

<https://doi.org/10.53656/phil2025-02S-02>

## CATHOLICOS JOHN OF ŌDZUN'S POLEMIC AGAINST PAULICIANS AND THE ARMENIAN- SYRIAN COUNCIL OF MANZIKERT, 726

**Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev**

*Sofia University "St Kliment Ohridski",  
Matenadaran Research Institute (Yerevan)*

**Abstract.** The paper discusses the activity of the Armenian catholicos Yovhannēs Ōdznetši (717 – 728). It sets his polemical treatise against Paulicians, and its Christology, in the context of the council convened by the catholicos in Manzikert with the participation of both Armenian and Syriac clerics. This council restored communion between two miaphysite Churches, Armenian and West-Syrian. Its historical and theological significance also resides in the fact that it represented an initiative not of an overarching secular authority, but of separate ecclesiastical institutions. The circumstances under which the council was convoked, and its proceedings, are analysed with reference to Armenian and Syriac historians of the eleventh to the thirteenth century.

**Keywords:** apthartodocetism; apocrypha of Adam and Eve; Christological debates; Church councils; Incorruptibility; miaphysites; Michael the Syrian; Armenian studies; Syriac studies; Adam and Eve; worship of the cross

The first attested sect of those defined by contemporaries as Paulician was established on the westernmost bow of the Euphrates in the eighth century. No consensus has so far been reached concerning the evolution of the Paulicians' cosmology and the degree of kinship existing between various groups of Paulicians. Since they did not possess any written canon, their doctrines were bound to be moving<sup>1</sup>, whilst severe canonical interdictions of contacts with Paulicians, both in the Empire and Armenia, prevented their contemporaries from acquainting themselves with the doctrines held by diverse Paulician groups.

One of our main sources of the presence of Paulicians in Armenia, and of their views, is the treatise 'Against the Paulicians' written by Catholicos John of Ōdzun (Yovhannēs Ōdznetši, 717 – 728)<sup>2</sup>. The Paulician group against which John of Ōdzun wrote his tract was not dualist, whilst later Paulicians, who survived after the Emperor Basil I's victory over their state on the plateau of Armenia Minor in 878 (879), and who also had followers in Greater Armenia, clearly upheld dualist cosmology.

One of the main goals of John of Ȑdzun's polemic is the defence of the Church's sacramental symbols, icons and crosses in particular. John makes reference to 'crosses of stone and gold'<sup>3</sup>, from which we may infer that he aims at defending not only the veneration of ritual objects, employed inside churches in regular liturgical celebrations<sup>4</sup>, but also that of cross stelae set in the open and thus becoming sacred landmarks of Armenia. Known in their later form as *khachkars*, such stelae would largely determine the cultural landscape of the country. The earliest known Christian stelae in Armenia have been dated to the seventh century<sup>5</sup>. Various samples belonging to this earliest group have recently been discussed by Hamlet Petrosyan, in particular the cruciform stele at Er ndjatap<sup>6</sup> and crosses carved within a cliff at Vankasar<sup>7</sup>.

It is in connection with his defence of the veneration of icons and crosses, as well as his claim that ordained ministers' gestures and liturgical prayers make the power of the Trinity inhabit them (a belief which may also be recognised in stone crosses erected in the name of the Trinity and in those bearing the name of the Trinity<sup>8</sup>), that we find in John's tract a brief Christological exposition<sup>9</sup>. These lines enable us to consider the polemic against Paulicians in a larger context of John's work. We shall elucidate this context in what follows. The author evokes the prim val humankind going astray (cf Gen. 6. 11 – 12), which, according to him, resulted in its falling into paganism. As a consequence of the humans' worship of multiple gods – John of Ȑdzun specifies – 'the features of the [human] form (*լկրպարսւնիւ ձև*) were altered, [so that] they lost their beauty, manifesting the filth of numerous illnesses and passions'<sup>10</sup>.

According to the Armenian apocryphal text 'Sermon Concerning Hospitality', these were already Noah's sons and grandsons who, after Noah's death, forgot God, also turning to the worship of idols<sup>11</sup>. Yet, other Armenian apocryphal accounts set the origins of idolatry at a later point in the history of humankind, associating it with the dispersion of tongues that took place after the destruction of the tower of Babel<sup>12</sup>. As for the *Cave of Treasures* (third-sixth centuries), it postpones the appearance of idolatry until the days of Nahor, Abraham's grandfather (chpts xxv.17 and xxvi.11)<sup>13</sup>.

