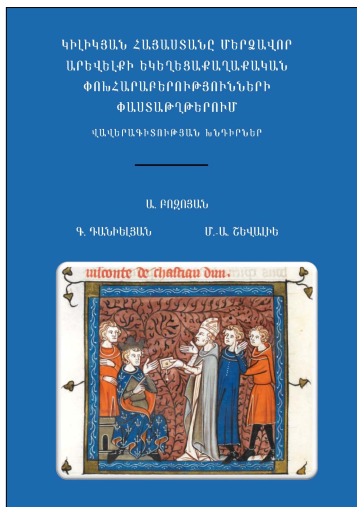


ԳՐԱԽՈՍԱԿԱՆՆԵՐ BOOK REVIEWS



A. BOZOYAN, G. DANIELYAN
M.-A. CHEVALIER

CILICIAN ARMENIA IN DOCUMENTS OF POLITICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL INTERRELATIONS IN THE NEAR EAST

Issues of Diplomats

*"Gitutyun" Publishing House of the NAS RA,
2023, Yerevan, 745 pages.*

ԲՈՂՈՅԱՆ Ա.Ա., ԴԱՆԻԵԼՅԱՆ Գ.Գ., ՇԵՎԱԼԻԵ Մ.-Ա.

ԿԻԼԻԿՅԱՆ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԸ ՄԵՐՁԱՎՈՐ ԱՐԵՎԵԼՔԻ
ԵԿԵՂԵՑԱՔԱՂԱՔԱԿԱՆ ՓՈԽՀԱՐԱԲԵՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ
ՓԱՍՏԱԹՂԹԵՐՈՒՄ

(ՎԱՎԵՐԱԳԻՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԽՆԴԻՐՆԵՐ)

At the end of 2023 a large anthology monograph (475 pages) was brought to the attention of specialists, dealing with the history of the interrelations between Cilician Armenia and the Near East. The monograph is a novelty in this field due to its unique nature and the variety of materials elucidated, and can be very useful for Armenologists-Orientalists, medievalists or source scholars. The research has been carried out with the support of the RA Science Committee,

and it has been published thanks to the "All-Armenian Fund for Financing Armenian Studies".

The volume consists of an Introduction, three large chapters (divided into parts), appendices (originals and translations), as well as lists of abbreviations, personal names, and geographical names.

The authors of the introduction present a concise overview, highlighting the works by scientists from different countries aimed at uncovering, studying and publishing the documents of the given region over the last 200 years. In this sense, Cilician Armenia is more "fortunate" than Greater Armenia. It is true that the archives of Sis, Hromkla and other important centers were also destroyed and looted, still much has been preserved in European or Middle Eastern libraries, or has been retained in the forms of rewriting in historical sources. The discovery of the aforementioned documents and their dissemination through scientific publications is one of the priorities of both Armenology and Oriental studies.

One of the pioneers in this field was Victor Langlois, who still in the middle of the 19th century, consistently searched, studied and published documents related to Cilicia in all possible European archives. V. Langlois in some sense is the founder of not only the studies on Armenian Cilicia (especially document studies), but also of European Armenology in general.

More than a century and a half separates us from those publications, and although many studies on Cilicia have been published during that time, due attention has not been paid to the examination of documents.

The authors of the book have tried to include all the materials that can be called a document: decrees, peace treaties, commercial patent-agreements, marriage contracts, letters. While studying the documents, the authors have examined their structure, wording, accepted formula, and of course the language i.e. Armenian, Latin, Old French, Arabic, Persian, Italian, Spanish, etc.

As far as Armenian is concerned, the language of documents of the royal notary and that of the Catholicosate are clearly distinct. The writings of the royal notary are written in the most colloquial, so-called Middle Armenian, in which there are foreign words, while the language of the church writings is more classical and elaborate.

The first chapter of the monograph in question, authored by the head of the program and editor of the publication, Dr. Azat Bozoyan, deals with the

interrelations between Cilician Armenia and the neighboring Christian states and is divided into four voluminous parts. In the first part, the researcher dwells on the initial stage of documents on Cilicia and its relations with European countries. The first part also studies the Latin influence on the Armenian royal structure and government system. The second part delves into the correspondence between the Catholicosate of All Armenians and the Roman Pontificate at the first phase of their relationship, i.e. throughout the 12th century until 1198, when these contacts still are not regular and the existing ones are not well preserved, posing problems for researchers.

