI century manuscript from Matenadaran archive in Yerevan and documents from the archives of Seville and Cadiz. Study is based on relevant bibliographical research in the field and independent archival work with manuscripts and printed material.

**Study Material and Questions:** Our principal study material is a manuscript number 9832 from the manuscript archive of Matenadaran located in Yerevan<sup>1</sup>. The context of written text is an itinerary of one monk named Sarguis. Manuscript dimensions are 10x20 cm, the material is paper. Text is written with black ink in one column and «notrgir» (նոտրգիր) style<sup>2</sup>, without decorated capital letters and other ornaments, in some places with overwritten text mistakes and added notes in the margins. From the visual observation we note that the manuscript is in acceptable conditions and probably it was restored in the past.

Considering the written record found on the page 76b and certain previous studies we assume that it was copied in XVI century from original itinerary of monk Sarguis. Most probably manuscript was written in the monastery of St. Cyriaco of Yerzinga (Երզնկայի Սր. Կիրակոս վանք)<sup>3</sup>. Later it was found in Diyarbakir (Տիգրանակերտ) by local priest, on March 17 of 1950 transferred to Constantinople and included in the private collection of Toros Azatyan. After his death the collection was delivered to Armenia. From 1958–1961 the small codex with first unit of the work of monk Sarguis was included in the manuscript archive of Matenadaran with registration number 9832.

The reason we have particularly selected the itinerary of monk Sarguis is that it corresponds with the main aim of our study – it is a quite detailed journey chronicle as a written evidence of existed cultural and historical links between Armenia and Europe. This manuscript is unique for many reasons: the largest part of its content is dedicated to the journey in Spain with an optimal information about that country which is possible to find in the works of previous or later Armenian travellers of that period; it has a detailed

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<sup>1</sup> The Main List of Matenadaran Manuscripts (Մայր ցուցակ հայերեն ձեռագրաց Մատենադարանի), N 2, 1970, Yerevan, p. 1000.

<sup>2</sup> Style of writing typical for Armenian manuscripts being in use from XIII century and widely common in XVI–XVII centuries. The word նոտար (notar) has the meaning of scribe and origins from Greek νοτάριος or Latin notarius. The main purpose of this style is to write fast using few space and many letters.

<sup>3</sup> Khachikyan L. S., 1970, 127–130.

description of visited places and mobility path; it contains information not only about religious places but also about some historical events happening in that period; finally, it is the first written source in Armenian about discovery of America. Manuscript is interesting also because it has been few studied. Among some scholars mentioning the journey of monk Sarguis (G.Aramyan, P. Chobanyan, V. Matiossian) perhaps the most complete and favorable one is academic L. Khachikyan's work which has been used as the main supporting source for the present work.

Our study includes also the references about XVII–XVIII century documents from the archives of Seville and Cadiz as a link and possibility to find the continuity of Armenian traces in Spain. In this case the context of material and its attribute are changed, but the desirable trace is found. This is an interesting phenomenon which is leading us to understand the historical developments hidden behind the objects. We can see how the transformation of material will shape our knowledge about human activity and trending missions in certain period. Speaking more clearly, in this case we do not have history or chronology of facts written by Armenian authors, but we have Spanish documents containing Armenian names in archival registers of Seville and Cadiz, therefore the Armenian presence in these cities. Consequently, we have a number of raised questions: What are going to tell us all this traces? What kind of history is behind these writings? Why in XVI century an Armenian monk arrives till the «edge of the world», and how it is connected to the flow of Armenians to Spain in XVII–XVIII centuries? We will try to reveal the fascinating past behind this connections with the help of known historical facts and written records.