Similarly to John, various apocryphal stories associate idolatry with filth<sup>14</sup>. However, in such texts we do not find references to the ensuing physical degeneration which John indicates in his Christological exposition. According to him, it is against this background that the Son's incarnation occurs. He pursues thus:

Having mercy on the Creator's image, he became an image of his creature; he who at the beginning had made man according to his image and resemblance, the selfsame one came also at the end of the times, took our form (*լկրպարսւնիւ*) of a servant and was made manifest in human resemblance, so that by this means he may once more adorn the image, [which at the beginning had] been composed with utmost beauty, with a

primæval, God-like, resemblance. And he also taught us to venerate the image of God the Word incarnate, depicted with living human features, and this honourable sign of victory.<sup>15</sup>

The veneration of icons (Christ's 'image depicted with living human features') and crosses (the 'honourable sign of victory'), according to John of Ōdzun, thus derives its meaning from the postulate that in the Incarnation the Creator manifests himself in human resemblance. He possesses this resemblance because he assumes not an ideal human form but 'takes our form of a servant'. Yet John also specifies that by assuming our fallen humanity, God the Son restores it to 'primæval resemblance'. The humanity restored by Son in his incarnation possesses, therefore, a double resemblance, to historical humankind and to the first human beings.

Here we approach a point that Armenian theologians often bring into focus, i.e. the juxtaposition of the Incarnation occurring 'in these last days' (Heb. 1. 2) with the first days of creation in Genesis, and the comparison of Christ's humanity with that of the first human beings in Eden. The enduring interest in the link between protology and the Messiah's advent is expressed, notably, in a series of para-Biblical legends transmitted in Armenian, in which we see Eve and other figures, allegedly involved in the human origins, such as Melchizedek, appearing as visitors in the cave of Christ's Nativity in Bethlehem<sup>16</sup>.

The theological stance expressed by John of Ōdzun in 'Against the Paulicians' may be clarified with reference to his tract 'Against the Phantasiasts' (i.e. apthartodocetists, the extreme followers of Julian of Halicarnassus), his sermon 'Against Mayragometši' (an Armenian apthartodocetist writer) and the doctrinal canons of the council convened by the Catholicos at Manzikert (Manazkert in Armenian; the present-day Malazgirt in Turkey). In the tract and the sermon indicated he rejects, in particular, every alteration of the human nature assumed by the Logos, asserting the presence in Christ of 'the natural and non-reprehensible feelings' proper to the humankind<sup>17</sup>. Moreover, according to John, the life in Eden itself implied some forms of normative human experience<sup>18</sup>.

Remarkably, in all three texts of John's (the tract against the Paulicians and the two works against the apthartodocetists), the doctrine contested is associated with Mani, which indicates that in the author's eyes, the denial of Christ's full consubstantiality with postlapsarian humankind and the rejection of what is material in Christian worship are kindred conceptually: both arise from the same religious understanding that he contests<sup>19</sup>. In his tract against the Paulicians, Catholicos explicitly claims that this sect follows Mani's teaching<sup>20</sup>. In Byzantium, Paulicians were dubbed as Manichæans since the time of Theophanes the Confessor (*ca* 760 – 817)<sup>21</sup>. Nina Garsoïan has aptly observed that once the Paulicians were classified as Manichæans, they could, as a consequence, be also accused of

aphthartodocetism, which in itself, however, does not represent a warrant of the views they really professed<sup>22</sup>.

In order to clarify John of Ōdzun's teaching and to assess its political dimension, in the second part of this paper we shall focus on the council of Manzikert convened by the catholicos in 726. First, however, we should recall that at the council convened at the patriarchal see of Duin in 553,<sup>23</sup> the rejection of the Chalcedonian Definition of Faith (451) by the Armenian Church was officially confirmed. Thereafter, one of the major themes of theological controversy amongst the non-Chalcedonians was the 'incorruptibility' of Christ's body. The question of the properties of Christ's humanity closely correlated with another one, namely: which of the human experiences were to be qualified as corruption? This amounted to asking: was the human being from the outset conceived as susceptible to hunger, thirst, weariness, sadness, fear and suffering, or have these limitations resulted from the fall of Adam and Eve?

These subtle questions, which also pertained to the polemic against the Paulicians, possessed a distinctly Biblical, and para-Biblical, background. Indeed, the account of the two trees in *Genesis* (2. 9, 16 – 17; 3) reveals a discrepancy between the initial threat for disobedience and the actual punishment: the primordial couple does not die but is only expelled from the Garden. Does, then, the nature of Adam and Eve endure any change after their leaving of Paradise? And what does the restoration of human nature by Christ entail? That the later Biblical authors make almost no explicit references to the first chapters of *Genesis* is, arguably, one of the reasons that prompted the profusion of later Jewish and Christian speculation about human origins, also orienting the reflection on the salvation of the humankind and eschatology<sup>24</sup>. Of a particular relevance in this respect is the book of the Wisdom of Solomon, in which we read that 'God created man for incorruptibility (ἐπ' ἀφθαρσία), made him to be an image of his own eternity (*var.* "his proper being")' (Wis. Sol. 2. 23), whereas in the following verse this incorruptibility is opposed to man's mortality after his fall: 'Nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world' (*ivi* 2. 24).