The next section is entirely devoted to Armenian-Byzantine documents on church-political relations, which also refer to the 12th century. Naturally, here a lot of attention is paid to the documents of negotiations, regarding the Armenian-Byzantine church union, spanning over the years of 1165–1178 (once again the historical correspondence between the Armenian Catholicos and the secular and spiritual heads of Byzantium is examined). The documents of the Council of Hromkla, 1178 are also directly related to this. Finally, the last, the fourth part is entirely devoted to the correspondence between the Catholicosate of All Armenians and the archimandrites (*vartapets*) of Northern (Zakarian) Armenia (Abbot Grigor Tuteordi of Sanahin and others), along with the decisions of Lore, Ani and other assemblies.

The second chapter is entirely devoted to Armenian-Latin relations (written in French), the author of which is French Armenologist Marie-Anne Chevalier. The given chapter entitled “Cilician Armenia and the Roman Papacy” is entirely devoted to the correspondence between Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) and the secular and spiritual elite of Cilicia. It is chronologically the direct continuation of Part B (first chapter) authored by A. Bozoyan.

This is the period when the reputation of popes in Europe and the Mediterranean basin reached its peak, coinciding with the phase of active Armenian-Latin correspondence and exchange of religious-diplomatic documents. M.-A. Chevalier describes and analyzes the correspondence between Pope Innocent III on the one hand and Levon the Great, Catholicos Gregory VI Apirat and John VI (previously Archbishop of Sis) on the other. The correspondence started in 1199 and continued until 1216. Not long after the last letter, the supreme pontiff of Rome died.

According to their characteristics these letters are divided into three groups by the French Armenologist: the first group includes the letters, referring to the rapprochement of the Armenian Church and the Roman Church, the second group – refers to the issue of the enthronement of Antioch and the war waged for taking the throne, and the third group – the dispute between Armenians of Cilicia and the Knights Templar.

The letters of the first few years, following Levon's proclamation as "King of Armenia" and his consecration by Archbishop Conrad (1198) are numerous and of a most warm and friendly nature. These sentiments continued until about 1204–1205, when bilateral grievances and demands were made, regarding the Antioch issue and the Templars' conquest of the Baghras (Gaston) fortress (Levon the Great insisted that it should belong to Armenians because the Cilicians seized it from the Muslims). Then the letters became scarcer and more accusatory, until in 1211 Pope Innocent III excommunicated the Armenian king (since Levon never reconciled with the Templars). In response, Levon I banished all the Catholic leaders from the Armenian kingdom (first of all from Tarsus and Mamistra). Then, after capturing Antioch in 1216 the Armenian king put his nephew Raymond-Ruben on the throne of Antioch, he restored all the Roman Catholic chairs and tried to find a compromise with the Pope. Something which was accomplished later in 1219, under the rule of the next Pope, when Bohemund IV, Count of Tripoli, recaptured Antioch.

The third and largest chapter of the book focuses on Cilician Armenia's diplomatic endowment, its official documents and correspondence with non-Christian states.

The author of the chapter, Gagik Danielyan, referred to Armenian-Arab (Mamluk period), Armenian-Mongolian and Armenian-Seljuk (Iconium) relations.

G. Danielyan convincingly shows that in the Mamluk-Mongol conflict, the Armenian Kingdom, being the latter's junior ally or subordinate, always suffered the consequences of the defeats and failures that the Ilkhanate had, and if at a certain stage the patronage of the Mongols still provided some partial support, then after 1323 (when the long-standing conflict between the two great powers ended in peace) Cilicia remained completely alone against the giant sultanate and other adversaries, surviving with great difficulty for another half a century. During that period, negotiations and diplomacy became even more important for the elite of Cilicia.

Part A of the third chapter of the anthology monograph "Cilician Armenia in the Political and Ecclesiastical Documents of the Middle East: Problems of Diplomacy" is particularly voluminous (100 pages). It is entirely devoted to the 115-year-old Armenian-Mamluk relations, in which, apart from military operations and raids, mutual ambassadorship, negotiations on ceasefire, exchange of prisoners, transit trade and, of course, correspondence occupy a large place.

The main source about the above relationship are the books by the Arabic-speaking historians of the 13th–15th centuries (al-Umari, al-Qalkashandi, Shams al-Din al-Halabi, Shihab al-Din al-Nuwayri, Baybars al-Mansuri, al-Aini, al-Yusufi, Abu al-Fida, al-Maqrizi, al-Dawadari, Ibn Abd al-Zahir and others), because, unlike a large number of documents preserved in European archives and manuscripts, in this case, not the documents themselves, but historical works recounting and describing them are saved. The study of the works of Mamluk period reveals the principles on the basis of which diplomatic writings were drawn up, the formulas-templates adopted for making such writings, highlighting titles and honorifics, as well as a number of ceremonial issues (including sending and receiving ambassadors, exchanging gifts, etc.). The researcher shows the place and role of the Armenian kingdom in that utterly complex system.

