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**SIMEON LEHATSI AND THE IDEAL OF KARG –  
IMAGE OF ARMENIA AND JERUSALEM IN TRAVEL  
ACCOUNTS OF THE 17<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY ARMENIAN  
TRAVELER FROM LVOV**

**Key words:** *Armenia, Ottoman Empire, Ottoman Armenians, Simeon Lehatsi, Armenians in Lvov.*

The text of Simeon of Poland or Simeon Lehatsi entitled *Ughegruthyun* (or Travel Accounts) represents one of the most important Armenian historical sources of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Simeon's work gives the perception of everyday reality in that period and provides information concerning the situation in Poland and Lithuania, the Ottoman Empire and its vassal states in the Balkans (Moldavia, Valachia), as well as in Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea regions. The author, an Apostolic Christian from Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, was interested especially in the conditions of Armenians and other Christians living in cities controlled by the Ottomans, and their specific situation in comparison with the Armenians in Poland. He spent almost ten years traveling through the Ottoman Empire (1608–1618), led by the major idea of pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Rome and the monastery of St. John the Baptist (surb Karapet) in Anatolian Mush.

Simeon's text could be considered as a kind of travel itinerary and diary, accompanied by (sometimes very detailed) information concerning history, geography, economics and demography of the places visited, as well as his personal and subjective impressions and feelings. Simeon started his journey in Lvov (south-eastern part of Polish-Lithuania or Rzeczpospolita) and then he travelled through the Balkans (by the Danube delta to present-day Moldavia, through Romania and Bulgaria) to Istanbul/Constantinople<sup>1</sup>. He stayed in Istanbul working for the Apostolic Patriarch Gri-

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<sup>1</sup> His itinerary is characteristic of pilgrims coming from Central Europe via Kraków, Sandomierz, then through the region of Galicia/Halych (the city of Lvov) following the valley of Prut and Dniester and the Danube delta (Chernivtsi, Suceava, Galati etc.). Travelers crossed Balkan mountains (Rila) in

gor Kesaratsi (residing in the quarter of Vlanka) as dpir (scribe) and acolyte. After a few months, he visited the surroundings of the Sea of Marmara, then traveled to Rome by way of Venice; after his return to Istanbul he started an ukht (sacred pilgrimage) to Mush (via Malatya, Sivas/Sevaste, Tokat, Kharberd, Diyarbakır/Amid), he continued by ukht to Jerusalem (through Cairo and Gaza), finally returning home via Aleppo and the Armenian Cilicia (Marash, Zeythun). After his return to the Polish city of Lvov, Simeon continued to work as a scribe, acolyte and teacher in Armenian schools, leaving behind him a manuscript of his Travel Accounts. The text describing his journey is accompanied also by taregruthyun (chronicles) and hishatakaran (colophons), which are considered important historical sources for the period following Simeon's return from the Ottoman Empire (1618–1636).

The text was influenced by the author's personality and his experiences, but not to the extent of other contemporary travelers from Central Europe (Kryštof Harant, Oldřich Prefát and others) or from Western Europe (Busbecq, Villamont and others). Even though it contains some common features and characteristics typical of the general discourse about the Ottoman Empire, it is of course definitely not an orientalist vision of the Orient as described in the work by E. Saïd.<sup>2</sup> More than the later simplistic binary oppositions between the categories of West and East, «translated» as rationality versus chaos, the Travel Accounts of Simeon offer a contemporary account of Polish Armenia, concerning the situation in the Ottoman Empire, the testimony of an interested person, who spent most of his life living on the immediate border of the «East» and often crossed it. We should not forget the fact that travelers from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were themselves perceived as «others» and «oriental» in the eyes of travelers from Frangstan (Western Europe). Simeon's text offers the reader the rich mosaic of his immediate travel experiences, perceived through the prism of a member of the minority – of an Armenian from Poland traveling through the Ottoman Empire as a foreign visitor.

This contribution, focusing on Simeon's vision of Jerusalem and stereotypical images of other communities, deals with the textual analysis of primary sources written in Armenian. Our main source is the text of Simeon Lehatsi (in printed version from Nerses Akinean's 1936 edition)<sup>3</sup>, compared with other Armenian sources from Central and Eastern Anatolia (Bitlis/Baghesh school of historians) in order to shape

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Nadir Derbent (famous mountain pass in northern Bulgaria) and continued through a part *via Egnatia* to Constantinople. Fixed itineraries were several; the most common road through eastern Balkans was called *via tartarica*, Tatar road or Wallachian/ Moldovian road. For more details, cf. **Laurentiu Rădvan**, 2010, 331.

<sup>2</sup> For more details, cf.: **Edward Saïd**. 1980. However, the author works here with theses, which he considers valid for the later period of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>3</sup> **Nerses H. Akinean**, 1936.

stereotypes of the Others, the image of Motherland (hayrenikh) and the Armenian diaspora at the beginning of the zarthonkh (Enlightenment) period. Simeon's itinerary and his description of cities was comparable with those of other travelers of that period, originating from the region of Western and Central/Eastern Europe, because of their common features concerning their perception of the world<sup>4</sup>.

### 1. Armenians in Lvov

The Armenian diaspora on the territory of today's Ukraine, Moldova and Eastern Poland (Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth or Rzeczpospolita) began to take shape during the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The Armenian tradition states that the first migration waves (caused by Byzantine and Seldjuk attacks) came from Bagratid Ani during the 11<sup>th</sup> century<sup>5</sup>. The Armenians from North-Eastern Anatolia and the North Caucasus then settled in the region of South Russia and especially in the Crimea (this area still shows traces of Armenian presence). Kaffa or Theodosia, a former Genoese colony, was one of the places where the Armenian merchants found favorable conditions for trading – exploiting contacts with other Armenians and using caravan routes along the Danube valley (with ports as Braşov, Brăila or Akkerman-Cetatea Alba)<sup>6</sup>, the so-called *via tartarica* etc. The network of these merchants (called *khodjas*, *ağas* or *dovlatner*) included the area of the Black Sea region, Eastern Mediterranean and Eastern Europe. Shortly after the annexation of the Crimea by the armies of the Ottoman sultan (1475), the situation of Armenian traders became less advantageous and they started to move (following rivers as Prut, Dnieper, Dniester and Seret) to great trading towns and business centers, in Simeon's words *shahristans*.

The city of Lvov was one of those most important *shahristans*<sup>7</sup> and trade centers in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, located in the region of Volyn and Halich (also known as Red Russia). Lvov was situated at the crossroads of caravan and trade roads from the Crimea (*via tartarica*), the Danube valley, Cracovia, Novgorod, Astrakhan, the Baltic ports etc. Lvov was founded as the city of the Polish crown, thus depending on direct decisions of Polish monarchs; kings liberated the town from goods-storage tolls, making in this way a great opportunity for traders because of the right of free trade and inviting foreign merchants to hold some privileges. The Armenian community in Lvov was well established; other targets of migrations were

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<sup>4</sup> For more details and comparisons, cf.: Laurent D'Arvieux, 1718. Corneille le Brun, 1718. Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, 1646. Arakhel Davrijetsi, 1990. V. A. Hakobyan, 1956. Kryštof Harant z Polžic a Bezdružic, 1948. Martin Kabátník, 1985. Oldřich Prefát, 1948. Vavřinec Slížanský, 2009. Jean Thévénot, 1727. Pietro Della Valle, 1665. Jacques De Villamont, 1610. Václav Vratislav z Mitrovic, 1950.

<sup>5</sup> Gérard Dédéyan et al. 2008, 436.

<sup>6</sup> Lucien Ellington. 2004, 750.

