

Gayane Babayan

**Gospel Books as a Means to Reconstruct the Armenian Artistic and
Cultural Milieu in Fourteenth-Century Crimea**

MA Thesis in Medieval Studies

Central European University

Budapest

December 2016

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by

Gayane Babayan

(Armenia)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the Master of Arts degree in Medieval Studies.

Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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I, the undersigned, **Gayane Babayan**, candidate for the MA degree in Medieval Studies, declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

The present thesis deals with the question of interrelation between artistic achievements of the Armenian community and intensifying cross-cultural communication through trade routes in fourteenth-century Crimea. The two fourteenth-century *Tetraevangelia* from Surxat are case studies in this research. The methodology is based on the iconographic and stylistic analyses of the miniatures of two *Tetraevangelia*, the investigation of some fourteenth-century colophons and historical review of the period.

The examination of illustrations of these *Tetraevangelia* revealed the use of certain stylistic forms and iconographic models which adhere to contemporaneous Byzantine tradition and Italian models. The notary acts, statute of Kaffa, as well as records in the Armenian colophons display the considerable involvement of the Armenians in the Black Sea trade of the period.

The contextualization of the two *Tetraevangelia* shows that the copying model of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* originated from the Theodorian-Trapezuntine environment. The Dugento and Trecento models were also used in the process of illustration and penetrated the Armenian environment through the Cilician manuscripts and art objects from cities of central Italy. The Vienna *Tetraevangelion* may be associated with the Armenian–Chalcedonian environment which needs further research.

Acknowledgements

The present thesis is not exclusively my achievement: there are many people who contributed to its accomplishment. First of all, I would like to thank my supervisors, Prof. Béla Zsolt Szakács and Prof. István Perzcel, for their support and comments, as well as the Department of Medieval Studies for granting the opportunity to conduct my research at the Central European University. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Zaruhi Hakobyan for her help and guidance throughout the writing process. I am also thankful to the M. Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts “Matenadaran” and the Mechitarists’ Congregation in Vienna for their willingness and cooperation in the realization of this project. Special thanks to Judita and Ester who constantly encouraged and inspired me during the writing process.

Last but not least, I am enormously grateful to my family and friends for their love, care and continuous support during the conduction of this research. I would like to dedicate this thesis to the loving memory of my mother.

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Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to show the level and extent of interrelation between the artistic influences manifested in the Armenian art of Crimea in the fourteenth century, the active social interactions of the Armenian community with other inhabitants of the peninsula, and the considerable involvement of the Crimean—Armenians in the Black Sea trade. These artistic interactions were promoted by trade routes through the active circulation of the artistic ideas and production. The key concepts are adoption and adaptation of the artistic forms and iconographic models. The investigation of illuminated manuscripts is essential for understanding the transmission of artistic patterns in a particular epoch and in a particular milieu. The style and iconography of illuminations contribute to a better understanding of the cultural environment, and reveal the social relations therein.

One of the expressions of Armenian artistic endeavor in Crimea is miniature painting and the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries are considered the heyday of the Crimean school of book illumination. The considerable number of the manuscripts manifests the existence of actively operating scriptorium during the fourteenth century in Surxat. In addition, the preserved illustrated manuscripts suggest that a refined style of illumination was developed in this period. The case of fourteenth-century Surxat with its densely coexisting, diverse populace is a case-study in this discussion.

Throughout the centuries, new waves of immigrants transmitted new artistic and cultural trends to the colonies of the peninsula they inhabited and, in fact, this cultural mosaic induced the creation of new cultural environment, and an original artistic style. The school of Armenian book illumination in Crimea gained its separate place and significance in the Armenian miniature painting with its specific characteristics. The analysis of the miniatures of the two *Tetraevangelia*—written and illustrated in the first three decades of the fourteenth

century in Surxat—highlights the peculiarities of their style and iconography and serves as an indicator of the artistic interactions that occurred in the Crimean–Armenian environment. Since this is an interdisciplinary piece of research the examination of the miniatures of the two *Tetraevangelia* is a tool and not a goal in itself: it serves to highlight an overall picture of the artistic achievements of the time. In this respect, three questions can be posed:

1. How did the adoption and adaptation of certain artistic patterns and different visual languages operate in a multi-cultural environment, such as Crimea?
2. To what extent did these artistic interactions reflect the social relations of the Crimean Armenians?
3. Did these artistic trends permeate the Armenian community through the interactions between the Armenians and other inhabitants of the city, as well as of the peninsula or they were rather externally conditioned artistic transfers? What kinds of interactions were stronger in Surxat in this particular period?

My methodology is based on the comparative analyses of the style and iconography of the illuminations of the two *Tetraevangelia* wherein the stylistic peculiarities and iconographic links with the Palaeologan art and Dugento and Trecento tradition are discussed. The colophons pertaining to the period in question as well as a review of the historical situation will help to understand the extent and nature of social-economic relations of the Armenians on the Crimean peninsula and within the network of the Black Sea trade.

The historiography of this topic is quite sporadic in such a way that it provides either the art-historical analysis of the Armenian art in Crimea or that of the social-economic relations of the Crimean–Armenians in general. Emma Korxmazyan and Heide and Helmut Buschhausen, who dedicated numerous articles and books to the topic, including even co-published works, investigate the art-historical aspect of the Armenian community in Crimea—specifically the Crimean school of the Armenian miniature painting. In their publications they highlight the

peculiarities of the refined style and conduct thorough analysis of the illustrations of Armenian manuscripts produced in Crimean environment—pointing out the artistic influences of the Armenian miniatures. However, their research interests embrace mostly the art-historical spectrum of questions and not the interrelation between the artistic influences and the social-economic interactions. The social-economic interactions, although covered by the scholars, were not studied at its full and concurrently.

Another scholar, Ioanna Rapti, who dedicates her dissertation to the Crimean school of the Armenian miniature painting from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century, although discussing the two *Tetraevangelia* mentioned above, nevertheless also applies only an art-historical approach. On the other hand, scholars such as Vardges Mikaelyan and Tatevik Sargsyan, are interested in the history of the Armenian community of Crimea and touch upon the artistic heritage of Crimean Armenians mainly in relation to their research interests. Thus, interdisciplinary research, which would focus specifically on the artistic influences of fourteenth-century Armenian community of Crimea and their reflection in the socio-cultural developments of Crimea in the period, has not yet been conducted. The current thesis is a modest step in the field of such research.

In the first chapter I examine the artistic influences through the example of these two *Tetraevangelia*, in the second chapter I present the historical environment—providing an insight into the political situation of the fourteenth-century Crimea and the neighboring areas. In the third chapter, I investigate the trading system of Italian emporia in the Black Sea, emphasizing the role of the Armenians and Surxat in this system. Then, I will reflect on the interrelation between trade and the circulation of artistic ideas and production across the Armenian centers of the peninsula. And finally, I will contextualize the two *Tetraevangelia* on the basis of my research. That is to say, the third chapter will provide me an opportunity to

analyze the results of the two previous chapters and represent my arguments concerning my main research questions.

Chapter 1 - Two *Tetraevangelia* in the Sphere of the Byzantine and Italian Artistic Influences: The Iconographic and Stylistic Analyses

Before conducting the iconographic and stylistic analyses of the two *Tetraevangelia* it is important to delineate in its main features the characteristics and peculiarities of the Crimean school of Armenian miniature painting in order to determine to what extent these two *Tetraevangelia* are distinctive for this school and what their main artistic merits are, as well as to indicate the main sources of their artistic inspiration.

1.1 The general overview of the Crimean school of Armenian miniature painting

The end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century is regarded as a period of the formation of the Crimean school of Armenian book illumination. It is one of the most well-established and interesting schools of Armenian book illumination in diaspora which developed a new style—harmonically combining the long-established traditions of Armenian miniature painting and the innovative artistic tendencies and different artistic traditions of Byzantium and Italy. In the course of time it has developed its distinctive features which distinguish it from other schools of Armenian miniature painting: the use of an intensive blue color as a background; the rare use of gold; the combination of a graphic style in the ornamental decoration of marginalia with a painterly execution of the miniatures. As it was pointed out by Emma Korxmazyan, these peculiarities, as well as a moderate use of color and restrained compositional solutions derived from the artistic traditions of *Barjr Hayk*‘ [Upper Armenia].¹

¹ *Barjr Hayk*‘ [Upper Armenia] is in present day Turkey and is situated in the Erzincan province in Turkey. For discussion of the general style of the Crimean school of Armenian miniature painting. [Emma Korxmazyan] Эмма Корхмязян, *Армянская миниатюра Крыма (XIV-XVII в.в.)* [Armenian miniature painting of Crimea]

1.2 The sources of the artistic inspiration for the Crimean school of Armenian miniature painting

Barjr Hayk' is a part of the historical Armenia from where many scribes and miniaturists moved to Crimea, especially in the fourteenth century because of the Mongol invasion and subsequent difficulties in earning a livelihood.² They came from the big cities of *Barjr Hayk'*, such as Baberd (Bayburt), Eriza (Erzincan), Karin (Erzurum). Even their names in the colophons of manuscripts made in Crimea, Simon Baberdac'i [Simeon of Baberd], Vardan Baberdac'i [Vardan of Baberd], Stepanos Karinc'i [Stepanos of Karin], Aslan Arzrumc'i [Aslan of Arzrum], testify their origin.³ The circulation of Byzantine manuscripts can be witnessed in the libraries of Eriza, Karin, and Baberd in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries.⁴ The Palaeologan artistic influence on the several Armenian manuscripts produced in *Barjr Hayk'*, has been recently outlined in scholarship.⁵ Thus, it can be said that the area of artistic impact of the Palaeologan style encompasses both *Barjr Hayk'* and Crimea, from where many scribes and miniaturists came from.⁶ This point is important since this can be

(Fourteenth-Seventeenth centuries)], (Yerevan: ՀՍՍՀ Գիտությունների ակադեմիա, 1978), 21-22. Transliteration of Armenian names, places here and elsewhere in the text is based on the Hübschmann-Meillet-Benveniste (HMB) system.

² The historical Armenia is a political-geographical term which refers to the territory of the northern part of the Western Asia, comprising in it Asia Minor, Armenian Highland and Transcaucasia.

³ Korxmazyan, *Армянская миниатюра Крыма*, 22.

⁴ [Emma Korxmazyan] Էմմա Կորխմազյան, *Բարձր Հայրի Մանրանկարչությունը ԺԱ.-ԺԴ դ.դ.* [The miniature painting of the *Barjr Hayk'* in the eleventh-fourteenth centuries] (Yerevan: M. Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts "Matenadaran", 2015), 72. The artistic influence of Palaeologan style on Armenian art is not sufficiently discussed in the scholarship and in this regard the recent publication on the miniature painting of the *Barjr Hayk'* is essential.

⁵ All discussed manuscripts are preserved in the repository of Matenadaran: 7630; 7599; 7645; 4080; 4059.

⁶ The Palaeologan style or Palaeologan Revival is a period in the Byzantine history which was marked by the return and re-evaluation of the achievements of the Hellenistic era which generated the re-investigation and development of the humanism and classical traditions in the intellectual circles of the Empire, especially that of the Nicaea (1204-1261). In the field of art this new current had two stages of the development which in the recent scholarship is divided in two stages: the so called "the first Palaeologan style" which pertains to the period of reign of Michael VIII (1259-1282) Palaeologos and the period of "the second Palaeologan style" assigned to the time of Andronikos II Palaeologos (1282-1328). The chronology was proposed by Hans Belting see Hugo Buchthal. Hans Belting, *Patronage in Thirteenth Century Constantinople: An Atelier of the Late Byzantine Book Illumination and Calligraphy* (Washington: Trustees for Harvard University, 1978), 24, 56ff. The first one is characterized with its painterly style of rendering wherein linear treatment of the figures and subjects gives its way to the illusionism which gears to create the illusion of the depth and three-dimensional shapes within an image and uses the highlight technique for that purpose: the intermediate tones which present a

considered as one of the ways how the Palaeologan style penetrated into the Armenian artistic environment of Crimea. Yet it should be also underscored that, as we will see, it was not and could not be the only agent of the dissemination of the Byzantine artistic trends.

The masters of *Bardz Hayk*⁴ appropriated and adapted the Palaeologan style to the artistic traditions and pictorial norms of the Armenian art, by using some of its artistic principles in the building of a composition and combined them with the artistic attainments of the Armenian miniature painting of Cilicia (rich decorative ornamentation of the folios; psychologism of the represented characters) and with the employment of the local types of personages. These borrowed artistic principles of the Palaeologan style present the previously mentioned method of the highlight modelling which was developed in the Byzantine painting in the thirteenth century. The sophisticated architectural forms in the backdrop display another prevalent principle of the Palaeologan style. The tradition of combining the graphic style of ornamentation for canon tables and marginal images with the painterly executed figurative miniatures is developed in the miniature painting of *Barjr Hayk*⁵ in the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century from where it has been transmitted to the Crimean school of book illumination. In many instances as it is attested in the colophons,

somewhat pastel or chromatic palette convey the gradation of light which, in turn, shapes the volume of the figures. The shading (often executed by the greenish and ochre strokes) conveys the anatomy of figures by the organic play of their draperies. The compositions are endowed with the rhythmic and harmonic structure. The three-quarter view of the architectural settings creates a certain degree of perspective and at the same time the architectural background obtains certain regularity. Of course, the above mentioned characteristics can be applied to certain monuments to a greater or lesser extent but the essence of the style is the same. Helene Papastavrou, "Classical Trends in Byzantine and Western Art in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries", *Byzanz— das Römerreich im Mittelalter*, vol. 1, *Welt der Ideen, Welt der Dinge* (Mainz: Romano-Germanic Central Museum, 2010), 187, 205. Ernst Kitzinger, "The Hellenistic Heritage in Byzantine Art", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (1963): 95-115. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1291192>, (accessed November 18, 2016), 107-8. For a general discussion of the Palaeologan style see Otto Demus, "The Kariye Djami and its Place in the Development of Palaeologan Art", in *The Kariye Djami*, vol. 4, *Studies in the Art of the Kariye Djami and its Intellectual Background*, ed. Paul Underwood, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 109-60. The second Palaeologan style gears to more graphic rendering of the image and the expressionism and spirituality find more austere way of artistic expression. According to Tania Velmans, the Palaeologan Renaissance was almost fully developed before Michael VIII reoccupied Constantinople in 1261. Tania Velmans, Vojislav Korać, Marica Šuput, *Rayonnement de Byzance* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1999). Cited in Papastavrou, "Classical Trends in Byzantine and Western Art," 187 The latter is noteworthy in relation to the Matendaran *Tetraevangelion* which should be examined in the light of the Byzantine artistic achievements of the second half or last quarter of the thirteenth century, although the contemporaneous artistic impulses are also reflected in the miniatures of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*. I will touch upon this issue in the third chapter when I will contextualize these two *Tetraevangelia* in their artistic environment.

gospels, which had graphically ornamented canon tables, headpieces and marginal images, were brought from *Barjr Hayk*⁷ and then decorated with the miniatures in Crimea. The comparison of the decorative ornaments of the manuscripts, produced in *Barjr Hayk*⁷ and Crimea in the end of thirteenth and the beginning of fourteenth century shows that there are evident similarities: the stylized representation of vegetal ornaments such as palms, trefoils, falcate leaves, real and imaginative fabulous birds and animals. The depicted architectural structures often resemble actually existing architectural buildings of the time. The miniaturists of *Barjr Hayk*⁷ often used calligraphic handbooks where the most widespread ornamental motifs were assembled.⁷

Armenian-Byzantine cultural contacts can be traced in the Armenian culture throughout the whole medieval period and their intensity can be characterized by the several waves of influence coming from Byzantium in different periods of time attesting to the established powerful connections between Armenia and Byzantium. For example, the intensive influx of the Byzantine influence is conspicuous in the seventh century, in the eleventh century, and in the thirteenth century, and resulted in the erection and creation of the most splendid architectural monuments, manuscripts and art objects. This essential fact demonstrates that the Armenian-Byzantine artistic contacts have a long-established history and in the current discussion the Byzantine artistic influence on the Crimean-Armenian community should extend to this discourse as well.⁸ The influence of Byzantine art on the Crimean–Armenian miniature painting of the fourteenth century is substantial and is conditioned by the several factors: first of all, Greeks comprised a considerable part of Crimean population and, despite

⁷ [Korxmazyan], *Բարձր Հայքի Մանրանկարչությունը* ԺԱ.-ԺԴ դ.դ., 57-58.

⁸ For the discussion of the Armenian-Byzantine artistic contacts see [Zaruhi Hakobyan] Заруи Акопян, “Армяно-византийские связи в области искусства с раннего средневековья до конца XI века” [The Armenian-Byzantine relations in art in the Early Middle Ages to the end of the eleventh century], *Армянский гуманитарный вестник* 2/3, no. 1 (2009): 130-45; [Zaruhi Hakobyan] Չարուիի Հակոբյան, “Վայոցձորյան քանդակի բյուզանդական պատկերագրական աղերսները (XIII դ. երկրորդ կես - XIV դ. առաջին կես)” [The Byzantine iconographic influence on the sculpture of Vayots Dzor (The second half of the thirteenth-first half of the fourteenth centuries)], in *Հորեղյանական գիտաժողով նվիրված Մոմիկի ծննդյան 750-ամյակին: Ձեկույցների ժողովածու* [The conference dedicated to Momik’s 750 anniversary: Compendium of articles] (Yerevan: ՀՀ Գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիա, 2011), 65-80.

serious religious disputes constantly taking place between Armenians and Greeks; they were interacting with each other. Furthermore, Crimean ports were important spots for the trading ships coming from Constantinople, Trebizond and this stimulated the circulation of the artistic production and goods. And finally, the existence of the Principality of Theodoro in the south-western part of the peninsula; that peripheral, last stronghold of the Byzantine power on the peninsula, suggests the possibility of interconnections between Armenians and the servants of this principedom. The latter is even more clear considering that the founders of the ruling dynasty, the Gabras family, had the Armenian genealogical line: the Taronits.⁹ And lastly, it is attested to in the chronicle of Mxit'ar Aparanc'i in 1410 that a considerable number of Armenian Chalcedonians lived in the Crimea.¹⁰ Unfortunately, there are no other sources or preserved monuments testifying the activity of the Armenian-Chalcedonian community in Crimea. Nevertheless, this element should not be ignored in any conclusion about the Byzantine-Armenian interconnections on the peninsula. I will expand on this more in the third chapter.

⁹ [Hrač' Bartikian] Грач Бартикийн, “О византийской аристократической семье Гаврас. [About the Byzantine aristocratic family of Gabras] 1. Об этнической принадлежности семьи” [About the ethnic belonging of the family] *ИФЖ* 3 (1987):190-200; 2. “Гаврасы Малой Азии и Западной Армении (XI-XIII в.в.): Ещё раз о цатах (армянах-халкедонитах)” [The Gabras of Asia Minor and the Western Armenia (Eleventh-Thirteenth centuries): Once again about the Cat's (Armenian-Chalcedonians)], *ИФЖ* 4 (1987):181-193; 3. “Гаврасы Западной Армении по армянским источникам XIII века” [The Gabras of the Western Armenia according to thirteenth century Armenian sources]; 4. “Гаврасы Северо-восточной Армении в XII-XIII в.в.” [The Gabras of the South-eastern Armenia in Twelfth-Thirteenth centuries], *ИФЖ* 1 (1988):163-178, in [Hrač' Bartikian] Հրաչ Բարթիկյան. Հայ-բյուզանդական հետազոտություններ: Հատոր 2 [The Armenian-Byzantine Studies. vol.2, Articles in foreign languages](Yerevan: ԵՊՀ Աստվածաբանության ֆակուլտետ, 2002): 389-428.