One of the points of debate concerning incorruptibility was whether the incarnate Logos was constrained by human nature or he endured sufferings deliberately. John of Ōdzun examines this question extensively. His counsellor, Khosrovik the Translator (*ca* 670 – *ca* 730), who also took part in the council of Manzikert, stated thereafter in his 'Doctrinal Chapters' that Christ deliberately allowed his humanity, in certain circumstances, 'to the extent that he wished, and when and where' he so wished, to experience sufferings and other human limitations<sup>25</sup>. Another of their learned contemporaries, Stephen of Siwnik, though being absent at the council, articulated a close position, stating that by his sovereign decisions the divine Logos allowed his humanity to live 'temporarily' in a common human way, thus becoming subject to human limitations<sup>26</sup>. This theology is also reflected in the acts of the council of Manzikert.

The council was convened at a critical moment in the history of the Armenian and the West-Syrian Christianities. The wars that had followed the advent of Islam had caused considerable destructions in the Near East, contributing to the reciprocal isolation of the two Churches. The years preceding the convocation were especially marked by two events: in the years 693 – 695 the Umayyad Caliphate established direct political control over Armenia, whereas as an outcome of the ruthless campaigns conducted there by the Arabs between 699 and 705, the Armenian princes' autonomy was definitively suppressed<sup>27</sup>. The Church, which had not escaped violence either, acquired a new authority within the Armenian society; it gained at once legal, political and moral dimensions<sup>28</sup>. The Armenian Catholicos was recognised as the legal chief directly responsible to the Islamic authority<sup>29</sup>. Armenian sources tell us that at the beginning of his patriarchate, John of Ōdzun travelled to Damascus in order to negotiate the conditions of the *dhimma* (the legal convention that regulated relationships between the Caliphate and the subdued 'Detainers of the Book' [*ahl al-kitab*]) with Caliph Omar II (717 – 720)<sup>30</sup>.

The Miaphysite (or non-Chalcedonian) faith received support from the Caliphate against the Chalcedonian, pro-Byzantine, tendencies. The Caliphs supported the jurisdiction of the Churches within their communities, seeing in them institutions able to assure civil control over the conquered populations. At the same time, the communications between different populations of *dhimmi* were hindered, also when such populations shared the same faith as did the West-Syrians and the Armenians. The reciprocal isolation of various Christian populations led to their decline and fastened the process of Islamisation<sup>31</sup>. This situation must have been of primary concern for the conveners of the council.

Our main sources elucidating the history of the council of Manzikert are John of Ōdzun and two later Syriac writers: the twelfth-century West-Syrian Patriarch Michael the Syrian (d. 1199), in Syriac and in his Armenian adaptation made in 1246 – 1247 (which is extant in two recensions: Jerusalem 1870 and 1871), and the thirteenth-century West-Syrian Catholicos (*maphrian*) of Mosul Gregory Bar-ʿEbroyo, known as Barhebraeus (1225/6 – 1286). Both Syriac chroniclers were born in Melitene, a city which had a mixed, Armenian and Syriac population, where they might, therefore, have access not only to Syriac, but also to Armenian sources. The information provided by these sources can be complemented by three Armenian chroniclers: Stephen of Tarōn (Asolik, writing at the very beginning of the eleventh century), the twelfth-century Samuēl of Ani and the thirteenth-century Kirakos of Gandzak (1200 – 1271).

If compared to the Syriac original, the Armenian version of Michael the Syrian stands out as an abridged text. It also offers us a slightly divergent account of the council and of the events that led to its convocation. It claims that on the eve of the council both the northern and the southern Armenia (the regions of Siwnik, Vaspurakan and Sasun), as well as Caucasian Albania and the Jacobite Syriac-speaking

lands, abided in communion<sup>32</sup>. Although the actual state of affairs could be more complex, this claim must reflect the vision, and the aspiration, of many, both in Armenia and the Syriac world. According to Michael, Syriac Christians of the region of Martyropolis declared before the Armenian Catholicos to acknowledge the faith of Gregory the Illuminator, with whose name the Christianisation of the Armenian kingdom *ca* 313/314 was commonly associated, as a criterion of orthodoxy<sup>33</sup>. This is not surprising if we take into consideration that the southern provinces of the Armenian Arsacid kingdom had a considerable Syriac-speaking population. Other sources also suggest that Gregory the Illuminator's authority was recognised beyond the frontiers of the Armenian kingdom and the Armenian-speaking world. Therefore, the claim expressed in the Armenian version of Michael may reflect an enduring ambition of Armenian catholicos.