<sup>7</sup> From Persian (town of towns, main city, capital).

towns like Kamianets Podilskyi, Suceava, Stanislaw-Ivano-Frankivsk, Lutsk, Zamość etc. The Armenian diaspora flourished there the most during the 14<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries (in 1585, the Armenians were invited to settle in Zamość, the birthplace of Simeon Lehatsi)<sup>8</sup>. Some Polish and Ukrainian towns still reflect in their toponymy traces of Armenian presence («Armenian dwelling», «Armenian bastion» in Kamianets etc.<sup>9</sup>). Armenian inhabitants were invited to settle by Polish kings and magnates, because they were famous and reputed as influent and skillful merchants contributing to the economic well-being of the region. Their security was guaranteed by royal privileges. The Armenian population was thus exempt from the status of burghers of the Polish crown (as subjects of the municipal law of Magdeburg); on the contrary, it was considered as an entity apart and depended entirely on the decisions of the monarch, as the Jewish community<sup>10</sup> did. The Armenians as well as the Jews, were supposed to pay higher taxes and war contributions. The multiethnic and multi-religious aspects of Lvov could be illustrated by a quotation from the Latin version of the Armenian Statuta, confirmed in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century by the Polish king Casimir: «*gentibus Ormenis, Iudeis, Saracenis, Ruthenis... Thartharis.*»<sup>11</sup> Due to the fact that Lvov was situated at the crossroads of the worlds of Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Islam, moreover, it was the place where Judaism and Armenian Apostolic faith frequently met, this multiethnic aspect is not surprising. Being a commercial crossroad and an intercultural border, characteristic of this *esprit de frontière*<sup>12</sup>, merchants from southern Russia, Scandinavia, the Baltic regions and the Ottoman Empire met in the main Rynek (square) of Lvov, selling and buying furs, honey and dried fish (imported from the north, furs being a part of the Ottoman tribute as decorative cloths) and so-called luxury goods from the south (wine, silk fabrics, brocade etc.).

The Armenian merchants – khodjas – usually held a monopoly on goods such as, originating from the south, the Crimean and Vlachian (Italian) wine they excelled in trade with jewelry and pearls. Great merchant «factorias», directed by members of influential Armenian families of tanuter<sup>13</sup>, specialized in the import of luxury «oriental» cloths such as althembash (a kind of richly-decorated brocade), shamlat or mukhayer (cloth made of goat's fine wool<sup>14</sup>). They excelled in crafts, working as goldsmiths, coiners, jewelers, gunsmiths, tailors, shoemakers, tanners etc. (Armenian

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<sup>8</sup> Adolf Pawiński, 1876, 21.

<sup>9</sup> Edward Schütz, 1968, 455–457.

<sup>10</sup> Gershon David Hundert, 2004, 20–22. Bernard Dov Weinryb, 1973, 75–79.

<sup>11</sup> «People of Armenians, Jews, Saracens, Ruthenians, ... Tatars». Marian Oles, 1966, 110.

<sup>12</sup> From French (spirit of boundary, periphery).

<sup>13</sup> From Armenian (patriarch, head of family, head of household).

<sup>14</sup> Krzysztof Stopka, 2000, 46.

khodjas were often heads of those guilds). Well-known and famous were especially Armenian sabres, swords (reputed for their high quality) and so-called bulawas, the ceremonial batons or maces of Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian and Cossack military leaders (hetmans)<sup>15</sup>. Apart from swords and sabres imported from the Caucasus, decorative bells were also sought out as «status goods», especially by the Polish nobility. In the range of Armenian traders' goods, spices (pepper, saffron, cinnamon, cumin), caviar, lemons, dates etc. also appeared. Armenians were reputed as experts in the matter of goods' quality and their prices, as negotiators, able to easily understand and find their way in the world of the borderland.

Located near Rynek, the centre of the Armenian quarter flourished especially during the 14<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> centuries, when the number of Armenians living in Poland was estimated at approximately 300 000 persons<sup>16</sup> – although the total number varied considerably depending on the political and economic situation and, subsequently, because of the dynamic aspect and mobility of the Armenian urban diaspora. In the period of Simeon's childhood, 22 great stores located in Rynek (a main square in Lvov) belonged to the Armenian merchants – from the total number of 38, specialized in international trade<sup>17</sup>. The Armenians from Poland were not only merchants and patrons of the Apostolic Church, but they also served as diplomats and official translators (tercimans)<sup>18</sup> for kings and magnates of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. They maintained permanent contacts with the Catholicos of all Armenians (residing in Edjmiatzin) through his legates (nviraks) and thanks to scholarships provided for talented students. The Armenian community in Poland (Lehastan), called Lehahayer, was considered wealthy and well-educated; its khodjas were usually well known maecenas of the Apostolic Church and the Polish kings. King Casimir the Great (14<sup>th</sup> century) and King Sigismund III (16<sup>th</sup> century) confirmed privileges for the Armenian community, which was thus established as an entity with a certain degree of autonomy – with the right freely to confess their own faith and with the right to be judged by their own representatives, their council of elders and their voyt (chairman). The council of elders (in Arm. tzerkh) resided at the seat of the Apostolic archbishop: *«hogevor datastan..., where every Thursday twelve aġas come together with the (Armenian) bishop and the patriarch of the monastery surb Hakob (in Lvov). They issue judgments and they shall know the degree of relationship (between fiancés). The court exercises the right and the judgment, such laws were given (to Arme-*

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<sup>15</sup> Eva Domanska, 2004, 78.

<sup>16</sup> Gérard Dédéyan, 438.

<sup>17</sup> Eleonora Nadel-Golobič, 1979/20, 363.

<sup>18</sup> Sadok W. F. Barącz, 1856, 235.

nians) by the *Catholikos and the king of Poland*»<sup>19</sup>. Besides the institution of voyt and the council of elders, we also find the council of forty aḡas (kharasun akhpar), which participated in the decision-making regarding testaments, marriage contracts etc. Armenian datastan followed the modified code of Mkhithar Gosh, while judges were supposed to (in the words of Minas Tokatetsi, the major scribe of Armenian court between 1572–1619): «*find the truth and the lie, to punish the guilty and free the innocent, ... to issue fair verdicts...destined to both, rich and poor, friend and enemy*»<sup>20</sup>. «*Apart from Armenian court, they have also ... the right of sword, which slashes an Armenian thief and robber, his head is shorter... no one else can judge Armenians but the Armenian court*»<sup>21</sup>, Simeon states. The Armenian chairman (voyt) was successively replaced by erets-phokhan, elder priests, and this situation persisted (more or less unchanged) up until the reforms of the Habsburg emperor Joseph in 1784 (and then even up to 1938).<sup>22</sup> Polish kings and magnates were responsible for supporting or for limiting the Armenian migrations that resulted in the establishment of urban communities, whose members were not reliant on cultivated land and therefore were more dependent on external changes and the monarch's will than were others. There were repeated demands for recognition of the original Armenian privileges in exchange for money brought into royal treasury, the practice, which represented considerable financial resources for Polish kings. New waves of Armenian refugees speaking Armenian or rather Kypchak (north-western Turkish) arrived in Lvov in the years 1550–1570 from Moldavia, in 1671 from Kamianets (after the Ottoman seizure of the Podolia region) etc., bringing new impulses for the original diaspora.<sup>23</sup> Permanent immigration of the Armenian pandukhts (refugees) came from inner Anatolia, where raids of jelâlis (rebels against the Ottoman rule) were destroying the Armenian countryside and towns. According to the testimony of an Italian traveler, A. M. Gratiani, the Armenians living in Lvov in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century knew only liturgical language, Grabar (due to regular liturgies in the church), but not the vernacular Armenian: «*songs sung in (Armenian) churches of Lvov are written in Armenian... but only their priests understand them, ... other Armenians speak the Scythian (Kypchak) language...*».<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Akinean, 336–337.

<sup>20</sup> Stopka, 31.

<sup>21</sup> Akinean, 337.

<sup>22</sup> Yaroslav Dachkévytch, 1968/5, 329–366.

<sup>23</sup> Y. Dachkévytch, 1968/5, 329–366. Richard Hovannisian (ed.), 1997, vol. 2, 66.

<sup>24</sup> Stopka, 20

Simeon's parents, originating from the Crimean Caffa, came to Zamość in 1585 at the invitation of the royal chancellor, Jan Zamoyski<sup>25</sup>. Simeon then studied in Lvov, becoming a scribe (dpir known as Simeon Lehatsi)<sup>26</sup>, acolyte and deacon (sarkavag), and serving at the court of the Archbishop's palace. Aged 24, Simeon decided on his own initiative to go on a pilgrimage. This journey finally took ten years, during which he occasionally worked as a scribe (at the seat of the Apostolic patriarch in Istanbul, at the seat of the Apostolic patriarch in Jerusalem, etc.). His Travel Accounts, based on the original travel diary, are written in Armenian (midjin hayeren sometimes mixed with Turkish, Arabo-Persian and Polish loanwords). After his return to Lvov in 1618, Simeon became one of the opponents and critics of the co-catholikos Melkhisedek and the new archbishop of Lvov, Nikolay Torosowicz, ordained by Melkhisedek in 1628. Torosowicz inclined to the side of the Catholics, was supported by the Polish nobility, burghers, and the Pope. He publicly declared his Catholic faith in 1630 and started to try to convert the whole Armenian community to Catholicism, while (using the words of Simeon's contemporary historian Arakhel Davrijetsi): «causing thus much suffering to the Armenian people»<sup>27</sup>. Simeon is (besides his Travel Accounts) also the author of the famous colophon «against Nikolay»; he writes: «they (the Catholics) slandered our faith, they call us renegades... they seized our churches and monasteries... our (Apostolic) priests are expelled, thrown into jail and chained, they forced them to deny our true faith by beating them...»<sup>28</sup>. Shortly after Simeon's death (probably in 1639) and in an atmosphere of religious wars, which divided Europe, the Catholic party of the Armenians in Lvov began to win, while its opponents had to go into exile in Moldavia. Simeon's work thus remains one of the latest monuments of the literary heritage of the Apostolic Armenians in Poland, being at the same time, however, one of the most significant.

