



Fig. 10 - Église du couvent de Zinjirli. Façade ouest.
 Զինճիրլուի վանքի եկեղեցին. արեւմտեան նակար:

THE ARMENIANS IN BILAD AL-SHAM

Any definitive history of Bilad al-Sham must also include an in-depth study of the minority groups that have inhabited the region since ancient times, for they too have played a significant role in its political, economic, and social development. The Armenians constituted one of these minority groups, and yet very little is known of their long and intimate associations with historic Syria. This presentation will, therefore, attempt briefly to trace the Armenians' historical associations with Bilad al-Sham. It will also examine the significance of the Armenian source materials relating not only to the Armenian settlements but also to the history of the region in general.

I

As early as the first millennium B.C. the Armenian people settled in their historic homeland, whose boundaries were roughly the Trans-Caucasus and the Pontus in the north, the Taurus range in the south, the present Turco-Iranian boundary on the east, and the Euphrates River in the west. This mountainous country was coveted at various times by its powerful neighbors: the western powers sought possession of the valleys of the Euphrates and of the tributaries of the Tigris which led into Iran and eastern Mesopotamia. From time immemorial, therefore, the Armenians were compelled to emigrate from their native country to neighboring as well as distant lands, and a number of Armenian colonies were founded abroad.

Armenian associations with Bilad al-Sham began as early as the Achaemenid period (6th-4th centuries B.C.). Within the bounds of this ancient Persian empire, Armenia constituted part of the thirteenth satrapy, which was contiguous on the southwest to the fifth satrapy of Syria. Armenian settlers and traders were found in the Achaemenid territories of the Pontus, Cappadocia, and Commagene, as well as Cilicia and Syria. As mercenaries in the imperial armies they participated in practically all the wars waged by the Persians against the Scythians, Greeks, and Egyptians¹. Following the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., the Armenian vassals of the Achaemenids recognized the suzerainty of the Seleucids². During their long associations with the Seleucids, Armenians settled in large numbers in the basins of the Lycos and Halys rivers as well as in the territories west of the Euphrates and in northern Syria, in particular the capital of Antioch³.

In 189 B.C. the Armenian princes Artaxias (Artashes) and Zariadris (Zareh), who governed Armenia as vassals of the Seleucids, took advantage of the defeat of Antiochus the Great by the Romans near Magnesia to establish two independent kingdoms, the first in Armenia Major and the second in Armenia Minor⁴. In the first century B.C. a descendant of Artaxias, Tigranes the Great (95-55 B.C.), not only united all Armenia under his scepter but established at the expense of the Parthians and the Seleucids a vast Armenian empire. At its peak, this empire extended from the Caspian Sea and the Kura River in the north to the Mediterranean and the borders of Egypt, and from Media on the east to Roman-occupied Cappadocia and the mountainous regions of Cilicia on the west. Unlike Palestine, southern Syria, and the Phoenician coast south of Ptolemais (Acre), which merely recognized Tigranes' suzerainty, northern Syria and Cilicia Pedias were integrated into his empire as a satrapy, with Antioch

1. See A. T. OLMSTEAD, *History of the Persian Empire* (Phoenix Books Edition, Chicago, 1960), pp. 515-516.
2. Armenian-Seleucid relations are discussed in RENÉ GROUSSET, *Histoire de l'Arménie, des origines à 1071* (Paris, 1947), pp. 79-84.
3. See J. LAURENT, *Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam, depuis la conquête arabe jusqu'en 886* (Bibliothèque des Ecoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, CXVII, Paris, 1919), p. 301.
4. Consult HAKOB MANANDIAN, *Critical History of the Armenian People* (in Armenian; 3 vols., Yerevan, 1945-1957), I, 114-135, for the history of these two Armenian kingdoms.

as its capital⁵. During his short-lived hegemony, Tigranes transplanted to Armenia and his capital of Tigranocerta a considerable number of native inhabitants from the territories which he occupied. Probably an appreciable number of Armenians were transplanted to Syria and the Levantine coastal regions, some of whom remained there even after Tigranes' defeat at the hands of the Romans⁶.

King Khusrow of Persia occupied Edessa and Antioch in 539, and transplanted to these two cities a considerable number of Christians, including numerous Armenians⁷. Since these regions were strongholds of the Nestorian sectarians, Catholicos Christopher I felt compelled to send an epistle to his Armenian flock urging them to remain steadfast in their faith; he even journeyed to northern Syria to ensure that his instructions were discharged⁸.

Arab occupation of Greater Armenia, from the close of the seventh to the middle of the ninth century, marked a new phase in Armeno-Syrian relations. During their early marauding expeditions, beginning in 639/40, the Arabs not only plundered several provinces but also carried off thousands of native captives to the territories adjacent to the Euphrates, principally to Edessa, Antioch, and northern Syria⁹.

5. Among the original sources dealing with the military exploits of Tigranes the Great consult, in particular, STRABONIS, *Geographica*, ed. A. Meineke, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1915-1925); APPIANI ALEXANDRINI, *Historia Romana*, ed. L. Mendelssohn, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1879-1881); JUSTINI JUNIANI, *Epitoma historiarum Philippicarum Pompeii Trogi*, ed. F. Rühl (Leipzig, 1915).
6. For Tigranes' military conflicts with and eventual defeat at the hands of the Romans see MANANDIAN, *Tigranes II and Rome* (in Armenian; Yerevan, 1940). Consult also H. Y. ASTURIAN, *Political Relations between Armenia and Rome, 190 B.C. to 428 A.D.* (in Armenian; Venice, 1912); and K. GÜTERBOCK, *Römisch-Arménien und die römischen Satrapen im 4. bis 6. Jahrhundert*, in «Schirmer Festschrift» (Königsberg, 1900).
7. See E. TER-MINASIAN, *The Relations between the Armenian and Syrian Churches* (in Armenian; Etchmiadzin, 1908), p. 122.
8. See MAGHAKIA ORMANIAN, *National History* (in Armenian; 3 vols. Constantinople-Jerusalem, 1913-1927), I, 356-357.
9. See ASOGHIK, *Stepanos Vardapet Taronetsi's Universal History* (in Armenian), ed. K. Shahnazarian (Paris, 1853), bk. II, p. 24; GHEVOND PATMICH, *Arab Invasions of Armenia* (in Armenian), ed. K. Shahnazarian (Paris, 1859), bk. III, pp. 26-27, 30.

During their occupation of Armenia, the Arabs provided a haven in their territories for those Armenians who were victimized by the religious persecutions of Byzantium. For instance, when in 711-713 Emperor Philippicus expelled a large group of Armenians from Asia Minor for refusing to conform to the Greek Orthodox faith, the Arabs permitted these refugees to settle in Armenia proper as well as in the regions of Melitene and northern Syria¹⁰. Many were enlisted in the Muslim frontier guards in the Taurus Mountains and in Mesopotamia to defend these lands against Byzantine attacks. On the other hand, the Arabs countered with ruthless reprisals all Armenian attempts to rid their country of Arab rule. In 653, for instance, the Arabs carried off to Damascus some 2000 Armenian princes and their families as hostages. After an insurrection in Armenia in 665, about 1775 of these hostages were put to death¹¹. The greatest and most fiercely fought insurrection occurred in 851/2. In order to guard against the recurrence of such uprisings, large numbers of Armenian nobility were carried off into captivity and a segment of the population of the province of Taron was dispersed to all parts of the Arab empire, particularly northern Syria¹².

Asoghik's work is an important primary source for the history of Armenia, particularly in the eleventh century, as well as the neighboring countries. Besides several Armenian editions, this work is translated into French, Part I by E. DULAURIER, *SDEPANOS ASOGHIK, Histoire universelle*, Paris, 1883, and Part II by F. MACLER, *Etienne Asolik de Tarôn, Histoire universelle*, Paris, 1917; and into German by H. GELZER and A. BURCKHARDT, *Armenische Geschichte*, Leipzig, 1907.

Ghevond Patmich's work is one of the more important Armenian primary sources dealing with the Arab occupation of Armenia to the year 788.

10. See *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche Jacobites d'Antioche*, trans. by J. B. CHABOT (3 vols. Paris, 1899-1910), II, 482; THEOPHANES, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor (2 vols. Leipzig, 1883-1885), I, 382; ABU AL-FARAJ BAR-HEBRAEUS, *Chronicon syriacum* (Paris, 1890), p. 121.
11. See SEBEOS, *History of Heraclius by Bishop Sebeos* (in Armenian; Constantinople, 1851), bk. XXXVIII. (The title of this historical work is somewhat misleading. Besides providing considerable information on Emperor Heraclius, it is also the most important and reliable Armenian primary source on the Arab occupation of Armenia in the seventh century and has valuable data on Persia. The work is translated into Russian by K. Patkanian (St. Petersburg, 1862), and into French by F. Macler (Paris, 1904).
12. See TOVMAS ARTSRUNI, *History of the House of the Artsrunis by Tovmas Vartapet Artsruni* (in Armenian; Tiflis, 1917), p. 131. (This work

In 963-965 Emperor Nicephorus Phocas succeeded in recapturing Cilicia, the Amanus, and northwestern Syria from the Arabs, all of which remained in Byzantine hands for more than a century. The outflow of Muslims from these territories was accompanied by a considerable inflow of Armenians, stimulated by the Byzantine practice of using Armenian officers to defend the country against Arab reconquest¹³. Moreover, in 999 Emperor Basil II transplanted a sizable number of Armenians to Caesarea in Syria, on the Orontes River¹⁴. Finally, the devastation of Armenia by the Seljuk Turks towards the end of the eleventh century exacerbated the emigration of Armenians in the direction of the Taurus Mountains, the Cilician plain, the Amanus, and northern Syria.