Both Michael the Syrian and Barhebraeus (who largely relies on Michael), affirm that the cause of the convocation of the council was the divergent opinions regarding Julian of Halikarnassos and his teaching of 'incorruptibility'<sup>34</sup>. The Armenian version of Michael tells, as Barhebraeus does, about a travelling Syrian cleric (or of two clerics) from Martyropolis, who provoked a controversy between Syriac Christians and Armenians by claiming before the two prelates that, whilst the Jacobites professed the body of Christ to be 'corruptible', the Armenians followed a 'Julianite' doctrine<sup>35</sup>. Others claimed before the Syrian patriarch that the Armenians were not only followers of Julian of Halikarnassos; according to those claims, the Armenians also asserted that Christ's body was not subject to sufferings, whilst the human qualities of Christ's body were merely apparent. That such an extreme current did exist in Armenia, is also known from other sources. The most famous figure of this current was John of Mayravank (Yovhannēs Mayravanetsi or Mayragometsi, 575? – 645?) mentioned above: failing to explain the Gospel passage on Christ's agony in Gethsemane, he famously attempted to suppress the pericope of the bloody sweat (Luke 22. 43 – 44) from Gospel codices<sup>36</sup>. Therefore, the 'Julianists' mentioned in sources may imply different doctrinal trends which do not necessarily reflect the ideas known to us from Julian's own writings<sup>37</sup>.

Persecuted by his Catholicos, John of Mayravank died in exile, a reason for which in some sympathetic Armenian sources he is qualified as 'confessor'. Obviously, apothartodocetism did not disappear in Armenia overnight, and a century later it was still registered in the country side by side with Chalcedonian leanings, so that John of ʾŌdzun found himself compelled to write a treatise against 'Phantasiasts' (*erewutakank*).

The polemic mentioned by Michael the Syrian and Barhebraeus revived the controversy between the followers of Severos of Antioch (as the majority of the West-Syrian Christians were) and the Armenians, leading to a protracted epistolary exchange between the Armenian catholicos and the Syriac patriarch. Each asked the other to dispatch to him his definition of faith. Both were reciprocally recog-



nised as orthodox. The old suspicions being, however, rekindled, it was eventually agreed to convoke a council which would examine the question in depth.

Both Stephen of Tarōn and Michael the Syrian support John of Ȫdzun's claim<sup>38</sup> that he was the initiator of the council. They explain that the Armenian Catholicos exhorted the Patriarch Athanasius III of Antioch (724 – 740) to the unity of faith<sup>39</sup>. Michael and Barhebraeus provide us with a significant detail about the long debate in Manzikert: while the Syrian party attempted to find various demonstrations of their position, the Armenians would let themselves to be persuaded exclusively by Biblical texts<sup>40</sup>. At this point, the Syrian bishops brought to John of Ȫdzun's attention Acts 13. 34, which convinced the Armenian party and became a sufficient ground for agreement: 'And as concerning that [God] raised [Jesus] up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption (μηκέτι μέλλοντα ὑποστρέφειν εἰς διαφθοράν), he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David'. The Syriac and the Armenian versions of this verse being compared, the locution 'no more' was found in both of them ( ܠܐ ܥܕܐ ܕܥܠܝܐ ܕܥܠܝܐ; *hē liu huphēliuqng l juyulhulihilil*), which implied that after his death Jesus faced 'corruption'<sup>41</sup>, which however did not imply that his body underwent physical decomposition. This provided a common ground enabling the two parties to envisage a doctrinal agreement<sup>42</sup>.

The Syriac sources specify that an agreement was achieved precisely over the correct understanding of the notion of 'corruption', although this is not evident from the canons. Michael the Syrian specifies that, while excluding the extremes, both sides tried to avoid polemic over nuances in order to reach an agreement<sup>43</sup>. Thus, neither the names of Severus and Julian, nor those of their followers are mentioned in the acts of the council. Once the sides arrived at mutual understanding, each celebrated the Eucharist according to the opposite party's rite, whilst the opposite party also communicated. Next, a synodical letter was edited, whose Syriac copy remained with the Armenians and whose Armenian copy was kept by the Syrians. Significantly, both the Armenian and the Syriac sources regard the agreement as a victory of John of Ȫdzun, recognised as a hero of Church unity<sup>44</sup>.

The synodical letter is preserved by Michael the Syrian. It contains a profession of faith, in which the reality of sufferings and death, which the incarnate Logos underwent in a body capable of sufferings, is asserted. This profession of faith is followed by the list of the canons promulgated by the council. Ten canons are preserved by Michael and in Armenian sources<sup>45</sup>, but not in the Armenian *Book of Canons* which was for the first time codified by John of Ȫdzun in 720. The Syriac and Armenian versions of the canons have recently been closely examined by S. Peter Cowe. They reveal a number of divergences some of which possess rather significant theological bearings<sup>46</sup>.