¹⁰ Armenian-Chalcedonians were Armenians who affiliated to the Byzantine Orthodox Church. Although they preserved Armenian language, daily customs and considered themselves Armenians, they were regarded as heretics and even people of another ethnicity by the Armenian Apostolic Church. This perception of Armenian-Chalcedonians is reflected in the Armenian chronicles which were written by the followers or by priests of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Armenian-Chalcedonian communities were spread across the territory of the Byzantine Empire and majority of these Armenians had higher positions at the imperial court. The study of Armenian-Chalcedonian cultural heritage, especially artistic monuments is a developing field in Armenian studies and hitherto underestimated in Armenian scholarship. For a general study of the Armenian-Chalcedonian community see Viada Arutjunova-Fidanjan, “The Ethno-confessional Self-awareness of Armenian Chalcedonits”, *Revue des Études Arméniennes* 21 (1988-89): 345-63. For more on the art of the Armenian-Chalcedonian community see [Viada Arutjunova-Fidanjan] Вида Арутюнова-Фиданян, *Армяно-византийская контактная зона. Результаты взаимодействия культур* [The Armenian-Byzantine contact zone: The results of cultural interactions], (Moscow: Наука, Восточная литература, 1994); [Заруи Акопян] Zaruhi Hakobyan, “Особенности Иконографии Армяно-халкедонитских Памятников X-XIII в.в.” [The peculiarities of the iconography of Armenian-Chalcedonian monuments in the tenth-thirteenth centuries], ՀՀ Գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի պատմաբանասիրական հանդես 2-3 (2009): 181-82.

Another source of the artistic inspiration for the Crimean miniaturists was Cilician miniature painting, which was the peak of Armenian miniature painting. Its impact on the other schools of miniature painting is huge both for *Barjr Hayk* and the Armenian community of Crimea. The refined examples of Cilician book illumination were circulating in the historical Armenia, as well as in the various Armenian colonies and set high standards for artistic representation. A number of thirteenth-century Cilician manuscripts appeared in Crimea, for example, the *Tetraevangelion* of the Eight Miniaturists (Matenadaran 7651); the *Tetraevangelion* from Drazark monastery (Matenadaran 2629); the Gospel of Smbat (Sembat) Constable (Matenadaran 7644); *Tetraevangelion* illustrated by Toros Roslin (the library of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem 251); and another gospel book illuminated by Sargis Picak (Matenadaran 7631). Their appearance in Crimea is testified by some of their colophons. Such is the case with the *Tetraevangelion* illustrated by Toros Roslin in 1260 in whose fifteenth-century colophon the bishop Constandin Vahkac'i notes that he found the *Tetraevangelion* of Toros Roslin in Kaffa which had been left as a pledge to Hodja Aslilbek. He managed to purchase this refined gospel with a lot of effort and in 1413 commissioned a gilded silver binding and donated it to the Saint James Armenian monastery in Jerusalem (Ms. 251).¹¹ Another instance of the presence of an exquisite Cilician manuscript in Crimea is attested to again in the colophon of the Gospel of Smbat (Sembat) Constable (Matenadaran 7644). The decoration of the gospel was begun by the Cilician master Hovasap in the thirteenth century and then was continued in Crimea by fourteenth-century Crimean Armenian master Avetik.¹² Interestingly, fourteenth-century figurative miniatures, according

¹¹ Levon Chookaszian, "Armenian Book Illumination of Crimea and the Art of Miniaturist Grigor Sukiasants (Fourteenth century)", in *Die Kunst der Armenier im ostlichen Europa*. ed. Marina Dmitrieva and Bálint Kovács. (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag Köln Weimar, 2014), 190-191.

¹² [Levon Azaryan] Լևոն Ազարյան, *Կիլիկյան մանրանկարչությունը XII-XIII դ.դ.* [Cilician miniature painting in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries] (Yerevan: ՀՍՍՀ Գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի հրատարակչություն, 1964), 84. A review on Azaryan's book can be found in Sirarpi Der-Nersessian, *Revue des études arméniennes*, vol.2 (1965), 394-98. [Lydia Durnovo] Лидия Дурново, *Очерки изобразительного искусства средневековой Армении* [A study on the visual arts of medieval Armenia] (Moscow: Искусство, 1979), 229.

to Levon Azaryan, gravitated towards the Comnenian style. However, this statement is not entirely beyond doubt since, although a lot of features were retained from the Comnenian style in the rendering of the faces with blue and green strokes and the stylized forms of the mountains, nevertheless there is clear attempt to create more delicate, sensuous characters. In the scene of the Descent into Hades (folio 121v) the representation of labarum is notable, which penetrated into Armenian art by the influence of Western art wherein the spread of Catholicism amidst Armenian elites of Crimea played an important role. Once again Byzantine artistic influence is detectable here which proves the continuous nature of these interactions on the peninsula and their layering in the artistic imagery of the Crimean masters. Returning to Cilician miniature painting, it should be added that the decline of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia in 1375 enhanced their influence because after its collapse many Cilician Armenians found shelter in Crimea. The circulation of these kinds of exquisite manuscripts in the Crimean peninsula highly affected and changed the artistic environment of Crimean cities. The Cilician manuscripts are attested to in the colophons of the Armenian manuscripts produced in Crimea as copying models. In addition, as Korxmazyan notes, Crimean masters often used as models the manuscripts which in their turn were copied from Cilician manuscripts.¹³

Finally, the third source of artistic inspiration for the Crimean Armenian masters was Italy. The influence of the Italian art on Crimean miniature painting was both direct from the Italian Dugento and Trecento art, and indirect from the Cilician book illumination. The iconographic analysis of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* demonstrates the presence of certain iconographic models borrowed from the works pertaining to the Dugento and Trecento art tradition. In the present discussion some miniatures from the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* will be examined in the light of these influences. As will be shown, the predominant part of

¹³ [Korxmazyan]. *Армянская миниатюра Крыма*, 24.

the analogies belong to the Sieneese school of painting which is quite interesting considering the influence of the Sieneese school of painting on the Cilician painting of the thirteenth century, which is thoroughly discussed in an article by Anne Derbes.¹⁴

1.3 The general characteristics of the two *Tetraevangelia*

One of the two *Tetraevangelia* discussed here is the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*; its extant colophon enables to date the manuscript precisely to 1332. It is currently kept in the repository of the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (Matenadaran) and henceforth I will refer to this *Tetraevangelion* as the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*.¹⁵ The Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, besides certain inscriptions made by the scribe and illustrators, has no full colophon suggesting the provenance and precise date of its production. However, scholars such as Heide and Helmut Buschhausen, based on the style of illustrations, tend to date the manuscript to the first three decades of the fourteenth century and considering the inscription made of the later period in the colophon of this manuscript (it has been transmitted from Surxat to Lviv in the seventeenth century) they ascribe it to the Surxat scriptorium. These two *Tetraevangelia*, produced in the city of Surxat in the first three decades of the fourteenth century, are specifically important in the discussion of Armenian artistic interactions in Crimea. They are peculiar for the Crimean Armenian miniature painting, and for fourteenth-century Armenian miniature painting in general, since they stand apart from other Crimean Armenian manuscripts in terms of their extensive illustrative

¹⁴ Anne Derbes, “Siena and the Levant in the Later Dugento” *Gesta* 28 (1989): 190-204, accessed November 18, 2016, http://www.jstor.org/stable/767068?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

¹⁵ The manuscript is kept under the number 7664. It is part of a vast collection of Armenian manuscripts written and illustrated in Crimea throughout centuries. As it was noted by Emma Korxmazyan, the Matenadaran collection of Crimean manuscripts comprises around 300 manuscripts. See Korxmazyan, *Армянская миниатюра Крыма*, 20. This manuscript was transferred from Nor Nakhichevan [New Nakhichevan] to Armenia and became part of the “Cultural-historical collection,” also known as the Yerevan collection created in 1922 after the establishment of Soviet Union. On the basis of this collection in 1935 three separate museums were created, one of which was the Museum of Fine Arts. In 1938, according to the decision of the Ministry of Education of ASSR, this *Tetraevangelion* with 1347 other manuscripts was given to the Matenadaran. See *Ցուցակ ձեռագրաց Մաշտոցի անվան Մատենադարանի* [The catalogue of manuscripts of the Matenadaran after Mashtots], vol.1, [Օնիկ Եգանյան] Օնիկ Եգանյան and others eds., (Yerevan: ՀՍՍՀ Գիտությունների ակադեմիայի հրատարակչություն, 1965). 147-54.

cycles; applied technique and painterly style. The elegant style and extended cycle of illustrations suggest that these refined examples can lead to a better understanding of the patterns of the reception and transformation of the new artistic forms in the Armenian environment. The latter grants an opportunity to identify, to a certain extent, the level and essence of such artistic interactions in the Crimean peninsula in general, and the Crimean Armenian environment in particular.

As mentioned above, it was written in the city of Surxat in 1332, at the monastery of Holy Theotokos (*Surb AstvaCaCin*), during the patriarchy of Hakob, under the reign of the pious juvenile Levon.¹⁶ The colophon also notes that it was written by the hand of Grigor Sukiassianc¹⁷ and commissioned by the “rabbouni” [rabbi] Avetik (*vardapet*).¹⁷ Tatevik Sargsyan identified this rabbi Avetik as the archimandrite Avetik Xotačarak who was an important figure in fourteenth-century Crimea and prior of the Holy Virgin monastery located near the border of the village K‘imčak. He commissioned the erection and restoration of several Armenian churches, as well as several manuscripts.¹⁸ The validity of this identification will be discussed in the third chapter.

Low-quality paper is another distinctive feature of many Armenian manuscripts in Crimea and such is the case of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*. Sadly, the miniatures are now distorted and the colors have faded with time. In some cases entire pieces of the coloring layer flaked off. The restorers of Matenadaran managed to stop the discoloration process of the manuscript. As Lydia Durnovo claimed, the usage of tempera by the miniaturist could be

¹⁶ The patriarch in the tradition of the Armenian Apostolic church is the catholicos. The Patriarch Hakob mentioned in the colophon is the Catholicos of the Holy See of Cilicia, well-known as Hakob [Jacob] II of Cilicia (1327-1341). The above mentioned Levon V [Leo V] (1320-1341) was a representative of the Hethumids’ dynasty, the king of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia. The full colophon with English translation is given in the Appendices. For more on the Cilician history of Armenian kingdom see Claude Mutaſian, Catherine Otten-Froux, *Le Royaume Arménien de Cilicie, XIIe-XIVe siècle* (Paris: CNRS Editions, 1993); Sirarpie Der Nersessian, “The Kingdom of Cilician Armenia”, in *A History of the Crusades* vol. 2, ed. Kenneth Setton (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962).

¹⁷ *Vardapet* means an archimandrite of the Armenian Apostolic who has a teaching function.

¹⁸ [Tatevik Sargsyan] Տաթևիկ Սարգսյան, “Ավետիք Խոտաճարակի և Քիմճակի Ս. Աստվածածին վանքի մասին” [About Avetik Xotačarak and monastery of the Holy Virgin at K‘imčak] *Պատմա-քանասիրական հանդես* 1 (2001):131.

the reason for detrimental state of the miniatures.¹⁹ During my previous study I was able to work with the manuscript in the manuscripts' repository at Matenadaran.

The general characteristics of the manuscript as follows: the folio dimensions are 21.3×16 cm; it contains altogether 435 *bifolia*, the text is written in *bolorgir* script (minuscule) in double-columns (nineteen lines in each folio). The *Tetraevanglion* comprises 89 miniatures dedicated to the life of Christ, four portraits of the evangelists and nine canon tables.²⁰ The illustrations do not have a colored backdrop. They are integrated into the text of the gospels, occupying sometimes the predominant part of the folio — the space below or above three-four lines of the text is used for the unframed illustrations. This miniature format, incorporated into the text, is quite unusual for the Armenian and Byzantine tradition and exhibits the original approach of the miniaturist. If this arrangement was dictated by the copied model it certainly did not survive, which makes the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* unique in this respect.²¹

The canon tables are colored in red, green and blue. All of them are identical in terms of structure with minor differences. The genealogy of Christ in the marginalia (fol. 11r-12v) frames the gospel-text with twenty bust-portraits of Christ's ancestors in which David and Solomon can be easily recognized by their crowns. The carnations in most of the miniatures are executed in with great skill and detail.

The iconographic program includes scenes from the main feast cycle, as well as parables and miracles. Some themes are rarely represented in the Armenian Gospel books, such as the Prophecy of John the Baptist about Coming of Christ, Herod's Banquet and the Dance of Salome, the Beheading of John the Baptist and Serving of his Head to Herod, The Bosom of

¹⁹ Sirarpie Der-Nersessian's preface in Lydia Durnovo, *Armenian Miniatures* (New York: Abrams, 1961).

²⁰ *Ցուցակ ձեռագրաց Մաշտոցի սենյակի Մատենադարանի* [The catalogue of manuscripts of Matenadaran after Mashtoc], vol.2, [Օնիկ Եգանյան] Օնիկ Եգանյան and others eds., (Yerevan: ASSR AS Publication, 1970), 7665.

²¹ Ioanna Rapti. *L'Enluminure Arménienne en Crimée Génoise (XIV e-XV s.). Origines et développement d'un centre provincial de production livresque*, Ph.D dissertation (Paris: EPHE Sorbonne, 1999), vol. 1, 300.

Abraham and the Holy Virgin, Twelve-year-old Christ in the Temple, Christ Teaching in the Synagogue, the Birth of John the Baptist, the Baptism of the Disciples, the Mocking of Christ and the Cleansing of the Temple. Some of these scenes were represented in Cilician manuscripts from the end of thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century.

Another subject of this study, the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, is now preserved in the collection of the library of Mechitarists' Congregation in Vienna. During my research I had a chance to consult the manuscript at the library of the Congregation.²² It is also characterized by the use of low-quality paper. The dimensions of the folio are 25×20 cm. The gospel text was written by the priest Simeon of Baberd (Simeon Baberdatsi) in black ink, with *bolorgir* script, in two columns with twenty three lines each. The *Tetraevangelion*, besides 119 miniatures integrated into the evangelistic text, is composed of eight full-page miniatures. In contrast to the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, the integrated miniatures are framed with red line. The canon tables are missing, even though in the beginning of the manuscript there are some pages most probably left for that purpose.²³ The extensively illustrated *Tetraevangelion* is distinguished by the detailed representation of architectural decor, the sumptuous garments of the figures and velum intertwining with the architectural buildings. The abundant use of rich red and gold is particularly emphatic in the miniatures. The proportioned, voluminous shapes of the figures, an attempt to create a three-dimensional space, as well as light and shade modelling make this manuscript a great example of fourteenth-century miniature painting. The ornamental decoration of marginalia is characterized by the representation of

²² Under number 242. In the first half of the sixteenth century the Armenian archbishop of Lviv Nikoghaïos Torosenc transferred this manuscript with many others to Lviv. This event is mentioned on folio 187r. Later, it was taken from Lviv to Vienna.

²³ Simeon left two inscriptions in the marginalia representing himself as a scribe of the manuscript (fol. 186v; 238v). For the inscriptions with English translations see the Appendix. [Heide and Helmut Buschhausen] Հայրէկ չեմուն Բուշխունգեն, Նկարագրող Հայկական Ձեռագրեր Վիեննայի Մխիթարյան մխաբանության հայտնաբերում [The illuminated Armenian manuscripts of the Mechitarists' Congregation in Vienna] tr. Hrayir Ter-Połosyan, (Vienna: Մխիթարեան տպարան, 1978), 20-1.

anthropomorphic, zoomorphic figures (such as birds, serpents, lions) and architectural, allegorical, vegetal ornamental forms twisted in various combinations.²⁴

The inscriptions in Greek, made directly into the miniatures, as well as the artistic manner of illustrations, suggest that these miniatures represent the artistic collaboration of Armenian and Greek masters. Unfortunately, there are no inscriptions or a complete colophon affirming the authorship of the miniatures, besides the stamp-like ornamental decoration crowned with a bird with the inscription “remember the priest Papanun” [ՉՊապանուն երէց յիշ(եաջիք)] (**Figure 1**) inside the ornament.

It can be assumed that this is done by the master who worked on the marginal decorations of



Figure 1 “Papanun” marginal stamp of one of the miniaturist, the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 216r.

Mechitarists’ Congregation library.

the manuscript which are distinguished by exquisite and diverse decorative forms. The emergence of the signature of the artist is quite rare phenomenon both in Armenian and Byzantine art and can be traced especially from the Palaeologan period.²⁵ Thus, the Vienna

²⁴ [Heide and Helmut Buschhausen], *Նկարագրող Հայկական Ձեռագրերի Վիեննայի Մխիթարյան միաբանության հավաքածու*, 21.

²⁵ The first art works which were signed by their authors can be found in Serbian monuments.

Tetraevangelion is a very good case-study for this phenomenon in terms of the Armenian-Greek artistic collaboration in Crimea. The comparative analysis of the miniatures shows that several masters worked on the illustrations, although only one miniaturist was engaged in each miniature painting: each received a certain number of pages for making illustrations. This kind of *modus operandi* is comparable with the one applied in the production of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, in which the general homogeneity of the illustrations is stricter but a certain artistic discrepancy is often visible in the frames of one single miniature. As noted by Helmut and Heide Buschhausen, seven artists worked on the miniatures of the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*: three Armenians and four Greeks.²⁶ The first master worked on folios 7v-26r with a Greek artistic manner and is indicated by the authors as the Master of Baptism. The second and the third masters are Armenian, identified as Armenian I and Armenian II. Armenian I also known as the Painter of Salome, illustrated folios 30r-45v, while Armenian II, the Painter of a Fig Tree, is the author of folios 52v, 58v, 87v, 95v, 123r, 140r. This sporadic location of his miniatures led Ioanna Rapti to conclude that this master participated in the execution of these miniatures a bit later, finishing the ones that were left undone, using already existing preliminary drawings. The fourth master of the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* is the master of forty-five miniatures and the portraits of the evangelists which is why he is referred to as the Master of Evangelists. The Greek inscriptions, written directly into the rectangular space of the miniatures are also executed by him. The forty-six miniatures of the manuscript are attributed to two Greek masters, the Master of Transfiguration and the Master of Parables. The seventh master was specified by Buschhausens as the artist of folio 144r, the Healing of the Daughter of Jairus” and was associated with the Vaspurakan School of miniature painting. Ioanna Rapti generally concurs with Buschhausens about the number of the artists and the attributions of the miniatures,

²⁶ Heide and Helmut Buschhausen, *Armenische Handschriften der Mechitharisten Congregation in Wien. Katalog zur Sonderausstellung in der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*. (Vienna:Dellerfuhs Offsetdruck, 1981), 102-14.

however, she considers the sixth master, identified by the Buschhausens as the Master of Transfiguration, also to be the author of the scenes attributed to the Master of Parables. In addition, Rapti also regards the illustration of folio 144r as a later intervention from the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries.²⁷ Rapti's main argument is that besides a certain indecisiveness of the drawing in the miniatures by the Master of Parables, the general iconographic formulae are identical to those by the Master of Transfiguration. This indecisiveness, according to Rapti, can be caused by the rapidity of work which is apparent also in the some miniatures executed by the fourth master of the manuscript, the so called the *Evangelistenmeister* (Master of Evangelists).

1.4 The iconographic and stylistic analyses of the two *Tetraevangelia*

As mentioned above, three sources of artistic influence can be identified in the Crimean miniature painting and specifically in these two refined examples. And since the art-historical analysis is the first step in achieving the main goal of the present thesis, that is obtaining a better understanding of the ways and agents of these artistic interactions, I will conduct iconographic and stylistic analyses only on a limited number of miniatures based on their characteristics and their relevance to the topic of this discussion. Therefore, the analysis of some miniatures from both manuscripts will be carried by comparing the means of drawing iconographic and stylistic analogies and comparisons between these *Tetraevangelia* and certain other examples from Byzantine art and Italian models.