## 2. Simeon's journey and the Armenians

Simeon started traveling as a young man with one clear idea, «to fulfill the desire of my heart and of my mind», «to visit sacred sites... and lands of infidels and pagans», inspired by other travelers like Ibn Battuta (14<sup>th</sup> century) or Evliya Tchelebi (17<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>29</sup> His journey took place between 1608–1618. Some of the most important cities mentioned in Simeon's Travel Accounts are – besides Jerusalem, dis-

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<sup>25</sup> Y. Dachkévytch, 329–366.

<sup>26</sup> For more details of Simeon's life, cf.: Yaroslav Dachkévytch, 1968/5, 329–366. Ya. Dachkévytch, 1970/7, 451–470. Y. Dachkévytch, 1973–1974/10, 306–358; 1975–76/11, 323–375). Y. Dachkévytch, 1977/12, 347–364.

<sup>27</sup> Arakhel Davrijetsi, 1990, 191.

<sup>28</sup> Akinean, 406–420.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Dankoff, 2006, 20

cussed later – Istanbul/Constantinople, Cairo, Venice and Rome. Simeon traveled through the Balkans (via Lvov – Suceava – Kalati, today's Ukraine, Moldavia, Romania and Bulgaria) to Istanbul, called Stampol in the eyes of Armenians (later Bolis), then he visited the neighborhood of the Marmara Sea and central and eastern Anatolia (Kayseri, Sivas, Tokat, Kharberd, Mush, Diyarbakır). He arrived at Jerusalem from Cairo (through Sinai) and then returned to Istanbul through the merchant towns of Ottoman Syria (Damas, Hama, Aleppo) and through Cilicia (Marash and Zeythun). His itinerary is characteristic of travelers coming from the region of Central and Eastern Europe (another possible and frequent way through Balkans was via Budin (Budapest) and Serbian Belehrad). All along the way could be found caravanserais (inns) for pilgrims and merchants; Simeon also frequently stayed with local Armenian families or accompanied caravans of Armenian merchants or khazna (an annual tribute levied from different provinces to Constantinople). His description is thus determined by the attitude of a foreigner and a Christian – representative of a minority in the Ottoman Empire – even if he identifies himself fully with the Ottoman Armenians.

Across the whole territory of the Ottoman Empire, Simeon's compatriots formed a part of millet-i Ermeni (Armenian «people» defined by Apostolic faith) within the status of dhimmi or non-Muslims living in the Muslim territory. As Simeon came from the Catholic world, the neighbor of the Orthodox empire, he had his specific point of view toward Ottoman society and its stratification. *«Everywhere... from Moldavia to Constantinople, from Rumelia to Venice, you do not find any single village... without Armenians. Because of our sins (as great as the sea) we are dispersed throughout the world as dust»*.<sup>30</sup> Being a non-Muslim living in the territory conquered and controlled by Muslims automatically included the inferior status, leading to the formation of specific «dhimmi» or «siege» mentality.<sup>31</sup> Dhimmi status (as the status of subjected population) sometimes approached even to the position of serfs in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>32</sup> Their lives were full of restrictions and prohibitions (although their rights were guaranteed by sharia and the sultan's firmans (edicts)<sup>33</sup>, their duties were more onerous). Non-Muslims were obliged to wear blue turbans and so-called zunnars<sup>34</sup>, which made them visible as the category of «Other» and «inner enemy». Non-Muslims were not allowed to marry Muslims, public manifestations of their faith were constrained (towers of churches had to be lower than

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<sup>30</sup> Akinean, 82.

<sup>31</sup> Bat Ye'or, 2002, 104.

<sup>32</sup> Bruce McGowan, 1981, 45, 53.

<sup>33</sup> Oded Peri, 2001, 51–53.

<sup>34</sup> Peri Bearman, 1991–2005, 617.

towers of mosques, church bells were prohibited with a few exceptions<sup>35</sup>), they had to pay higher taxes and war contributions, they were not allowed to serve in the Ottoman army or in the bureaucratic system, they were limited in how far they could show off their property and wealth etc. Paying official taxes (to the Sublime Porte) and unofficial (to ağas and beys, local leaders) was no exception. In the words of Simeon: «*Christians are not allowed to sit on the horse or the mule, not to have nice clothes or a large garden or big house... otherwise Muslims seize everything into their own hands... Only in Istanbul... Christians can rejoice a little... they have their churches, they gather during the feasts and they sing songs... They sit on horses, they wear coats made of expensive cloth... in Anatolia you cannot see it at all...*».<sup>36</sup> In another place, Simeon writes: «*(Christians) are constantly tormented and tortured, their liturgies are dishonored, their churches are ruined, priests tormented by doubts turned away from prayers, they turned away from knowledge, because they are worried, everything rests on their shoulders. If they enter the church and conduct the Mass, they do it very quickly and they flee, in order that no one finds them in the church... they must nourish all, governor, judge..., tax collectors... they are beaten in order to make them bring the food quickly... And the (Armenian) nation not only does not come to Mass, but forgets also God because of taxes and duties, it forgets also namus... there is not a single day at peace... (Armenian) houses are small and flat, dark and under the ground, and (Armenians) are still tormented. Defamation and looting fall on their heads. Who can construct a nice house, possess a horse or a mule, who can wear a nice hat, nice clothes or boots?*».<sup>37</sup> Christians frequently became the target of injuries and mockeries, according to Simeon's lament: «*they call us unbelievers, rebellious, dogs or pigs*».<sup>38</sup> Simeon identifies himself fully with Ottoman Armenians and their «poor conditions of life», and perceives this as a kind of curse and tragic national destiny. Nevertheless, certain exceptions existed in the case of this inferior tolerated status of dhimmi.<sup>39</sup> We should suppose, that these inferior conditions were partly exempted in the case of wealthy merchants, whose importance within the Armenian community could be clearly documented by the fact that these khodjas (especially from Aleppo, Van and Persian Nor Djughha near Isfahan) paid the

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<sup>35</sup> Tchengeli kilise or surb Karapet (known also as Msho Sultan) near the town of Mush, (called Çanlı or Çengelli kilise in Turkish or Kurdish), **Richard G. Hovannisian** (ed.), 2001, 53.

<sup>36</sup> **Akinean**, 199.

<sup>37</sup> **Akinean**, 270.

<sup>38</sup> Simeon's disillusionment originates from the comparison with situation in Anatolian town of Malatya, where Christians were according to his testimony called only «Yesayikuli» (servants of Jesus), which is clearly positive designation of the category of religious Other. Christians were also designated by Ottoman Turks by the common term of «gavur», infidel. **Akinean**, 190.

<sup>39</sup> **Philip Mansel**, 1994, 36.

debt of the Jerusalem patriarchate and contributed to its further development. Rich Armenian khodjas usually owned large palaces and held their safeguards; they held public and expensive celebrations for pilgrims or mahtes (in Armenian: those, who could see the place of death and resurrection of Jesus) just returning from Jerusalem.

### **3. Jerusalem: the vision of the Holy City**

Simeon's description of the Holy City is very detailed and it reflects the fact that Simeon perceives Jerusalem as a fulfillment of his sacred pilgrimage – ukht. While Cairo is for him the symbol of an «oriental town», characterized by its disorder, dirt and overcrowding, Jerusalem represents the quintessence of the Holy City «touched by God» – similar to Istanbul or Constantinople, in whose image the former glory of the city of the early Christian emperors and the seat of holy Patriarchs is clearly reflected. Simeon's text allows the reader to form an idea of the image of the city in the period in question (September–April of 1617). In order to illustrate the situation, the author makes a detailed mention of the city, its quarters, its ethnoreligious communities and their mutual relationships. Simeon's text (apart from the description of Jerusalem, its Christian quarters and especially the see of the Patriarchate) deals with the recent history of the Armenian Patriarchate and it also depicts other holy places in the vicinity of the city, the tradition of pilgrimage as well as the celebration of the principal feasts.