**Into the Past:** Before starting the main topic of our study we will draw a brief history of the Armenian-Spanish historical connections. In general, these connections did not develop continuously, but from time to time they were activated mainly as a result of global historical events. Few ancient Armenian scholars mention about Spain in their works mostly describing some historical facts (Movses Khorenatsi, V century)<sup>4</sup> or geography (Anania Shirakatsi, VII century)<sup>5</sup>. Later on, we see active connections in the Middle Ages, especially during the Crusade period between Spain and Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia (1198–1375) which was situated in the territory of present day Turkey for almost two centuries. Because of its strategic geographical position, with an access to Mediterranean Sea, Cilicia was involved in active trade networks between the Eastern countries and Western Europe. Especially Italian city-states of Genoa and Venice had free access in the main port of Cilicia named Ayas. It is known from the written sources that in 1293 there was an agreement between the king of Aragon Jaime II (1251–1327) and king of Cilicia Hetum II (1289–1297) giving a privilege to Catalanian traders for their activities in Cilicia with their main representative<sup>6</sup>. Jaime II kept good relations also with king of Cilicia Oshin (1308–1320) delivering him horses in 1319 and 1320, as confirm the documents in the archives of Barcelona. King Oshin from his side is answering to the request of Jaime II of Aragon and sending the relics of

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<sup>4</sup> Aramyan A. G., 1990, 33.

<sup>5</sup> Abrahamyan A. G., 1967, 200.

<sup>6</sup> Alpoyajyan A., 1959, 86.

St. Tekla for the church of Tarragona<sup>7</sup>. One more evidence of Spanish-Armenian relations is the XIII century fresco in the old church of Toledo depicting the procession of Armenian priests<sup>8</sup> (another interesting case study).

Armenian Kingdom was cooperating with Latin Monarchies trying to prevent the growing invasions of Egyptian Sultanate. After the fall of Cilicia under the rule of Mamluks in 1375 the last king Leon V Lusignan (1374–1375) was captured and imprisoned in Cairo for 7 years. After many efforts he was liberated with the help of king of Aragon Pedro IV (1336–1387) and king of Castile Juan I (1379–1390) and arrived to Spain in 1383<sup>9</sup>. Juan I assigned Leon as a Señor of Madrid, Villareal and Andujar, trying to reinstate his lost royalty. But Leon was not accepted by Spanish noblemen, he left Castile in 1384.

During the next centuries, due to historical developments, Armenian travellers started to appear in Spain and Spanish travellers in Armenia as well. Many members of Dominican and Franciscan order travelled to Armenia as missionaries of Latin Church. Archives provide us with written evidence of those travels: pilgrimages, diplomatic or religious missions, trade etc. Some of them are worth to mention, such as the journey of Martiros of Yezzinga (XV century)<sup>10</sup>, diary of Ruy Gonzalez Clavijo (XV century)<sup>11</sup>, letter to Spanish king Felipe II (XVI century)<sup>12</sup>, so-called «Catalan Map» from 1375<sup>13</sup>, journey of Don Eliseo da Sarbanga (Paleologo Armeno, XVII century)<sup>14</sup>, many Armenian names of traders mostly in Seville and Cadiz<sup>15</sup>, compendium of Kostandin Djughayetsi (XVII century)<sup>16</sup>, diary of Zakaria Aguletsi<sup>17</sup> etc. As our selected study material is an itinerary of pilgrimage, we will concentrate mainly on that context.

History of Late Medieval and Early Modern period travellers is attractive and has many interesting particularities to observe. The features of those travels can be observed in several points: ➤ Tradition of pilgrimage to sacred places; ➤ Discovery and description of new realities; ➤ Impact of written records on the society; ➤ Social transformations of travel purpose and ancient mobility routes; ➤ Text materials as precious heritage.

**Tradition of pilgrimage to sacred places:** Tradition of pilgrimage is too old, and passing through many transformations it had arrived even to modern times. Pilgrimages were important events especially in the Middle Ages, being encouraged by the Church. It was common to visit religious places not only in one country, but also to accomplish long distance trails walking in many countries between the East and West. Pilgrims made their spiritual journey in order to see the places stepped by Christian saints, to pray for

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<sup>7</sup> «Banaser», 1905, 65–74.

<sup>8</sup> Aramyan A. G., 1990, 34.