In the Matendaran *Tetraevangelion*, the Faith of the Canaanite Woman or the Healing of Daughter of the Canaanite Woman (Mathew 15:21-28) occupies most part of the folio, leaving space for only three lines of the text in the lower part of the page (**Figure 2**). In this image, Christ, escorted by a group of three disciples and making the gesture of blessing, approaches the bed of the daughter of Canaanite woman. The daughter is half-laid, raising her

²⁷Rapti, "L'Enluminure Arménienne", vol.1, 310-19.

right hand as if preparing to tell something to Christ; the Canaanite woman herself is situated behind the bedstead in a kneeling position. Though the iconography of this miniature represents a restricted compositional type (reduced number of witnesses, absence of architectural setting) typically for the *modus illustrandi* of this manuscript, however, it contains a rather interesting detail which attests to the high status and prominent origin of

the copying model: a two-headed eagle, the coat of arms of the Palaeologos dynasty, is depicted on the daughter's pillow.²⁸

Another stylized representation of this coat of arms, hitherto unnoticed in the scholarship, is the depiction of a two-headed eagle as a decorative ornamentation on the cover the bedstead of Jairus's daughter in the scene of the Healing of Jairus's Daughter



Figure 2 The Faith of the Canaanite Woman, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 68r, Matenadaran collection.

²⁸ [Andrey Svirin] Андрей Свирин, *Миниатюра древней Армении* [The miniature painting of ancient Armenia] (Moscow-Leningrad: Искусство, 1939), 99-100.

(Figure 3). This hints at the possibility that we deal either with the manuscript of a metropolitan origin or with a certain model from the Principality of Theodoro. The latter is quite plausible as the Theodorian principedom extensively used this coat of arms, depicting it on works of art as well. The Parable of Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:26) is one of the most splendid miniatures in this manuscript (Figure 4, 5).²⁹ The symbolical image of the



Figure 3 The Healing of Jairus's Daughter, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 151v, Matenadaran collection.

praying Church embodied in the figure of the Virgin corresponds to the main idea of parable: salvation and heavenly grace await the virtuous souls after death. Since this parable along with some other parables from the New Testament, such as the Parable of Ten Virgins in their narratives alludes to the idea of the Second Coming, they are often represented in the scene of Last Judgement. As it is rightly pointed out by Ioanna Rapti, the representations of the Parable of Ten Virgins and the Parable of

²⁹ The main composition includes the depiction of Abraham, usually sitting and holding in his bosom a person or a group of people with smaller proportions which personify the righteous souls; and the rich man burning in the fires of hell. The trees can also be interpreted as a symbol of Heaven. Sometimes next to Abraham Isaac and Jacob can be found, making up three patriarchs. There are also some secondary motifs and details which were popular in the thirteenth–fourteenth centuries, especially in Byzantine cycles of mural-paintings such as the representation of the Holy Virgin next to Abraham. The Holy Virgin in *orant* position is depicted standing, in some cases positioned on the throne; always in the *orant* posture, flanked by two angels on both sides. The Holy Virgin — a symbol of Church—prays for the salvation of the righteous souls. [Galina Kolpakova] Галина Колпакова, *Искусство Византии. Поздний период 1204-1453* [Byzantine art. The late period 1204-1453] (Saint-Petersburg: Азбука Классика, 2010), 272.

Rich Man and Lazarus (The Bosom of Abraham and the Holy Virgin) in the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* have an empathically eschatological meaning. Their allusion to the idea of the Second Coming and Last Judgement is especially important since there are no other scenes illustrating these eschatological ideas in the manuscript.³⁰

This parable is narrated in the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* on two folios of the gospel book



with two full-page miniatures on each and involves also the figure of the Holy Virgin. The image on folio 297v represents the Holy Virgin sitting on a red cushion; next to her is Abraham also on the seat covered with a green cushion, he holds Lazarus the beggar as a child in his lap; the trees of life are depicted in a background in allusion to the heavenly garden. On the opposite folio (fol.298r) the rich man is depicted sitting among the flashing fires of Hell. He points with his right hand's forefinger to his tongue, begging Abraham to

Figure 4 The Bosom of Abraham and the Holy Virgin, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fol.297v, Matenadaran collection.

³⁰Rapti, "L'Enluminure Arménienne", vol.1, 277-78.

send Lazarus to cool his tongue with his wet finger.³¹ The left hand is on his well-fed stomach as if indicating his avarice. The scene has a neutral background besides the two trees represented behind the figures of the Virgin and Abraham.

The representation of the Bosom of Abraham and the Holy Virgin is a very rare example in Armenian art in general, even more exceptional in the Armenian miniature painting and as such it certainly deserves further analysis.³² In Cilician miniature painting this narration comprises a part of the full-page depiction of the scene of the Last Judgement

(fol.109v), depicted on one of the four registers of the gospel book WGA 539 dated to 1262.³³ Herein the composition is canonical, containing the representation of all components of the narration, however, the Holy Virgin is not depicted or not represented in her usual



Figure 5 The Rich Man in the Fires of Hell, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fol.298r, Matenadaran collection.

³¹ Klaus Wessel and Marcell Restle, ed. *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*. vol.1 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1966), 21; Engelbert Kirschbaum, Wolfgang Braunfels and Günter Bandmann. *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, vol.1 (Freiburg : Herder, 1968), 31.

³² Besides these two examples, there is another notable representation of the Bosom of Abraham theme without the Holy Virgin in a fifteenth-century Armenian *Tetraevangelion* produced in Xizan in 1455. However it has a different composition and is a much later work which is why it is not noted in this discussion.

³³ Rapti, "L'Enluminure Arménienne", vol. 1, 278. For further detail see Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Armenian Manuscripts in the Walters Art Gallery* (Baltimore: The Trustees, 1973). The illuminator is thirteenth-century renowned and prominent Cilician master Toros Roslin, acknowledged for his extraordinary talent in the creation of new narrative imagery in which various biblical themes and events were modified and re-interpreted by adapting both Western (French and Italian) artistic tradition and Byzantine artistic forms and motifs into the



Figure 6 The Bosom of Abraham and the Holy Virgin, mural painting, the *katholikon* of Axtala monastery, thirteenth century.

iconographical type: the only female figure is a woman on the far left side of the register, represented in the profile. It is highly unlikely that the Holy Virgin would be depicted in such a secondary position.

One of such rare representations of this scene is monumental thirteenth-century painting in the church of the Holy Virgin in the Axtala monastery, also known as Plnjavank (Copper Mine) (**Figure 6**).³⁴ The *katholikon* of the monastery, the church of the Holy Virgin is decorated with highly artistic mural-paintings dated to 1205-1216. In the beginning of the thirteenth century this monastery turned into a Chalcedonian center of northern Armenia. The

traditions of the Armenian art and theology. For more on Cilician miniature painting see Sirarpie Der-Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century*, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 31, vol.1, (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1993).

³⁴The commissioner of the mural-paintings was Ivan Zakaryan, member of the thirteenth-century Armenian-Georgian Zakaryan/Mkhargzeli family, *atabeg* of the Kingdom of Georgia, who at first was a follower of the miaphysite-Armenian Church then turned towards Chalcedonian Christianity. The murals of the church are distinguished by their Byzantine style and a specific iconographic program which includes the representation of six saints of the Georgian Orthodox Church: John, Shio, Evapre and the founders of Georgian monasticism, Illarion the Georgian, Euthymius the Athonite and Georgy the Athonite, as well as depictions of Popes Clement and Silvester. For more detail: [Alekssei Lidov] Алексей Лидов, *Росписи монастыря Ахтала. История, иконография, мастера* [The mural-paintings of the Axtala monastery. History, iconography, masters] (Moscow:Русский Фонд Содействия Образованию и Науке, 2014), 45-117; “Искусство Армян-Халкедонитов” [The art of the Armenians-Chalcedonits] *Պատմի-բանասիրական հանդես* 1 (1990):75-87.

scene of the Bosom of Abraham and the Holy Virgin created in the Armenian–Chalcedonian environment is notable in this respect. The Axtala’ example represents an extended iconographic version of the Entry of the Elect into Paradise scene where the Holy Virgin is flanked by two angels, Abraham holds Lazarus as a child in his bosom and is surrounded by a group of people in smaller proportions, and the Good Thief as well, pictured with a big wooden cross. Since it is a part of the scene of the Last Judgement on the western wall of the church the representation of the whole parable is not essential and the episode of the Rich Man suffering in the agony of hell is not included. In contrast, the master of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* follows the narrative of the parable, portraying the protagonists of the story; Abraham, Lazarus, the Rich Man and, interestingly enough, the Holy Virgin as well, who is not involved in this gospel story. Thus, the fact that this parable gains an eschatological accentuation in the context of this gospel’s illustrative program suggests that this miniature implies the idea of the awaiting heavenly grace. Consequently, the representation of the Holy Virgin in this parable is justified. However the master adapts this composition to the needs and pictorial capacities of his visual medium, deliberately leaving out the angels and the virtuous souls. This kind of intentional omission of subsidiary personages, as well as the exclusion of the architectural and landscape background, is a means of artistic expression for the master of this gospel book, a manifestation of the original approach as compared to the copying model which endows these miniatures with a certain degree of monumentality.³⁵ Paradoxically, apart from the general monumentality of the two folios which resemble a single piece of a mural painting and contrapose the depiction of Paradise to the image of Hell represented on the opposite folio, the miniaturist achieved a kind of a chamber atmosphere in the depiction of Abraham and the Virgin so that folio 297v creates the impression of an icon or a panel painting. This compositional type can be explained either by the master’s

³⁵ The earliest example of depicting this parable in Byzantine miniature painting is found in the eleventh-century manuscript Paris gr.74, fol.149r.

meticulous following of the copied model or by the fact that this iconographic model was popular in the Byzantine mural cycles of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries and that the master of the miniatures was inspired by these contemporaneous depictions of the topic.³⁶

The concept of the artistic adoption and adaptation which is central for this discussion applies to this case as well: the master of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* either directly copied it from the Greek model or sought his inspiration from contemporaneous mural-paintings which he then transformed in tune with the demands of miniature painting. The prototypes could be borrowed from monumental art found in the numerous churches founded on the peninsula. In reference to this, the highly developed monumental art of Kaffa is notable.

The loose interpretation of canonical models and motifs can be associated with the period of the Palaeologan Revival which stimulated the development of the artistic individuality and which eventually led to its efflorescence in the Italian Renaissance. In comparison, it should be noted that in the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, allegedly created in the same artistic milieu and at the same period, this parable is not illustrated at all. The iconographic analogy between the thirteenth-century fresco from the Armenian–Chalcedonian church is illustrative in a way that it suggests the development and distribution of this compositional type in Armenian art either in the Armenian–Chalcedonian environment or in the milieu directly exposed to the

³⁶ In Byzantine art the first representation of this scene appears in the illustrations of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus in a ninth-century manuscript, however, it depicts only the parable and excludes the Holy Virgin. The representation of the Paradise with Abraham and the Virgin can be seen in the eleventh century mosaics of the cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta on the island Torcello in Venice in the context of the depiction of the Last Judgement. This scene was often depicted in the mural cycles of the Byzantine churches. The most relevant example in relation to Palaeologan art is a mural painting from the Parecclesion of the Chora monastery where the parable and the Entry of the Elect into Paradise” are combined harmonically. The Abraham with Lazarus in his bosom scene is represented in the right pendetive and the Rich Man on the left pendetive, between them is a span of bema arch which separates them from each other and corresponds to the words of Abraham “between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us”. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, vol.1, 208-10. The iconographic analogies can also be found in the twelfth-century and contemporaneous Byzantine monumental art, such as in the church of the Dormition of the Holy Mother of God in the Bachkovo monastery, Bulgaria (second half of the twelfth century) [Viktor Lazarev] Виктор Лазарев, *История византийской живописи* [The History of the Byzantine painting] (Moscow: Искусство, 1986), 108, tabl. 362-3; in the church of the Holy Saviour in Chora (Kariye-Djami), Turkey; in the church of the Holy Virgin in Gračanica monastery, Kosovo (1321-22), and in the fresco cycle of the church of Assumption of the Holy Virgin in Panagia Kera, Crete. These examples suggest that this compositional type was widely known in Byzantine art and was distinctive for the Byzantine mural cycles of the time.

Byzantine painterly trends (**Figure 7**). The Parable of Ten Virgins (The Wise and Foolish Virgins) (**Figure 8**) occupies more than half of the page in the Matendaran *Tetraevangelion*. The door into Heaven is depicted in the center of the composition, dividing the wise and foolish virgins in two groups. The stylistic characteristics of this miniature testify that it is the work of less skillful master, perhaps the assistant of the main master. The composition chosen by the master for this scene is notable. The group of foolish virgins on the left side of the door is pictured with eyes closed and heads down, in a somewhat lesser size, whereas the group of wise virgins on the right are of taller stature, have their eyes opened and hold lit candles in their hands. The master uses this artistic means to accentuate the contrast between the two groups. This kind of play with dimensions to emphasis certain figures (e.g. virtuous



Figure 7 The Bosom of Abraham and the Holy Virgin, mural painting, Kariye Djami, 1315-1321, accessed November 25, 2016, <http://nevsepic.com.ua/> .

figures, Christ or the Holy Virgin) is typical in Armenian miniature painting which survived well into the late medieval period, demonstrating the oriental tradition imbuing Armenian art. A diagonal line can be drawn on the left side of the composition, connecting the three figures in the upper row and three wise virgins of the lower row.

In the same pattern, two foolish virgins of the lower row on the left correspond diagonally to the respective group of wise virgins of the upper row on the right. This artistic scheme aims to balance the



Figure 8 The Parable of Ten Virgins, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 104v, Matenadaran collection.

composition and deploys the hidden geometricity of the compositional structure to lend a special rhythm to the composition. This X-like pattern can also be traced elsewhere in the gospel book.

The iconographic analogies of this parable can be found both in the art of the eastern part of historical Armenia and in the Armenian book illumination of Cilicia. The bas-relief on the tympanum of the church Saint Karapet in Hovahannavank monastery above at the entrance to the church; in the interior of the *gavit* [narthex] represents the Parable of the Wise and

Foolish Virgins (**Figure 9**).³⁷ The composition placed over a delicately carved, almost embroidered vegetal background and comprises the depiction of ten virgins divided into two by the image of the enthroned Christ. His blessing gesture is addressed to the wise virgins and the outline of a closed door is represented on the side of the foolish virgins. Besides the marginal illustration of the parable in the gospel book WGA 539 where arrangement of the group of ten virgins has a pyramidal (five foolish virgins are placed in groups of three and two placed above a group of five wise virgins), Roslin has the foolish virgins in a full-page miniature of the Last Judgement.³⁸ As it is noted by Ioanna Rapti, there are no any similar kind of combined representations of the Parable of Ten Virgins and the Last Judgement. As mentioned above, the symbolism and eschatological message of the parable are emphasized in the <http://hushardzan.am>.

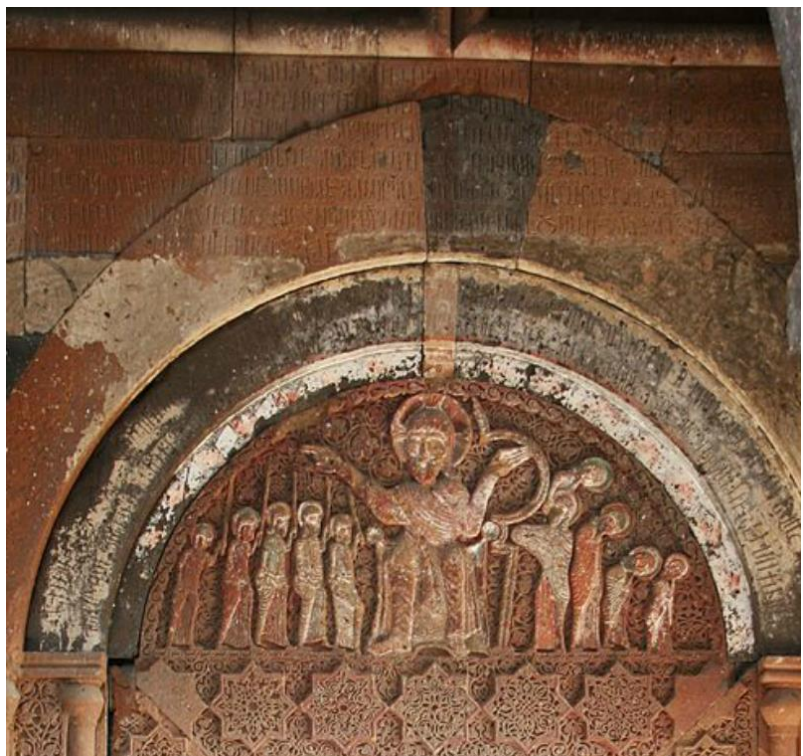


Figure 9 The Parable of Ten Virgins, Hovhannavank monastery, bas-relief on the tympanum, thirteenth century, accessed November 25, 2016, <http://hushardzan.am>.

iconographic program of the

Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* due to the absence of the representation of the Last Judgement, conversely the parable is not illustrated in the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* but the eschatological

³⁷ The *katholikon* of Hovhannavank monastery, Saint Karapet was commissioned by Vač'e Vač'utyan in 1216-1221 and finished by his son K'urd in 1248-1250. Հայաստանի հուշարձաններ /Armenian monuments/Monuments d'Arménie, Text by Varazdat Harut'unyan, Album (Beirut: S.A.L., 1975), 176-78.

³⁸ They are represented on the extreme left side, almost as marginalia of the folio but closely attached to the door on the second register of the composition which is closed by the apostles. Der Nersessian, *Armenian Manuscripts in the Walters Art Gallery*, fol. 109v, pl. 56.

meaning is expressed in the scene of the Last Judgment in the Gospel of Matthew.³⁹

The compositional model used in the Matendaran *Tetraevangelion* is somewhat similar to the thirteenth-century Cilician *Tetraevangelion* (FGA 32.18, also known as Vasak Gospel) where the door is the center of the composition dividing two groups of virgins (**Figure 10**).



Figure 10 The Parable of Ten Virgins, FGA 32.18, thirteenth century. The image reproduced from Fig. 95, page 159, in Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Armenian manuscripts in the Freer Gallery of Art*, Oriental Studies 6, (Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Institution Freer Gallery of Art, 1963).

The bust representations of an angel with a small trumpet and a blessing Christ in the two opposite upper parts of the scene complete the composition of the Cilician Four Gospels. Interestingly, this theme is not frequently depicted in Byzantine art, especially in its entirety. The earliest and most famous such representation is found in the sixth-century Rossano Gospels. In comparison, in Western art it was used in depictions in the twelfth and thirteenth century, especially in the decoration of the cathedrals portals, however, often not narrating

³⁹ Rapti, "L'Enluminure Arménienne", vol.1, 277-8.

the whole story: sometimes depicting only two figures personifying the fool and the wise virgins, respectively.⁴⁰ The miniature depicting the Healing of a Man Born Blind at the Pool of Siloam (**Figure 11**) (John 9: 1-12) attests to the artistic thinking which takes its roots from the Late Antique and Early Christian period but it has been revived and “digested” in the Palaeologan art.⁴¹ The gospel text is narrated on two folios of the *Tetraevangelion* in full-page depictions: folio 385r shows the first phase of healing where Christ, accompanied by his disciples on the left side of the composition, prepares to smear the eyes of the blind man who is on the right side of the scene.