To see Jerusalem and the holy places was, in the eyes of Christians, Jews and Muslims, the fulfillment of holy pilgrimage and the accomplishment of sacred duty, and its importance for monotheists was undeniable. The Armenian tradition of pilgrimage to Jerusalem started in the early centuries of the existence of Church. Simeon thus reached his dream of complete ukht, which he had had in his mind already in Lvov. In Simeon's description of Jerusalem, one fact manifests itself clearly – the importance of the city and its specific status as the Holy City. Jerusalem surprises its visitors by its extraordinary aspect of a Christian pilgrim town. The main Christian feasts such as Easter were accompanied by sumptuous celebrations and common (Christian and Muslim) processions that took place in the presence of the high-ranking Ottoman officials. The holy places were shared and the cohabitation became more important especially in the time of great religious feasts (Easter, Christmas). In the Church of Holy Sepulcher, there were twelve chapels «for twelve nations», as Simeon states, or twelve religions (Armenians, Greeks, Copts, Ethiopians, Assyrians, and different Catholics), so different Masses were conducted at the same time. Circulation and rotation of pilgrims were guaranteed by Muslim guards. The celebration of the main feasts such as Easter or Christmas was supervised by sheiks, the Muslim judge, police chief, governor etc., while Christians were generally represented by their patriarchs and main translators (tercimans). The community of Apostolic Ar-

menians was represented by the Armenian Patriarch or Paronter (Grigor from Gandzak), whose authority was important not only for the native Armenian community in Jerusalem, but also for the Armenian refugees from inner Anatolia (whose constant inflows were caused by the jelâli revolts) and for the numerous pilgrims coming to see the holy places via different routes.

Crowds of pilgrims entering the city gates during great feasts have since the beginning infringed the restrictive rules which should have determined the behavior of dhimmi. However, the Ottoman Sublime Porte (government) tried to balance the tensions between Christians and Muslims, while Christian pilgrims were recognized as *mustam'in* (in Arab.) with specific permission (in Arab. *amân*), with the right of access to their original sanctuaries (it originally means before the Muslim conquest of *dar al-harb*)<sup>40</sup>. It could be said that the position of Christians has been more stable in Jerusalem than elsewhere, both in the case of foreign pilgrims and local dhimmis.<sup>41</sup> Christians and Jews settled here were not afraid to appeal to shariat courts, even though they were frequently accused of hiding weapons in their monasteries and of preparing riots against the Ottomans (as Simeon mentions, even the Apostolic patriarch was imprisoned for this reason)<sup>42</sup>. During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, exclusive rights to manage the Holy Places were held by the Franciscan Order (whose interests were protected by the French consul residing in the Istanbul quarter of Galata). In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the preferences of Ottomans inclined to the side of the Orthodox Greeks and the Apostolic Armenians – the Sublime Porte started to favor its Ottoman subjects, *Ermeni milleti* and *Rum milleti*<sup>43</sup>. Both parties of the interreligious conflict had the necessary documents to verify the validity of their right to access to Holy places. Among the most disputed places figured the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem and the Church of the Nativity in Betlehem.

Simeon arrived to the gates of Jerusalem after a long journey through Sinai; he left Cairo with a caravan accompanying *khazna* (annual tribute) and pilgrims to Mecca. Passing through Gaza and Ramla, he reached Jerusalem by land, his security and status guaranteed by *amân* – a status accorded to Christian pilgrims to the holy places, who used official roads and paid all toll fees. The entrance to the city is per-

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<sup>40</sup> Peri, 51–53.

<sup>41</sup> Dror Zeevi, 2012, 4–20.

<sup>42</sup> During the visit of Simeon, the atmosphere of mutual distrust between Muslims and Christians fostered because of the fear of Crusade. The official keeper of holy sanctuary of Jerusalem was Ottoman sultan, but the great reputation of sacred sites determined also Christian presence. Ottoman authorities attached great importance to Christian pilgrims and their security, but they were aware of them because of possible conquest of Palestine by Lebanese emir with help of «fifth column», composed of Christian Catholic communities settled in Palestine (originated from Italy and France, 1614–1630).

<sup>43</sup> Zeevi, 17.

ceived in the Travel Accounts – especially in contrast to the long, difficult and dangerous journey across Sinai – as literally a «new world». In comparison with other cities under Ottoman control, the Muslim aspect was partially neglected in the case of Jerusalem, while the Christian aspect was emphasized. The caravan of pilgrims<sup>44</sup> was officially greeted by the ambassador of the Patriarch, usually also by local bishops, priests and the official translator. All Armenian pilgrims then formed a procession, put on their chasubles and entered the city on the road to the monastery of St. James (surb Hakob), singing sharakans. Armenian pilgrims could rest in the monastery of St James, while others had to find their accommodation in inns or their own monasteries (held by Greeks or Franciscans). Catholic pilgrims were obliged to spend the night in the monastery of St. Saviour on Mount Sion. Outside the official route to holy places, pilgrims could not go anywhere alone, only rarely and always led by a professional guide. «*The custom is maintained here, that none of the pilgrims should go anywhere out of the convent of Mount Sion... without the knowledge of the father guardian... if so, only in group, because to go alone is too dangerous and the guardian will not let him*», wrote Oldřich Prefát, a Czech traveler from the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>45</sup> «*We could not continue our way because of dangers threatening our throats... because of the denial of our Christian faith*», states Kryštof Harant, another traveler who visited Jerusalem at the very end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>46</sup>. Thus, pilgrims are able to perceive the Holy city exclusively through the stories of the Bible. Common everyday life in Jerusalem is not in the focus of their attention, because they are allowed to see only a little, only a «permitted» and distorted fraction of reality. A lot of biblical sites far from the inner city are difficult to see and the Ottoman pasha (sandjak pasha) sends pilgrims there only after they paid a fee and with an armed escort. «*We could not go there because of the great danger of a large amount of Arabs... who have the custom to treat pilgrims terribly*», writes Kryštof Harant.<sup>47</sup> The possibility of discovering another world was thus very limited, especially when taking into account that the monastery was fully responsible for the pilgrims, for their safety and security; the monastery also searched interpreters and city guides, «*tulmachs... or tercimans, who knew Greek and Italian... for those, who need the translation*». <sup>48</sup> Among famous tercimans, there were Greeks and local Armenians.<sup>49</sup> Some

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<sup>44</sup> Czech traveler Vavřinec Slížanský met a caravan of Armenians and Greeks formed in Ramla. Vavřinec Slížanský, 2009, 35.

<sup>45</sup> Oldřich Prefát, 1948, 48.

<sup>46</sup> Kryštof Harant, 1948, 187.

<sup>47</sup> Kryštof Harant, 1948, 229 and 238.

<sup>48</sup> Oldřich Prefát, 1948, 49.

<sup>49</sup> Richard Hovannisian – Simon Payaslian, 2010, 187. Sepuh Aslanian, 2011, 38.

of the pilgrims remained in the Holy Land till their death, which was considered a path to their ultimate salvation.