<sup>9</sup> Alpoyajyan A., 1959, 87–88.

<sup>10</sup> Hakobyan V., 1957, 97–110.

<sup>11</sup> Hakobyan H., 1932, 65–147.

<sup>12</sup> Alpoyajyan A., 1959, 93–94.

<sup>13</sup> Aramyan A.G., 1990, 34.

<sup>14</sup> Chobanyan P., 2002, 105–156.

<sup>15</sup> Alpoyajyan A., 1959, 98–99.

<sup>16</sup> Matiossian V.V., 2008, 134.

<sup>17</sup> Aguletsi Z., 1938.

human sins and for cure of illnesses, or to fulfill their faith. The interesting fact is that the religious idea of pilgrimage developed a rich atmosphere of material culture, such as churches and cathedrals, tombs and shrines, objects for different rituals, manuscripts and books, expressions in artworks etc.

Pilgrimages were common in Armenian reality as well, especially considering the strong influence of Christian faith in the country. There were adopted pilgrimage routes in Medieval Armenia at internal and external level. Apart of local pilgrimage traditions the most common routes leading to sacred places out of Armenia were Jerusalem (church of St. Jacob), Rome (basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul) and Spain (Santiago de Compostela). The cult of Santiago is very old and famous not only in Spain, but also out of its confines. Compostela is situated in the North of Spain. It is believed, that in IX century in this place were discovered the relics of the apostle St. James. Perhaps it is difficult to imagine in those times a trail connecting Armenia with the «edge of the world», as Armenian scholars used to call Spain in the past. But the strong faith of ancient pilgrims overcame all the difficulties in their way to holy lands. It is believed, that Armenians had their «harbor» in Compostela named «Jerusalem» with Armenian books and religious rites, but unfortunately those manuscripts are not preserved<sup>18</sup>.

One of the dedicated pilgrims of his time was monk Sarguis. His itinerary depicts his journey from Armenia to Europe. In preserved 36 pages of his notes there is not a direct mentioning about the main purpose of his travel. But from the content we can presume that the reason however was to make a pilgrimage to holy places, to pray and to confess as a humble follower of Our Lord. Accordingly, taking into consideration the main interest of our study, we will give a fast reference to the places of monk Sarguis's journey from Armenia to Europe and concentrate mostly on his notes about Spain.

**Discovery and description of new realities:** The manuscript of monk Sarguis is interesting in order to disclose the new realities based on personal perceptions of traveller. Descriptions are simple, written in one of the Western Armenian dialects. It is important to mention about the courageous spirit of monk Sarguis and medieval pilgrims in general. Despite they had the patronage of different authorities and the respect of society, however, they should have been ready for all the challenges in their desirable way. In our case, following the notes of our author, in few remarks we can see the difficulties he faced with: being physically tired of long distance walk, taking decisions in unexpected situations, even learning new languages to be able to communicate. He started his travel in 1587 and completed in 1592.

Now we will briefly describe his path. Unfortunately, the first pages of manuscript are missing. Probably he started his journey from Yerzinga<sup>19</sup>. Passing through Constantinople, Smyrna and Cephalonia he arrives to Italy and after visiting many cities there he moves to Germany, Flanders, England, France, Portugal and finally Spain. The amazing fact of his travels is when he mentions about learning of the languages in almost every new place: «*I did not know the language; I suffered a lot until I learnt*». He gives detailed description of many churches and monasteries emphasizing architectural

<sup>18</sup> Kyulpenkyan R. V., 1986, 38.