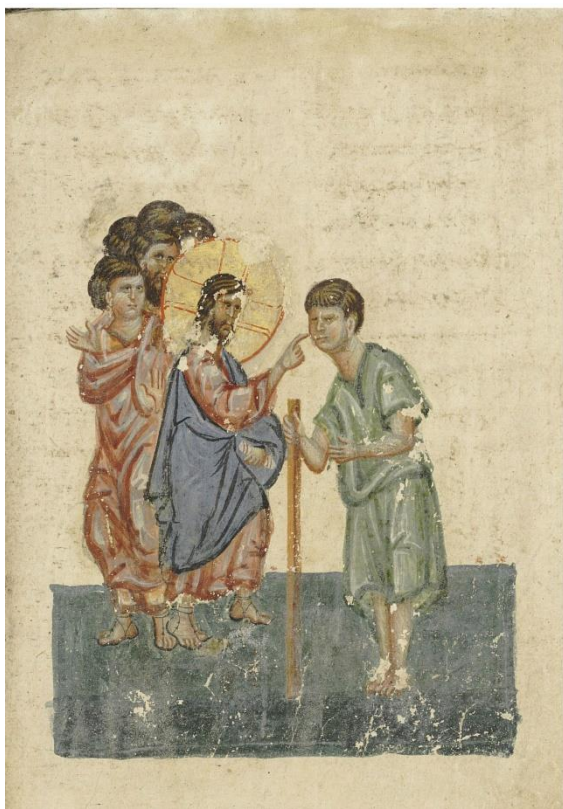


Figure 11 The Healing of the Blind Born Man, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fols. 305v-305r, Matenadaran collection.

The composition demonstrates a restricted iconographic version without any architectural backdrop and a limited number of miracle witnesses. The second phase of the miraculous

⁴⁰Kirschbaum, Braunfels, and Bandmann, *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* vol.2, 458-63.

⁴¹ The earliest example of this scene was represented in the nave of the church of St.John in Ephesos (erected 548-65) but has not survived. Thomas Mathews. *Byzantium: From Antiquity to the Renaissance* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 103.

healing is folio 385v depicting the most fascinating part of the narration: the moment when the blind man, following the instruction of Christ, goes to the pool of Siloam and washes his eyes in the fountain of a cruciform shape and with rounded edges.⁴² The cruciform shape of the latter emphasizes the significance of the baptismal sacrament. But the most noteworthy part is that in this composition the blind man is shown twice so he is doubly represented in one single miniature: he is portrayed first in motion with his eyes closed, approaching the fountain and right after this, depicted once again in the process of washing his eyes and with eyes opened, gazing in amazement at his hands. This kind of double image is an interesting way of conveying the sense of movement of the figures, that is to say, it is a means of enhancing the image.

The desire of emphatic narrativity is distinctive for the Palaeologan period wherein artists geared to convey or rather connect the surrounding reality to the images and to the stories they narrated. This change is a result of alteration of the artistic outlook and of the emerging need for an expression of the artistic individuality of the artist reflecting on the surrounding reality. Though remaining religious, art becomes more secular, extending and modifying its iconographic canons, nourishing itself with more details and motifs borrowed from the realm of real life. This narrativity is especially important for the mural cycles where continuity of the scenes and the smoothness of transitions from one scene to another unites the iconographic program of the decorations.⁴³ The miniaturist depicted some figures twice in one scene, for instance on the fol. 37v (Matthew 8:22-27) and foli. 147r (Mark 4:35-40) representing the Jesus Calms the Storm scene. In this image, however, following the gospel-text, the master illustrates two phases of the story: first the sleeping Christ and then Christ in

⁴² From the earliest surviving examples of this theme are a miniature from the Codex Rossanensis; a miniature from the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus; the fresco painting from the church of Saint'Angelo in Formis, near Capua; a miniature of the Codex Egberti, the golden binding for the Codex Aureus at Saint Emmeran, Regensburg. Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol.1 (New York: New Graphic Society, 1971), 172.

⁴³ Колпакова, *Искусство Византии. Поздний период 1204-1453*, 60.

mid action of calming the storm. The example of the man born blind this “double” representation has another function aiming to represent a figure in motion instead of the sequence of phases of the narration. In the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* the same kind of emphatic narrativity in general and the “double” representation of the same person in particular, can be found throughout the illustrations, for instance in the scene of the Disciples of Christ (The Story of Nathanael) (**Figure 12**) where it is meant only to represent two phases of the story in one miniature.



Figure 12 The Story of Nathanael, the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 190v, Mechitarists’ Congregation library collection.

One of the Armenian miniaturists of the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* depict a central-dome church in the scene of the Destruction of the Temple and Signs of the End Times (Matthew 24:1-3) (**Figure 13**).⁴⁴

⁴⁴Helmut Buschhausen, “Beziehungen der Armenischen zur Palaiologischen buchmalerei 14 im Jahrhundert”, Հայ արվեստին նվիրված միջազգային երկրորդ սիմպոզիում (Yerevan: ՀՍՍՀ Գիտությունների ակադեմիայի արվեստի ինստիտուտ, 1978), 141.

As it is common for Armenian miniature painting and seen in the manuscripts produced in *Barjr Hayk'*, in many cases these architectural buildings were inspired by actual buildings or by masterpieces of Armenian architecture. It can be suggested that the Armenian miniaturist, who had a task to depict a church in this scene, as it was in Greek copied model, chose a familiar model for him or he used as a model an actually existing Armenian church. The



Figure 13 The Destruction of the Temple and Signs of the End Times, the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 58v, Mechitarists' Congregation library collection.

Karno Gospel (Matenadaran 7599) illuminated in *Barjr Hayk'* in 1335 may serve as an example: in the portraits of evangelists Mark and Luke the master depicted in the backdrop of one folio a central-plan tetraconch church which resembles Zvartnots Cathedral (fol. 81v) and in the other a church with a high drum and conical roof typical for Armenian architecture (fol. 131v).⁴⁵ The interest in the surrounding world and the first efforts of its rendition manifest the generation of new artistic outlook and search for new means of artistic expression.

⁴⁵ Korxmazyan, *Բարձր Հայրի Մանրանկարչությունը* ժԱ.-ԺԴ դ.դ., 66. Fig.66.

Another interesting fact is that in some cases the Greek master confused the iconography. For example, the Healing of a Man with Dropsy scene is painted next to the text narrating the healing of a Man with Withered Hand (fol. 79r) (Mark 3:1). The Greek artist was clearly not able to read the gospel text in Armenian. Though was inserted in incorrect place, nevertheless the iconography of the scene of the Healing a Man with Dropsy displays the master's knowledge of this iconographic type. Helmut Buschhausen found the iconographic links of this scene with the Greek *Tetraevangelion* of the last quarter of the thirteenth century, produced in the Iviron monastery on Mount Athos.⁴⁶

The inscriptions, made with black ink into the miniatures and then covered by the artists themselves, were meant to guide the Greek masters through the Armenian texts of the four Gospels. Rapti suggested that these inscriptions were meant to refer the miniaturist to the copied model or to the notebook with models.



Though the function of these texts cannot be precisely **Figure 14** Herod's Banquet and the Dance of Salome, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 154v, Matenadaran collection.

⁴⁶Buschhausen, "Beziehungen der Armenischen", 146.

defined it is evident that they are not captions, but working inscriptions.⁴⁷ Some of them are still readable: “Xariete”, “Lazarus” and “Tallasa”.

The Banquet of Herod and Dance of Salome (**Figure 14**) (Mark 6:21-24) in the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* is worth some comments. The depiction of this episode of the narration can be found in the Cilician art (Herod's Banquet and Dance of Salome, FGA32.18). However, the latter cannot be compared with the Matenadaran example since it is a marginal image and the figure of Salome is interpreted as a secondary one: the miniaturist transposed her almost to the edge of the composition. Unlike the Cilician composition, in the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*'s miniature Salome is placed in the foreground and her lively, daring dancing position makes all the participants in the event gasp. The miniaturist managed to convey Salome's self-confident, audacious and cheeky character. Unfortunately, Salome's face is extremely damaged and we can only speculate what she looked like in this miniature but even her stance is telling and convincing. To some extent this scene repeats many details of the Wedding at Cana, as will be demonstrated below, such as the representation of garments, table and even types of persons, e.g. that of the bride and the steward taking the place of Herodias and John the Baptist. In terms of composition, it is noteworthy to mention the parallel movements of Herode and Herodias who simultaneously hold their right hands on their chest as an expression of their amusement and stretch their left hands on the table, almost touching the chalices in front of them. And here again the diagonal arrangement of the composition creates a dynamic image and illusion of depth: the figure of Salome, the table and the figure of John the Baptist create a diagonal line. The optical trickery used by the miniaturist, in which Salome is disposed at the lower left corner of the composition and the steward further back on upper right corner, creates, together with the diagonal line between Salome, the steward and the table in a reverse perspective (sloped position), an illusion of

⁴⁷ Rapti, “L'Enluminure Arménienne”, vol.1, 311-12.

depth in the composition. The representation of the dancing scene in such loose and immediate manner shows thirteenth-fourteenth tendency of secularization of religious scenes common both for the Palaeologan and Italian art of the period. This was expressed in the involvement of new details, motifs and personages which were borrowed from the surrounding environment. The artists aimed to convey the emotions, mood and atmosphere of the event. In this respect, the icon of the Annunciation in the church of St. Clement of (Ohrid), dated to circa 1300, is a relevant example here (**Figure 15**). Here the action takes place in the space which is cut in two perpendicularly (presented in a three quarter view), creating two parts of the composition. This forms a diagonality which stresses the illusion of depth in the image.⁴⁸ Though this example surpasses the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* in its high level of execution and splendor but the compositional choices in these two examples are somewhat similar and speak in favor of a largely disseminated artistic current which differently applied by every artist.



Figure 15 The Annunciation icon, circa 1300, church of Saint Clement, Ohrid, accessed November 25, 2016, <http://iconaimmaginedio.blogspot.am> .

⁴⁸ Helene Papastavrou, "Classical Trends in Byzantine and Western Art in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries", in *Byzanz— das Römerreich im Mittelalter*, pt.1, *Welt der Ideen, Welt der Dinge* (Mainz: Romano-Germanic Central Museum, 2010), 200-1.

The Wedding at Cana is depicted both in the Matendaran *Tetraevangelion* (**Figure 16**) and in the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*. In the former the story is narrated in two episodes, represented on two opposite folios of the manuscript, making an impression of one solid composition. The master's efforts to convey the bulky shapes and physicality of the figures, as well as his attempt of creating a sense of depth are eloquently demonstrated in this scene.

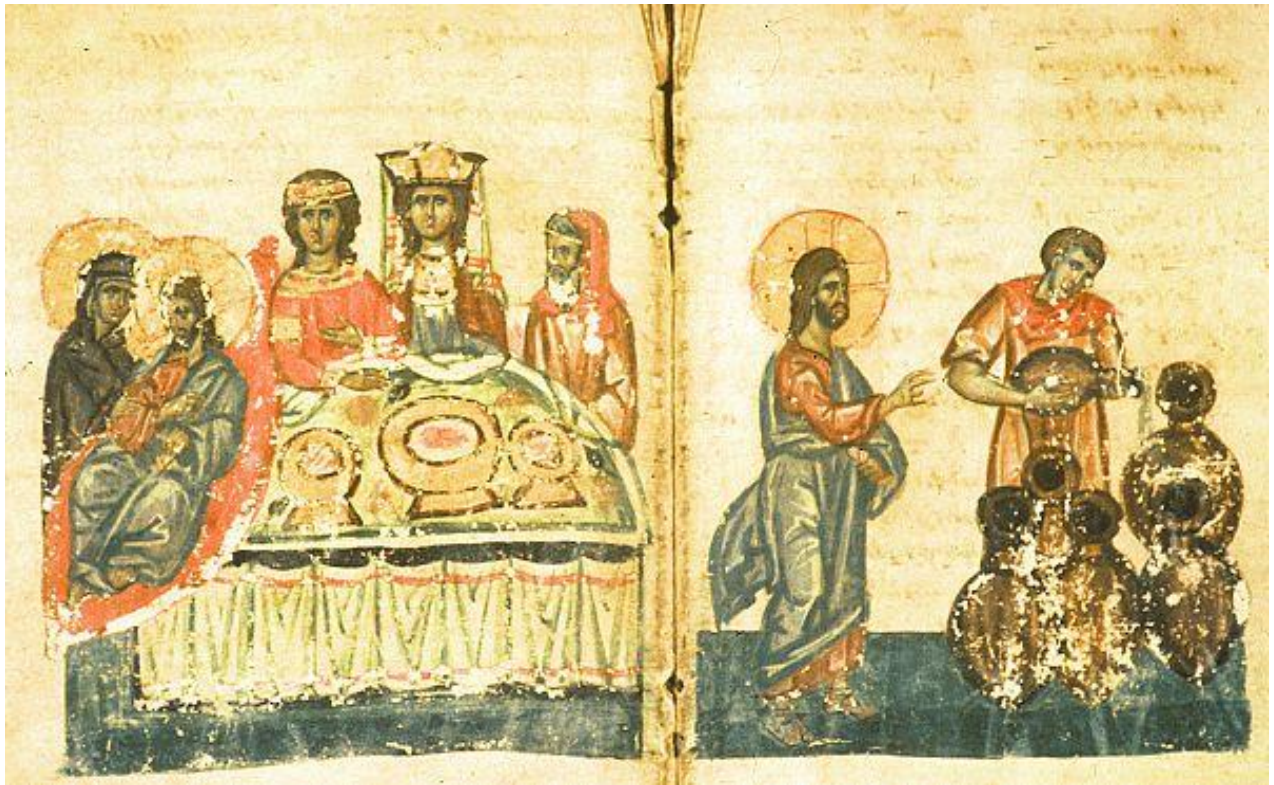


Figure 16 The Wedding at Cana, the Matendaran *Tetraevangelion*, fols. 348v-349r. Matendaran collection.

The first episode depicts the part where Christ is being told by the Virgin that the wine has run out: Christ is sitting in the frontal position on a red mattress, the Virgin is on his right, depicted in the moment of delivering the news. The table is in the center, depicted in a reverse perspective. It is covered by a white-greenish tablecloth and laden with some vegetables and three chalices, the central one bigger than the other two. The groom and bride are behind the table, pictured in sumptuous garments and jewelry. The figure of Christ and his mattress are almost in the air. The real proportions of chalices are not correctly conveyed. In the second episode there are six jars for wine whose mouths are not properly drawn. As we

can see the miniaturist tried to convey the proportions of jars unsuccessfully; they are unnaturally curved towards the viewer, as compared with the detail, for example, in the mosaic in the Chora church (Kariye Djami, 1315-1321) (**Figure 17**). Christ is standing in a three-quarter position and stretches his left hand in a blessing gesture. Interestingly, his fourth finger which is crossed in accordance with this gesture looks as if it was missing and this ‘cut finger’ can be tracked elsewhere in the manuscript. But his face and the draperies of his cloth are executed with great proficiency. The wavy edge of Christ’s cloak is performed quite skillfully, conveying the qualities of the tissue, its weight and the play of its draperies. The edge of the cloth caught in breeze resembles the one from the Descent into Hades scene in the *Tetraevangelion* of Iviron (Iveron monastery, cod. 5). The servant, who upon the order of Christ fills the jars with water, is represented frontally; his hands are drawn voluminously. The carnation of the steward is evocative and resembles an image from Late Antique frescoes.

In previous scholarship the miniatures of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* were considered as good examples of refined Constantinopolitan Palaeologan style, presumably painted in tempera, which was a rather unusual technique for manuscript illustrations, as noted above.

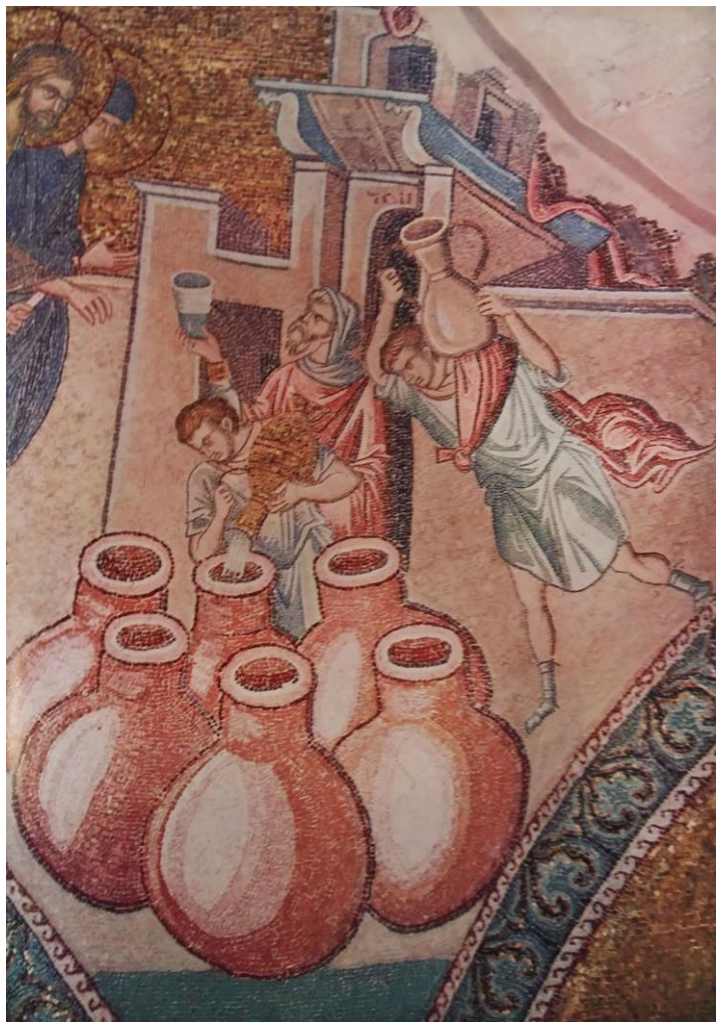


Figure 17 Detail from the Miracle at Cana, mosaic, Chora church (Kariye Djami), fourteenth century, accessed November 25, 2016, <http://romeartlover.tripod.com/>.

The technique of tempera was typical for monumental art and the use of this technique in book illumination is a phenomenon which can be traced from the Palaeologan period in manuscripts such as Paris gr. 64.⁴⁹ Considering certain similarities between the iconographic models of contemporaneous mural paintings and the miniatures of this manuscript, this correlation becomes even more convincing.⁵⁰

Apart from the dominating elegant style in the miniatures of Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, there is an apparent discrepancy between different miniatures of the manuscript in terms of its artistry and level of proficiency. The Palaeologan style manifest in the miniatures, underscored by Svirin, Lazarev and Durnovo, is justified in view of certain peculiarities of the adopted style: a highly expressed painterly style, shaping of proportioned, voluminous forms, a refined technique, bold brushstrokes to express glints and a soft finish of the faces. The palette of the miniatures centers on the intermediate hues of green, red, rose, orange and grayish-olive colors. The oval-shaped faces of the figures are often shaded by greenish shadows. However, along with this highly artistic manner of illustration, certain discrepancy is visible in the artistic performance which, as rightly remarked by Ioanna Rapti, is demonstrated in the plumpness of the facial representation of young people and female personages.⁵¹ The discrepancy of the artistic performance hints at the possibility that at least two masters worked on the illustrations. This hypothesis was put forward by Emma Korxmazyan, corroborated by Rapti and deserves further consideration since the comparison of several miniatures clearly shows different hands at work in a single miniature. In this respect, the Parable of the Ten Virgins (fol. 104v) is a very good example for such a discrepancy. The heavyweight and sturdy figures of the virgins, their small, round eyes and short noses indicate that the manner of this master differs from the elegant, plastic modelling

⁴⁹Rapti, "L'Enluminure Arménienne," .vol.1, 264-65.