As stated before, non-Muslims (Ermeni and Rumi millets) had their religious rights guaranteed and usually well protected, so this pilgrim procession should not be seen as a surprising phenomenon in the Muslim world, where the conditions of dhimmis were otherwise restricted and the manifestations of non-Muslim faith usually not too visible. It should be taken into account that the institution of millet during the 17<sup>th</sup> century was primarily a flexible system, whose functioning showed various nuances depending on the specific geographical locality or a specific historical period, or local officials etc. The Christian quarters of Jerusalem, the main destination of pilgrims, was considered one of the most holy Christian places, its reputation being based upon the long-term Christian presence. Outside of the major religious holidays Jerusalem is depicted as a town empty of pilgrims. The most famous holy places located inside the city and in its vicinity were more or less prepared for the visit of pilgrims, who came here according to their well-defined program (even if the reconstruction of all sites was strictly reduced and determined by dhimmi status, thus possible only with special permission or firman/berat from the Ottoman sultan and after paying all dues). According to Simeon's description, the more distant sites were in ruins: *«far from the city... because of fear of Arabs, ... there are churches, but no services performed, no mass conducted, no priests...»*<sup>50</sup>. The keys of the doors of the most holy churches were kept by Muslim sheiks (in the case of the Holy Sepulcher/surb Haruthyun) or by janitors of different Christian religions (Franks or Greeks). The most famous sites frequented by pilgrims, forming a kind of «obligatory pilgrim itinerary» (in Simeon's words: *«following the list of holy sites»*), were for example: the Church of Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, The Church of Nativity in Bethlehem, the church of Mother of God in Gethsemane etc. Pilgrims were not allowed to enter without their tezkere (permission). The entrance toll, quite expensive, could be understood as a kind of enrichment means for Muslim supervisors (sheiks, chiefs of police, guards, governor, judge etc.) and of course, as the source of important income for the Sublime Porte. Every pilgrim had originally paid only for himself, obtaining thus his own tezkere. Then, the entrance fees were levied collectively in monasteries, where the pilgrims stayed. After checking their permission, pilgrims were collectively allowed to enter the church under the supervision of guards. After visiting all the holy places, pilgrims (always accompanied by a professional guide providing an expert commentary) obtained the title of «pilgrim to holy places», in Armenian mahtes. Pilgrims, who had successfully completed their pil-

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<sup>50</sup> Akinean, 277.

grimage, were welcomed and applauded on their way home; they brought home some souvenirs and – among others – also characteristic tattoos, that symbolized their journey. The pilgrimage to Jerusalem was undoubtedly a very expensive affair, available only to wealthy nobles or possible after saving up money for a long time (as in the case of Simeon, who worked as scribe in Istanbul and Jerusalem). Those pilgrims who came to Jerusalem without necessary financial funds depended entirely on their co-religionists and their mercy. *«The poor, weeping bitterly, who remained at the door of the church (the Holy Sepulcher), begged them: «let us go inside», but (sheiks, subashi, qadi) said: «no, you must pay at least two or three golden coins». When the poor swore that they had nothing, they stripped them naked and searched them. Then they said by means of terciman: «pay, so that you can see the light (of Easter)». So (our) Paronter summoned our khodjas (merchants) and asked them: «for the love of Christ, do not leave the poor stand at the door, but please, pay according to your means, so that the poor could also see the light».*<sup>51</sup>

The economic aspect of Christian pilgrims was, in the eyes of Ottoman authorities, more than visible, whether in the case of the entry to the most sacred sites or in the case of «forced» pilgrimage to River Jordan. According to Simeon: *«Alas! They did not come with the paron (Muslim governor) to Jordan»*<sup>52</sup>. Pilgrims were required to participate, to pay the «official» fee and consequently to buy themselves out of the captivity of «insurgent Arabs». 200 horsemen of the governor provided protection against nomads and a kind of safe-passage, and, forcing pilgrims to buy even the water during long negotiations with «insurgents», *«they started to collect the fee..., those who did not (or could not) pay were beaten, kicked even fifty times..., we became tired because of the heat, but there was nowhere to run, because (Ottoman soldiers) blocked all the roads...»*<sup>53</sup>. Thus, in reality the procession of pilgrims became a welcomed source of living for local Muslim lords and tolls and fees levied could be seen as a kind of ransom. The official price for entry to the Holy Sepulcher during Simeon's visit (determined by the Sublime Porte) was established as 8–9 golden coins for Franks (foreigners from Europe)<sup>54</sup> and 4 golden coins for other pilgrims, with the exception of higher religious rank dignitaries. Several hundred

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<sup>51</sup> Akinean, 286–287.

<sup>52</sup> Akinean, 262.

<sup>53</sup> Akinean, 264.

<sup>54</sup> To compare with Czech travelers to Jerusalem in the period concerned (starting at the end of 16<sup>th</sup> century and continuing to the beginning of 17<sup>th</sup> century), Kryštof Harant z Polžic a Bezdržic and Oldřich Prefát z Vlkanova (1597, 1609). For more details concerning former Ottoman currency, cf.: Peter Sugar, 1996.

pilgrims came to Jerusalem every year<sup>55</sup>, crowds gathered especially in the period of great feasts.

#### 4. Armenians in Jerusalem

A few families of native Armenians lived in Jerusalem, there were also Armenian pilgrims, coming every year by sea or by the Gaza road from Egypt, the so-called land of Misr, according to Simeon. Simeon counted only twelve native Armenian families or households in Jerusalem, all were: «*poor... weavers, belt-makers, they make collars, waists... for pilgrims*».<sup>56</sup> He estimates the number of Armenians arriving each year on the occasion of great feasts at several hundreds to one thousand, even if – with the highest probability – it is an exaggerated number (other authors speak about dozens of Armenian pilgrims, whose number fluctuated depending on how security conditions changed). Local Armenians probably produced and sold goods, brought home from Jerusalem, according to the Czech traveler Kryštof Harant. Harant writes: «*Rosaries..., crosses ... bought from Christians of different religions who are making them and bringing them to the monastery,... especially crosses made from wood, carved ... and covered with small stones, which touched the holy places... we gave them to our friends in our country in order to honor them and to commemorate... the Holy city*»<sup>57</sup>.

The influence of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem was noticeable. Even in comparison with the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople<sup>58</sup>, the official head of the Ottoman Ermeni millet, and the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia<sup>59</sup>, the influence of the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem was determined by its great prestige relying on the status of sacred sites and on the possession of the well-reputed St. James monastery. The centre of Armenian life in Jerusalem was represented by the Armenian quarter (till today one of the four traditional quarters of the Old City of Jerusalem), whose «heart» was the monastery of St. James, a complex able to accommodate more than a thousand pilgrims and their horses, according to Simeon.<sup>60</sup> Oldřich Prefát described the Armenian quarter as follows: «*Nice... church, which has*

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<sup>55</sup> Peri, 178.

<sup>56</sup> Akinean, 260–261. Number of Christians living in Jerusalem and paying poll-tax (jizya) is estimated on the basis of data from 1690/1691 tahrir as beying 622 households (levied per head), not taking into account women, children, aged people, disabled and clergy (these following categories were not subject to the census of Non-Muslim population and its taxation). The census results suggest that the Christian population of Jerusalem has considerably increased in the period of Simeon's life. Peri, 13.

<sup>57</sup> Kryštof Harant, 1948, 167 a 240.

<sup>58</sup> Patriarch of Constantinople, Grigor Kesaratsi (1601–1608, 1611–1621, 1623–1626).

<sup>59</sup> Catholicos of Cilicia/Sis, Hovhannes IV. from Aintab (1601–1621).

<sup>60</sup> Akinean, 249.

*the name of St. James, where James the Great was beheaded*».<sup>61</sup> Kryštof Harant states, that St. James is: «A rather large church, built of stone, which hold... in his power Christian Armenians ... There is a chapel... vaulted and painted ... at the east side stands an altar made of stone ... where St. James the Great, the Apostle of the Lord, was beheaded on the commandment of king Herode... then 335 steps from St. James, there is a wall and small church situated within, where once stood the house of Caiaphas».<sup>62</sup> Simeon adds, that: «in St. James there are three hundred sixty-five cells of stone and lime for monks... There are forty wells, and everything is surrounded by high stone massive walls. There are great iron gates like (the entrance of) the city. Behind the gate there is the three-storied mansion of the Patriarch and Catholicos. Every street here has its name».<sup>63</sup> Vavřinec Slížanský, a traveler, who visited Jerusalem 40 years after Simeon, speaks about «the Church of St. Jacobi the old, which belongs to Armenians. An Armenian born a Christian and a Pole led us to go inside, he led us in through a small iron door (one can find all kinds of iron doors there, Christians live behind them)».<sup>64</sup>

For Simeon, the Armenian quarter in Jerusalem is the very embodiment of Karg, the order and discipline of the Apostolic Church: «I witnessed the great order and respect for traditions (karg), both in church affairs and in the case of secular (affairs)...They worship continuously, they sing psalms...».<sup>65</sup> Jerusalem is the symbol of the City of the God, the reflection of the glory of the original Apostolic Church and the time of apostles, the quintessence of intact traditions and purity. «It is better to stay (and live constantly in Jerusalem) than to return (home) and regret».<sup>66</sup> Simeon writes about the Holy City – the only place on Earth, where the Christians can live in the very presence of their God.