Both versions affirm that Christ was united with our corruptible nature, and not with Adam's prelapsarian nature. They also specify that Christ's humanity was

incorruptible since the conception in Mary's womb and that no ontological change in Christ's humanity occurred with regard to its incorruptibility after the Resurrection. Contemporary Armenian authors, such as Stephen of Siwnik, also address this question, suggesting that the corruptible human nature assumed by the Logos was transformed by the virtue of the hypostatic union, being restored to Adam's primordial state at its very moment<sup>47</sup>. The canons furthermore affirm that Christ's body was subject to human feelings, suffering and death.

The importance of the council of Manzikert resides not only in the restoration of communion between two Churches, but also in the fact that it was promoted by separate ecclesiastical institutions established on the territories subdued to the Umayyad Caliphate, rather than by an overarching secular authority seeking political cohesion<sup>48</sup>. The agreement was achieved in spite of the enduring attachment of each to its respective doctrinal formulations, which did not exclude future debates<sup>49</sup>. Nevertheless, several documents show that these two Christian societies of Dar al-Islam now found themselves less isolated from each other. The document attesting the existence of communion between the two Churches a decade after the council of Manzikert is the Armenian 'Martyrdom of Vahan of Goltān' composed in 744. It accounts of one Vahan, an Armenian youth imprisoned by Caliphal authorities in 737 in Ruṣāfa (Sergiopolis), a residence of Caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik (724 – 743). Vahan was eventually martyred there for his refusal to abjure Christian faith. The 'Jacobite', i.e. West-Syrian, community was more numerous in the city, and it was precisely a 'Jacobite' priest who, according to the account, visited Vahan in prison administering him communion<sup>50</sup>.

In the thirteenth century, upon recounting the events of the council of Manzikert, Barhebraeus mentions doctrinal reproaches still addressed by Armenians to the Syrians. He does not specify the dates, yet his words indicate that at a certain point after the council, and in certain localities, controversies between the two communities over the meaning of 'corruption' resumed<sup>51</sup>. Peter Cowe suggests that a partial rehabilitation of John of Mayravank occurred in Armenia in the tenth and eleventh centuries, in a period characterised by doctrinal pressure from Byzantines and Georgians<sup>52</sup>. This, however, happened after a considerable lapse of time during which the council of Manzikert had enjoyed authority. The career of the learned West-Syriac preacher Nonnus of Nisibis (*ca* 795 – *ca* 865) in Armenia allows us to conclude that the event related in the 'Martyrdom of Vahan' was not an isolated case of solidarity. From a number of Syriac, Armenian and Arabic sources we gather that between the years *ca* 816 and 862 Nonnus repeatedly travelled to Armenia, and especially in quality of an envoy of the Syriac Patriarch Cyriacus (793 – 817), of Severian persuasion. In Armenia he was welcomed by five Bagratuni princes who controlled regions as distant from each other as Sper in the north-west, Tashir in the north, Tarōn in the south and Gelakunik in the north-east<sup>53</sup>. Nonnus's 'Commentary on the Gospel of John' was patronised in Armenia<sup>54</sup>, whilst in some Ar-



menian recensions of the 'Commentary' its author is even qualified as a 'saint'<sup>55</sup>. Eventually, in 862, Nonnus was invited to the council convened by Catholicos Zachary of Dzagk (855 – ca 876) in Shirakawan and was involved in the elaboration of its doctrinal acts<sup>56</sup>. These witnesses indicate that the council of Manzikert had enduring results and that its validity was recognised in a large part of Armenia at least until the later part of the ninth century.