⁵⁰Svirin, *Миниатюра древней Армении*; Durnovo, *Armenian Miniatures*; Lazarev, *История византийской живописи* vol.1.

⁵¹Rapti, "L'Enluminure Arménienne," .vol.1, 308.

introduced by another hand in other miniatures of the manuscript. Some of the examples of the latter practice include The twelve-year-old Jesus at the Temple scene (fol. 228v), The Wedding at Cana (fols. 348r-349v) and The Bosom of Abraham and the Holy Virgin (fols. 297v-298r). Two different hands can also be traced within the frames of a single miniature, expressed in the representation of harmonious, well-proportioned figures along with less meticulously developed figures, such as the Cleansing of the Temple scene (fol. 350v). Nevertheless, the overall homogeneity of miniatures is not violated.⁵² The lineaments are shaped by light-brown lines with red strokes. The eyelids and the area around the eyes are outlined with black. It is justifiable to assume that a less skilled miniaturist was in the service of a more experienced master, most probably Grigor Sukiassianc⁴, who had an eye on the whole illumination process, making sure that the stylistic unity is not dramatically violated. The process of the adaptation of artistic forms has been performed in the Four Gospels, which attests to the versatility of these masters.

The exquisite manner of painting, as well as the aspiration at creating voluminous figures are relevant issues for contemporary Armenian miniature painting.⁵³ The composite approach in fourteenth century miniature painting, whereby the artistic attainments of Cilician painting were combined with the oriental tradition, can also be referred to as the Crimean miniature school. Crimean miniaturists often used painterly modelling of carnations, draperies and at

⁵²Rapti, "L'Enluminure Arménienne," .vol.1, 309.

⁵³ The classicizing style of the fourteenth century is just one tendency in Armenian miniature painting, the one whose impact faltered in the subsequent centuries. By the fourteenth century the classical tradition in the representation of forms and space, developed in the Armenian miniature painting by Toros Roslin and his followers, gives way to a more constrained artistic approach. Such prominent masters of the fourteenth century as Sargis Picak (from Cilica) and Toros of Taron (from Siwnik) were representatives of the oriental tradition of the Armenian miniature painting with its abundant decorative ornamentation, accentuation on the pattern and color of the form rather than on its dimensional and voluminous characteristics. Nevertheless, it is notable that the Cilician influence on these masters in particular and on the Armenian miniature painting in general cannot be overestimated. The individualization and psychologism of the persons depicted, especially that of the evangelists; the tendency of breaking canonical schemes and extensively stylized forms are artistic achievements that certainly set new standards in Armenian miniature painting. Dickran Kouymjian, "The Classical tradition in Armenian Art", in *Revue des Études Arméniennes* New Series 15 (1981): 285. For a general overview of Armenian miniature painting in the fourteenth century see [Vigen Ghazarian] and [Sejranuš Manukyan] Виген Казарян и Сейрануш Манукян, *Матенадаран Армянская рукописная книга VI-XIV веков* vol. 1 [Matenadaran: Armenian manuscripts of sixth-fourteenth centuries] (Moscow: Книга 1991).

the same time represented the architectural decorations in two-dimensional space often in a reverse perspective and stylized patterning. The combination of inverse and reverse perspectives in one composition is also a characteristic feature of the Palaeologan art.⁵⁴ The quest for new ways of representation of forms and space, revived from the arsenal of classical art, adopted by Armenian artists and the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* is illustrative in this respect.

The point of departure for the Armenian masters was certainly the Greek model but artists had several manuscripts and notebooks in front of them which they used for building their compositions, so it was not the sheer emulation of forms but rather a creative process of combining and conceiving new composition. The miniaturists modified composition in accordance with their own needs and artistic experience. The style of the miniatures suggest that the copied model of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* can be assigned to the second half of the thirteenth century. And in the case of Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, as noted by Heide Buschhausen and attested to the stylistic analysis of the miniatures, the Greek masters of this *Tetraevangelion* were not from Constantinople but most probably from the nearby city of Kaffa. According to the authors, the copying model of this manuscript is probably a Georgian-Byzantine manuscript of the twelfth-thirteenth centuries produced in the twelfth or thirteenth century and it preserves some Late Comnenian elements of style.⁵⁵ A good example of the latter is the scene of Christ's entombment.

⁵⁴[Kolpakova], *Искусство Византии: Поздний период*, 67.

⁵⁵Buschhausen, "Beziehungen der Armenischen" 149; 146.

One of several examples included in Levon Chookaszian's article dedicated to the artistic peculiarities of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* is the scene of the Mocking of Christ (**Figure 18**). In this scene Christ is positioned between the mockers in frontal position whereas in the Armenian miniature painting Christ is usually represented either on the right or on the left. The type represented in the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* was common for the art of Toros Roslin and Cilician miniature painting in general and can be traced back to Western prototype.⁵⁶ This suggests that the iconography of this scene in the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* is associated with Cilician prototypes.⁵⁷ The same can be inferred about the representation of this scene in the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* where Christ is also represented in the center of the composition between four mockers (fol. 231r). Thus, it can be supposed that in these instances we deal with a model which penetrated into the



Armenian artistic milieu either due to the familiarity of the Crimean **Figure 18** Mocking of Christ, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 203r, Matenadaran collection.

⁵⁶ From Cilician examples: the *Tetraevangelion* FGA 32.18, Der Nersessian. *Armenian Manuscripts in the Freer Gallery of Art*, 319 fig. 125, 516 fig.160; The gospel book WGA 539, fol. 195 Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia*, vol.2, fig. 277.

⁵⁷ Chookaszian, "Armenian Book Illumination", 194.

masters with Cilician examples or by the models brought from fourteenth-century Italy and pertaining to the period of Trecento art. I will not present other examples cited by Chookaszian but instead will draw attention to certain scenes which have not been discussed from this perspective.

The Deposition of Christ in the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* (**Figure 19**) presents an interesting compositional model where the influence of the Dugento and Trecento art can be seen.



Figure 19 The Deposition of Christ, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 427v, Matenadaran collection.

It is interesting to compare this image with the scene of the Deposition in the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*. Unfortunately, the colors of the former have flaked off, nevertheless, the main composition is still visible: the big cross dominates the composition and its horizontal wings are stretching above the figures. The diagonal body of Christ, fallen to the left, occupies the central part of the composition and unites all the participants of the scene in one single act. The upper part, torso of the Christ, is supported by the Virgin who wears a dark red *mophorion* with a bluish tunic. On the left side of the composition Mary Magdalene holds the hand of the Christ next to her cheek; dressed in reddish-pink vestment beneath which she wears a green tunic. Joseph of Arimathaea on the left side of the Virgin wears a bluish tunic and is covered with pink *himantion*. On the opposite side of Mary Magdalene is John the Evangelist in a pink tunic. He lays his cheek on the lower part of Christ's body. Below his figure is Nicodemus who kneels at the bottom of the cross. Sadly, his figure is heavily damaged but it looks like he holds some instrument in his hands, perhaps a chisel or a hammer, and is captured right after the moment he removed the nails from Christ's feet. He wears a bluish tunic with a green *himantion*. The skill of the master who painted Nicodemus in such a complicated stance, his sandals visible, is especially notable. The hidden geometricity of scene is also manifest in the X-like compositional form which is formed by two diagonal lines crossed in the center of the composition. It aims to balance the composition: the above mentioned diagonally displaced body of Christ, which also encompasses the figures of the Virgin and John, is crossed with another diagonal line formed by the figures of Mary Magdalene and Joseph of Arimathaea. At the same time the composition is also divided into two by the vertical line of the cross; equally separating three figures of the composition the Virgin on the left, Christ and Mary Magdalene and Joseph of Arimathaea, John the Evangelist and Nicodemus on the right, respectively. The current state of the miniature, especially the lower part, does not allow a more thorough examination of

the details of the composition. All the figures, besides Mary Magdalene, have nimbi and, as usual, Christ's nimbus is cruciform.

The same topic in the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* is interpreted somewhat differently (**Figure 20**). Here the center of the composition is not the cross, which is on the right side of the composition, but the fallen upper part of Christ's body with a ladder behind him. On the left side the Virgin is holding the hand of Christ, bringing his hand to her cheek, a motif frequently found in Byzantine art as a manifestation of the Virgin's tenderness and grief over the death of her tortured son. This motif became popular in the Byzantine art from the eleventh century onwards and especially in thirteenth-fourteenth-century Italian art.⁵⁸ Two figures of holy women accompany the Virgin. One of them is most probably Mary Magdalene; she is enrobed in red and holds Christ's hand to her cheek with her veiled hand. On the right, John the Evangelist is standing in a half-bowed position and, again, places one hand on his cheek and the other raised forward as if expressing his mourning for Christ. Nicodemus, situated below John, is kneeling and preparing to remove the nails with his



Figure 20 The Deposition of Christ, the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 70r, Mechitarists' Congregation library collection.

⁵⁸Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. 2,165.

chisel. The colors have also fallen away in some parts of this composition but not as much as in the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*. Unlike to the Matendaran *Tetraevangelion* only Christ has nimbus, also in a cruciform shape.

The Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* follows the Italian model more faithfully, whereas the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* demonstrates the Byzantine iconographic type. The Matenadaran type is closer to the painted panel by Guido da Siena in 1270s (**Figure 21**).

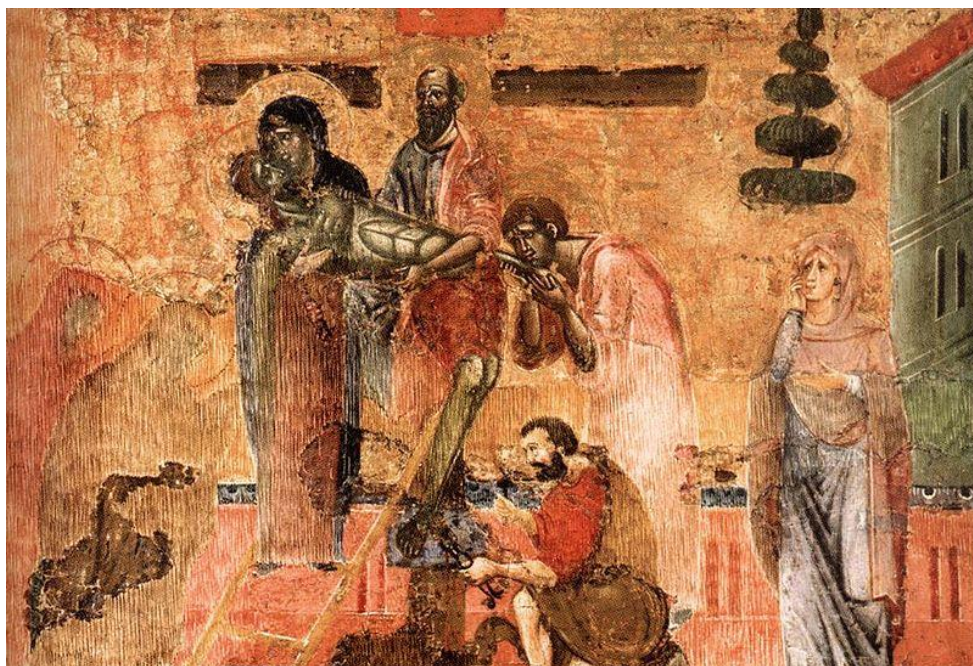


Figure 21 The Deposition of Christ, Guido da Siena, circa 1270, National Pinacoteca in Siena, thirteenth century, accessed November 25, 2016, <http://www.wga.hu/> .

The compositional structure is almost identical, although the Matenadaran example, as usual, reduces the composition by omitting the secondary personages. The other examples of similar models include a painting by a Byzantine master in the Pinacoteca in Bologna as well as the Pietro Lorenzetti fresco, The Deposition of Christ (1310-1329) in the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi (**Figure 22**).

The Flagellation of Christ (**Figure 23**) in the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* is an episode from the passion of Christ, which equally rarely illustrated in Byzantine and Armenian art. The concise three-figure composition covers most of the folio. The center of the composition is focused on a Corinthian column to which Christ is tied. He is represented in the three-quarter, tied to the right side of the column. He has a cruciform nimbus, his feet are in the air above the base of the column. Two mockers flank the Christ: they keep one of their hands on the column and hold scourges in the other, preparing to flagellate Christ. The faces of the



Figure 22 The Deposition of Christ, Pietro Lorenzetti, fresco, Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi, fourteenth century, accessed November 25, 2016, <https://www.pinterest.com> .

mockers are extremely damaged. One of them has a brown tunic covered with red mantle and the other is dressed in a red tunic, above which he has green mantle which harmonizes with the green shaft of the column, just like the golden capital's repeating the gold of Christ's nimbus.



Figure 23 The Flagellation of Christ, Matenadaran Tetraevangelion, fol. 120r, 1332, Matenadaran collection.

They wear black boots. Although this scene is rarely depicted in Byzantine tradition and Armenian art, it is quite common in the Western art, especially in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This iconographic model can be found in Western examples, more specifically in Italian art, for example in the scene of the Flagellation of Christ by Guido da Siena (**Figure 24**).

In this chapter I brought into the forefront certain peculiarities and characteristics of two *Tetraevangelia* and drew attention to their importance in the context of present thesis. It was shown that apart from their

Armenian origin, these iconographic and stylistic choices are strongly connected to the Byzantine artistic tradition and Italian models, certainly each in its own way. This conclusion opens the question whether they were a reflection of the well-established and close cultural and economic interactions of the Crimean-Armenian community with Byzantium and Italy.



Figure 24 The Flagellation of Christ, circa 1280, Guido da Siena, Lindenau Museum, accessed November 25, 2016, <http://www.wga.hu/index1.html>.

In the second chapter, the overview of

the historical situation in south-eastern Crimea is presented and then, in the third chapter I will contextualize these two *Tetraevangelia* in the context of fourteenth-century cultural-economic relations in the Black Sea Region, especially on northern shores.

Chapter 2 - The Political Situation in Thirteenth-Fourteenth-Century Southeastern Crimea and the World Around

2.1 The Political Situation in thirteenth-fourteenth century Black Sea region

Southeastern Crimea in the fourteenth century can be characterized as a developed and prosperous region — being a part of the trading system of the Black Sea as well as an important transit area for the commercial affairs between the Mediterranean and Asian markets. The role of Genoese and Venetian trading colonies — which were established in the Southeastern Crimea in the middle of the thirteenth century — was central to the economic advancement of the region and was marked by the political and economic changes which took place along with the recapture of Constantinople in 1261 and the ascent of the Palaiologos dynasty to the Byzantine throne. In the second half of the thirteenth century and up to fifteenth century — the Ottoman conquest of the peninsula in 1475 — Kaffa (Theodosia), Sudak (Soldaya), Surxat (Solgat, Solghat) and Tana were the most important centers among the trading colonies (*factoria*, *comptoirs*, *emporia*) established by Italians in the Northern shore of the Black Sea.

In 1261, with the support of the Genoese, the Nicaean Emperor Michael Palaiologos (1259-1282) recaptured Constantinople, thus putting an end to the Latin domination of Constantinople. Nevertheless, the Latin threat was still in the air and the efforts of Michael VIII were aimed to suppress the future attacks and consolidate the empire. For that purpose, the emperor developed several strategies — the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Latin world as well as with the erstwhile rivals of the empire. This process was underpinned by the intermarriages between the members of the Palaiologos family and the ruling elites of

Bulgaria, Epiros, Trebizond and the Golden Horde and Ilkanate. The negotiations with the Papacy over the rapprochement of two churches became focal point of Michael VIII's foreign policy.⁵⁹ The latter instigated the discontent of the Byzantine Orthodox Church and intellectual elites which the emperor had to repress by the wave of persecutions. Moreover, the hazard, coming from the new ruler of the deposed Latin Kingdom of Constantinople; Charles of Anjou, who was planning a new Crusade on the schismatics, left the emperor no way for stepping back from the policy of Union. He spent a lot of governmental money on the advancement of the Aragonese family in Sicily and the deposition of the Angevines (Anjou family) from the rule. All these developments display the loosened positions of Byzantium in the political arena wherein all its efforts were directed towards moving away the approaching threat rather than restoring its leading positions in the world. The reign of his successor Andronikos II was marked with the rejection of the Church union and heavy taxation and corruption policy across the empire. The abandonment of the territories in Asia Minor by his father in many ways affected the further history of the Byzantine presence in this region and Andronikos II's efforts to return positions in this region were tardy —the Seljuks and later the Mongols firmly took hold over the region. He tried to reduce expenses and dissolved the naval forces and cut the size of army which marked the starting point for the Byzantium: from when on it would heavily depend on the mercenary forces which, in turn, played destructive role for its historical fortune. The civil war of the 1320s aggravated the political situation and divided the higher circles of the ruling elite. The loss of Asia Minor was made evident by the rise of Ottomans who began an offensive on the Byzantine lands from the second half of the fourteenth century onwards. They captured Nicaea, Nicomedeia,

⁵⁹ Michael VIII married his illegitimate daughter Euphrosyne Palaeologina to Nogai Khan.

Pergamon, Chrysopolis. As an addition to this, Serbia and Bulgaria set up a military alliance and attacked the territories of the northern Greece.⁶⁰

Thus, in the second half of the thirteenth century and in the fourteenth century, even though Byzantium triumphantly took control over Constantinople and declared its ambitions for restoring the glory of the empire, the political realities of the time revealed its incapability to reunite the fragmented empire. The glimmer of hope arose when the Byzantines tried to set up an alliance with the Mongols who at that time became powerful players of political life and their sympathy to Christianity served as a prerequisite of success. The Byzantines were not the only ones who sought alliance with the Mongols against the rising danger of the Turks of the Asia Minor and Mamluks of Egypt. The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia, using the same strategies of intermarriages and military support, established liaisons with the Mongols from the thirteenth century onwards.

Although these political realities may seem as digressions from my direct research questions yet these are factors which had crucial impact on the neighboring regions and shaped the political map of fourteenth-century Black and Mediterranean Seas. These developments generated a situation where the Italian states, whose main profit was gained by trade, had to seek alternative sources which would grant them economic security in case of the political turmoil. They experienced difficulties in their Eastern Mediterranean ports after the capture of Baghdad (1258), the sack of Aleppo (1260) by the Mongols with the help of the Armenian and Frankish troops. This made them reroute their trade and gain an open access to the Northern shore of the Black Sea. Herein, they found allies with the Nicaean Empire and provided a military support to Michael VIII for recapturing Constantinople. As a precondition for such support, they signed a trade and defense pact with Byzantium known as the Treaty of Nymphaion in 1261. This document granted the Republic of Genoa unlimited access to the

⁶⁰ Dionysios Stathakopoulos, *A Short History of the Byzantine Empire* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2014), 154-61.