Patriarch Grigor from Gandzak (1613–1645)<sup>67</sup> called Paronter, whom Simeon dealt with as his official scribe (on the recommendation of Simeon's friend, bishop Ghukas, nvirak of the Patriarch), managed to improve the reputation of the Armenian patriarchate and to fortify its position. The stability of the Apostolic see was finally confirmed when he paid the debt of Armenian Patriarchate, caused (according to Simeon) by «carelessness of former Patriarchs» and by the decline in the number of pilgrims because of the jelâli raids. The Patriarch depended financially on pilgrims,

<sup>61</sup> Oldřich Prefát, 1948, 43.

<sup>62</sup> Kryštof Harant, 1948, 208.

<sup>63</sup> Akinean, 253.

<sup>64</sup> Vavřinec Slížanský, 2009, 52–53.

<sup>65</sup> Akinean, 249–250.

<sup>66</sup> Akinean, 299.

<sup>67</sup> Patriarch of Jerusalem (Paron-Ter), Grigor IV. (1613–1645).

as Simeon explains: «*the rebels (jelâlis) appeared, roads were cut off... many impoverished, many perished... the debts of the Patriarchate grew and because of unjust demands... they increased to forty thousand kurush (silver coins)... every possession of Church... was seized by unbelievers*»<sup>68</sup>. According to Simeon, «*... the Armenians did not appear in the (Church of) the Holy Sepulcher before because of the shame and mockeries, because they had no holy places, no vases or ceremonial garments... the Armenian people had to endure all this, tormented by doubts*»<sup>69</sup>. On the initiative of Armenian merchants (starting with «*khodja Enki from Amid*»), who assembled in Aleppo in order to discuss «*the sorting out of Jerusalem's debt... they (khodjas) finally gathered forty thousands kurush... to pay the debt of the Patriarchate*»<sup>70</sup>. Thus, the situation of the Apostolic Church seemed to ameliorate visibly after the election of Patriarch Grigor («*before, while serving in Bethlehem, he did not have even a cross to bless the water*»). But even the position of Paronter Grigor – himself the ideal of ascetism and eremitism – was far from being unassailable, judging by the events described by Simeon – the Armenian Patriarch was imprisoned by the Ottoman governor of Jerusalem because of an accusation of storing weapons (the pretext was furnished by sheiks during the reconstruction of the monastery of St. James). «*Because of constructing monasteries and churches... he (Patriarch) suffered a lot from sheiks and the paron (governor of Jerusalem)... he was put in jail many times, he was put in chains... they even sentenced him to death*»<sup>71</sup>. One year before Simeon's arrival to Jerusalem (1616), the mufti (the highest Muslim religious chief) seized the church of Ascension and constructed the mosque nearby, despite all Christian protests (even if before, the Armenian Patriarch had always managed to save the church by writing petitions to Istanbul and by paying bribes). The Patriarch had to pay two thousands kurush (silver coins) every year as taxes and duties and he had to buy the freedom of prisoners, pay their ransoms etc.; nevertheless, even with the help of wealthy Armenian merchants and as he depended financially on pilgrims, resources of the Patriarchate were limited. His position towards the Ottoman Porte was determined politically and economically, particularly by the level of financial resources: «*(The Patriarch) accomplished everything through the payment of money... He had to send expensive gifts (to the governor and others)*». All Armenian monasteries had to pay high taxes to: «*security men, tax collectors, the local governor, police chief, sheiks*»<sup>72</sup>. Duties and taxes (as well as quasi-official bakhshish) were

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<sup>68</sup> Akinean, 274–276.

<sup>69</sup> Akinean, 274–276.

<sup>70</sup> Akinean, 249–250.

<sup>71</sup> Akinean, 281, 283.

<sup>72</sup> Akinean, 284.

collected during the whole year: «*impious (Muslims)... take unjustly more from Christians, hundreds and thousands (of coins)*»<sup>73</sup>. Expensive gifts and festivities had to be paid for by Christians to Muslims as their expression of gratitude for tolerating Christian processions and for allowing the entry of pilgrims to holy sites, while Christian funerals took place silently and without prayers. As Simeon compares the discrimination against the Ottoman Armenians with his birthplace, he notes, «*Bodies are silently carried through the streets... just as in the case of Jews in Poland*»<sup>74</sup>..

The situation of Armenians in Jerusalem visibly improved several years after Simeon's return to Lvov (1618). The Ottoman Sublime Porte started to favour the Apostolic and Orthodox Patriarchate to the detriment of the Franciscans in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century; and the religious struggle between Armenians and Greeks had subsequently broken out because of the access to holy sites. Among the most disputed sites were of course the church of the Holy Sepulcher and Holy Nativity, Armenians temporarily lost even the monastery of St. James. As written by the Armenian chronicler from Bitlis, Vardan Baghishetsi, a contemporary of the Ottoman traveler Evliya Tchelebi: «*among the bitter attitudes we must endure there is one worse than others, our grief is so great, that even hearts of stone would be moved, hearing our lamentations and seeing our tears... because the Greeks... the nation, which is our enemy from the very start, the nation of a belief deviant from our true faith, and with a heart full of immorality, (Greeks) vomited drop by drop the poison of bitterness on us... for a long time they were jealous, they prepared a secret trap... they blinded their souls and turned away from Christ... for two hundred thousand kurush, (one hundred (thousand) dahekans (golden coins)), they bribed the sultan and seized the monastery of St. James, so we lost our joy... we are humiliated... it is better to die than to live such a life... alas! darkness has covered us, because of our sins*»<sup>75</sup>. This tragic event occurred in 1657, nearly 40 years after Simeon's journey. Armenian-Greek religious clashes did not stop even after the return of the monastery to Armenians. Another struggle arose because of access to the most important holy place (Aedicule of Holy Sepulcher) during the evening of Easter Saturday. Celebrations accompanying Easter should be perceived as the symbolic peak of the whole year in Christian Jerusalem. «*Without pilgrims, Jerusalem is empty, but during Easter it is filled with crowds*», states Simeon<sup>76</sup>; «*(the city) resembles the monastery*»<sup>77</sup>. The vast majority of pilgrims arrived especially for this occasion and the Patriarch made

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<sup>73</sup> Akinean, 284.

<sup>74</sup> Akinean, 270.

<sup>75</sup> Chronicle of Vardan Baghishetsi (Vardan of Bitlis). V. A. Hakobyan, 1956, 397–398.

<sup>76</sup> Akinean, 268–269.

<sup>77</sup> Akinean, 262.

available most of his resources in honor of this feast. During the week of Easter, the Passions of Christ were symbolically re-enacted, started by Palm Sunday; the Patriarch's deputy descended from the Mount of Olives, sitting on a donkey and passing around the monastery of St. James, while Christians greeted him by waving branches of palms and dates. On Easter Holy Thursday there the traditional washing of feet in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher took place, then Christians kept vigils in the garden of Gethsemane and commemorated thus the last days of Jesus Christ before his Crucifixion. Processions went on Friday morning to Golgotha and visited the holy site, where the body of Jesus was placed in the tomb. The night of Saturday to Sunday was the most important feast of Easter, because all pilgrims tried to enter the church of Holy Sepulcher in order to wait for the appearance of the Holy Light. Simeon participated in all Easter celebrations and thus accomplished his ukht. He was present in Holy Sepulcher during Saturday evening prayers, while all patriarchs of all churches concerned successively entered the Aedicule. Even if Simeon did not mention the primary position of the Orthodox Greek Patriarch, it was he, who entered the first the Aedicule of Holy Sepulcher to appear with lighted candles. In 1630, the head of the Orthodox was replaced by the head of the Apostolics and from 1657, the Armenian and Greek patriarch entered both at the same time.<sup>78</sup> The Armenian position did not cease to be strengthened till the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century – in 1654, the Armenian Patriarchate bought the rights of access to the holy places from all the monophysite churches (Jacobites, Copts, Ethiopians), while Greeks purchased the claims of Georgians and Serbs.

Simeon provides a vivid description of Easter festivities, which in that year were held separately and at different times (Armenian Zatik, Orthodox and Catholic Easter). He mentions that during his visit, more than a thousand of pilgrims had to gather in the monastery of St. James. *«Some (of us) were even sitting at the roof of St. James... we ate harissa and khorovats... we drank sweet wine. At night, you could count more than five hundred lanterns and candlesticks in the church of Holy Sepulcher, not counting lamps in St. James and in other monasteries... owned by Armenians. Because at this time, the Armenian people were more powerful and greater than all other nations (in Jerusalem). I think, that only once before, in royal times it had to be so»*<sup>79</sup>.