The emergence of the Armenian kingdom in Cilicia (1080-1375), and its intimate associations with the Crusaders and the subsequently established Frankish principalities of Edessa, Antioch, and Tripoli and the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, marked a significant turning point in the fortunes of the Armenians in historic Syria. The Frankish-Armenian community of political interests, the religious bonds which united them, and finally intermarriage among the Armenian nobility in Cilicia and the ruling classes of the Crusaders — all these contributed to the sizable increase of Armenians in these territories.

As seen earlier, long before the advent of the Latins the Armenians already constituted an important proportion of the populations of the regions of Edessa and Antioch. With the trenchment of the Crusaders in the valley of the Orontes and the Levantine coastal region, an appreciable number of Armenians from Cilicia and the Amanus colonized these lands as well. Hence, in addition to the Antioch region, the hinterlands of Edessa and the maritime towns of Alexandretta, Seleucia, Laodicea (Latakia), and Tripoli became the new habitat of Armenian settlers. In due time, these colonizers organized themselves into

is a detailed history of the feudal Artsruni dynasty of Armenia from the most ancient times to the year 907; continued by another author or authors down to 1226. The earlier accounts are replete with legendary stories).

13. See *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, III, 198; also A. H. SAYCE, *Les Hétyens; Histoire d'un empire oublié* (Paris, 1891), p. 250.
14. See G. SCHLUMBERGER, *L'Epopée byzantine à la fin du dixième siècle*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1896-1905), II, 151.

ecclesiastical units as evidenced by the fact that the Armenian church council, held at Hromkla in 1179, was also attended by a number of prelates representing the episcopal seats in Syria and Palestine. Among these, specific mention is made of the bishops of Antioch, Cyprus, Apamea (Hama), Laodicea, and Jerusalem¹⁵.

It is known that a number of Cilician-Armenian princesses were married to the Latin princes of Tyre and Sidon. Arab geographers assert that subsequent to its occupation by Baldwin I in 1104, Acre — which had a mixed population — also had an Armenian element which in the middle of the twelfth century had its own hostel. In the middle of the following century there was still a large Armenian community at Acre, as attested by the fact that in 1248 they had a prince¹⁶. This was the period when, after Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem, Acre had become the principal center of Christian power in Palestine.

In the first half of the thirteenth century the Mongols swept through Armenia and far into Anatolia. Hence, with a view to protecting the integrity of Cilicia, King Hetum I of Cilicia concluded military alliances with the Mongol Guyuk Khan in 1247 and also with his successor Mangu Khan in 1253. As a result, Armenian contingents fought side by side with the Mongols in Anatolia as well as Syria. They joined forces with Hulagu in the occupation of Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Heliopolis, Damascus, and other Syrian cities¹⁷. They had also planned the conquest of Jerusalem, but the news of Mangu Khan's death compelled Hulagu to interrupt his successful campaign. In consequence, the Armeno-Mongol troops left behind in Syria suffered defeat near Nablus, in Palestine, at the hands of the Mamluks in 1260¹⁸. Henceforth, the Cilician kingdom became one of the principal targets of Mamluk attacks. The Mongols' preoccupation with internecine

15. See NERSES SHNORHALI, *Encyclical Letters by St. Nerses the Gracious* (in Armenian; Jerusalem, 1871), pp. 198-199. Whether the above-named bishoprics were the only ones in Syria and Palestine at this time cannot be easily determined, particularly since it is known that not all of the Armenian episcopacies in the east were represented at this council.

16. See GHEVOND M. ALISHAN, *Sissouan; Documentary Study of Armenian Cilicia and Leon the Great* (in Armenian; Venice, 1885), p. 482, note 2.

17. See MANANDIAN, *op. cit.*, III, 233-236.

18. See KIRAKOS GANDZAKETSI, *History* (in Armenian; Venice, 1865), pp. 372-373.

conflicts prevented them from coming to the aid of the Armenians, forcing Hetum to surrender to Sultan Baybars (1260-77) a number of his fortresses in the Amanus and along the Syrian border. When the Mongols renewed their Syrian expedition they, together with Hetum, scored temporary victories at Homs and Damascus in 1299; but another invasion in 1303 ended in the decisive defeat of the Mongols near Damascus. In the meantime, Tripoli (1289), Acre (1291), and Arwad (1302) having fallen into Mamluk hands, Latin rule in the Levant had already come to an end. With the fall of the capital of Sis in 1375, the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia became incorporated into the Mamluk empire.

The Cilician kingdom distinguished itself in cultural achievements; it also attained an important position in the international affairs of the east. No less significant was the Armenian role in the economy of the Levant under Latin rule, both on the local and international levels. The accounts of contemporary travelers, pilgrims, and geographers¹⁹, indicate that the Crusaders' hegemony in this area stimulated maritime activity and international trade to a degree which had not been attained since Roman times. After the dissolution of the kingdoms and principalities in Armenia proper in the eleventh century, Armenian traders had established important commercial contacts with the Levantine maritime centres as well²⁰. These merchants engaged in a vast international trade; their caravans brought manufactured goods, such as silk, dyes, and spices, from interior Asia to the Latin principalities²¹. This merchandise was not only sold locally but also traded with European firms through their representatives in the Latin commercial centers. The local Armenians, who constituted an appreciable segment of the Levantine populations, also distinguished themselves as artisans and craftsmen. In the first half of the thirteenth century, the cosmopolitan town of Tripoli had a considerable number of Armenians who were active in this seaport's economic life, especially in the silk manu-

19. AL-IDRISI, *Nuzhat al-Mushtaq: Dhikr al-Sham*, ed. J. Gildemeister (Bonn, 1885), pp. 12, 15; THEODORICH, *Description of the Holy Places*, trans. Aubrey Stewart (London, 1896), pp. 71-73; JOANNES PHOCAS, *The Pilgrimage of Joannes Phocas*, trans. Aubrey Stewart (London, 1896), pp. 9-10; WILLIAM OF TYRE, *History of Deeds*, Babcock-Krey trans., II, 6.

20. MANANDIAN, *op. cit.*, III, 166.

21. ARSHAK ALBOYAJIAN, *History of Armenian Emigrations* (in Armenian; 3 vols. Cairo, 1941-1961), II, 453-454.

facturing industry²². It can be conjectured that the same was true in the other Latin-dominated towns — such as Acre, Tyre, Sidon, and Beirut — whose manufactured goods found markets in Europe.

The Mamluks' occupation of Palestine and Syria, and their periodic invasions of Cilicia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, had the most adverse effects upon the large Armenian settlements in Syria as well as those in the Cilician kingdom. In Cilicia the Mamluks destroyed numerous towns, fortresses, and villages, as well as a large number of religious establishments and cultural centers. They decimated the Armenian population in Cilicia and northern Syria, carrying off countless captives and slaves to their territories in Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. Thousands of Cilician Armenians, unable to withstand the Mamluk tyranny and cruel exploitation, migrated to Cyprus²³ as well as to various European countries where they founded new colonies.

In Syria itself, the prominent position which the Armenians occupied under the Latins was dealt a severe blow under the Mamluks. Despite the absence of documentary evidence, it may be assumed that many of the captives and slaves from Cilicia and northern Syria were gradually assimilated with the Muslim populations in the Mamluk dominion to escape the anti-Christian discriminatory restrictions and burdensome taxation. It is not unlikely that a substantial segment of the Armenians inhabiting the Levantine coast took refuge in the Lebanese mountains and eventually were assimilated with the Maronite community. It seems equally probable that others joined with the Latins who returned to Europe, particularly to the Italian cities. And, finally, the drought, famine, pestilence, and earthquakes that punctuated almost the entire Mamluk era and reduced the population of Syria and Egypt to about one third of its former size²⁴, must have taken a heavy toll of the Armenian communities in the Levant. In consequence, the once prosperous and multitudinous Armenian population was appreciably diminished. Whereas un-

22. *Ibid.*, II, 453.

23. *Ibid.*, II, 550-553.

24. PHILIP K. HITTI, *History of Syria, from the Earliest Times to the Present* (London, 1957), p. 638; cf. also D. AYALON, *The Plague and Its Effects upon Mamluk Army*, in «Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society», 1946, pp. 67-73.

der the Latins members of this ethnic group were found almost everywhere from the Taurus Mountains to Egypt, under the Mamluks they were represented by small enclaves in Cilicia, in northwestern Syria²⁵, Aleppo, Latakia, Damascus, Mount Lebanon, and in the Palestinian towns of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Jaffa, Ramle, Gaza, and so forth. This state of affairs continued until the Ottoman conquest of historic Syria in the beginning of the sixteenth century.