Black Sea as well as various taxation and customs concessions. The most important condition of this treaty was the obligation of the emperor to forbid any Western traders' to navigate through the Bosphorus, except for merchants from Genoa and Pisa. This act was primarily aimed to hinder the entry of the Venetian ships, main rival of the Republic of Genoa, to the Black Sea.⁶¹

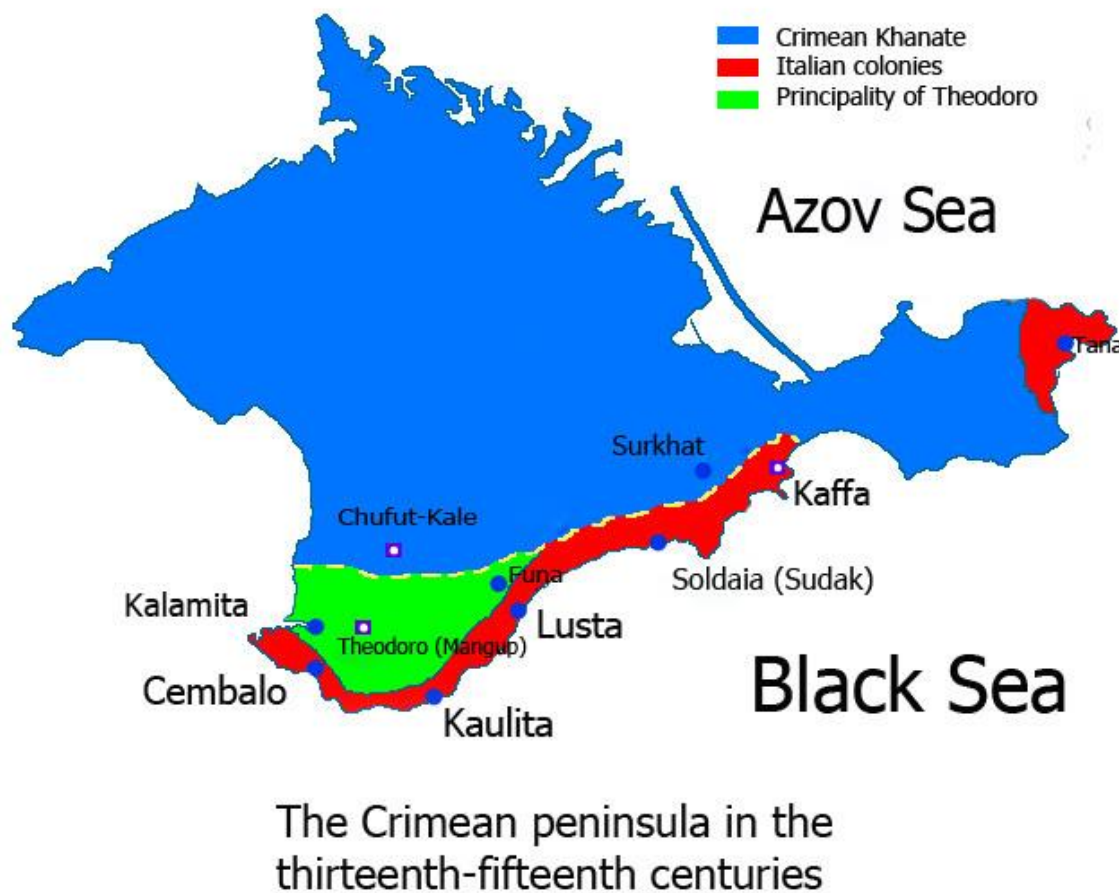


Figure 25 The Crimean peninsula in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries.

⁶¹ *A Short History of the Byzantine Empire*, 155.

However, the support of the Byzantine emperor was not sufficient for the establishment of Genoese colonies in the eastern part of Crimea, so they started negotiating with the Mongols who at the time primarily held the area. As part of the realization of Genghis Khan's world-domination plan, the next Great Khan, Ögedei (1229-1241), initiated the broadening of the frontiers of the Mongol Empire and one of the main directions encompassed the western end of the Eurasian steppe in Russia through Poland and Hungary. Acting upon this military plan, in 1239 the Mongols, under the command of Batu Khan (1207-1255), grandson of Genghis Khan, conquered Crimea.⁶² Later Crimea became the *Ulus* of Jochi or the Golden Horde with Surxat (Solgat, Solghat) as a center of the *ulus* and was named Eski-Qirim.⁶³ The Mongol name is a Turkic word, *qirim* (moat). As noted in the scholarship, the Mongols likened the moat to the Isthmus of Perekop.⁶⁴ In 1265 Berke Khan donated as an appanage 'Solghat and Sudak' to Kai-Kawus II, a dethroned Sultan of Rum who was released by from the Byzantine captivity by the Mongols.⁶⁵ Besides Kai-Kawus II, other Seljuk emirs received

Figure 25 The Crimean peninsula in the thirteenth-fifteenth centuries.

estates in the southeastern part of Crimea. Until 1280s the Seljuks ruled over Surxat and their presence is evident in the preserved monuments.⁶⁶ The presence of the Seljuk element in the area completes the picture of multi-ethnic society of fourteenth-century Crimea and that of Surxat. This is clearly indicated by the topographic plan of the city of Surxat where the mosques and churches are placed in close proximity of each other. It can be inferred that this

⁶² John Saunders, *The History of the Mongol Conquests* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 75.

⁶³ *Ulus* is a Mongol, Turkic social term which is used to indicate a particular populace or state. It can also have the meaning of horde, a military-administrative entity of Mongol and Turkic populace.

⁶⁴ The Isthmus of Perekop is a narrow strip of land which connects the Crimean peninsula to the mainland of Ukraine.

⁶⁵ Saunders, *The History of the Mongol Conquests*, 159.

⁶⁶ [Tatevik Sargsyan] Տաթևիկ Սարգսյան, "Միջնադարյան Սուրխատի հայերը և նրանց հավատալիքները" [The Armenians of medieval Surxat and their churches], *Պատմա-քաղաքագիտական հանդես*, 1 (2000), 108; See also [Osman Akchokrakly] Осман Акчокраклы, "Старо-Крымские и Отузские надписи XIII-XV в.в." [The inscriptions from Stary Krim and Otuz], in *Известия Таврического общества истории, археологии и этнографии* 1, (1927): 5 – 17.

proximity also suggests the intensive intercommunication between different multi-ethnic groups.

In this period, besides the Republic of Genoa and the Golden Horde, another power rose in this part of Crimea. In the twelfth century Constantine Gabras, a member of an influential family of the principality of Trebizond, established a principality which he called Theodoro in the honor of his famous ancestor Theodore Gabras. This is particularly interesting because the Gabras family had an Armenian genealogical line: Theodore Gabras had married Irina of Taronits who came from a prominent Armenian family.⁶⁷ In this regard, Tatevik Sargsyan suggesting that the Armenian-Chalcedonians resided at the peninsula in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries in the area of the principality of Theodoro — in the southern part of the peninsula, is noteworthy.⁶⁸ For this discussion the existence of such a potential source of Byzantine artistic and cultural influence in the area is of utmost importance.

To sum up, it should be underscored that the political situation in the northern shore of the Black Sea in the fourteenth century reveals a heterogeneous and disputed environment where the non-dominant ethnicities of the peninsula had to navigate between these powers.

2.2 The Armenian presence in Crimea

At this point, it is necessary to present the Armenian element in the framework of this political and cultural mosaic as well as the position it held in the social-economic life at the time. The first accounts concerning the Armenian presence in the peninsula are from the period of the Byzantine domination of Crimea. These accounts mainly concern Armenian military commanders in the service of the Byzantine army, who were considered excellent warriors and faithful servants of the emperor. Armenian military commanders were very

⁶⁷[Bartikian], *Հայ-բյուզանդական հետազոտություններ*. Հատոր 2, 389-428.

⁶⁸[Tatevik Sargsyan] Տաթևիկ Սարգսյան, “Հայ հոգևոր-մշակութային կենտրոնները Արևելյան Դրիմում (14-15րդ դարեր)” [Armenian spiritual-cultural centers in Southeastern Crimea. Fourteenth-fifteenth centuries], Ph.D dissertation (Yerevan: ՀՀ Գիտությունների ազգային ակադեմիայի պատմության ինստիտուտ, 2004), 78.

often sent into exile to the peripheries of the empire after unsuccessful uprisings against Byzantine emperors or, on the contrary, were entrusted with the task of defending the Byzantine borders against invasive attacks.⁶⁹ It is from the seventh century onwards that an Armenian community can be distinguished in the melting pot of Crimea; it became increasingly important and developed rapidly from the end of the eleventh century. During the fourteenth and in subsequent centuries there were further bouts of new inflow. In the course of these seven centuries the growing number of the Armenians and their social integration into the public life of the Crimea was palpable.

Migration patterns were driven by the political-economic situation in the Armenian kingdom, such as invasions and the concomitant destruction from the seventh to the eleventh centuries, as well as the frequently exercised massive deportation of the Armenian population by the Byzantine Empire. The first inflow of immigrants came to Crimea in the seventh century as a consequence of the Arab invasion, when persecution and high taxes forced many Armenians to leave the Armenian kingdom.⁷⁰ The route of migration for this group of Armenians was through the Balkans.

Another inflow of Armenians occurred in the eleventh century, caused by the incursion of the Seljuks, and the collapse of Bagratid Kingdom of Armenia in 1045. At the same, the majority of Armenians moved to Cilicia, to the northwestern regions of historical Armenia, and to the

⁶⁹ A striking example for such a case is Vardan (Greek: Βαρδάνης) who was declared emperor of Byzantium and received the nickname Philippikos (711-713). He led a rebellion in the Chersonese in 711 against Justinian II the Slit-nose, and ascended the throne with the support of the Khazars. Another early example for the presence of the Armenians in Crimea can be found in the chronicle of Matthew of Edessa, an Armenian historian of the twelfth century. Matthew writes that the Byzantine emperor, Constantine X Doukas, in 1065 conscripted troops from the ‘whole Armenian land’ under the command of Basil and sent them to fight against the Uğurs near the Don River. See in [Ashot Abrahamyan] Աշոտ Աբրահամյան, *Համառոտ նրբագիծ հայ զանդախյանի պատմություն* vol.1, [The brief outline of the history of Armenian colonies] (Yerevan: Հայաստանի հրատարակչություն, 1967), 160.

⁷⁰ The Armenian kingdom is referred as the Bagratid Kingdom of Armenia (880-1045) which was an independent state and was founded by Ashot I in 884. For a general overview on the medieval Armenian kingdoms see Nina Garsoïan, “The History of Armenia”, in *Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Illuminated Manuscripts* ed. Thomas Mathews and Roger Wieck (New York: Princeton University Press, 1994), 9-15.

Crimea as well. Several groups of Armenian people came to the Crimea through Trebizond and Sinope.

However, the biggest influx of Armenians to Crimea came from the city of Ani, which was exposed to the Mongol invasions in 1330, so that many inhabitants of Ani found shelter in areas near the Volga River and then moved to the southern part of the Crimea. After the fall of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia in 1375, many Armenians migrated to the Crimea in the fourteenth century.⁷¹

In this section I will focus on three important cities and trading centers of the Crimea, Kaffa, Sudak, and Tana, even though there are more destinations on the peninsula where Armenian presence is testified in the written sources.⁷²

According to the *Statute di Kaffa* of 1316, verified by the *Committee of Gazariae* of the Republic of Genoa, it was permitted to lease the lands situated in the outer part of the citadel to the Armenians, Greeks and other Christians. The Armenian populace, which appears to reside outside the defensive system of the city, had to protect itself by erecting fortified walls which were known as *Hayoc' Berd* [Armenian fortress]. The enlargement and development of the urban space necessitated the second outer fortress which comprised both the citadel and the external residential areas of the city (burgs). The Armenian fortress, now known as Karantin, was situated in the eastern part of Kaffa. Here, four Armenian churches are preserved, as well as the ruins of the Armenian fortress, while the foundation of one more church was excavated in the 1980s.⁷³

⁷¹ [Vardges Mikaelyan] Վարդգես Միքայելյան, *Ղրիմահայոց պատմություն* [The history of Crimean Armenians] (Yerevan: Հայաստանի հրատարակչություն, 1989), 5-46.

⁷² Sudak is also known in written sources as Sughda, Suroj, Soldaya.

⁷³ [Tatevik Sargsyan] Татевик Саргсян, “Ещё раз об армянских церквях в Феодосии XIII-XV вв. Церковь архангелов Габриэла и Микаэла” [Once again about the Armenian churches in Theodosia in the thirteenth to-fifteenth centuries: Church of Gabriel and Michael]. *Պատմա-քանադական հանդես* 2, (2002): 114.

[Vardges Mikaelyan] Վարդգես Միքայելյան, *Ղրիմի հայկական գաղութի պատմություն* [The history of Armenian colony in the Crimea] (Yerevan, ՀՍՍՀ Գիտությունների ակադեմիայի հրատարակչություն, 1970), 102.

According to Mikaelyan, in the fifteenth century more than 47 000 Armenians lived in Kaffa which constituted two thirds of the city's 70 000 population. The colophons written in Kaffa, attest to the existence of thirty churches and monasteries, though only eight have survived. Two of them, Saint Sergius and that of the Holy Archangels (*Hreshtakapet*), were part of the citadel of the city and most probably had been built even earlier, before the Genoese domination of the city.⁷⁴

Another important city was Tana (Azov) which was under Venetian domination.⁷⁵ In Tana, as in other Italian emporia, trade was operated by *habitatores* and *burgenses* from different parts of the Black Sea (Kaffa, Porto, Pisano, Simisso, Sinope, Trebizond), Byzantium (Constantinople, Mesembria, Monemvasia), Latin Romania (Candia, Pera, Famagusta, Chios) and the Golden Horde (Sarai, Surxat, Kolkoliko, Kubako). There were three Greeks, three Armenians, two Jews and one Catalanian amongst *habitatores* who had Venetian citizenship in Tana.⁷⁶ According to the 1359-1360 acts of Cancelliere Benedetto Bianco, in the 1360s in Tana there were Genoese and Tatar settlements, Armenian and Jewish districts, as well as areas where Greeks and Slavs lived. Beside Italians, in this trading post Greeks, Saracens, Tatars, Alans, Armenians, Germans, Catalanians, Jews, Dalmatians, Czechs and Russians were actively involved in various aspects of public life. As it is noted by the notary, there were a separate Greek district (*contracta Grecorum*) and an Armenian district and curia (*contracta; curia Armenorum*).⁷⁷ This proves that these inhabitants of Tana were not just settled in Tana in the sense of occupying some of its territory, but had also their own judicial-administrative authorities, which, in turn, demonstrates the extent of their integration and significant role in Crimea, and particularly in Tana. The latter had trading relations with Sarai

⁷⁴Sargsyan, “Ещё раз об армянских церквях в Феодосии XIII-XV в.в.”, 115.

⁷⁵ Now in the territory of Russian Federation.

⁷⁶ [Sergei Karpov] Сергей Карпов, “Венецианская Тана по актам канцлера Бенедетто Бьянко (1359-1360г.г.)” [The Venetian Tana in the acts of Cancelliere Benedetto Bianco (1359-1360)], in *Причерноморье в средние века* vol. 5 (Saint Petersburg: Алетейя, 2001), 19.

⁷⁷ [Karpov], “Венецианская Тана по актам канцлера Бенедетто Бьянко”, 24.

(Old Sarai/Sarai Batu), Surxat and even further with Urgench (all the way across Golden Horde).⁷⁸ It was an important outlet in the caravan trade with Far Eastern markets. In this respect, Surxat as a transit spot will be discussed in the third chapter.

According to the same source, there were three groups of people of non-Latin origin living in Tana who were classified according to their occupation: merchants and craftsmen with some property; hired workers; and former or present slaves and servants. In the fifteenth century, the main population of Tana consisted of Greeks, Russians, Jews and Armenians who were mostly merchants. They established partnerships with the Italians in the course of time and Italians adopted their manner and expertise in navigation and trade of the Black Sea region.⁷⁹

The Genoese had a special attitude towards Armenians as a dominant group of the population of Tana and experienced traders, which proved useful in trading interactions with the Mongols.

2.3 The Cilician-Mongol alliance and role of the Mongols

In regard to the role of Armenians and their relations with the Mongols in the period in question, it is illustrative to discuss the alliance between the Cilician kingdom of Armenia and the Great Khanate and the Ilkanate. The Cilician kingdom of Armenia declared its submission to the Mongols in 1247 by sending their envoy, the brother of king Hethoum I (1226-1270 and 1299-1303) Smbat (Sembat) to Karakorum. The submission ensured the support of Mongols against Seljuks and Mamluks who captured many important Cilician forts at the time and were a potential danger to the kingdom. In 1253 Hetoum himself visited the Great Khan Möngke (1251-1259) at Karakorum. Besides the protection, which could be provided for the Armenians by the Mongols, Hetoum hoped that the Mongols could assist in

⁷⁸ Urgench is situated in Central Asia (Turkmenistan) and was one of the most important cities on the Silk Road. As 'Konye-Urgench' was an independent entity in the system of the Golden Horde in the fourteenth century.

⁷⁹[Sergei Karpov] Сергей Карпов, "Источники по истории Причерноморье и древней Руси в итальянских архивах" [Sources concerning the history of the Black Sea region and ancient Rus' in Italian archives] *Вестник МГУ* (1994):6.

taking the Holy Land from the hands of Muslims. For this purpose, the Cilician Armenians became kind of intermediaries in the negotiations between the Latin world and the Mongols, trying to persuade both sides that such an alliance could be feasible and beneficial for both sides. Throughout the thirteenth century the Armenians maintained their contributory role in the military success of the Mongols by providing considerable number of troops for their military campaign in the Upper Mesopotamia and Syria in 1260 and even benefited from that by receiving some fortifications in Syria and conducting raids in northern Syria. Nevertheless, the Mongols support was restricted and unsubstantial in the face of Mamluks' danger. Therefore, after continuous attacks of Mamluks on the Cilician lands, the Armenians signed a truce with Mamluks in 1285 which obliged the Armenian side to pay an annual tribute of one million dirhems and gave various privileges to the Egyptians. However, the Mamluk threat was still relevant and Hetoum continued to consider the Mongols as possible allies against them, perhaps because besides the Mongols there was no other power that could stand up against the Mamluks at the time. The Armenians took part in several Mongol campaigns against Mamluks in 1299 and 1301. However, the conversion of the Mongols to Islam made things worse for the Armenians and the tolerant attitude of the Mongols which protected them from religious persecutions was now a thing of the past. This change in the mood of the Mongols towards Cilician kingdom is reflected in in 1307 the Mongol emir Bilarghu killed Hethoum, King Levon IV (1303-1307), and their retinue.⁸⁰

It is noteworthy that in the period the relations between the Mongols and the Armenians (the King of Cilician Kingdom of Armenia considered himself the king of the whole Armenian nation) were relatively friendly and guaranteed the Armenians, including Armenian merchants, free movement in the lands of the empire. The latter created favorable conditions

⁸⁰ Sirarpie Der Nersessian, "The Kingdom of Cilician Armenia", in *A History of the Crusaders* vol. 2, ed. Kenneth Setton (Philadelphia. 1962), 652-58. Reuven Amitai, "Dangerous Liaisons: Armenian-Mongol-Mamluk Relations (1260-1292)", in *La Méditerranée des Arméniens XIIe-XIVe siècle*, ed. Claude Mutafian, (Paris: Geuthner, 2014), 191-203.

for Crimean-Armenians too who, due to their close interactions with Mongols, became intermediaries between the Italians and the Mongols.

Though the developments discussed above did not take place in the peninsula itself, from the perspective of this thesis, these events were important for Southeastern Crimea in the second half of the thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth century. The political and economic objectives of the Mongols, Italians and Byzantines shaped the upcoming history of peninsula to a great extent. In this reality, trade played a crucial role for all of these powers and also conditioned their foreign policies and made the cultural exchange an important tool of conducting diplomatic relations. The Mongols gravitation towards Nestorian Christianity generated hopes in the hearts of the Christians. The legend of a Nestorian Christian patriarch and king, known as Prester John in twelfth-century Western chroniclers, who allegedly ruled a Christian nation of the East is illustrative in this respect. After the advent of Mongols in Eastern Europe and in the light of their Nestorian orientation the West identified the Mongols with a mythical nation of the East. And though the invasion of the Mongols into Poland and Hungary in 1241 left Europeans in shock, the West still believed that the conversion of the Mongols into Christianity could protect them from the Mongol menace. For this purpose, several missionaries were sent to the court of Great Khan, including the two Franciscan missionaries, John of Plano Carpini in 1245 and William of Rubruck in 1253. The former was sent by the Pope Innocent IV (1243-1254), and the latter made an unofficial diplomatic visit as a Franciscan friar preaching Christian faith in the East, even though it was prompted by Louis IX of France (1217-1270).⁸¹

All these missionaries and embassies were accompanied with the circulation of manuscripts and other precious gifts. The manuscripts illustrated with miniatures, besides their artistic value, were a tool for knowledge transmission and religious propaganda. In this perspective,

⁸¹ Saunders, *The History of the Mongol Conquests*, 102-3.