#### **6. Stereotypes of Others and intercommunity life in Jerusalem**

Simeon's stereotypes of Others, formed as usual on the basis of religion, do not differ so much from other contemporary Armenian authors. Armenian historiograph-

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<sup>78</sup> Peri, 118.

<sup>79</sup> Akinean, 293.

ical tradition shows here some common features based on the collective historical memory, accompanied by local variations. Let us compare Simeon's text with Armenian chronicles from the same period, originating from Eastern Anatolia or the Caucasus.

Tachiks or Ottoman Turks are (in the category of Muslims) usually perceived as a kind of necessary evil, striking the persecuted and chosen Armenian people (besides the wars, famine and epidemics). They are depicted as a perpetual danger and threat for Christians, forcing the latter to convert to Islam, destroying their churches and kidnapping their women. The life «under the yoke of Muslims» could be understood as the God's punishment «because of our sins», «because we had forgotten God's commandments», «because we turn away from ukht» – as a rejection, of the God's Covenant. The image of Muslims usually displays common and unchangeable negative characteristics of «bad people with stony hearts». Their stereotype serves as a starting point for comparison with other ethnoreligious communities.

Probably because Simeon grew up in a Catholic environment, his Muslim stereotypes are more negative and visibly more directed against Muslims than is the case with chroniclers of the so-called Bitlis school in Eastern Anatolia, living for a long time in the immediate neighborhood of Muslims. According to Simeon's testimony, relations between Christians and Muslims were tense, they took place in a climate of mutual distrust and forced dependence between the superior and the inferior. Simeon is lamenting «the life in torment and torture», Christians were cursed, offended and humiliated here in Jerusalem even more than in Ottoman Anatolia: «*they are calling us (Christians) ... dogs, pigs..., while in Malatya, Muslims do not call us gavur, but only Isa kuli, (servant of Jesus)*»<sup>80</sup>. Christians are afraid of going to Church, priests are persecuted and responsible for any pretext, taxes and duties are too high to pay. Christians play the role of servants, they must be able to provide everything that Muslims request without delay and if not, they are heavily fined and punished. Constant fear and pressure accompany the lives of Christians, they are forced to limit themselves to: «*small and dark houses*», «*they are not allowed to have horses, mules or nice clothes*» and yet, they «*do not find peace, they live constantly in troubles and torments*»<sup>81</sup>. This generally negative image of Muslims deals with: «*cursing Christians, swearing our faith, the cross and sacraments in such a way that I can not even pronounce it or write it down... Therefore people do not go to Mass and they forget even the God because of their troubles and because of high taxes, they alas forget the*

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<sup>80</sup> Akinean, 190.

<sup>81</sup> Akinean, 191.

*namus*»<sup>82</sup>. In comparison with other negative stereotypes, the image of Ottoman Turks (Tachiks) nevertheless reveals some positive or ambivalent characteristics; Simeon for example praises and appreciates Tachiks as guardians of order and as supervisors of discipline. The image of Muslim is thus strictly divided around the stereotype of Turk (ambivalent) and Arab (negative). The stereotypical negative image of Arabs shares common features with stereotypes, detected in travel accounts of other contemporary authors – Arabs (especially nomadic Arabs) are the embodiment of vicious mobs and bandits and robbers. Arab peasants (fellahs) are perceived by Simeon as cursed people, doomed to the fate of Noah's curse (curse of Ham) to be eternal slaves of Ottoman Turks.

While the image of Orthodox Greeks in chronicles written by authors of the Bitlis school is almost exclusively negative: «*they are cunning, crafty, perfidious, treacherous..., from the very beginning Greeks are our enemies, ... because they envy us*» (Chronicle of Vardan of Bitlis, Vardan Baghishetsi)<sup>83</sup>, the stereotype of Greeks according to Simeon's testimony is rather positive. «*(In Jerusalem), Greeks, Copts, Syrians and Armenians live in harmony and love. They mutually marry their sons and daughters to each other. They usually go to (our) marriages and funerals..., and we (go to theirs), so there is a peace and harmony*».<sup>84</sup> Here, the Greek Orthodox community is depicted in common terms as the community of Syrian Jacobites (Assyrians, in Armenian Asori), which formed, together with Armenians, millet-i Ermeni. Simeon describes Greeks in Jerusalem as «*poor people*», their Patriarch «*was so heavily in debt that he had to flee from Jerusalem... how fortunate we are being not like them*»<sup>85</sup>. Simeon did not mention any dispute regarding the division of power in shared sites.

The negative image of Greeks by Armenian authors from Eastern Anatolia is probably caused by mutual rivalry – both in the field of religion and in the field of business and trade – between Armenians and Greeks. Simeon, educated in the multi-ethnic city of Lvov, had fewer experiences of Greek than of Jewish merchants, thus his stereotypical perception was less influenced by negative images of the Orthodox world. On the other hand, Simeon's perception of Jews is quite negative, probably caused by an environment of direct competition and struggle in Polish merchant towns. He did not mention them as a kind of «elder brothers» (as in the famous text of Movses Khorenatsi)<sup>86</sup>, but as enemies, who have to live under restrictions and

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<sup>82</sup> Akinean, 270–272.

<sup>83</sup> Hakobyan, 397–398.

<sup>84</sup> Akinean, 266.

<sup>85</sup> Akinean, 278

<sup>86</sup> Moise de Khorène, 1993, 320–323.

prohibitions, deservedly punished. *«In the land of Pope, there is a good law against Jews... they are not allowed to open a shop or store, they can live only from bric-a-brac... It is not like in Lehastan or Tachkastan, where the impious and devils seized everything»*<sup>87</sup>. Simeon mentions the fact that some Jews from Poland settle in Jerusalem, while the Jewish diaspora from Poland supports them financially.

Simeon's relation to Roman Catholics is positive. He originated from Poland and he grew up in the environment deeply marked by the Catholic religion and its external manifestations. All these manifestations of Christian faith were forbidden in the territory of the Ottoman Empire; that is why Simeon was so amazed when arriving in Split (after his long journey through Ottoman Balkans and stay in Istanbul), he saw *«bells, high bell towers decorated with crosses»*<sup>88</sup>. Simeon praised especially the piety, charity and mercy among Franks. *«Franks (in Jerusalem) love Armenians very much, they are friends, they treat Armenians in high esteem ... they come three times a year to St. James, our Patriarch honors them with dinner»*.<sup>89</sup> The only exception is Simeon's relation to Jesuits. Due to his experience from Venice, where Jesuits became the target of dispute between the Pope and Serenissima he describes them as: *«erroneous, mistaken... bad and perfidious»*.<sup>90</sup> Jesuits in Rome, whose image is described in a Venetian context as purely negative, are on the contrary portrayed as an example of piety. Of course, the image of Catholicism changed in Simeon's text radically after his return to Lvov, during religious struggles between Apostolics and Catholics.

With regard to the Armenian autostereotype (self-image) in Simeon's text, it could be described as quite critical, in some cases even negative. Simeon attaches the blame for the contemporary situation «of lament and torment» either to aylazgner (Muslims) or to representatives of the Apostolic Church, who *«became rare, wise men are missing among our people»*.<sup>91</sup> According to him, the Armenian nation had forgotten the God's commandments and *«we have not even mentioned God's name»*. Simeon criticizes also the lack of education among Armenian clergy and generally among young people: *«we have no love for education. We let our children grow up alone and they are abandoned, uneducated...»*.<sup>92</sup> The lamentable situation of the

<sup>87</sup> Akinean, 112–113.

<sup>88</sup> Akinean, 53.

<sup>89</sup> Akinean, 266–267.

<sup>90</sup> Akinean, 114.

<sup>91</sup> Akinean, 113.

<sup>92</sup> Akinean, 111–112. It should be mentioned, however, that this is Simeon Lehatsi's subjective understanding of the situation, which, can be accounted for by the probable supposition that he, like Movses Khorentsi, desired to see his nation more widely educated and perfect (Editorial Board).

Armenians is explained as caused by «our sins, (great as) sea» and perceived as a kind of tragic national destiny. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that this kind of lamentation over the decline of the Apostolic Church belongs to a series of topics, characteristic of that period.