The principal Armenian enclaves in northwestern Syria were located in Antioch and its neighboring villages. In the Amanus there were communities at Payas, Alexandretta, Suwaydiyah, and their immediate villages. On the slopes of Musa Dagħ (also known as Jabal Musa), Armenians were concentrated in six exclusive villages, and also lived with the local Turkomans, Alawis, and Arabs in nearby villages. In the region of Jabal Aqra (Mount Cassius) not only the principal town of Kasab but also twelve neighboring villages were inhabited almost solely by Armenians. The existence of a number of sanctuaries, now in ruins, in the vicinity of Kasab²⁶ suggest the presence over the centuries of an organized network of Armenian monastic and ecclesiastic institutions. They also indicate the large size of the community there in medieval times as well as under the earlier period of Ottoman rule.

Throughout the Ottoman period the Armenian settlers in northwestern Syria were, in the main, peasants. In contrast, the Armenians at Alexandretta were petty merchants and small-scale commission agents²⁷; at Antioch they were largely artisans and craftsmen, though not a few were engaged in commerce²⁸; at Kilis they were traders, artisans, and farmers²⁹; and at Beylan, a resort town, and its neighboring villages, they were primarily fruit and vegetable growers³⁰.

25. For specific references to historic and modern Armenian settlements in northwestern Syria, see PAUL JACQUOT, *Antioche* (3 vols. Beirut, 1931).

26. *Ibid.*, III, 501-502.

27. SUKIAS EPRIKIAN, *Dictionary of Natural Geography* (in Armenian; 2 vols. Venice, 1900-1905), I, 51.

28. *Ibid.*, I, 220-222.

29. A. TER-HOVHANNESIAN, *A Brief Journey to North Syria* (in Armenian) in «Sion», 3 (1868), p. 231.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 174; also A. SURMEYAN, *History of the Armenians of Aleppo* (in Armenian; 3 vols. Aleppo, Beirut, Paris, 1940-1950), III, 745-746.

As we have seen, Latakia was the seat of an Armenian bishopric during the Frankish hegemony in the Levant. This testifies to the existence of a substantial colony and a large organized ecclesiastical institution encompassing the city and the villages in its environs. Under Mamluk and Ottoman rule the size of these communities was considerably diminished by emigration to other, especially Christian, countries and by assimilation with the native Christian and Muslim populations, since in this later period the records no longer refer to an Armenian bishopric. Nevertheless, Latakia continued to serve as an important transit station for pilgrims to the Holy Land. The hospice there was built in 1755, and the church was constructed in 1776.

Following the downfall of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia in 1375 a large group of Armenians migrated to Lebanon and settled principally in Tripoli, the neighboring villages of Zagharta and Ihdin, and the region of Ghazir. In the course of time most of these migrants were assimilated by the native Christian populations³¹. Not until the seventeenth century is there any record of another sizable Armenian migration to Lebanon. This was the period when Fakhr al-Din II encouraged the settlement in his territories of political refugees and religious minorities, and when Christian families migrated from Syria to Lebanon to escape Ottoman tyrannical rule³². According to an unpublished Armenian manuscript³³, several thousand Armenians, who had fled from Sis in Cilicia during the years 1683-90, had settled among the Maronites in the region of Jubbat Bisharri. The document also asserts that the Maronite Baladi monks had appropriated some fifteen monasteries which the Armenians had founded in that region.

Toward the end of the seventeenth century, the Maronites began to welcome to their territories in Lebanon Greek, Syrian,

31. SISAK VARJABEDIAN, *The Armenians in Lebanon* (in Armenian; Beirut, 1951), pp. 8-9.

32. COMTE DE VOLNEY, *Voyage en Syrie et en Egypte* (2 vols. 2nd ed. Paris, 1787), II, 68.

33. MS. no. 669 of the Armenian monastery of Bzommar (Lebanon) written by Andreas Agheksandrian, superior-general of the same institution (1880-1909). The passage referred to here is reproduced by H. TOPJIAN, *The Armenians in Syria* (in Armenian) in «Hayastani Kochnak», 28 (1928), p. 747.

and Armenian refugees who had defected from their historic native churches, and also admitted pupils from these groups into their seminaries. Moreover, the Maronite feudal lords, notably the Khizan shaykhs of the district of Kisrawan, bestowed lands and money on these newcomers and helped establish them in their adopted home³⁴. Under the hereditary governorship of the Khazins, Kisrawan became a flourishing Christian district³⁵, and Syrian, Greek, and Armenian Catholic communities were planted in north Lebanon.

The Armenians who migrated to Lebanon in the last quarter of the seventeenth century were for the most part people who were persecuted by the authorities of the Armenian church and millet because of their adherence to the Catholic faith and who sought a safe refuge among the Maronites. It must be assumed that the monasteries founded in the region of Jubbat Bisharri belonged to these converts, and that after their assimilation with the natives these institutions passed into the hands of the Maronite church.

The Armenian Catholics in Greater Syria, who had defected from the national church, established several religious institutions in Mount Lebanon in the eighteenth century. The first of these, known as the «Antonian» monastic order, was founded in 1716 by four brothers from Aleppo who built a monastery at Kraym, near the village of Ghusta in Kisrawan, on a site granted to them by the Maronite Prince Sakhr Khazin³⁶. The rules of this order were patterned after those of the Maronite order by the same name. In 1742 Bishop Abraham Artsivian of Aleppo founded a separate Armenian Catholic patriarchate with jurisdiction over Armenian adherents to Catholicism in Cilicia and Greater Syria³⁷. Artsivian organized bishoprics and missions in

34. RAPHAEL, *The Role of the Maronites*, pp. 32-33, 37-38, 41-42, 88.

35. TANNUS AL-SHIDYAO, *Akhbar al-A'yan fi Jabal Lubnan* (Beirut, 1859), pp. 85, 201-203.

36. There is an unpublished history of the Antonian order, which now is in the library of the monastery of Bzommar in Mount Lebanon. This MS. has been extensively utilized in vol. III of ORMANIAN's *National History* (see note 8).

37. Consult SERAFINO DAVIDIAN, *Biografia di sua beatitudine Abramo Pietro I patriarca di Cilicia e catolicos degli Armeni* (Cairo, 1861). For a monograph on the Armenian Catholic patriarchate see ANDREAS AGHEKSANDRIAN, *Brief History of the Twelve Catholicoses of Cilicia* (in Armenian; Venice, 1906).

these regions, which he directed from the monastery of Kraym. In 1750 his successor, Hakob-Petros II, transferred his seat to the monastery of Bzommar (Armenian Zmmar), and the small ecclesiastical community in this institution became the nucleus of a second Armenian Catholic monastic order known as «Zmmarian»³⁸.

Little is known of the actual size, organization, and administration of the Armenian Catholics in historic Syria before the middle of the nineteenth century. By 1860 they had founded sixteen churches and several parochial schools to accommodate their community needs³⁹. On the eve of World War I, there were 7500 Armenian Catholics in Greater Syria: 5000 in the *qazas* of Aleppo, Iskenderun, and Beylan; 2000 in the *qazas* of Antioch, Shughur, and Sahyun; 300 in Beirut and its environs; and 200 in the *sanjaks* of Mount Lebanon and Jerusalem⁴⁰.

The origin of the Armenian colonization of Aleppo cannot be easily determined because of the absence of documentary evidence. Nevertheless, it can safely be assumed that Armenian associations with this important commercial city date back to the earliest Christian centuries. It can be surmised that subsequent to the establishment of the Cilician state Armenians who inhabited the region of Antioch spread into Aleppo as well. With the growth of commercial contacts between the Cilician kingdom and Syrian mercantile centers, more and more Armenians were attracted to the city of Aleppo⁴¹.

The earliest indication of an organized community at Aleppo is found in a colophon of an Armenian Gospel manuscript copied in that city in 1329⁴². Following the fall of Sis, the Mamluks carried off some 40,000 Armenian captives, a number of whom settled at Aleppo⁴³. Before the end of the fourteenth century the Armenian community had developed to an extent that warranted the erection of two churches adjacent to those of the other Christian communities, namely, the Greek Orthodox, Ma-

38. See MESROP TERZIAN, *The Armenian Monastery of Zmmar, 1749-1949* (in Armenian; Beirut, 1949).

39. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

40. See M. ORMANIAN, *The Church of Armenia*, trans. from the French by G. Marcar Gregory and ed. by Terenig Poladian (London, 1955), p. 207.

41. SURMEYAN, *op. cit.*, III, 5.

42. *Ibid.*, III, 25-26.

43. MISAK KELESHIAN, *Sis-Matian* (in Armenian; Beirut, 1949), pp. 59, 72.

ronites, and Syrians. The Armenian church in Aleppo soon acquired the status of a separate bishopric which, as attested by the extant manuscripts copied in that city, progressed sufficiently to establish a regular scriptorium to meet the growing demand for religious and liturgical books. This scriptorium emerged as the cultural, intellectual, and artistic center of the Aleppine community⁴⁴. As the Armenian community's ecclesiastical life advanced, Aleppo attracted an increasing number of transient clergy who traveled between Armenia or Cilicia and the Holy Land⁴⁵. Finally, with the founding of the regional catholicosate of Cilicia at Sis in 1446, and the growing prosperity of the Aleppine colony, the bishopric of Aleppo was destined to occupy a position within the see second in importance only to that of the catholicos seat itself.