<sup>19</sup> Khachikyan L. S., 1970, 131.

features, internal and external decorations, holy relics etc. In every place he expresses his gratitude and dedication with prayers and repentance. Sarguis describes also the cities and towns, mostly giving the approximate number of houses and population. He reflexes also some political events happening in Europe. For instance, speaking about his stay in Paris we understand that he was blocked in the city and could not move out for a while because of civil conflict and clashes. According to his descriptions, it was the period when the king Henry III Valois was defeated by citizens and with protection of Henry Navarro was trying to press the revolt. But in August 2 of 1589 the king was killed by Dominican monk Jacques Cleman. After this events Sarguis moves from Paris to Nantes and from there sails to Bilbao in 25 days. Finally he arrives to his most desirable destination, the «Land of St. Jacob» as he calls Spain. From Armenian Medieval travellers no one can compete with monk Sarguis in walking that much in the vast territories of Spain and giving that much important information about this country<sup>20</sup>.

After arriving he immediately visits Santiago de Compostela. Here he was not able to visit the tomb of St. Jacob, but he finds out with happiness that after 8 months it will be open for public, as this happens only once a year. So, during this period he visited other places and came back again as a committed pilgrim. Further on, he describes with big amazement about celebration days of Santiago de Compostela with huge number of religious and mundane participants. He describes in details the beauty of Compostela church (perhaps with some exaggeration): 3 floors, 206 arches, 30 chapels, 4 doors and big campanile with 7 floors.

Further on the monk is impressed with his visit to Madrid. He aimed to see the king of Spain, but in that period king was in his summer residence of Escorial. However, Sarguis pays a visit to the king Felipe II in Escorial. After receiving some support and papers from the king, he continues his route.

The summary approximately shows the places visited by monk Sarguis in Spain: Bilbao, Burgos, Valladolid, Medina del Campo, Salamanca, Zamora, Benavente, Medina del Rioseco, Simancas, León, Villafranca del Bierzo, Astorga, Santiago, Carmona, Cordoba, Archidona, Antegüera, Campillos, Santafe, Granada, Jaen, Alcala, Guadalupe, Talavera de la Reina, Toledo, Madrid, Alcala de Henares, Guadajajara, Zaragoza, Lerida, Barcelona, Tortosa, Valencia, Ibiza, Mallorca, Menorca and many other small and big towns.

The interesting fact is that for some places he gives perhaps short but typical characteristics. For instance, San Sebastián-the place of martyred saint killed with arrows; Burgos-the place of the relic of the Holy Cross of Christ; Salamanca-there are many scholars (university atmosphere); Santa Maria Finisterre-the edge of the land with sea lying ahead; Tui-town where he crossed the Miño River and arrived to Portugal; Granada-city that was under Magreb rule but now it is Christian; Barcelona-city with 50000 houses and half of them were closed because of some deadly disaster, etc. In these descriptions we see monk Sarguis not only as a religious person, but also as an open minded traveler who is interested in historical, geographical and social transformations

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<sup>20</sup> Khachikyan L. S., 1970, 132.

of the places he visits. This manuscript is precious also as it is the first Armenian source speaking about discovery of America.

Probably one of the most interesting parts in this manuscript is the description of Seville. The author describes Seville as a big harbor which is connected with a New World by sea. With usual exaggeration he tells that the city has around 300 churches with many holy relics, one enormous church with 7 doors and 150 chapels (speaking about Cathedral of Seville), 80 thousand houses (speaking about population). *«In front of the city there is a big river (speaking about Guadalquivir) with many royal ships of Spanish king who has discovered New India. Every year 5 boats arrive embarked with silver and gold»*. Then he tells one of the legendary stories heard probably from the locals: *«This gold and silver grows itself – an amazing thing. They [people] are killing many horses, mules, cows, sheep, taking and leaving the skins into that place where gold and silver is growing. In that place there are big ants...ants go out from the gold, [they] go to eat the skins...they are [people] collecting [gold and silver] and embarking the boats and coming back»*. He describes also an enormous boat with 14 opened sails and 500 sailors that arrive to Seville in 6 months. Exciting stories about rich supply from America were circulating among traders, travelers and Spanish people in general in those times. Monk Sarguis is probably telling one of those caught stories about gold import into Seville<sup>21</sup>.