Latin books and Byzantine manuscripts were also ways to disseminate theological doctrine. As will be shown in the next chapter, this is applicable both for Crimea and Armenia proper in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries.

Chapter 3 - Trade Network and Armenian Artistic Interactions in Fourteenth-Century Surxat on the Example of Two *Tetraevangelia*

After setting the historical framework for the present discussion, firstly, I will outline the importance of trade in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries for the northern shore of the Black Sea which connected the Mediterranean trade to the remote markets of Asia. Thus, in this chapter I will examine the main trade routes, commercial affairs and trading communities of late-thirteenth-fourteenth century in the area around the Black Sea in relation to the involvement of Armenians in this trading network. Secondly, the chapter follows with the contextualization of two *Tetraevangelia* in the context of the interrelation between art and trade. The latter concerns not only the circulation of artistic production as such but also the transmission of artistic trends and ideas via travelling. The latter intensified due to more developed infrastructures such as roads, networks of communication and supply such as the *yam* system.⁸²

3.1 Trade as a driving force in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries social-economic relations

Trade as a beneficial source of revenues played a central role for all the rulers of the coastal areas both in the Mediterranean and the Black Seas; however it gained even more importance after thirteenth-century Mongol conquests when the Mongols created favorable conditions for the development of the caravan trade, connecting Europe to Asia, Persia, China and even India. The Pax Mongolica, which unified the vast territory from China to the Eastern Mediterranean under Mongol rule from 1220 onwards, contributed to the development of trade by facilitating the establishment of commercial relations and providing the security of

⁸² *Yam* was a supply point in the post and communication network developed by Mongols and promoted the development of trade routes from China to Europe by ensuring their safety.

the trade roads.⁸³ To some extent this change promoted more openness and facilitated cross-cultural interactions, which went beyond being solely commercial: it became an impetus for the active artistic and cultural exchange.⁸⁴ The safe and secure roads made Catholic missionaries and travel possible, and remote areas more accessible, which, consequently, created an opportunity to learn more about each other and to interact in a more direct and straightforward way.

The Mongols contributed to the flourishing of trade and urban centers and protected and sustained the trade routes providing safety and feasibility. These factors were essential for the expansion and improvement of commercial interactions and subsequently activated cross-cultural interactions, missionaries and dissemination of scientific knowledge. Perhaps it could not be formulated better than Nicola di Cosmo did:

“Christianity, Islam and Buddhism all benefited, or tried to benefit, from this favorable climate; the tastes of people ranging from clothes to food became more cosmopolitan, and men of science were able to compare their knowledge and exchange ideas at various Mongol courts. Even forms of sport and entertainment such as the royal hunt and musical spectacles were enriched and changed by the flow of people, animals, and goods”.⁸⁵

3.2 The development of urban centers and the emergence of the middle class

The thirteenth-fourteenth centuries are characterized by the development of urban centers across the areas where trade played key role. In addition, a new social stratum made itself evident in these centers, merchants who concentrated considerable wealth and formed the so

⁸³ The Pax Mongolica is a term which specifies a period of time, characterized by more or less stable situation across the lands controlled by the Mongols which promoted the flow of goods and people across continental Eurasia for at least a century.

⁸⁴Nicola Di Cosmo, “Black Sea Emporia and the Mongol Empire: A Reassessment of the Pax Mongolica”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 53 (2010): 85-86.

⁸⁵ Di Cosmo, “Black Sea Emporia”, 92.

called middle class of the time. These developments were common both for Byzantium and Crimea.

For the understanding the role of Byzantium in the trade network of the thirteenth-fourteenth century it is crucial to understand the political situation in the period. After 1204 Byzantium has never been fully liberated from the West, even after the re-conquest of Constantinople in 1261 Byzantium was heavily dependent on the West especially in terms of economic life. Throughout the fourteenth century it became “a hinterland of the Italian-dominated markets” and was closely connected to the Eastern Mediterranean trade.⁸⁶ Byzantium exported foodstuffs, raw materials and imported manufactured products; textile and ceramics to the west. The Byzantine economy was part of the trading system established by the Italians and issued considerable trading privileges to them.⁸⁷

As mentioned previously, in this period a new social stratum, the merchants, became influential in the Palaeologan society and not only in terms of its economic position but also in its pursuit of gaining the political power too.⁸⁸ Aristocracy, which had left their sumptuous residential houses and moved to the cities, made up part of fourteenth-century urban population but it was the merchants and artisans who played a key role in the urban life of the time. Along with other bankers they constituted a separate social group in this period, which was called *mesoi* [middle class].⁸⁹ The *mesoi* fed on the trade (foodstuffs), money lending and manufacture and had close ties with Italians. They presented the financial interests of Italians as their local intermediaries or agents.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Angeliki Laiou-Thomadakis, “The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System; Thirteenth-Fourteenth Centuries” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol. 34/35, (Washington: Trustees for Harvard University, 1980-81): 179.

⁸⁷ Angeliki Laiou, “The Palaiologoi and the World Around Them (1261-1400)”, in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c.500-1492*, ed. Jonathan Shepard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 820.

⁸⁸ Laiou, “The Palaiologoi and the World Around Them (1261-1400)”, 813.

⁸⁹ Laiou, “The Palaiologoi and the World Around Them (1261-1400)”, 821.

⁹⁰ Stathakopoulos, *A Short History of the Byzantine Empire*, 165.

The emergence of this new social stratum is similarly attested to within Armenian community of Crimea, and Surxat in particular. Moreover, the advent of this middle class can be observed also in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries in such important cities as Ani, Kars, etc. and the elements of urban life began to appear in the visual imagery of Armenian art.

A good example for this development is a thirteenth-century gospel book written in the Halbat monastery and illustrated by the master Margare in Ani at the Bexents monastery.

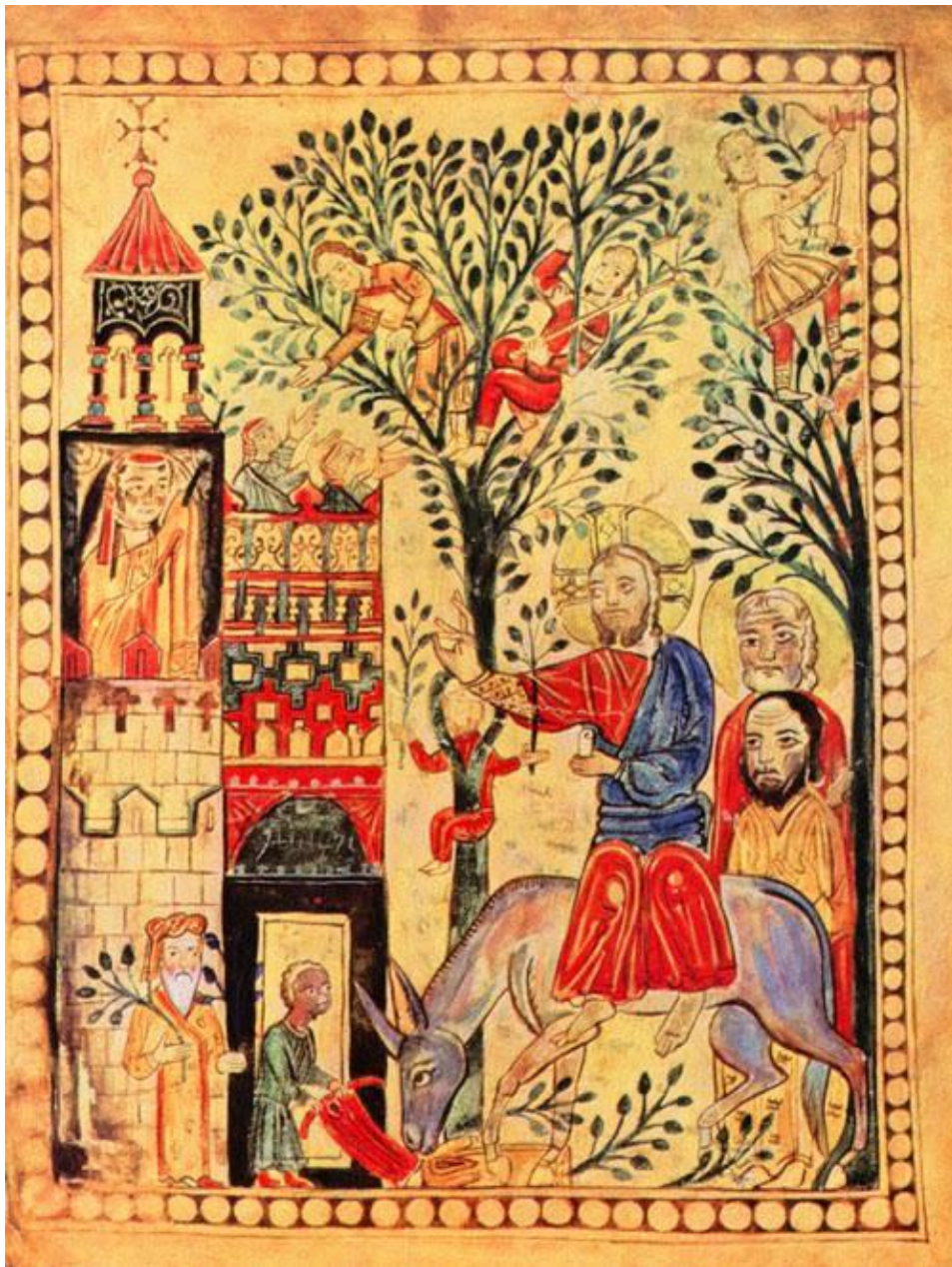


Figure 26 Entry into Jerusalem, Halbat Gospel book, fol. 16v, thirteenth century, Matenadaran collection, accessed November 25, 2016 <http://arvestagir.am/> .

The master portrays ecclesiastical and secular figures and elements of daily life of the city on the margins of the canon tables and in the only figurative miniature of the gospel book, the Entry into Jerusalem: on the marginalia by the accompanying inscriptions one can identify the prior of the Bexents monastery and the compiler of the book who is also a monk. From the secular figures several characteristic figures of the urban life of medieval Ani are depicted such as fisherman Sheranik, a jar-bearer and *gusan* [entertainer/singer]. Furthermore, based on the colophon of the gospel book Karen Matevosyan argued that the citizens of Jerusalem who greet Christ at the gates of the city in the gospel scene, are members of the patron's family who commissioned the gospel book (Figure 26). In addition, the gateway in the miniature resembles an actually existing arch, situated on the way from Horomos to Ani. This is a telling example of the thirteenth century's rich artistic imagery in which the secular and urban elements become more and more important.⁹¹

For the present thesis, it is interesting because it suggests that this kind of artistic thinking also came to the Crimean community of Armenians with the inflow of the Armenians from Ani to Crimea in 1330.⁹² The influence of the Ani school of miniature painting is noted by Emma Korxmazyan but the scarcity of the preserved contemporaneous visual material from Ani hampers the comparative analysis.⁹³

3.3 The trade routes around Black Sea and Surxat

The establishment of Pax Mongolica promoted the Western commercial interests in inner Asia, and the Black Sea and the empire of Trebizond became important hubs on this trading route.⁹⁴ Furthermore, on the one hand, the thirteenth-century Mongol-Mamluk confrontation,

⁹¹ [Karen Matevosyan] Շարեն Մաթևոսյան, *Անի: Եկեղեցական Կյանքը և Ձեռագրական Ժառանգությունը* [Ani: The Ecclesiastical Life and Manuscripts' Heritage] (Etchmiadzin: Մուրթ Մայր աթոռ, 1997), 246-265. [Sejranuš Manukyan] Сейрануш Манукян, Ахпатское евангелие [The Haľbat Gospel], in *Православная энциклопедия* vol. 4, accessed November 18, 2016, <http://www.pravenc.ru/text/77214.html>.

⁹² [Karen Matevosyan] Շարեն Մաթևոսյան, *Անի-Շիրակի պատմության էջեր* [Historical pages from the Ani-Shirak] (Yerevan: Author's publication, 2010), 272-273.

⁹³ [Korxmazyan], *Армянская миниатюра Крыма*, 23.

⁹⁴ [Korxmazyan], *Армянская миниатюра Крыма*, 162.

which extended to the area of the Fertile Crescent, heavily affected the trade in the outlets of the region, on the other hand, the establishment of important cities by the Il-khanate rulers in Persia and in the Kipchak Khanate such as Tabriz, Sultaniya and Sarai Berke, Hajitarkhan respectively, rerouted the trade between West and East through the city of Trebizond and its neighboring area.⁹⁵ On this occasion, it is appropriate to mention the involvement of the cities of *Barjr Hayk* and the Cilician kingdom of Armenia in this trade network and the Armenian merchants' involvement in it as intermediaries and traders. This route embraced three major Armenian cities; Karin (Erzerum), Erzuka (Erzinjan) and Sebastia (Sivas), from where the trading route proceeded to the south; to the important outlet of Cilician kingdom, Ayas.⁹⁶ In Karin/Erzerum, the caravans which had a direction to Trebizond proceeded to the north-western direction whereas, as it is attested to in Pegolotti's fourteenth-century manual, the *Practica della Mercatura*, trading route between Ayas and Tabriz went directly through Khoi to the westward direction.⁹⁷

The Genoese merchants, who initiated the long-distance trade, plausibly established partnerships with local Muslims from Persia and Central Asia who were familiar with routes and markets. The latter is attested to in the notary acts in which partnerships between Italians and Greeks, "Saracens" and others are recorded.⁹⁸

The Mongols integrated the maritime system into their continental trade, creating a united system which was highly beneficial for them in terms of connecting land and sea; thus

⁹⁵Sergej Karpov, "The Black Sea Region, Before and After the Fourth Crusade" accessed November 18, 2016, https://www.academia.edu/28760148/THE_BLACK_SEA_REGION_BEFORE_AND_AFTER_THE_FOURTH_CRUSADE, 286.

⁹⁶ Thomas Sinclair, "Trade, Administration, and Cities on the Plateau of Kars and Ani, Thirteenth to Sixteenth Century", in *Armenian Kars and Ani*, ed. Richard Hovahannisyan (Los Angeles: MAZDA Publishers. 2011), 174.

⁹⁷ Sinclair, "Trade, Administration, and Cities", 175.

⁹⁸ Sinclair, "Trade, Administration, and Cities", 104-5. It should be added that besides the Muslims from Iran and Central Asia, the Armenians were also appropriate intermediaries since most of them had a good knowledge of Eastern languages, especially Turkish, which in the course of time overshadowed Mongolian and became the predominant language in trade. Their familiarity with the trade routes and local customs was also beneficial.

multiplying their profit.⁹⁹ Their profit was not only gained from the exchange of goods but also from the “transaction costs” which included the renting of pack animals and labor, paying for storage and transiting fees. This regular flow of money stimulated the development of local economy in the hubs of this trading system such as Sarai, Urgench, Tabriz. The commercial fees, *commercium*, was collected from the Italian trading emporia’ by the Golden Horde at the rate of 3 % of the value of merchandise, although sometimes the unsteady situation made it fluctuate. The Mongol governor who was appointed to be a representative of the Golden Horde and to manage, regulate the taxation and diplomatic relations with Italians was located in Surxat until the time of the establishment of the Crimean Khanate.¹⁰⁰

Surxat was an important trading hub which was engaged in the caravan trade with Russian and Central Asian cities in the fourteenth century. Surxat’s market offered the Italian merchants Russian furs, Asian silk and oriental spices from the cities of the Golden Horde. The remains of the *caravansaray* can attest to the existence of an active trading center. In the course of time the scale of trade conducted in Surxat grew so much that it provoked the reaction the Genoese of Kaffa.¹⁰¹ They dreaded that the commercial center could be translocated from Kaffa to Surxat and reduce their profit. For that purpose, in the *Statute di Kaffa* of 1316 they put restrictions on stay for the citizens of Kaffa in Surxat. According to statute, the citizens (referring both to *habitatores* and *civites*) of Kaffa were not allowed to transmit commodity to Surxat.¹⁰² Apart from that, if one visited the city he/she was eligible to

⁹⁹Sinclair, “Trade, Administration, and Cities”, 106.

¹⁰⁰ Nicola Di Cosmo, “Mongols and Merchants on the Black Sea Frontier in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: Convergences and Conflicts”, in *Turco-Mongol Nomads and Sedentary Societies*, ed. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 395-6.

¹⁰¹ [Vardges Mikaelyan] Վարդգես Միքայելյան, *Դրիմսիայ Գաղութը Արևելք-Արևմուտք Հարաբերությունների Ոլորտում (13-18-րդ դարեր)* [The Armenian colony in Crimea in the sphere of relations between East and West (Thirteenth-eighteenth centuries)] (Yerevan: Գիտություն, 2000), 87-88.

¹⁰² The population in Crimea, as in other Italian colonies, could have three main social statuses: *habitatores* [inhabitants]; *burgenses* [burghers] and *civites* [citizens]. In Kaffa, which was one of the most important trading posts in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in the Black Sea region, Armenians were considered an important stratum of the society. The sources, produced by Italian notaries in the 1340s-1360s, show that dominant part of

stay at Surxat eight days and in case if one bought anything from there that purchase had to be transported from Surxat within eight days otherwise the fine was charged in the amount of 100 *hyperpyron*.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, in comparison with the confinements set upon Sudak wherein the eligible duration of stay was reduced to three days and carrying on any commercial affairs was forbidden, the restrictions concerning Surxat were not that radical.¹⁰⁴ As it is underscored by Mikaelyan, perhaps the reason for such relative gentleness towards Surxat was conditioned by the pivotal role that it had in the commerce with the northern and eastern parts of the Mongol empire. They could not cut themselves off this important market of eastern trade. What the Genoese really wanted was that the caravan traders were compelled to come to Kaffa for the purchase of Western goods.¹⁰⁵

The fact of the interactions of the Armenian traders with the empire of Trebizond in the thirteenth century is testified by two notary acts from the *Actes des notaries* wherein the Armenian traders and Italian trader make deals about the transportation of wheat in one case, and “commodities” to Trebizond in the other.¹⁰⁶ They confirm that the ships will go straight from Kaffa to Trebizond. Interestingly, all these acts regardless the fact who their authors were started in the same way “In nomine Domini amen”. And as rightly underscored by Aslıhan Akışık Karakullukçu, Armenian, Greek and Muslim traders were involved into Italian trading system and also into “Italian-dictated civilizational discourse”.¹⁰⁷

Armenians had the status of *burgenses* which granted them a protection. However, only few Armenians obtained rights of *civites*. See Alexandr Osipian “The Practices of Integration and Segregation: Armenian Trading Diasporas in Their Interaction with the Genoese and Venetian Colonies in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea (1289-1484)”, ed. Georg Christ, Franz Julius Morche, Roberto Zaugg, Wolfgang Kaiser, Stefan Burkhardt, Alexander D. Beihammer, in *Union in Separation: Diasporic Groups and Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean (1100-1800)* (Rome: Viella, 2015), 358.