Since the institution of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the earliest centuries of Christianity, Aleppo must have served as one of the most important Syrian stations for Armenian pilgrims, and in the course of time facilities must have been established for their accommodation and comfort. The first privately owned Armenian ecclesiastical institution, which dates back to the middle of the fourteenth century, undoubtedly assumed the responsibility of caring for the pilgrims. At the end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century the Aleppine Armenian magnate Reis Isa built a number of inns and hostels for the accommodation of transients and particularly for pilgrims bound for Jerusalem⁴⁶.

In the Ottoman period, Armenian émigrés first arrived in Aleppo from Cilicia in the second half of the sixteenth century. Toward the end of the same century another group, consisting primarily of traders, came from Julfa in Armenia. The émigrés in the middle of the seventeenth century were principally from the Sasun; these colonizers, who were followed by others from the same town in later times, distinguished themselves as bakers, millers, and wheat traders. An Armenian monk from Poland, Simeon Lehatsi, who visited the city in 1616, reports that in that year there were three hundred Arabic-speaking Armenian fami-

44. SURMEYAN, *op. cit.*, III, 68, 77-79, 82-83, 146-210, 227, 392; also NERSES AKINIAN, *The Armenians in Aleppo, 1605-1635* (in Armenian) in «Handes Amsorya», 47 (1933), pp. 312-315; ALBOYAJIAN, *op. cit.*, II, 451-452.

45. SURMEYAN, *op. cit.*, III, 26-27.

46. *Ibid.*, III, 32-33.

lies in Aleppo, most of whom were merchants who engaged in commerce with India, Baghdad, and Isfahan⁴⁷. In 1737 Armenian settlers arrived from Erzurum, and in the late 1740's there was a new wave of migration from Cilicia. The magnates originally of Julfa, after occupying a position of prominence in Aleppine commerce and in the administration of the local Armenian community's affairs for over two centuries, gradually dwindled in number and influence. They were replaced by a group of enterprising merchants who, beginning in the eighteenth century, arrived from the Anatolian cities of Akin, Arapkir, and the villages in their vicinities. These traders, and the artisans who accompanied them, gradually emerged as the dominant class in the Aleppine community. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Armenian colonization was principally from Erzurum, Erzincan and Akin, as well as from Cilicia, notably Ayntab and Marash. And, finally, after the Hamidian massacres of 1895-96, refugees arrived from eastern Anatolia as well⁴⁸.

The period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries stands out as the most prosperous era in the history of the Armenians of Aleppo, from the standpoint of the organization of their ecclesiastico-national institutions as well as their economic status. The preeminent position of Aleppo among the Armenian communities of northern Syria stemmed primarily from its significance as one of the most important centers of international trade. Armenian traders began to play significant roles as intermediaries in this international trade as early as the sixteenth century⁴⁹. By the 1550's the local Armenian community of Aleppo counted in its ranks a large number of prominent merchants from Julfa, who as enterprising and wealthy magnates occupied an important position in Aleppo's international trade. They engaged in large-scale transit trade between Europe and the Orient, principally by acting as intermediaries between the European colonists of Aleppo and the eastern markets or by establishing direct contacts with the producing firms in Europe through the

47. See SIMEON LEHATSI, *Accounts of His Travels* (in Armenian), ed Nerses Akinian (Vienna, 1936), pp. 319-320.

48. For details concerning the Armenian colonization of Aleppo during the Ottoman period, consult SURMEYAN, *op. cit.*, III, 67, 103, 116, 120, 680-682, 694-695, 728-729, 770, 894.

49. *Ibid.*, III, 270-271.

agency of foreign consuls. During the years 1590-1632 the French, English, Dutch, Venetian, and Spanish merchants at Aleppo conducted their silk trade solely with the mercantile firm of Khoja Petik, who apparently monopolized the supply of this product. He and his brother Khoja Sanos operated a vast network of commercial establishments in Anatolia, Persia, and India, supplying raw silk and in exchange distributing European manufactured goods.

During the years 1630-60 a number of Armenians were entrusted with the superintendency of the mint at Aleppo, and even as late as the end of the seventeenth century local Armenian *sarrafs* (money chargers) for the most part handled the business of foreign exchange⁵⁰.

The period extending from the middle of the sixteenth to about the end of the seventeenth centuries marks the golden age of Armenian Aleppine commerce. The gradual decline of the role of merchants of Julfa origin coincided with the inflow of Armenians from Akin and Arapkir in Anatolia. These enterprising merchants soon replaced those of Julfa as commercial tycoons, on a relatively smaller scale. Many at first entered into the service of governors, high-ranking civilian and military officials, foreign consulates, and commercial firms; in time these amassed great wealth by establishing independent commercial enterprises. Indeed, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries many natives of Arapkir distinguished themselves as chamberlains, commercial agents, and bankers in the more than one hundred khans and caravansaries at Aleppo⁵¹. Despite Aleppo's economic decline resulting from the opening of the Suez Canal, the local Armenian community still possessed a number of well-known merchants whose firms had branches in eastern Asia Minor, as well as in Baghdad, Basra, and Persia. Beginning in the 1880's the commercial activities of the leading members of the Armenian Aleppine community were in the main confined to the role of middlemen or commission agents and to small-scale banking. After the widespread Turkish pogroms in Anatolia in 1895-96 a large number of refugee merchants chose Aleppo as their new home and established commercial contacts with firms in the eastern provinces. Armenians continued to serve in the khans, banks, and

50. *Ibid.*, II, 531-533.

51. *Ibid.*, III, 738.

foreign consulates until the general massacres of World War I dealt a severe blow to the once-flourishing Armenian community.

The economic functions of the Armenian Aleppine community were not confined to commerce alone. Indeed, since the first settlement in the fourteenth century the majority of the colonists brought with them their traditional arts, crafts, and trades, and established small workshops, developing their trades as hereditary family occupations⁵².

The history of the Armenian colonization of Damascus prior to the Ottoman period is still obscure. The Arabs, during their rule in Armenia, periodically carried off Armenian captives to other parts of their empire, including the Umayyad capital of Damascus. Whether there was an established community in this important Syrian metropolis under the Arabs as well as under the Mamluks cannot be easily determined from historical works. Nevertheless, it is perhaps safe to assume that even before the Arab conquest Damascus served as a way station for pilgrims from Armenia. It can also be surmised that as elsewhere an Armenian ecclesiastical institution had been established to meet the spiritual needs of the small community and to provide facilities for the comfort of the pilgrims. By the mid-seventh century there was an Armenian cultural center at Damascus where monks engaged in intellectual pursuits, as evidenced by the translation into Armenian of St. Basil's Discourses in 661.

Under the Ottomans the monastery and church of St. Sarkis was the nucleus of the small Armenian ecclesiastical and secular community of Damascus. The date of the construction of this church is unknown, but the fact that it was restored in 1617 suggests that it was built at the latest in the sixteenth century.

Unlike those of Aleppo the Armenians of Damascus do not seem to have played a notable role in the city's commerce. A certain proportion engaged in commercial activities and operated small-scale businesses, but the majority were artisans and shopkeepers.

Throughout the long history of the Armenian communities in Bilad al-Sham the patriarchate of Jerusalem has always been distinguished as the single most important institution. Its position of preeminence among the various sees of the Armenian church stemmed first, from its unique association with the domi-

52. *Ibid.*, III, 421-422, 680-682, 701-702, 972-977.

nical sanctuaries in the Holy City and its custodianship, with the Greek Orthodox and Latin churches, of the shrines; secondly, from its control of a sizable number of privately owned monasteries and churches in the Holy Land and neighboring countries; and, thirdly, from the great influence which the see exercised over the large segment of the Armenian communities in Syria and even beyond which were under its direct administrative jurisdiction.

The official recognition of Christianity by Constantine the Great, and the construction of the dominical sanctuaries at Jerusalem and Bethlehem in the first half of the fourth century, induced numerous pilgrims to see for themselves the places hallowed by Christ. The extent of the pilgrimage can be judged by the fact that by the beginning of the fifth century the number of monasteries and hostels in the Holy City where pilgrims could be housed was over three hundred⁵³. The same period, especially from the fourth to the sixth centuries, witnessed the rise of monasticism and asceticism centered in regularly organized monastic institutions. Early church historians attest to the fact that the initial monasteries in the Holy City and its environs were multiracial and that the devotional services were conducted in various vernaculars⁵⁴.

Along with other Christian groups, Armenians began to arrive in Jerusalem in substantial numbers as pilgrims and as residents after the proclamation of Christianity as the official religion of their country in the beginning of the fourth century. They at first shared the multiracial monastic facilities, but in private monasteries and churches throughout the Holy Land.

Religious harmony among the heterogeneous Christian communities at Jerusalem was not seriously affected for a whole century after the wide breach occasioned by the decisions of the controversial Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451), for all Christians remained under the spiritual authority of the bishop of Jerusalem. The persecutions of the monophysites, among them the Armenians, were initiated by the Byzantine Emperor Justin I (518-527) and reached their climax during the reign of his suc-

53. See A. COURET, *La Palestine sous les empereurs grecs* (Grenoble, 1869), p. 212.

54. See F. LAGRANGE, *Lettres choisies de St. Jérôme*, p. 160.

cessor, Justinian I (527-565), a staunch adherent of the Chalcedonian creed. As a result of these persecutions, the Armenian clergy of the Holy Land severed their ecclesiastical ties with the hierarchy of Jerusalem. Many monophysite clergy abandoned their monasteries in the Holy City and sought refuge in other regions of the Holy Land and in neighboring countries. Those who remained formed an Armenian see independent of the Greek. Henceforward, the see of Jerusalem was split into the Greek patriarchate exercising jurisdiction over the dyophysite Christians regardless of nationality or language, and the Armenian hierarchy having authority over the monophysite communities, notably the Jacobite Syrian, Coptic, and Abyssinian.