One more important observation: in his manuscript the author makes another significant register about destruction of Spanish «Armada Invencible» in 1588, telling that the Spanish king was fighting against England with 130 boats and 80000 people (this is an exaggeration because according to the sources the actual number of people was 8000 sailors and 19000 soldiers), but they all were destroyed and sank<sup>22</sup>.

In Valencia monk Sarguis is already terribly tired of walking almost 4 years. He is asking some sailors to take him on the boat and after sailing with them 2 months he is arriving to Italy and in 1592 finally to Armenia. He is concluding his itinerary with a nice folksong, which is telling that better to be hungry and thirsty in your homeland, than to have all the good things in the far but with eyes full of tears. This is the best way to express his experience and inner maturity of 5 years of travel.

**Impact of written records on the society:** Written heritage plays a big role in the enlightenment of common intellectual vision of a certain society. It can be a key to many questions in ancient periods and in modern times as well. Each historical period has a distinctive literary culture build up by the essentials of that time. Especially in Mediaeval times we can highlight the importance of monasteries as active centers for manuscript production and repositories of written records.

Referring to our study material, we have only assumptions for its place of origin and further interventions: for that archaeometric analysis would be a preferable option. Leaving in a side the vague information about details of the manuscript we prefer to observe it under the light of corresponding time and environment – XVI century Armenia. In that period such chronologies and itineraries were important in order to raise

<sup>21</sup> Aramyan A. G., 1990, 37.

<sup>22</sup> Aramyan A. G., 1990, 38.

the knowledge of population, at least for its literate part. Information those manuscripts provide may have had a remarkable impact in the society, opening new perspectives about other countries, their geography, culture, political developments and new discoveries. And maybe in a slow way, however, those manuscripts were copied and transmitted from one owner to another, as in the case of our material. It is not excluded, that through these stories Spain was depicted as a land of vast possibilities, especially considering the rumor about new discovered «India». It is important to mention, that this period is remarkable also with invention of printed book, which means that ideas, therefore manuscripts started to be spread faster and be more accessible to literate societies. Consequently, due to the information flow, Spain, despite miles of distances, became an attractive destination for Armenians, and not only.

And who knows, if monk Sarguis presumably was influenced by previous texts, maybe his nice manuscript also served as a good adviser and guide for the next travelers<sup>23</sup>.

**Social transformations of travel purpose and ancient mobility routes:**

Historical connections between the East and West were always active. Many paths were opened and stepped by human migration groups, trading caravans or single wonderers. Main sea routes and islands were spotted by traditional trader communities. In XIII–XIV centuries the crossing point between Asia and Europe was Constantinople: geographical position gave the privilege to this city. All the Oriental goods were passing through this point, such as textile, leather, wine from Syria and papyrus from Egypt, precious jewels, oils and spices, ivory and silk from Arabia, India and China, and many other things appreciated in Europe<sup>24</sup>.

In XV century the new era of big discoveries reopened a new perspective of the world with round confines. Brave navigators spotted new landmarks in far India and America.

Historical transformations of that period, particularly the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the expansion of the Ottoman Empire, changed the policy of Western Kingdoms. Europe, already familiar with products from the East with centuries continued supply by Silk Road, now had to conduct a new diplomacy and to find alternative trade routes. At the same time the maritime expeditions into India and America reopened the new perspectives especially for Spanish and Portuguese Kingdoms, with establishment of colonial strategies and new coastal trade routes between the continents.

In 1492 the small fleet consisting of three boats and with a crew of 90 men sailed from Palos, they were heading to unknown seas for glory or for death. Cristobal Colon, a stubborn Genoese sailor was leading them, after receiving the patronage of Spanish King. It was one of the biggest moments in the history when in October 12 the sailor Rodrigo de Triana noticed the land: New World appeared on the horizon and America had just been discovered for Europeans<sup>25</sup>. This was the period in the Spanish history

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<sup>23</sup> Khachikyan L. S., 1970, 129.

<sup>24</sup> Perez B.N., 1998, 10.

<sup>25</sup> Perez B.N., 1998, 12–13.

when it became an attractive destination for all fortune seekers, especially with its flourishing commerce in the cities of Seville and Cadiz.