## NOTES

1. Cf. Gouillard, pp. 302 – 303, 308; Lemerle, pp. 124 – 126; Alexander, p. 255; Lieu, pp. 215 – 216; Dagron, pp. 228 – 230.
2. On this prominent figure, see Mahé 1993, pp. 478 – 486.
3. *Ənddēm pawlikeants*, in *Ķeosēean*, p. 42, § 74.
4. Cf. Mahé 1993, pp. 484 – 485; Id. 1997, p. 65; Mardirossian, p. 270.
5. Hakobyan, pp. 103 – 108.
6. Petrosyan, pp. 16 – 17, figs 3, 4.
7. *Ivi*, p. 31, figs 21 – 2.
8. *Ivi*, p. 18.
9. *Ənddēm pawlikeants*, in *Ķeosēean*, p. 42, § 78.
10. *Ivi*, p. 41, §§ 68 – 69.
11. See 'Sermon concerning Hospitality', in Stone 2012, pp. 213, 223.
12. Cf. 'Story of Father Abraham', *ivi*, pp. 37, 41; 'Sermon on the Word concerning the Sodomites', *ivi*, pp. 180, 193; and 'When Noah Went Forth from the Ark', in Stone 2021, pp. 68, 69.
13. Su-Min Rī, CSCO 486, Syri 207, pp. 200 – 201, 204 – 205; Id., CSCO 487, Syri 208, pp. 76 – 79.
14. Stone 2021, pp. 76 – 77.
15. *Ənddēm pawlikeants*, in *Ķeosēean*, pp. 41 – 42.
16. Dorfmann 2014, pp. 298 – 302, 308 – 315, 325 – 327, 331 – 333; Id. 2020, pp. 276 – 287, 291 – 293, 301 – 305.
17. Cowe 2004, pp. 45 – 46.
18. Dorfmann 2004, pp. 171, 214; Id. 2016, pp. 281, 288.
19. Dorfmann 2004, pp. 204 – 205.
20. *Ənddēm pawlikeants*, in *Ķeosēean*, p. 39; cf. *Ənddēm erewutakanats*, in *Ķeosēean*, pp. 53, 54.
21. De Boor I, p. 488, l. 22.
22. Garsoian, p. 94; cf. also Lieu, pp. 210 – 211.
23. Cf. Aleksidzé and Mahé, p. 110, n. 82; p. 113, n. 105; pp. 121 – 127.
24. Dorfmann 2023, pp. 28 – 35.
25. Cowe 2004, pp. 46 – 47.
26. Dorfmann 2016, pp. 278, 287 – 288.
27. Cf. Martin-Hisard, pp. 223 – 225.
28. Mahé 1993, pp. 477 – 478.
29. Mahé 2012, pp. 111 – 114.

30. Manukean, p. 705.
31. Dorfmann 2008, pp. 77 – 81.
32. Michael the Syrian 1870, pp. 351 – 352; Id., 1871, p. 338.
33. Chabot IV, p. 457; Id., II, p. 492; Michael the Syrian 1870, p. 352; Id., 1871, p. 338.
34. Chabot IV, pp. 458 – 459; Id., II, pp. 493 – 494; Abbeloos I, pp. 299 – 301.
35. Michael the Syrian 1870, p. 352; Id., 1871, pp. 338 – 339.
36. Cowe 1994, pp. 35 – 48.
37. Cf. Tēr-Minaseants', pp. 120 – 121.
38. *Saks žolovots'*, in Keosēcan, p. 124.
39. Chabot IV, p. 458; Id., II, p. 493; Michael the Syrian 1870, p. 352; Id., 1871, p. 339.
40. Chabot IV, p. 458; Id., II, p. 494; Abbeloos I, p. 301.
41. Cowe 2017, pp. 67, 69.
42. Chabot IV, p. 458; Id., II, p. 495.
43. Chabot IV, pp. 458 – 459; Id., II, p. 495.
44. Chabot IV, p. 459; Id., II, pp. 495 – 496; Abbeloos I, pp. 301 – 303.
45. For a new collation, see Cowe 2017, pp. 72 – 79.
46. See Cowe's analysis, *ivi*, pp. 73 – 80.
47. Dorfmann 2016, p. 282; Cowe 2017, p. 69.
48. Cf. Cowe 2017, p. 80.
49. Mahé 1993, p. 484.
50. Greenwood *et al.*, pp. 39, 89.
51. Abbeloos I, p. 303.
52. Cowe 2004, p. 48.
53. Chabot IV, pp. 495 – 497; Id., III, pp. 13, 32 – 34; Vardan, p. 78; Patkanean, p. 68; Graff, pp. 222 – 226; Akinean, coll. 198 – 199; Van Roey, pp. 3 – 5.
54. Marr, pp. 11 – 15; Chrakean, pp. 5 – 8; Mariès, pp. 277, 288 – 290.
55. Chrakean, pp. ԺԱ, ԺԶ – ԺԷ; 15, 247.
56. Ter-Minassiantz, p. 234; Chrakean, pp. ԺԱ – ԺԲ; Mariès, pp. 277 – 278; Dorfmann 2004, pp. 1, 55.

### **Acknowledgement**

This research was supported and funded by the Bulgarian National Science Fund, Project № КП-06-Н80/8 (08.12.2023) “Bogomilism in History and in the Present Day”. The opinions expressed in the publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the view of the National Science Fund.

### **REFERENCES**

- ABBELOOS, J.B., and LAMY, T.J. (Eds), 1872. *Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon ecclesiasticum*, Leuven.
- AKINEAN, N. 1922. Tēodoros Apikura ew Nana Asori Hayastani mēdj ew Nanyai Meknutean hayerēn țargmanutiwnə. In: *Handēs Amsōreay*, pp. 193 – 205, 357 – 368, 417 – 424.