### **Conclusion**

Generally speaking, it could be stated that the text of Simeon Lehatsi may be considered as a very important source in the field of Armenian Studies and particularly interesting for researchers focusing on the issue of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. As Simeon came from the Catholic world, the neighbor of the Orthodox Empire, he had his specific point of view toward the Ottoman society and its stratification. During his travels (1608–1618) he spent several years in the territory of the Ottoman Empire, thus his text may be considered as a source of precious information not only for historians, but also for researchers in the field of ethnology and historical anthropology. Simeon's work represents one of the last relics of the literary heritage of the Apostolic Armenians in Poland, but its significance is incontestable for the worldwide Armenian diaspora. Simeon's *Ughegruthyun* is a valuable historical source especially from the point of view of the depiction of everyday reality. It should be taken into account that the manuscript was not ordered by any authority; Travel Accounts were written on Simeon's own initiative.

The most important parts of the Travel Accounts – from the point of view of primary historical sources – reflect such events as the jelâli rebellions in Eastern Asia Minor and the so-called Great Flight (in Ottoman Turkish büyük kaçgün), mass migrations of villagers to cities in order to be protected from the raids of jelâlis. The emphasis of Simeon's work is placed on issues of permanent insecurity of dhimmis while dwelling among Muslims. Simeon's vision of a scattered nation is reflected in a specific siege or border mentality. His work mirrors the living countryside of the Western Armenia, which has been lost. Travel Accounts of Simeon which focus on the status of pilgrim, his perception of alterity and stereotypical images were compared with a wide range of travel accounts written by other authors of the same period, especially those, who came from the area of Central and Eastern Europe.

It could be said in conclusion that the image of Jerusalem in the Travel Accounts of Simeon Lehatsi reflects on the one hand the vision of the most sacred town for Christians (viewed through the prism of the Bible), and on the other hand the heyday of Ottoman sanjaks and cities, the colorful description of contemporary Jerusalem. Simeon submits to his reader a vision of Jerusalem and its surroundings, which oscillates between a biblical image of Palestine, the «promised land» of milk and honey, and the everyday reality, seen with his own eyes. The city of Jerusalem symbolizes for Simeon the fulfillment of his most desired dream, which was «deliv-

ered into the hands of infidels... because of our sins». Nevertheless, Jerusalem is depicted as the quintessence of the Armenian Karg, the order of the Apostolic Church and thus the order of the whole and the guarantee of its proper existence.

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**ՊԵՏՐԱ ԿՈՇՏԱԼՈՎԱ**

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ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԵՎ ԵՐՈՒՍԱԳՆԵՄԻ ՊԱՏԿԵՐԸ 17-ՐԴ  
ԴԱՐԻ ԼՎՈՎՑԻ ՀԱՅ ՃԱՆԱՊԱՐՀՈՐԴԻ  
ՈՒՂԵԳՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՈՒՄ**

**ԱՄՓՈՓՈՒՄ**

Միմեոն Լեհացու Ուղեգրությունը և Ժամանակագրությունը ԺԷ դարի Հայոց պատմության կարևորագույն սկզբնաղբյուրներից են: Դրանք կարևոր տեղեկություններ են պարունակում 1608–1618 թթ. Հռոմի և Վենետիկի, ինչպես նաև Օսմանյան կայսրության մաս կազմող Բալկանների (Մոլդավիա, Վալախիա, Բուլղարիա), Արևելյան Միջերկարականի (Երուսաղեմ, Կահիրե, Գազա, Հալեպ, Կիլիկիա) և Մև Ծովի (Կոստանդնուպոլիս, Մալաթիա, Սվաս, Ամիդ, Մուշ) տարածաշրջանների մասին, նկարագրվում են հեղինակի ճանապարհորդությունները. Արևմտյան Եվրոպայում, Ռեչ Պոսպոլիտայում, Օսմանյան Թուրքիայում և պատմական Հայաստանում: Հիշատակված տեղանուններից շատերը (Երուսաղեմ, Հռոմ, Մուշ ևն.) Միմեոն Լեհացու համար սրբավայրեր են, որոնք նա այցելել է մահտեսի-ուխտավորի հնագանդությամբ: Հեղինակը՝ լինելով Հայոց առաքելական եկեղեցու անդամը, ծնվել և մեծացել է Ռեչ Պոսպոլիտայում, հասարակական-մշակութային գործունեություն է ծավալել հիմնականում Լվով քաղաքում, ձեռնադրվել է սարկավագ:

Նա ուշագրավ տեղեկություններ է հաղորդում Բուն Հայաստանի և հայոց գաղութների կրոնաքաղաքական կյանքի մասին. նրա աշխատանքներում ներկայացված է Հայոց եկեղեցու գրեթե ողջ նվիրապետական կառույցը՝ հիշատակված տարածաշրջանների աշխարհիկ և հոգևոր իշխանությունների հետ փոխհարաբերություններում: Ուղեգրությունն ու Տարեգրությունը ուշագրավ վկայություններ են պարունակում Արևելյան Եվրոպայի (մանավանդ՝ Լեհաստանի) և Միջերկրայքի (հատկապես՝ Օսմանյան կայսրություն) հայ վաճառականության և արհեստավորների ստեղծած գործարարական ցանցի, բանուկ ճանապարհների, հայկական գաղութներում ստեղծված կա-

ռուցվածքների, նրանց կարգավիճակի, արտոնությունների և բնակավայրերի մասին: Միմեռնի աշխատություններում հետաքրքիր երանգներ ունեն Եվրոպայի և Ասիայի տարբեր քաղաքների և ժողովուրդների (լեհ, իտալացի, հրեա, ասորի, թուրք, արաբ ևն.) նկարագրությունները, նրանց և հայազգի գործիչների փոխհարաբերությունները: Հոդվածում հանախ համեմատության մեջ են դրվում Միմեռնի և նույն դարաշրջանի այլ ճանապարհորդների (հատկապես՝ չեխ) և սկզբնաղբյուրների վկայությունները: Հեղինակն անդրադառնում է Մերձավոր Արևելքի և Արևելյան Եվրոպայի կաթոլիկ և մուսուլման պետություններում հայ ազգաբնակչության կարգավիճակին, ընթերցողի ուշադրությունն է սևեռում ԺԷ դարի առաջին կեսի Երուսաղեմի հայկական սրբավայրերի հետ կապված, և գաղութին զբաղեցնող խնդիրների վրա: Սուրբ քաղաքը դիտում է Հայոց Առաքելական եկեղեցու ստեղծած կարգի խտացում, որով էլ երաշխավորվում է ստեղծված կառույցների աշխատանքը:

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**СИМЕОН ЛЕХАЦИ И ИДЕАЛ *КАРГ*-А –  
ОБРАЗ АРМЕНИИ И ИЕРУСАЛИМА В ПУТЕВЫХ  
ЗАПИСЯХ АРМЯНСКОГО ПУТЕШЕСТВЕННИКА ИЗ  
ЛЬВОВА XVII ВЕКА.**

**РЕЗЮМЕ**

Путевые записи Симеона Лехацы и Хроника – важнейшие источники по истории Армении XVII века. В них содержатся важные сведения о Риме и Венеции, а также входящих в состав Османской империи Балаканах и городах Восточного Средиземноморья. Описываются путешествия автора по Западной Европе, Речи Посполитой, Османской Турции и исторической Армении, а также о событиях, имевших место в этом регионе до 1635-го года. Будучи членом Армянской Апостольской церкви он родился и вырос в Речи Посполитой, он осуществлял свою деятельность в основном в г. Львове, где был рукоположен дьяконом. Он сообщает примечательные сведения о духовно-политической жизни Армении и общин диаспоры. В его работах представлена почти вся иерархическая структура армянской церкви и взаимоотношения со светскими и духовными властями названных регионов. Путевые записи и Хронология содержат важные свидетельства о деловых контактах армянского купечества и ремесленников, торговых путях, структуре армянских колоний, их статусе, привилегиях и населённых пунктах Восточной Европы (особенно – Польши) и Османской империи.

В работах Симеона есть интересные подробности в описаниях населения различных городов Европы и Азии, их взаимоотношения с армянскими деятелями. В статье часто сравниваются свидетельства Симеона и других путешественников (особенно чешских) и источников. Автор обращается к вопросам статуса армянского населения в мусульманских и католических государствах Ближнего Востока и Восточной Европы, заостряет внимание читателя на проблемах колоний и Иерусалимских святынь первой половины XVII века. Святой город рассматривается, как концентрация порядка (*карг*), созданного Армянской Апостольской церковью, который обеспечивает работу созданных структур.