In this continuously reshaping world, from XVI to XVIII centuries Armenia, being in the middle of Europe and Asia, had to be in a process of gaining and losing its territories, to be invaded by Seljuks, Mongols and to be divided between Ottoman and Persian empires. This results a migration of vast number of Armenians. This wave of migrations is mostly characterized by organization of trader communities from which the notable ones were in Iran (New Djulfa), India (Madras, Calcutta), in the cities Smyrna, Crimea, Amsterdam etc. Armenians in those communities were involved in maritime trade as well, and from XVII–XVIII centuries they started to appear in Europe. The relevant literature provides many Armenian names present in this period in Spain (Cadiz, Seville, Barcelona, Madrid)<sup>26</sup>. Especially traders from New Djulfa traveled to Spain, they even crossed the Atlantic and moved to the New World. They were established in two important Spanish ports: Cadiz and Seville, which was quite logical. Seville had become the gateway to America as soon as Cristobal Colon had returned from Indias<sup>27</sup>.

So, here is the clue of small Armenian community presence in Cadiz and Seville with hidden long story behind, as an evidence of harsh destiny of Armenian people. But the small community of Armenian merchants in Cadiz and Seville was an element developed by the necessity of that period and most probably these people did not have an intention to be settled there permanently. Consequently, we do not see them as a complete unit in Spanish reality as it happens with traditionally developed communities, especially in the level of cultural, social, religious activities. We even do not know if they were followers of Catholic Church or not. Therefore it was normal in that period for Spanish society to consider them strangers coming from the East and maybe mixing them or with Muslims, or with Orthodox Greeks. That was the reason to see Armenian community members in one moment being involved in the activities different than trade.

It was the period of historical transformations in Iberian Peninsula. After Spanish Reconquista the Christian rule again established and followed by expulsion of Moors and Jews. Most probably, for a while few Armenians living in Cadiz were suspected as well<sup>28</sup>. Therefore, they should have tried to maintain their position and to prove their dedication to Spanish King and Catholic Church. Preserved documents in the archives of Seville and Cadiz contain names of Armenians who were involved in social activities, especially as members of one Catholic brotherhood in Cadiz.

Probably Armenians were not living in Cadiz long before. According to one source, in corresponding documents of the year 1607 about city population there is not any Armenian name. Evidence of their activity is preserved in some documents dated from 1664–1684 covering more or less 20 years and mainly connected with activities of brotherhood named Jesus Nazareno<sup>29</sup>. In 1665–1670 three brothers Davit, Hakob and

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<sup>26</sup> **Abrahamyan A. G.**, 1967, 204.

<sup>27</sup> **Matiossian V.V.**, 2008, 130.

<sup>28</sup> **Ashjean M.**, 1993, 133.

<sup>29</sup> **Sopranis S. H.**, 1954, 299.



Poghos of Zakar(yan) donated to Sta. Maria church of Cadiz a baptismal font of Genoese marble work from 1600s, and a collection of fine Hollandaise tiles. Apart of being precious art objects, these donations have an important historical value: they can «tell» the facts hidden behind their presence in particular environment, especially when the objects bear Armenian inscriptions.

Baptismal font is situated in the chapel of Jesus Nazareno, above the font there is a framed bas-relief of Jesus with a cross and carved text on white marble: *Այս է Յիշատակս է Չորսպարի Որդի, Դաւութին, Պողոսին / եւ Յակոբին, Թալմն ՌՃ.ԺԹ Կալիս / David Zucar 1670* (This is a remembrance of David, Poghos and Jacob, sons of Zucar from Djugha) (Fig.).

Faience tiles have pleasant blue and white colors with different depictions and inscriptions in Spanish and Armenian. Here is one of them: *David y Jacome / y Paulus de Zucar / de Nacion / Armenio; Աս է Յիշատակս է Չորսպարի Որդի / Դաւութ Պողոս Յակոբին / Թալմն ՌՃԻ (1671)*.