Byzantine domination in Palestine and Syria came to an end in the first half of the seventh century. The Muslim Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula had occupied several strategic towns in Syria. It was to check their further advance that the Armenian-born Emperor Heraclius (610-641) mustered from the vicinity of Antioch and Aleppo an army of some fifty thousand mercenaries, mostly Armenians and local Arabs⁵⁵. The crushing defeat of this army by the Arabs at the battle of Yarmuk in 636 sealed Byzantium's doom. Jerusalem surrendered to Caliph Umar I in 638. The terms of the capitulation allegedly offered by the caliph to the non-Muslim inhabitants of the city are preserved in several versions⁵⁶. The authenticity of this charter seems highly questionable⁵⁷, but its terms essentially reflect the Arab policy vis-à-vis the non-Muslim subjects under their dominion generally⁵⁸.

55. See TABARI, *Annales*, ed. M. J. de Goeje, 15 vols. (Leyden, 1879-1901), I, 2125; THEOPHANES, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1883-1885), I, 337.

56. See TABARI, *Annales*, I, 2405-2406; BELADSORI [AL-BALADHURI], *Liber expugnationum regionum (Futuh al-Buldan)*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leyden, 1866), p. 139; English trans. of Beladkori by P. HITT, *Origins of the Islamic State*, Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, vol. 68, pt. 1 (New York, 1915); AL-YA'QUBI, *Historiae (Ta'rikh)*, ed. M. T. Houtsma, 2 vols. (Leyden, 1883), II, 167. An English translation of the document will be found in WILLIAM MUIR, *The Caliphate, Its Rise, Decline, and Fall* (Edinburgh, 1924), p. 134; and an Italian version in Leone Caetani (ed.), *Annali dell'Islam*, 10 vols. (Milan, 1905-1926), vol. III, pt. 2, pp. 956-957, A.H. 17, para. 173.

57. See CAETANI, *op. cit.*, pp. 956-957.

58. It is generally asserted that the Greek Patriarch Sophronius arranged the terms of the capitulation of Jerusalem with Caliph Umar I. The

The Christian inhabitants of Jerusalem were granted religious liberty and security for their lives, property, and churches; and in return they were to pay the *jizyah* and to assist the Arab rulers in warding off Byzantine troops and raiders.

The roster of Armenian patriarchs of Jerusalem begins with the reign of Abraham: it was he who, upon the Arab conquest of Jerusalem in 638, allegedly received a charter from the Caliph Umar guaranteeing the integrity of the Armenian possessions in the Holy Land and recognizing him as the spiritual leader not only of the Armenian community but also of the other monophysite Christian communities. With the Arab conquest of Jerusalem, the Armenian see of the Holy City attained a stature which perhaps equaled the Greek patriarchate, whose associations with the Byzantine empire rendered it suspect in the eyes of the conquerors.

A widely published document attributed to a seventh-century monk, Anastas Vardapet, contains a list of seventy monasteries and churches which the Armenians are said to have owned in that century in Jerusalem and its environs⁵⁹. The list supplies the barest minimum of information regarding the alleged Armenian institutions, and is limited solely to recording of their names, locations, and the feudal families in Armenia which provided their endowments. The document asserts that an unspecified number of Armenian monasteries confiscated by the Greeks were eventually recovered by the Armenian princes after payment of a large sum of money to the Byzantine Emperor Justinian. When subsequently the Greek authorities in Jerusalem warn-

Greek claim that the Arab conqueror granted a charter to the same ecclesiastic, entrusting the custody of all the Holy Places exclusively to the Greeks, is based on a later forgery designed to further this community's claims to the sanctuaries. (See L. G. A. CUST, *The Status Quo in the Holy Places*, London, 1929, p. 6). Equally unauthentic are the edicts which the Armenian patriarch of Jerusalem is alleged to have received not only from Caliph Umar I but also from the Prophet Muhammad and the Orthodox Caliph Ali. (For details see A. K. SANJIAN, *The Armenian Communities in Syria under Ottoman Dominion*, Cambridge, Mass., 1965, pp. 351-352, note 2). All of these documents, which must have been fabricated to support rival claims to the dominical sanctuaries, have no historical foundation.

59. For a study of this text see my article *Anastas Vardapet's List of Armenian Monasteries in Seventh-Century Jerusalem: A Critical Examination* in «Le Muséon», LXXXII, nos. 3-4 (1969), pp. 265-292.

ed the monophysites — that is, the Armenians, Jacobite Syrians, Copts, and Abyssinians — that unless they adhered to the Chalcedonian doctrine they would not be permitted to sojourn in the Holy City, some five hundred Armenian monastics were advised by Catholicos Hovhannes II (557-574) to abandon their monasteries rather than make doctrinal concessions to the Greeks. Although many of the monks are said to have left for Caesarea in Palestine and Egypt, others remained in their institutions at Jerusalem, despite the persecutions meted out to them by the Byzantine authorities, until the Arab conquest. Under Arab rule the Armenian monastic institutions gradually disintegrated and fell to ruins; some that had been left without administrators were occupied by the Greeks. This disintegration is ascribed to the failure of the catholicoses and princes to dispatch the revenues from the endowments in Armenia and to the heavy taxes imposed by the Arabs. The last section of the text, which appears to have been a much later addendum, asserts that there remained only fifteen monasteries in the hands of the Armenians. These were scattered on the Mount of Olives, in Bethlehem, on Mount Sinai, along the shores of the Sea of Galilee and Jordan River, on Mount Hermon, and on Mount Tabor⁶⁰.

In a separate study I have shown that the document attributed to Anastas Vardapet is of doubtful authenticity⁶¹. Though probably containing a core of truth going back to an earlier document, in the form in which the text is preserved there are many elements which clearly show that it is not reliable. Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that the Armenians did indeed have important religious institutions in the early Christian centuries, albeit not to the extent claimed by the document attributed to Anastas.

The existence of these establishments at an early date is confirmed by the fact that in the mid-fifth century the Armenians had established a scriptorium in Jerusalem⁶². This scriptorium also emerged as an important intellectual center, where a signi-

60. It is alleged that Anastas Vardapet also prepared a list of the Caucasian Albanian monasteries at Jerusalem. See this text in C. J. F. DOWSETT, *The History of the Caucasian Albanians by Movses Dasxuranci* (London, 1961), pp. 184-185.

61. See note 59.

62. See NERSES AKINIAN, *Classical Armenian and the Mekhitarist School in Vienna* (in Armenian; Vienna, 1932), pp. 69-70.

ficant number of religious and canonical works as well as patristic texts written in Greek, Syriac, and Latin were rendered into Armenian⁶³. Evidence of a fully organized Armenian religious community there is also furnished by the extant Armenian Lectionary, a translation of the Greek Liturgy — or Christian liturgy in general — as it was performed in the Holy City in the fifth century⁶⁴. More importantly, it is substantiated by the remains of mosaic pavements with Armenian inscriptions found on the Mount of Olives and in Jerusalem, as well as by one with a Greek inscription which mentions an Armenian⁶⁵. Though scholars are not in complete agreement respecting the exact dates of these mosaic pavements, various suggestions have placed them as early as the fifth and no later than the ninth to tenth centuries⁶⁶. These artistic remains provide ample and most reliable evidence for the presence of Armenians in Jerusalem and its environs and for the important religious institutions which they had maintained there from the Byzantine period to the time of Arab rule.

With the arrival of the Crusaders and the establishment of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem (1099-1187), many Christians, mostly Armenian, from Antioch, Edessa, Tarsus, Cappadocia, Cilicia, Mesopotamia, and Syria, flocked into Jerusalem, some to establish permanent residence there and others performing pilgrimages. As a result of this influx and because of the close relationship between the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem and the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia, the Armenian religious institutions and secular community in Jerusalem enjoyed a period of prominence and prosperity, perhaps never attained before or after. Almost all the Latin queens and a substantial number of the princesses were either Armenian or of Armenian blood⁶⁷. The kingdom had

63. See A. G. ABRAHAMIAN, *Brief Outline of the History of Armenian Colonies* (in Armenian; 2 vols. Yerevan, 1964-1967), I, 264, 266-267.

64. Consult A. RENOUX, *Un Ms. du lectionnaire arménien de Jérusalem (Cod. Jérus. arm. 121)* in «Le Muséon», 74 (1961): 361-385, and *Lectionnaires arméniens et commémoraison de la sépulture du Christ le Vendredi Saint* in «L'Orient syrien», vol. 7, no. 4 (1962): 463-476.

65. These mosaic pavements are described in M. AVI-YONAH, *Mosaic Pavements in Palestine* in «The Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine», 2 (1932): 136-181, and 3 (1933): 26-73, nos. (of mosaic entries) 117-120, 132.