- ALEKSIDZÉ, Z. and MAHÉ, J.-P., 2010. Arsen Sapareli *Sur la séparation des Géorgiens et des Arméniens*. In: *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, vol. 32, pp. 59 – 132.
- ALEXANDER, P.J., 1978. Religious Persecution and Resistance in the Byzantine Empire of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries: Methods and Justifications. In: Id., *Religious and Political History and Thought in the Byzantine Empire*, London, N°X, pp. 238 – 264.
- CHABOT, J.-B. (Ed.), 1899 – 1910. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, Paris.
- CHRAKĖAN, K. (Ed.), 1920. *Nanayi asoruot's vardapeti Meknutiwn Yovhannu awetaranin*, Venice.
- COWE, S.P., 2004. Armenian Christology in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries with Particular Reference to the Contributions of Catholicos Yovhan Ōjnec'i and Xosrovik T'argmanič'. In: *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. 55/1, pp. 30 – 54.
- COWE, S.P., 1994. Christological Trends and Textual Transmission: the Pericope of the Bloody Sweat (Luke 22.43 – 44) in the Armenian Version. In: AJAMIAN, SH., et al. (Eds), *Text and Context: Studies in the Armenian New Testament*, Atlanta, pp. 35 – 48.
- COWE, S.P., 2017. Doctrinal Union or Agreement to Disagree? Armenians and Syrians at the Synod of Manazkert (726 CE). In: AVETISYAN, P.S., et al. (Eds), *Bridging Times and Spaces: Papers in Ancient Near Eastern, Mediterranean and Armenian Studies*, Oxford, pp. 61 – 84.
- DAGRON, G., 1993. L'Église et l'État (milieu IX<sup>e</sup> – X<sup>e</sup> siècle). In: MAYEUR, J.-M., et al. (Eds), *Histoire du Christianisme des origines à nos jours*, vol. IV, Paris, pp. 167 – 240.
- DE BOOR, C. (Ed.), 1883. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, Leipzig.
- DORFMANN-LAZAREV, I., 2004. *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius : Deux débats théologiques après le Triomphe de l'orthodoxie*, Leuven.
- DORFMANN-LAZAREV, I., 2008. Beyond Empire I: Eastern Christianities from the Persian to the Turkish Conquest, 604 – 1071'. In: SMITH, J.M.H., et al. (Eds), *Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. 3, Cambridge, pp. 65 – 85, 658 – 665.
- DORFMANN-LAZAREV, I., 2014. The Cave of the Nativity Revisited: Memory of the Primæval Beings in the Armenian Lord's Infancy and Cognate Sources. In: *Travaux et Mémoires*, vol. XVIII, pp. 285 – 334.
- DORFMANN-LAZAREV, I., 2016. *Christ in Armenian Tradition: Doctrine, Apocrypha, Art (Sixth – Tenth Centuries)*, Leuven.
- DORFMANN-LAZAREV, I., 2020. Eve, Melchizedek and the Magi in the Cave of the Nativity According to the Armenian Corpus of Homilies Attributed to Epiphanius of Salamis. In: BREMMER, J.N., et al. (Eds), *The Protevangelium of James*, Leuven, pp. 264 – 311.