The royal decree of Carlos II in 1684 (February 26 or January 23) ordered to expel Moors from the city, but Armenians were exception because of being the members of Jesus Nazareno. However, the next decree (July 3, 1684) describes the reason of this exception – Armenians were paying a custom tax for their trade activities<sup>30</sup>. Since the XVI century a payment called «composición» allowed foreigners to legalize their status. It was a sort of legalized bribery, quite popular in the XVII century, when the Spanish Empire was anxious for its empty coffers<sup>31</sup>. In 1699 the brotherhood Nazareno cancelled this rule for Armenians. As a sign of appreciation, they offered their contribution making a donation for restoration of Sta. Maria church<sup>32</sup>.

The last evidence about Armenians in Cadiz is the document (January 27, 1727) which is confirming the decree of 1699<sup>33</sup>. Certainly, with more preserved documents we would have had more detailed information. In available material there are approximately 11-12 names of active community members, but probably community had more people. If to conclude, we can say that Armenians were present in Cadiz and its environs from 1660; at least several of their leading members belong to the brotherhood of Jesus Nazareno; they are listed with honor among the generously contributing benefactors<sup>34</sup>.

There are also other Spanish and Armenian sources about Armenians in Cadiz and Seville. One of them is telling about small community of around 100 people during XVII–XVIII centuries present in Cadiz. It is even mentioning about one Armenian known in Cadiz as Juan Clat or Fragela who built in 1756 a hospice still standing in the corner of Hercules street<sup>35</sup> (but Spanish sources doubt the fact of his Armenian origins<sup>36</sup>). Other source is telling about factory established in Cadiz in late XVII century by rich

<sup>30</sup> Ashjean M., 1993, 140.

<sup>31</sup> Matiossian V.V., 2008, 132.

<sup>32</sup> Ashjean M., 1993, 140.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Sopranis S. H., 1954, 300.

<sup>35</sup> Mavean V., 1996, 351.

<sup>36</sup> Ortiz D., 1991, 191.

Armenian family Merimaniants involved in commerce with Livorno and Venice<sup>37</sup>. During XVII century in Seville Greeks and Armenians used to have their business stores<sup>38</sup>.

One general remark in addition to above mentioned: during XVII–XVIII centuries Armenian traders were considered good agents between Western Europe and Eastern countries (mainly Persia and India), especially after Ottoman control in the trade links through Constantinople. Armenian merchants were appreciated because of their flexibility, ability of speaking languages and being Christian representatives in Muslim domination.

**Text materials as precious heritage:** Our study is constructed on the base of material objects. Without doubt, we can conclude that any kind of written or printed record is an important part of our cultural heritage. These objects can take us into the past. Text records are especially precious because they are “speaking witnesses” of time flow and always can reopen possibilities for new investigations.

These materials are very fragile and first of all they need a good conservation. In our case we did not apply any instrumental analysis to study available material. But this approach is intended for our future studies. For instance, observation of the manuscript of monk Sarguis only by naked eye may reveal some features of its past. We assume that it was restored. However, degradation traces are visible in some parts such as discoloration stains on paper, darkening of page margins or blurred ink, which may be caused by humidity and air pollution due to handling it from place to place until the final destination. Considering the period of manuscript and its texture we can assume that the material itself is most probably a rag paper.

Different qualities of black inks were used to write the text. Anyway, for more precise material characteristics the additional chemical and physical analysis should be applied<sup>39</sup>.

From subjective point of view we may propose that for conservation of manuscripts in this state the most favorable treatment would be the decrease of further interventions (or to use them only in inevitable situations) and stabilization of storage facilities in order to maintain the present conditions of material. Fortunately, these conditions are carefully established in the repositories of Matenadaran, especially in the new scientific building opened in 2011.

**Acknowledgements:** Current paper is a preliminary independent study of manuscripts as witnesses of past mobility based on Spanish-Armenian case. It is going to be developed in the future including more geographical locations and literary/archival sources combined with field

<sup>37</sup> **Alpoyajyan A.**, 1959, 99.