66. Consult SANJIAN, *Armenian Communities in Syria*, p. 315 note 19.

67. See F. MACLER, *Les Arméniens en Syrie et en Palestine* (Marseille, 1919), pp. 11-12.

in its service an infantry corps of Armenians⁶⁸. In addition to a sizable number of ecclesiastics, there was a considerable secular community as well. These colonists had a number of private hostels or inns, and they also occupied several quarters in the city, one of which was known as «Ruga Armenorum» as late as the year 1222⁶⁹.

During and after the Latin rule in Palestine, the patriarchate of Jerusalem enjoyed, particularly in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the active interest of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia whose royal family and princes bestowed on it munificent gifts. Moreover, a number of Armenian princes and prelates from Cilicia visited Jerusalem and secured significant privileges for the local community from the Frankish authorities. Among these, Catholicos Grigor III Pahlavuni (1113-1166) attended the Latin church council held at Antioch in 1141, and then accompanied the papal legate Albericus on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where he was given a place of honor at the second Latin council. In consequence of the considerably enhanced bond of friendship between the Latins and the Armenians which was consummated on this occasion, the Armenian community not only secured important privileges guaranteeing the continued prosperity of the institutions which it already possessed, but was able to increase the number of its monasteries and hostels in the Holy City⁷⁰. In 1165 the Armenians erected the large monastery and cathedral of St. James on Mount Zion, consisting of a complex of sanctuaries, which became the principal headquarters of the Armenian ecclesiastical institutions in the Holy Land. The accommodations of the monastery were considerably enlarged for the benefit of the local monastics as well as for the countless Armenian pilgrims who annually arrived in the Holy City⁷¹.

Saladin's occupation of Jerusalem in 1187 and the fall of the

68. See JACQUES DE VITRY, *The History of Jerusalem*, trans. Aubrey Stewart (London, 1896), p. 79.

69. ALISHAN, *op. cit.*, p. 482.

70. H. VINCENT and F. M. ABEL, *Jérusalem; Recherches de topographie, d'archéologie et d'histoire*, vol. II, pt. 3, *Jérusalem Nouvelle* (Paris, 1922), p. 522.

71. In later times the limits of the monastery were extended through the acquisition or purchase of lands. The whole complex, consisting of many buildings, occupies a dominating position on Mount Zion in the southwestern elevation of the city.

Latin kingdom marked another turning point in the fortunes of the Armenians in the Holy Land. The Armenians of Jerusalem, comprising some five hundred monks and one thousand families, were — unlike the Latins — neither expelled nor taken as slaves by the lieutenants of the sultan⁷². As an avowed enemy of the Latins and ever suspicious of the Greeks, Saladin found it expedient to endow the Armenians of the Holy Land with greater privileges. The Armenian Patriarch Abraham and his leading clerical associates are said to have hastened to pledge their loyalty to the sultan and to pay him the prescribed poll tax. The patriarch requested the sultan to reaffirm all privileges previously guaranteed to the community in the charters allegedly granted to the Armenians by the Prophet and by the Caliphs Umar and Ali. The text of the charter⁷³ issued by the sultan reconfirmed the «sacred and benevolent acts» of his revered predecessors. The sultan enjoined that not only his successors but also the Muslims generally should faithfully honor the new pact granted by him. Saladin guaranteed absolute religious freedom of the Armenians and their communicant Copts, Syrians, and Abyssinians, as well as the integrity of the Armenian sanctuaries.

The four centuries of Ottoman rule in the Holy Land produced a marked change in the fortunes of the various Christian communities in the Holy Places. From the second half of the sixteenth century until the nineteenth century time and again the paramountcy alternated, although generally the Greek Orthodox secured the balance of power in their favor at the expense of the Latins.

The strongest and almost continuous challenge to the Armenians and their holdings in the Holy Land came from the Greek community, despite the fact that the charters issued in March 1517 to the Armenian and Greek patriarchates by the Ottoman conqueror of Jerusalem, Sultan Selim I, did no more than sanction the status quo. On the basis of ancient edicts, among which special mention is made of those granted by the Caliph Umar and Saladin, Selim guaranteed the integrity of the Armenians'

72. See A. TER-HOVHANNESIAN, *Chronological History of Holy Jerusalem* (in Armenian; 2 vols. Jerusalem, 1890), I, 154.

73. Armenian translations of this charter will be found in *ibid.*, I, 160-163; and in TIGRAN SAVALANIAN, *History of Jerusalem* (in Armenian; 2 vols. Jerusalem, 1931), I, 409-413.

age-old possessions within and without the Holy City, as well as those of their dependent non-Armenian communities⁷⁴.

Under Ottoman rule, the Armenian communities in Syria and Palestine constituted an integral part of the empire's Armenian millet, whose *de jure* and *de facto* representative before the Sublime Porte was the patriarch of Constantinople. As in the past so also under Ottoman rule, the administrative jurisdiction of the patriarchate of Jerusalem extended not only over the Armenian monastic and secular communities in the Holy Land, but also over the small and scattered communities in Transjordan, the provinces of Damascus and Beirut, and the bishoprics of Egypt and Cyprus. As leader of the monophysite group of Christian churches, the patriarchate extended its protection, as well, over the small Jacobite Syrian, Coptic, and Abyssinian communities in the Holy Land, notably in Jerusalem.

Besides Jerusalem, Armenian religious and secular communities were found in other localities in the Holy Land as well as in Transjordan.

From time immemorial there has been in Bethlehem a monastic community to oversee the Armenian interests in the Nativity cathedral, which is controlled jointly with the Greeks. The secular community there is perhaps as old as the ecclesiastical, for its presence has been indispensable for the protection of the Armenian possessions in the Nativity cathedral. A privately owned monastery adjacent to the cathedral, which still occupies a dominant position in the Nativity Square, housed the ecclesiastics and accommodated pilgrims.

Jaffa, the principal port of entry for pilgrims arriving by ship, has had an Armenian hospice and the monastery of St. Nicholas. The monastery is claimed to have existed as early as the time of the Arab conquest of Palestine in the first half of the seventh century⁷⁵. This assertion is by no means certain, but there seems to be little doubt about the establishment's antiquity.

Like Jaffa, the nearby town of Ramle had always been an important way station for pilgrims. Here the patriarchate had

74. The Turkish-language Armenian-script text of this charter will be found in SAVALANIANTS, *op. cit.*, II, 880-889; a classical Armenian translation of same appears in TER-HOVHANNESIANTS, *op. cit.*, II, 222-229.

75. BARNABAS HOVSEPIAN (GANBZAKETSI), *Chronology of the Patriarchs of Jerusalem* (in Armenian; Constantinople, 1872), p. 32.

established a hospice and a monastery. The founding of this monastery is generally attributed to the seventeenth-century Patriarch Yeghiazar, but it seems more logical to assume that it antedates his incumbency.

At Gaza, too, there was an Armenian monastery and church as well as a hospice where the Armenian pilgrims from Egypt lodged and rested before continuing their journey to the Holy City. It is generally believed that these institutions were founded during the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem⁷⁶, but there is no historical record supporting this claim.

In the twelfth century the Latin fortress cities east and south of the Dead Sea constituted part of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, which administered them through princes. The prosperous trade of this region attracted many Christians, including perhaps Armenians as well. The first historical reference to Armenian associations with this area dates back to the second half of the twelfth century, when Prince Reuben of Cilicia married the daughter of Prince Renald de Châtillon of Kerak⁷⁷. In 1257 the combined forces of King Hetum I of Cilicia and the Mongol Khan Hulagu occupied the territories east of the Jordan River, which remained under Armenian dominion for seven years (1257-64), until their seizure by the Mamluks⁷⁸. The fact that King Leon IV of Cilicia, after a visit to Jerusalem in 1330, donated an expensive manuscript to the Armenian church of Kerak⁷⁹ testifies to the importance of the community in this outlying region. There is also some evidence of an Armenian settlement at the town of Salt, where they had a small church named after St. George⁸⁰.

The Armenian communities which were established in Transjordan during the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem continued to

76. ALBOYAJIAN, *op. cit.*, II, 456.

77. It has been suggested that, upon his return to Cilicia, Prince Reuben encouraged his fellow Armenians to settle in the prosperous city of Kerak as traders, especially in view of the facilities provided by the Latin authorities. See M. AGHAVNUNI, *Ancient Armenian Monasteries and Churches in the Holy Land* (in Armenian; Jerusalem, 1931), p. 52.

78. See MACLER, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

79. The colophons of this manuscript (no. 1822 of the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem), which record its donation to the church of Kerak, are reproduced in SAVALANIANTS, *op. cit.*, I, 512-513.

80. See AGHAVNUNI, *op. cit.*, pp. 438-439.

exist until about the middle of the nineteenth century. As early as the seventeenth century, however, their numbers had begun to diminish because of emigrations to New Julfa in Persia, Jerusalem, and Europe, notably Italy, and because of assimilation with the native populations.