- DORFMANN-LAZAREV, I., 2023. The Primordial Human Beings According to the Biblical Tradition, In: *Philologia/Филология*, vol. 44, pp. 11 – 39.
- GARSOÏAN, N., 1971. Byzantine Heresy. A Reinterpretation. In: *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol. 25, pp. 87 – 113.
- GOUILLARD, J., 1965. L'hérésie dans l'empire byzantin des origines au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle. In: *Travaux et Mémoires*, vol. I, pp. 299 – 324.
- GRAFF, G., 1947. *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vol. 2, Vatican.
- GREENWOOD, T., GRANT, A., HAGAN, K., PECORINI GOODALL, L., & READ, L., 2025. A Neglected Armenian Source of the Late Umayyad Era: The Martyrdom of Vahan of Gott'n. In: *Al- 'Uṣūr al-Wuṣṭā: The Journal of Middle East Medievalists*, vol. 33, pp. 30 – 106.
- HAKOBYAN, Z., 2005. Haykakan karakoł kotołneri t'vagrman hartsi shurdj. In: *Eritasard hay arvestabanneri gitakan aradjin nstashrdjan*, Yerevan, pp. 103 – 108.
- HAYRAPETEAN, A., et al. (Eds), 2011. Samuēl Anetsi, *Hawak'munk' i grots' patmagrats'*, Yerevan.
- HEWSEN, R.H., 2001. *Armenia. A Historical Atlas*, Chicago.
- ĶEOŚĒEAN, Ya. (Ed.), 2007. Yovhannēs Ōdznetsi, *Ənddēm erewutakanats'*. In: *Matenagirk' hayots'*, vol. 7, Antelias, pp. 45 – 66.
- ĶEOŚĒEAN, Ya. (Ed.), 2007. Yovhannēs Ōdznetsi, *Ənddēm pawlikeants'*. In: *Matenagirk' hayots'*, vol. 7, Antelias, pp. 37 – 44.
- ĶEOŚĒEAN, Ya. (Ed.), 2007. Yovhannēs Ōdznetsi, *Saks' žolovots' or elen i Hayk'*. In: *Matenagirk' hayots'*, vol. 7, Antelias, pp. 122 – 132.
- LEMERLE, P., 1973. L'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure d'après les sources grecques. In: *Travaux et Mémoires*, vol. V, pp. 1 – 144.
- LIEU, S.N.C., 1994, *Manichaeism in Mesopotamia and the Roman East*, Leiden.
- MAHÉ, A. and J.-P., 2012. *Histoire de l'Arménie des origines à nos jours*, Paris.
- MAHÉ, J.-P., 1997. Confession religieuse et identité nationale dans l'Église arménienne du VII<sup>e</sup> au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle. In: Garsoïan, N., et al. (Eds), *Des Parthes au Califat : Quatre leçons sur la formation de l'identité arménienne*, Paris, pp. 59 – 78.
- MAHÉ, J.-P. 1993. L'Église arménienne de 611 à 1066. In: Mayeur, J.-M., et al. (Eds), *Histoire du Christianisme des origines à nos jours*, vol. IV, Paris, pp. 473 – 542.
- MANUKEAN, G. (Ed.), 2010. Stepanos Tarōnetsi, *Patmutiwn tiezerakan*. In: *Matenagirk' hayots'*, vol. 15/2, Antelias, pp. 619 – 832.
- MARDIROSSIAN, A., 2004. *Le Livre des canons arméniens (Kanonagirk' Hayoc') de Yovhannēs Awineci*, Leuven.
- MARIÈS, L., 1921. Un commentaire sur l'Évangile de Saint Jean par Nonnos (Nana) de Nisibe. In: *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, vol. I, pp. 273 – 296.

- MARR, N., 1906. Аркауиъ, монгольское названіе христіанъ, въ связи съ вопросомъ объ армянахъ-халкедонитахъ. In: *Византийскій Временникъ*, vol. 12, pp. 1 – 68.
- MARTIN-HISARD, B. 2007. Domination arabe et libertés arméniennes (VII<sup>e</sup> – IX<sup>e</sup> siècle). In: Dédéyan, G., *Histoire du peuple arménien*, Toulouse, pp. 213 – 242.
- MELIK-ŌHANĴANYAN, K. (Ed.), 1961. Kirakos Gandzaketsi, *Patmutiwn hayots*, Yerevan.
- MICHAEL THE SYRIAN, 1870. *Mikhayēli asoruots patriarki Žamanakagrutiwn*, Jerusalem.
- MICHAEL THE SYRIAN, 1871. *Žamanakagrutiwn Mikhayēli asoruots patriarki*, Jerusalem.
- PATKANEAN, K. (Ed.), 1867. Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, *Patmutiwn zhamanakagran*, Petersburg.
- PETROSYAN, H.L. 2008. *Khachkar. Tsagumə, gortsaruytə, patkeragrutyunə, imastabanutyunə*, Yerevan.
- SHAHNAZAREANTS, K. (Ed.), 1859. Stepanos Ōrbēlean, *Patmutiwn nahan-gin Sisakan*, Paris.
- STONE, M.E., 2021. *Armenian Apocrypha from Adam to Daniel*, Atlanta.
- STONE, M.E., 2012. *Armenian Apocrypha Relating to Abraham*, Atlanta.
- SU-MIN RI, A. (Ed.), 1987. *La Caverne des trésors : Les deux recensions syriaques* (CSCO 486, Syri 207; CSCO 487, Syri 208), Leuven.
- TĒR-MINASEANTS, E. (=Ter-Minassiantz, E.), 1908 (rev. and augm.). *Hayots Ekelecu yaraberutiunnerə asoruots Ekeletsineri het*, Echmiadzin.
- TOUMANOFF, C. 1963. *Studies in Christian Caucasian History*, Washington, D.C.
- VAN ROEY, A. 1948. *Nonnus de Nisibe : Traité apologétique. Etude, texte et traduction (première partie)*, Louvain.
- VARDAN AREWELTSI, 1862. *Hawakumn patmutēan Vardanay vardapeti*, Venice.

✉ Established researcher (R3) Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev, Dr. Habil.

ORCID iD: 0000-0002-1596-6006

WoS Researcher ID: GQZ-4066-2022

Author ID (SCOPUS): 56167161200

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Bulgaria  
and Matenadaran Research Institute, Armenia

E-mail: dorfmann@uni-sofia.bg