Part B of the third chapter is devoted to the official script of Armenian-Mongolian, or Cilician Armenia-Mongol Empire of Iran, the language of the script (Latin and Persian played the role of an intermediary language), also focusing on the envoys and translators of both sides, as well as diplomatic gifts. Here, one of the important novelties is the study of Muhammad Nakhchivani's book, a handbook on state administration, where, among various ways of addressing kings and princes (by mentioning titles and honorifics), there is also a remarkable passage in which the "Takfurs of Sis", i.e. the kings of Cilicia as well as Armenian Catholicos are discussed.

Part C of the third chapter refers to the relations between Cilician Armenia and the Seljuk Sultanate of Iconium, the language of official correspondence and the protocol of reception of ambassadors. Although the official language of correspondence of the Sultanate of Iconium (as well as in all Seljuk states) was

Persian, Gagik Danielyan considers Greek¹ more likely to be the intermediary language in relations with Cilicia.

In this part, the noteworthy novelty of the monograph consists in the examination of excerpts of the story introduced by historian Ibn Bibi which are of great interest to us. It refers to the work “Seljukname” written in Persian by the official historian of the sultans of Rum. The work has not been widely elucidated in Armenology. It includes the narration of historical events in the years 1192–1280 and contains quite a lot of information about the Armenian-Seljuk relations, especially, dating back to the period of the reign of Levon I and Hetum I. They are important not only in terms of covering bilateral relations, but also reveal the various alliances that Cilician Armenia and the Sultanate of Iconium formed with different countries of the region. Here, too, special attention was paid to the accounts, referring to the reception of ambassadors, correspondence, exchange of gifts and various ceremonial issues.

This valuable publication would have benefited from a more conscientious proofreading, excluding the errors as much as possible, the number of which is not insignificant. Of course, this can easily be corrected by posting the digital version of the book online.

A few years ago, on the initiative and under the leadership of Dr. Azat Bozoyan, an interesting project was carried out with the participation of a group of leading scientists from Armenia and abroad. The project was connected to the history of Cilician Armenia². It is also an anthology monograph (A. Bozoyan, R. Shukurov, V. Ter-Ghevondian, G. Danielyan) consisting of historiographical essays, related to various perceptions of Cilician Armenia by the adjacent political entities.

The volume under review is the second of such an undertaking, on Cilicia and neighboring countries, being successfully accomplished by a new group of authors (A. Bozoyan, G. Danielyan, M.-A. Chevalier). The anthology monograph

¹ **Ա.Ա. Բոզոյան, Գ.Գ. Դանիելյան, Մ.-Ա. Շեվալիե**, Կիլիկյան Հայաստանը Մերձավոր Արևելքի եկեղեցաքաղաքական փոխհարաբերությունների փաստաթղթերում, վավերագրատության խնդիրներ, Երևան, 2023, էջ 402:

² **Ա. Բոզոյան (խմբագիր), Ռ. Շուքուրով, Վ. Տեր-Ղևոնդյան, Գ. Դանիելյան**, Կիլիկյան Հայաստանը սահմանակից միավորների ընկալումներում (պատմաքաղաքական ակնարկներ), ՀՀ ԳԱԱ արևելագիտության ինստիտուտ, Երևան, 2016, 306 էջ նույնի անգլերեն տարբերակը՝ **A.A. Bozoyan, V.A. Ter-Ghevondian, R.M. Shukorov, G.G. Danielyan**, Cilician Armenia in the Perceptions of Adjacent Political Entities, Yerevan, 2019.

Ter-Ghevondian V.

“Cilician Armenia in Documents of Ecclesiastical and Political Interrelations in the Near East, Issues of Diplomats” is a valuable publication both in terms of the abundance of materials put into circulation and in terms of developing an under-researched field in Cilician studies, outlining new directions in that field.

VAHAN TER-GHEVONDIAN

Doctor of Historical Sciences

Leading Researcher, Institute of History,

National Academy of Sciences of the RA

vterghevondian@gmail.com

ORCID: 0009-0004-7212-4683

DOI: 10.54503/1829-4073-2024.1.198-204