II

Historical writings represent one of the most important genres in the rich legacy of Armenian literature, which began in the fifth century A.D. Despite the fact that Armenia never emerged as a first-rate power in Middle Eastern history — excepting the brief period under Tigranes the Great in the first century B.C. — and its borders were physically narrow, its geographical position afforded Armenian writers a close view of major world events. Hence, while narrating the history of their own country, the Armenian authors give us a great deal of information, often otherwise unknown, on the affairs of the oriental world. This assertion is also true of the large number of Armenian chronicles which have survived⁸¹, as well as the colophons of Armenian manuscripts⁸². These colophons were written by scribes in localities extending from Central Asia and Iran on the east to Constantinople and Europe on the west, and from the Crimea and the Caucasus on the north to Egypt on the south. Although the historical information contained in them are for the most part local in nature, many colophons however provide data that are broader in scope and therefore of interest to those who are concerned with major Middle Eastern developments. The uniqueness of the Armenian colophonic literature lies in the fact that the authors of these texts did not confine themselves to brief statements concerning the circumstances of the production of the manuscripts. In the process of providing these essential data, they also recorded contemporary information on a broad range of subjects. More importantly, they supplied eye-

81. See, for example, *Short Chronicles, XIII-XVIII Centuries*, ed. V. A. Hakobian (2 vols. Yerevan, 1951-1956). This is an important collection of the original Armenian texts, with extensive annotations.

82. See A. K. SANJIAN, *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 1301-1480: A Source for Middle Eastern History* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969); also *idem*, *The Historical Significance of the Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts* in «Le Muséon», LXXXI (1968), pp. 181-195.

witness and contemporary accounts of historical events which transpired during the production of the manuscripts. In view of these, the colophons emerge — alongside the Armenian historical works, the chronicles, and the inscriptions — as important primary sources for the history not only of Armenia but also of the entire Middle East.

As seen in Part I of this study, the Armenians from earliest times were compelled to emigrate from their native homeland to neighboring countries and distant lands, resulting in the founding of many Armenian colonies abroad. Some of these colonies have survived for centuries, while others could not withstand the powerful assimilationist factors. Armenian scholars, especially since the beginning of the nineteenth century, have produced a considerable wealth of monographic literature on the various historic and modern colonies in the Armenian Diaspora. Probably unique in its extent among minority groups, this literature constitutes an important source for scholars engaged in the general study of minority colonies and their problems.

The nature and scope of some of the works dealing with specific Armenian colonies are examined in a bibliographical study by this author⁸³. Many of these works are historical, sociographic, and ethnographic studies. In the main, they discuss the topography and history of the area under study, the settlement of the Armenians there, their religious institutions, and the cultural, economic, and social life. They also discuss the local dialects, social customs and traditions, prejudices and superstitions, and popular literature.

There are only two attempts at a comprehensive scholarly history of all the Armenian colonies. The first of these is A. Alboyajian's three-volume *History of Armenian Emigrations* (Cairo, 1941-1961); the second is A. G. Abrahamian's two-volume *Brief Outline of the Armenian Colonies* (Yerevan, 1964-1967). Both works have serious shortcomings but they are broadly conceived, contain a wealth of information, and lay the ground-

83. See SANJIAN, *Armenian Works on Historic and Modern Armenian Communities* in «Report on Current Research on the Middle East, 1958» (Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., 1958), pp. 47-54. This study mentions only a fraction of the vast literature that is available. Moreover, works on the colonies by non-Armenian scholars, as well as studies by Armenian authors in languages other than Armenian, are excluded.

work for future historians of the Armenian colonies. Moreover, Sukias Eprikian's *Dictionary of Natural History* (2 vols.; Venice, 1900-1905) is a valuable reference work which provides general information on localities inhabited by Armenians in Armenia and elsewhere, including the settlements in Greater Syria.

The historic and modern Armenian settlements in Bilad al-Sham are the subject of a number of monographs which however, in contrast to works on other communities, are limited in variety and scope. There is, of course, no dearth of historical works on the religious community of Jerusalem. Hovhannes Hanne Vardapet's *History of Jerusalem* (Constantinople, 1807) is a very valuable source for the history of the Armenian patriarchate in the first half of the eighteenth century. A. Ter-Hovhannesiants' two-volume *Chronological History of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1890) covers the history of the same institution up to 1865. T. Savalanians' two-volume *History of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1931) supplements Ter-Hovhannesiants' and brings the history up to 1872. And, finally, M. Ormanian's three-volume *National History* (Constantinople-Jerusalem, 1913-1927) — to date the most comprehensive and authoritative history of the Armenian church — deals at considerable length with historical developments affecting the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem to the year 1910.

The works of Ter-Hovhannesiants and Savalanians concentrate on the history of the Armenian religious institutions in the Holy Land, particularly Jerusalem, against the background of the history of the Holy Land. Both monographs begin by tracing chronologically the historical developments of the Christian Church in Jerusalem. It is only after Saladin's conquest of the Holy City that they concentrate on the Armenian church and become chronicles of events relating to the controversies with other churches over rights in the Holy Places, the various court proceedings and rulings, and so forth. In essence, therefore, their contributions are limited primarily to ecclesiastical history. Both authors utilized a large number of original Armenian historical writings, as well as secondary sources in Western and in Arabic and Turkish languages. More importantly, both Ter-Hovhannesiants and Savalanians made use of the manuscript and archival materials available in the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem. These included numerous edicts issued to the Armenian patriarchs of Jerusalem by the Mamluk sultans of Egypt and by Ottoman sultans beginning with Selim I, and a large

number of official documents issued by provincial governors and local functionaries. Many of these texts, which are totally unknown to non-Armenian scholars, have been reproduced in Armenian translation.

Other works dealing with the community in Jerusalem include: M. Aghavnuni's *Ancient Armenian Monasteries and Churches in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem, 1929), a valuable scholarly work on the history and topography of forty ancient Armenian places of worship based upon archaeological findings and other historical evidence; Ghevond Alishan's *The Monasteries of Jerusalem* (Venice, 1896), a historico-topographic study utilizing ancient and medieval Armenian sources; and Barnabas Hovsepian's (Gandzaketsi) *Chronology of the Patriarchs of Jerusalem* (Constantinople, 1872), a study of the Armenian patriarchs who occupied the hierarchical see founded by St. James, the brother of Jesus, at Jerusalem. M. Aghavnuni's *Armenian Monks and Visitors in Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1929) is a kind of «Who's Who» of monks who have served in the monastery of St. James, and of historically important clerical and civilian pilgrims. Mention should also be made of M. Ormanian's *Armenian-Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1931), which describes the monastery of St. James and its administrative, monastic, and educational life at the time of writing (1915). There is some historical value, as well, to E. Chilinkirian's two-volume *Memoirs and Documents* (Beirut, 1928-1929), which encompass the author's correspondence (1901-1908) during his tenure of office as *locum tenens* of the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem.

In the nineteenth century there also appeared a series of monographs describing the Christian sanctuaries in the Holy Land, particularly those in Jerusalem and its environs. Many of these topographic studies also provide historical data concerning the individual dominical shrines based upon texts preserved in medieval Armenian manuscripts. Among such works special mention can be made of the following: M. Artsrunian's *Description of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1859); A. Ter-Hakobiants' *The Holy Land or Palestine* (Tiflis, 1883); Khoren Mekhitarian's *A Brief History of Jerusalem and Description of the Holy Places* (Jerusalem, 1867); and Trdat Balian's *The Holy Land: A Description of Holy Jerusalem and the Holy Places* (Constantinople, 1892). In all these studies the major emphasis, of course, is on the Armenian sanctuaries and religious institutions in the Holy Land.

The Lebanese-Armenian community has been treated in only one work: S. H. Varjabedian's *The Armenians in Lebanon* (Beirut, 1951). Its sub-title, *History of the Lebanese-Armenian Colony* (from the most ancient times to the end of World War I), is misleading, since its historical discussion is sketchy, at best. Actually, the chief merit of the monograph lies in its collection of biographical studies on individual Armenians and families who have been prominent in the political, cultural, and economic history of Lebanon, particularly in the nineteenth century; and in the discussion of the final period (1895-1918), where the author also touches upon the internal organization and institutions of the Armenian colony. While abounding in irrelevant and superfluous details, the volume on the whole contains much material for a future definitive study of the Lebanese-Armenian community.

M. Terzian's *The Armenian Monastery of Zmmar* (Beirut, 1949) is confined to the Armenian Catholic institution in Mount Lebanon, and is dedicated to the second centennial (1749-1949) of its founding. Besides discussing the institution's history and ecclesiastical, literary, and missionary activities, the monograph also provides considerable information about the Christian communities in Mount Lebanon.

Artavazd Surmeyan's three-volume *History of the Armenians of Aleppo* (I, Aleppo, 1940; II, Beirut, 1946; III, Paris, 1950) is an ambitious endeavor, but unfortunately the author's scholarship was not equal to his task. He has felt it necessary — without any real justification — to devote two large introductory volumes, one to the history of Syria and the other to that Aleppo, before tackling his primary objective. Hence, only Vol. III, which deals with the history of the Aleppine colony from the middle of the fourteenth century to 1908, bears directly to the title. Its material is drawn from a rich variety of sources, principally from the manuscripts and archives of the prelacy, and from multifarious inscriptions in the Armenian churches of Aleppo. However, the study revolves to a very large extent around the religious institution. In the process of providing the history of the Aleppine Armenian ecclesiastical institution and to some extent the economic role of the Armenians, the author also gives a great deal of information concerning the other Christian minorities. Nevertheless, the generally unbalanced presentation, irrelevant material, and extensive quotations detract considerably from the

value of the study, which otherwise is replete with important information.