<sup>38</sup> **Ortiz D.**, 1991, 171–172.

<sup>39</sup> The fact that in the manuscript is possible to distinguish different kind of inks, handwriting and even paper only by visual observation leads us to the several assumptions: if to base on previous studies, it is not the original manuscript and copied by different scribes, therefore, we guess that it could be the restored example of two combined copies of the same manuscript (because even the paper looks different). However, not being convinced with that, we think that the manuscript (or the part of it) could be also the original one. For precise dating we propose appropriate instrumental non-invasive analysis applied on different parts of the manuscript. This approach will disclose completely different «biography» of our material.

work. I would like to express my special gratitude to José Miguel Morillo León for his support and continuous guidance on fulfillment of this article. Also my thanks to Irena Grigoryan for her help and valuable advice.



Fig. The baptismal font at the chapel of Jesus Nazareno (source: [www.amigosdesantamaria.wordpress.com](http://www.amigosdesantamaria.wordpress.com))

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## **ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ՀԵՏՔԵՐ ԻՍՊԱՆԻԱՅՈՒՄ**

### **ԱՄՓՈՓՈՒՄ**

Սույն աշխատանքի նպատակն է ուսումնասիրել այն ձեռագրերը և տպագիր նյութերը, որոնք դիտարկվում են որպես Հայաստանի և Եվրոպայի միջև եղած անցյալ շփումների վկաներ: Դիտարկված են Իսպանիայում հայերի ներկայության վկայությունները, մասնավորապես՝ Սևիլիա և Կադիս քաղաքներում ուշ միջնադարյան և նոր շրջաններում: Ուսումնասիրությունն ընդգրկում է Մ. Մաշտոցի անվ. Մատենադարանի հավաքածուից XVI դարի հայկական մեկ ձեռագիր՝ «Ուղեգրություն Սարգիս արեղայի», և վկայակոչում-ուսումնասիրություններ Սևիլիայի և Կադիսի արխիվներում պահվող XVII–XVIII դարերի փաստաթղթերի մասին: Բազմաթիվ աղբյուրների համակցությամբ փորձ է արվել ընդգծել հայերի ներկայության շարունակականությունը իսպանական քաղաքներում: Մի դեպքում մենք ունենք Իսպանիայի մասին տեղեկություններով հարուստ ուղեգրական նոթեր գրված հայ հեղինակի կողմից, մյուս դեպքում՝ իսպանական արխիվներում պահվող փաստաթղթեր, որոնք հիշատակում են հայերին և նրանց գործունեությունը: Այդ նյութերն օգնում են հասկանալ սոցիալական տարբեր խմբերի դերակատարությունը (օր.՝ հայ համայնքն Իսպանիայում) և նրանց ձևավորումը օտար իրականության մեջ, նրանց գործունեությունը, հետաքրքրություններն ու ինտեգրման աստիճանը:

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## **АРМЯНСКИЕ СЛЕДЫ В ИСПАНИИ**

### **РЕЗЮМЕ**

Цель настоящего исследования изучить рукописи и печатные материалы, которые рассматриваются как свидетельства прошлых контактов между Арменией и Европой. Рассмотрены свидетельства армянского присутствия в Испании, в частности в городах Севилья и Кадис в позднесредневековый и новый периоды. Исследованы армянская рукопись XVI века из собрания Матенадарана – «Путевые заметки монаха Саркиса», и документы XVII–XVIII веков из архивов Севильи и Кадиса. Сопоставлением различных источников сделана попытка выявить непрерывность армянского присутствия в испанских городах. В одном случае имеем дело с путевыми заметками с ценными сведениями об Испании и оставленными армянским автором, в другом случае – с документами, хранящимися в испанских архивах, которые упоминают армян и их деятельность. Эти материалы помогают понять роль различных социальных групп (например, армянской общины Испании), их деятельность и степень интеграции.