It is by no means surprising that the works on the Greater Syrian Armenian colonies are generally confined to ecclesiastical history, since most of the authors were clerics. Hence, the scholar engaged in the general historical study of these communities, and in the more specific study of the economic and social institutions, is confronted with serious, but not insurmountable, difficulties.

My own monograph, *The Armenian Communities in Syria under Ottoman Dominion* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), is the only attempt at a comprehensive historical study of the settlements in Bilad al-Sham. Although it is a detailed study of the evolution and internal organization of the Armenian communities, social institutions, and economic functions throughout the entire Ottoman era, it is nevertheless presented against the background of their historical associations with the area prior to the advent of the Ottomans in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The preponderant use of Armenian-language sources in the preparation of this work was a part of the original design of the study — that is, to make available materials hitherto inaccessible to scholars who do not read Armenian. Indeed, a good deal of the information provided in this work is based upon hitherto untapped materials.

It should be pointed out that the secular history of the Armenian communities in Syria is far from adequately illustrated by the limited Armenian-language sources. For instance, it is known that under Ottoman rule, Armenian merchants controlled much of the trade of the Middle East and Central Asia, and that much of the economic and social power of the secular Armenian community, particularly in Aleppo, stemmed from its important role in commerce and finance. A study of these aspects of Armenian activity might be expected to throw valuable light on the organization of international trade among Europe, the Middle East, and farther Asia; the relations of urban and rural communities in Syria; and the role of Christian and Jewish bankers in the Ottoman administration. Regrettably, however, the Armenian documents contain little detailed information on the economic activities and foreign relations of the Syrian communities; hence, for these aspects other source materials will have to be exploited. Because of this, the commercial and financial role of the Arme-

nians in the Ottoman administration is presented in my work only in general terms, and the major emphasis has been on the economic activities and occupations of the communities scattered throughout historic Syria.

Despite the fact that the Armenians have been associated with Bilad al-Sham for over two millennia, there does not exist a single history of the area written in the Armenian language. Moreover, we do not know of any ancient or medieval Armenian or non-Armenian historical work that deals with any of the Armenian settlements in historic Syria. On the other hand, certain historical writings in Armenian, Arabic, and Greek occasionally make peripheral references to some of these communities, usually in the context of the description of some specific events.

We have seen that many of the major ancient and medieval Armenian historical writings provide ample information on developments in the countries neighboring Armenia. Some of these refer to developments in Mesopotamia and historic Syria and supply data not only on the Armenian settlements but also the various ruling powers and the Christian minorities. Among these, special mention should be made of the Armenian historian Matthew of Edessa, whose *History* covers the years 952-1136; this work was continued by the Priest Grigor who brings it up to 1162. Another important work is the *Chronicle of General Smbat*, which covers the history of Cilicia for the years 951-1274; the work was continued by an anonymous author who brings it up to 1331. An appreciable number of other Armenian historical works deal with the Frankish, Mamluk, and Ottoman conquests of Syria and Palestine.

The general histories of the Armenian church also contain a wealth of information pertaining to the Armenians and other Christian religious institutions in Greater Syria, notably M. Ormanian's, three-volume monumental work referred to earlier, which is based upon documentary sources. Monographic studies of the various hierarchical sees of the Armenian church also are important secondary sources on the communities in historic Syria.

By far the most important source materials relating to the Armenian settlements in Bilad al-Sham are to be found in the colophons of the Armenian manuscripts. It is known that there were active Armenian scriptoria in ancient and medieval times at Antioch, Edessa, Aleppo, Damascus, Jerusalem, and elsewhere,

and the colophons written by the scribes in these localities contain considerable historical data. For the medieval period, also, the accounts of Armenian travelers in the Near East, mostly ecclesiastics, provide first-hand information on the local communities. Among these, particular mention should be made of the *Chronicle of Grigor Vardapet Daranaghtsi*, and Simeon Lehatsi's *Account of His Travels*. A widely traveled cleric, Simeon provides a most interesting eyewitness account of conditions at Constantinople, Aleppo, Cyprus, Jerusalem, and elsewhere during the years 1608-1619. Armenian manuscripts also contain a considerable number of accounts written by medieval Armenian travelers in the Holy Land; these also supply extensive historico-topographic descriptions of the Christian as well as non-Christian sanctuaries. Regrettably, only a small fraction of these texts have been published.

Insofar as other primary sources pertaining to the Syrian-Armenian settlements are concerned, the archival materials found in the patriarchate of Jerusalem, the catholicosate of Cilicia in Antilias near Beirut, the monastic institution at Bzommar in Mount Lebanon, and the chancery of the bishopric of Aleppo — to mention only the major holdings — are of considerable importance. The patriarchate of Constantinople, which during the entire period of Ottoman rule had jurisdiction over all the Armenian institutions and communities within the empire, periodically compiled demographic and statistical data pertaining to them, including those in Syria and Palestine, particularly in the nineteenth century. Equally important for the latter period are the archives of the European and American missionary societies, and the memoirs and travel accounts of individual missionaries. To date, these important resources have not been adequately utilized.

By far the most extensive and important archival and documentary sources are those in the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem, which has had an unbroken history since the early Christian centuries. It was pointed out earlier that, in composing their respective histories of the Armenian religious institutions in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, Ter-Hovhannesiants and Savalanians had made extensive use of and had reproduced in Armenian translation many of the official edicts issued to the patriarchs by the various Mamluk and Ottoman sultans and by local functionaries. It should be noted, however, that these represent only

a relatively small proportion of the documents that were available. Hence, the true magnitude and historical significance of these documentary resources still await exhaustive examination, assessment, and publication in their original languages. This will undoubtedly make a significant contribution not only to a better understanding of the historical evolution of the Armenian religious and secular communities; it will also shed important light on the history of Bilad al-Sham, particularly under Fatimid, Ayyubid, Mamluk, and Ottoman rule.

Pending a personal, on-the-spot examination of this rich collection of archival materials, this author has secured a copy of a list of 160 official documents found in the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem. The list is confined only to those edicts issued by Mamluk and Ottoman sultans, as well as provincial and local functionaries, that relate to the Armenian rights in the Holy Places, privately owned religious properties, and restoration of such establishments, the institution of the pilgrimage, and the system of taxation, and so forth. Among these, the oldest document is a charter, dated A.H. 583 (= A.D. 1187) and attributed to Saladin; the oldest decree by an Ottoman ruler is that given by Sultan Selim I in A.H. 923 (= A.D. 1517). Reference to these documents has already been made in Part I of this study.

Insofar as their contents are concerned, the 160 documents can be divided into nine groups:

- 1) Documents that reaffirm the rights of the Armenian church in the commonly-held Christian sanctuaries in and around Jerusalem, as well as in Bethlehem. These documents, as a rule, confirm the Armenian jurisdictions in specific shrines, particularly vis-à-vis the Greek Orthodox and Latin churches.
- 2) Documents that permit the restoration or reconstruction of specific Armenian religious edifices in the Holy Land.
- 3) Documents that reaffirm the legal jurisdiction of the Armenian patriarchate of Jerusalem over the smaller monophysite Christian communities, namely, the Copts, Abyssinians, and Jacobite Syrians, and the superintendency of their institutions and property holdings, which occasionally had been a source of controversy between the Armenians and the Greek Orthodox.
- 4) Documents that enjoin Ottoman functionaries on the provincial and local levels not to harass the nuncios of the Ar-

menian patriarchate and to guarantee their free travel during the performance of their missions.

- 5) Firmans issued by Ottoman sultans confirming the election or appointment of patriarchs to the Armenian hierarchical see in Jerusalem.
- 6) Documents relating to the Armenian patriarchate's *waqf* properties in the Holy Land, in the provinces of Damascus, Aleppo, and Beirut, and in Egypt, all of which were under the administrative jurisdiction of the patriarchal institution. These included the monasteries, churches, and other properties, as well as the hostels for pilgrims. One of these edicts enjoins that Muslims could not be appointed as custodians or agents of *waqf* properties anywhere in the Ottoman empire belonging to the Jerusalem see, unless of course this was done with the patriarch's consent. Apparently as a result of disputes among Armenian monks in Jerusalem, in A.H. 1162 (= A.D. 1748) an edict issued by the Sublime Porte ruled that properties acquired by individual monastics legally belonged to the patriarchal institution. This edict was reaffirmed on four other occasions subsequent to its first issuance.
- 7) Documents dealing with the levying of legal and, more importantly, illegal taxes by Ottoman governors of Damascus as well as district and local officials upon the Armenian ecclesiastical institution and pilgrims traveling to and from the Holy Land. In these edicts the officials are prohibited from imposing levies beyond the prescribed limits and from making other excessive demands from the inhabitants. Se-making other excessive demands from the inhabitants. Several of the edicts exempt from taxation the Armenian religious institutions and the monastics. Similarly, customs officials also are frequently ordered not to impose illegal levies. The earliest documents pertaining to taxes date back to A.H. 1112 (= A.D. 1700) and A.H. 1166 (= A.D. 1752).
- 8) Documents relating to Armenian pilgrims who annually at Easter-time arrived in the Holy Land from all parts of the Ottoman empire. Some of these documents instruct Ottoman officials not to harass the pilgrims anywhere, especially when they arrived at such ports as Latakia, Beirut, and Jaffa. Some enjoin that pilgrims are to be free in making their voyage on any ship of their choice, and that ships carrying