¹⁰³ *Monumenta historiae patriae*, vol.2, 379, Cited in [Vardges Mikaelyan] Վարդգես Միքայելյան, Հայ-իտալական առևտրային ջանքեր: Ջենովական Փաստաթղթերի Դրինսհայերի մասին [The Armenian-Italian relations: Genoese documents concerning the Crimean-Armenians] (Yerevan: ՀՍՍՀ Գիտությունների ակադեմիա, 1974), 27.

¹⁰⁴ [Mikaelyan], Հայ-իտալական առևտրային ջանքեր 27-28.

¹⁰⁵ Mikaelyan, *Դրինսհայ Գաղութը*, 89.

¹⁰⁶ *Actes des notaries*, 173-4; 228. Cited in Mikaelyan, Հայ-իտալական առևտրային ջանքեր, 21-4.

¹⁰⁷ Aslıhan Akışık Karakullukçu, “The Empire of Trebizond in the World-Trade System: Economy and Culture”, in *Trade in Byzantium. Papers from the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium*, ed. Paul Magdalino and Nevra Necipoğlu (Istanbul: ANAMED, 2016), 335.

Unfortunately, not many similar records can be found because the notary records did not employ consistent signifiers in their acts to identify the origin or hometown of the merchants.¹⁰⁸ Thus, it is difficult to find more evidence on the commercial interactions of Armenian merchants in Trebizond in the fourteenth century not because its existence is disputable, but rather because they were not recorded in any distinguishable way.

Surxat, as other medieval multi-ethnic cities, was segregated into various districts according to ethnicity or denomination. In the fourteenth century, the city was divided into three districts: the *Verin Holetner* [Upper earth houses], the Tatar district and the Jewish district.¹⁰⁹

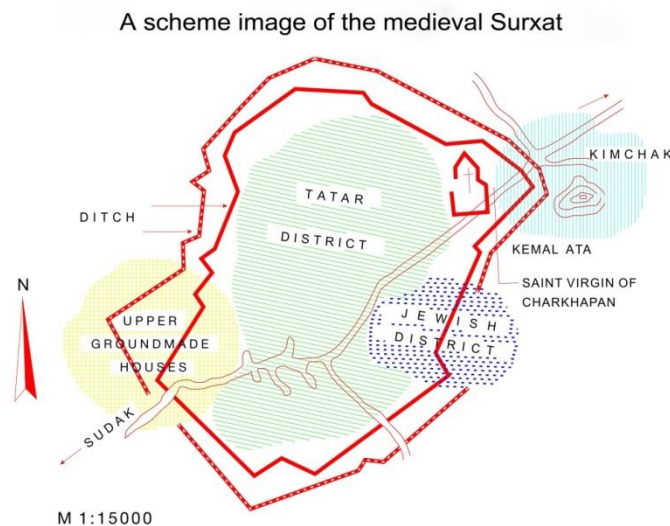


Figure 27 A scheme image of the medieval city of Surxat. Map reproduced from Image 1 in [Tatevik Sargsyan] Տաթևիկ Սարգսյան, "Ավետիք Խոտաճարակի և Քիմճակի Ս. Աստվածածին վանքի մասին" [About Avetik Xotačarak and the monastery of the Holy Virgin at K'imčak], 134.

The existence of *Verin Holetner* is attested to in the colophons of the manuscripts, written in Surxat in the fourteenth century (Figure 27). The colophons of the Armenian manuscripts written in Crimea provide useful sources for the identification and accurate location of the architectural monuments and in some cases serve as complementary evidence for the reconstruction of some aspects of daily life of the community (Figure 28). As Tatevik

¹⁰⁸ Karakullukçu, "The Empire of Trebizond", 335.

¹⁰⁹ *Verin Holetner* [Upper earth houses] was situated in the upper part of the city landscape, but had a flat layout.

Sargsyan noted, the analysis of the Armenian colophons from Surxat indicates that there were churches dedicated to Saint Sergius, as well as Saint Stephen the Protomartyr, Saint George, Saint Karapet, Saint Gregory the Illuminator and the *AstvaCaCin* [the Holy Virgin] in the Armenian district. The considerable number of churches in the city points to the existence of a growing community of Armenians which necessitated the building of numerous churches. Written sources and travelers' accounts attest to the fact that there were eight Armenian churches situated in different parts of the city and presumably seven Armenian monasteries situated not far from the city. The church of *Surb AstvaCaCin* referred in the colophon of the *Matenadaran Tetraevangelion* copied in 1332 is notable.¹¹⁰

Many Armenians who were actively involved in trade and craftsmanship turned to Catholicism and this gave them the opportunity to have equal rights with the *civites* of the

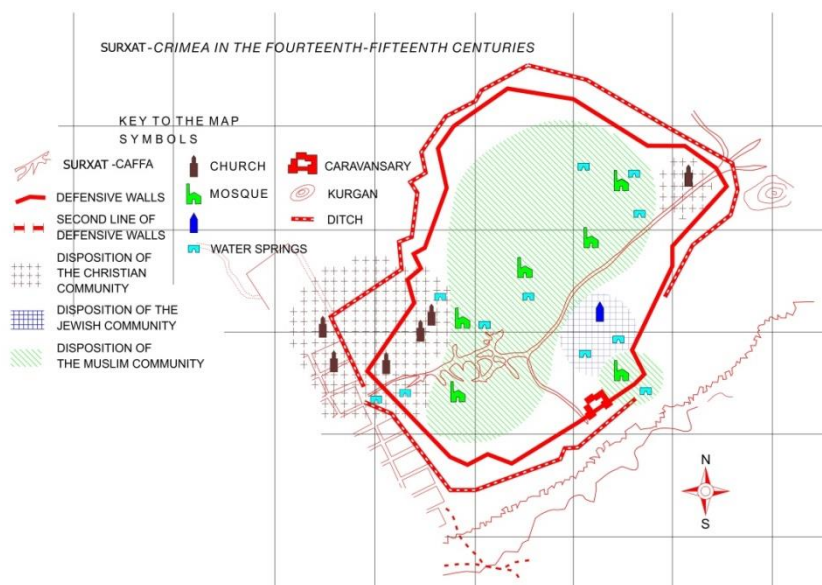


Figure 28 Surxat in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries. map reproduced from Image 1, in [Tatevik Sargsyan] Տաթևիկ Սարգսյան, "Միջնադարյան Սուրխաթի հայերը և նրանց հավատաատեղիները", 113.

city, who were mainly Genoese.

For some among the affluent Armenian families in the upper class this conversion was a means of climbing the social ladder of the city. On this evidence, it would be interesting to outline the Catholic presence

in Surxat as a potential agent of the artistic interactions. In

comparison with Kaffa, where due to the constant presence of the Genoese Catholicism was highly propagated, Surxat was more oriented towards the Armenian Apostolic Church and, as the colophons, show the churches in Surxat belonged to the Armenian Apostolic Church.

¹¹⁰ Unfortunately, the church was bombed in the 1960s and it is not possible to examine the inscriptions on the walls or in the surrounding area. See Sargsyan, "Միջնադարյան Սուրխաթի հայերը և նրանց հավատաատեղիները", 112-14.

Nevertheless, there is also evidence for the presence of Franciscans in Surxat and circulation of Latin manuscripts which were used not only by the Armenian Catholics but also by the Armenian followers of the Armenian Apostolic faith.

These Latin manuscripts were also used by the opponents of Union with the Latin Church who translated, studied theological doctrine of Latin Church in order to strengthen their arguments against it by pointing out the deviations of the Catholic faith from the fundamental principles of Christian faith and expounding its heretic nature. On the other hand, this was a way of dissemination and exchange of knowledge. In the face of the threat of Catholicism the Armenian theological thought established itself as a high intellectual current. The evidence of the circulation of Latin manuscripts in Surxat can be attested by the example of a fourteenth-century manuscript wherein the inscription on folio 140v records that this manuscript presents the translation of the life of Saint Francis written by “the Great Archimandrite Bonaventura”.¹¹¹ The scribe was certain Aslan Arzruc‘i from Karin (Erzreum) and, as suggested by Tatevik Sargsyan, was not Catholic himself since the date of the creation of the manuscript is presented according to the Armenian calendar ...թվ. հայոց ՊԸ (1359), դեկտեմբերի Ժ (10) կատարեցաւ [executed on the Armenian calendar 808 (1359), December 10th].¹¹² According to Tatevik Sargsyan, there is a record stating the existence of a Franciscan friary in Surxat in 1320. In addition, there used to be gravestones with Latin and Armenian inscriptions and depictions of the Genoese coat of arms around the church of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin up to the nineteenth century when it was already converted into a Russian church. The inscription with the Genoese coat of arms in the fifteenth century was placed above the entrance to the church area. On that evidence, Sargsyan dates these

¹¹¹ [Levon Xaç‘ikyan] Լևոն Խաչիկյան, ԺԴ Դարի Հայերեն Ձեռագրերի Հիշատակարաններ [The colophons of fourteenth century Armenian manuscripts] (Yerevan: ՀՍՍՀ Գիտությունների ակադեմիա, 1950), 443.

¹¹² [Tatevik Sargsyan] Татевик Саргсян, *Свод Армянских памятных записей, относящихся к Крыму и сопредельным регионам (XIV-XV в.в.)* [The corpus of Armenian colophons pertaining to the Crimea and surrounding regions (Fourteenth-Fifteenth centuries)] (Simferopol: Sonat, 2010), 9,140.

gravestones to the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries.¹¹³ This church, according to Gregory Spasskij, was previously an Armenian church and was dedicated to the Holy Virgin (*Surb AstvaCaCin*).¹¹⁴ As it has been cogently pointed out by Sargsyan, these gravestones with Armenian inscriptions could belong to Armenian Catholics: it is hard to imagine that they would bury their dead near the Catholic Church, next to Catholics whom they hated and considered heretics, if they were not Catholics themselves.

Thus, the penetration of Italian artistic trends into Surxat and its manifestation on the example of Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* suggests that the circulation of Latin manuscripts and the existence of the Franciscan monastery and Armenian Catholic Church in Surxat created a fruitful atmosphere for the artistic interactions between Armenians both Catholics and non-Catholics. However, as highlighted in the previous chapters, besides this internal type of interaction there are also certain external ways such as the artistic interactions fulfilled by the circulation of Cilician and Italian manuscripts. The latter was facilitated by the advanced network of trade routes which highly affected the artistic environment of the Crimean-Armenian masters.

In reference to this, an instance of the interaction in the opposite direction deserves special attention. This example is directly related to the mid-fourteenth century Crimean–Armenian artistic environment and supports the idea of artistic “interactions” of the Armenian community with the surrounding environment, rather than a “one-way impact” which places the question solely in the discourse of the metropolis-periphery relationship. The so called Brescia Gospel Book (Civica Biblioteca, Fondo Querini, cod. A. VI. 26) is a gospel book decorated with three portraits of evangelists, several headpieces and two frontispieces presenting the letter of Eusebius to Carpianus. The latest studies date the text of the

¹¹³ [Sargsyan], *Свод Армянских памятных записей*, 141.

¹¹⁴ [Gregory Spasskij] Григорий Спасский, “Старый Крым” [Starij Krym] *Записки Одесского Общества* vol.4, no.2 (Odessa: Городская типография, 1860), 90.

manuscript to the twelfth century but the portraits of three evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke are assigned to the Palaeologan period.¹¹⁵

The Armenian quire signatures found in the Brescia A.VI.26 are contemporary to these portraits of the evangelists and most probably required the disassembling of folios for making these illustrations. Kathleen Maxwell convincingly argues that the Armenian artist from mid-fourteenth century Crimea executed the portraits of Mark and Matthew and repainted the portrait of Luke.¹¹⁶ Maxwell claims that although the figural representations adhere to the characteristics of the Palaeologan style (inflated figural style), the architectural settings and the coloring of the portraits find close iconographic and stylistic parallels with the portraits of evangelists from the Armenian Gospel book produced in fourteenth-century Crimea (Matendaran 7337).¹¹⁷ Comparing the portraits of Matthew in the two manuscripts demonstrates the almost identical architectural forms constituted by the cylindrical and conical shapes of the turrets and ciboria. The figures of Matthew in both images are haloed. Herein Maxwell points out that the artistic approach to the representation of the figures and architecture can be likewise traced in the Crimean miniature painting: the combination of voluminously, delicately modelled figures with decorative architectural settings. The stylized and geometric rendering of the forms and the multi-color palette mark the extent of the impact of the artistic activity of an eminent fourteenth-century Cilician–Armenian scribe and

¹¹⁵ The sources noted by Kathleen Maxwell concerning the twelfth-century dating of the manuscript's text are George Galavaris, *The Illustrations of the Prefaces in Byzantine Gospels*, Byzantina Vindobonensia, 11, (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979), 111; Antonio Munoz, "Miniature Bizantine nella Biblioteca Queriniana di Brescia", in *Miscellanea Ceriani* (Milan: Ulrico Hoepli Editore, 1910), 173-6; Viktor Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina* (Turin: Einaudi, 1967), 252, note 51; Lino Moretti, *In Venezia e Bisanzio*: exhibition catalog (Venice: Electa Editrice, 1974), no. 48. For the fourteenth-century dating of the evangelists' portraits see Robert Nelson, *The Iconography of Preface and Miniature in the Byzantine Gospel Book*, College Art Association Monograph 26 (New York: College Art Association, 1980), 60.

¹¹⁶ Kathleen Maxwell, "Armenian Additions to a Greek Gospel book: Brescia, Civica Biblioteca, Fondo Querini, cod. A.VI.26", in *Revue des Études Arméniennes* 25 (Paris: Sciences Historiques et Philologiques a la Sorbonne, 1994-1995): 337-352.

¹¹⁷ According to the colophon, Matendaran 7337 was written in Kaffa in 1352. Korxmazyan suggests that it is a one of a group of five manuscripts produced in Crimea in the mid-fourteenth century, attributed to the same hand. Korxmazyan, *Армянская миниатюра Крыма (XIV-XVII в.в.)*, 31-33, 114, also Fig. 2a and 2b.

illuminator Sargis PiCak, in the Armenian community of Crimea.¹¹⁸ According to Maxwell, it is possible that the Armenian artist who worked on the evangelists' portraits had previously lived in Italy. She quotes Emma Korxmazyan who writes that the first Armenian settlements in Italy can be dated to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as a result of an agreement between Cilician and Italian merchants which allowed Armenian traders to open shops and offices in Italy and vice versa. On the other hand, Korxmazyan suggests that the gospel book appeared in Crimea in 1340 and has been repainted by the Armenian artist.¹¹⁹

Based on this evidence, it is worth to briefly examine the two manuscripts from a group of codices produced in Italy in the fourteenth century.¹²⁰ The considerable Armenian presence in various Italian cities necessitated the erection of churches and many Armenian manuscripts were written in their scriptoria. Out of the twenty-nine surviving Armenian manuscripts produced in Italy five are illustrated. Four of them are kept at the Matenadaran and one at the Hermitage museum in Saint-Petersburg.¹²¹ One of these manuscripts is a Bible (Matenadaran 2705), half of which was written by a certain Deacon Arakel at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Then it was transmitted to Crimea (Kazaria) and there the rest of the text was finished by Stepanos in 1368.¹²² The fourteenth-century illustrations of the Bible, probably by Arakel, comprise three figurative miniatures (The Life of David and two scenes from The Book of Revelation) and marginal decorations. The fourteenth-century illustrations

¹¹⁸ According to Sargis, the geometric details of the subjects distinguished by a separate color are more emphatic than the integrity of their forms themselves.

¹¹⁹ Emma Korxmazyan, Heide and Helmut Buschhausen, *Armenische Buchmalerei und Baukunst der Krim*, (Yerevan: Nairi, 2009) 16-17.

¹²⁰ These direct artistic contacts were conditioned by the trading agreements and contracts which were signed during the reign of Cilician king Leo (Levon) I (1187-1219) between Cilician merchants and the trading houses of Genoa, Pisa and Venice. The Armenians who settled in Italy, as is underscored by Emma Korxmazyan, kept close contacts with the Armenians in Armenia proper and Crimea. Armenian traders played an intermediary role in the trade between the Armenian centers of Crimea and Italy. [Emma Korxmazyan] Эмма Корхмязян, "Армянские рукописи иллюстрированные в Италии" [Armenian illustrated manuscripts in Italy] *Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես* 3 (1971): 247-8.

¹²¹ Two were illustrated in Bologna, one in Rome and one in Perugia: Matenadaran 2705 and 218; 4553; 7628 and Hermitage У3-834, respectively.

¹²² But the text of the Old Testament was partially rewritten by Nicholaios Tsaghkarar in 1660, refurbished with new binding and illustrated with new miniatures. Korxmazyan, *Армянская миниатюра Крыма (XIV-XVII в.в.)*, 79. Emma Korxmazyan, Irina Drampian, Grigori Hakoopian, *Armenian Manuscripts of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: Matenadaran Collection*, Yerevan (Leningrad: Aurora Art Publishers, 1984), Fig. 158.

are distinguished by their peculiar iconography and high artistic merits: soft coloring, plasticity of forms, smoothness of movements. These characteristics attribute these miniatures to the first style of Palaeologan art. As Korxmazyan suggests this master of the beginning of the fourteenth century took classes from a Greek master in Bologna. This hypothesis is quite convincing, especially in view of the fact that after 1204 many Greeks found shelter in different parts of Europe, for example, in Italy and played a key role in the development of the Italian art.¹²³ The location of this manuscript in the Crimean-Armenian artistic environment is telling and, as it is also attested to in the colophons, these fourteenth-century miniatures became copying models for generations of Crimean-Armenian miniaturists. Coming to the main focus of the present thesis, it is necessary to highlight one of the ways of the dissemination of contemporaneous Byzantine painterly trends through Italy: the reception of Byzantine artistic forms by Armenian miniaturists of Crimea in which the impact of Western artistic tradition was also present, and which significantly changed the character of the Crimean miniature painting, especially in its formative period, in the fourteenth century.¹²⁴ Regarding the Western influence, the Hermitage manuscript is especially notable since it was produced in Genoa in 1325. It is a book of the Four Gospels (26×18cm), and, as recorded in the first colophon (1325), the scribe was AstvaCatur who probably most also executed the decoration of *xorans* (canon tables).¹²⁵ As noted by Tatyana Izmailova, the initials representing the symbols of the evangelists are executed in a more proficient manner and suggest that they were done by another master not mentioned in the colophon.¹²⁶ The style and rendering of the initials resemble Western miniature painting

¹²³ [Korxmazyan], *Армянские рукописи иллюстрированные в Италии*, 251.

¹²⁴ As for the Western features of the illustration, the rendering of the heads of the priests with tonsure and without beard is characteristic for the Western Church but not the Armenian and Byzantine.

¹²⁵ Their style is heavily dependent on the models of the Cilician School of book illumination and of the Gladzor School (eastern part of Armenia). Astvatsatur simplifies the ornamental motifs by means of their generalization and graphic characteristics. [Tatyana Izmailova] Татьяна Измайлова, “Армянская рукопись написанная в Генуи в 1325г., и её серебряный оклад 1347г.” [The Armenian manuscript written in Genoa in 1325 and its silver binding from 1347] *Византийский Временник* 20, 1961): 247.

¹²⁶ [Izmailova], “Армянская рукопись написанная в Генуи”, 247.

specifically their loose and plastic modelling.¹²⁷ The Latin influence is also manifest in the codicological characteristics: the manuscript consists of twenty seven quires, each of them with six folios written in a somewhat angular *boloragir* (minuscule) script.¹²⁸

Along with the co-existence of the various ethnicities in cities across the region, it is remarkable that these communities tried, on the one hand, to create their own ‘private space’ by establishing some sort of autonomy, on the other they had close interactions and contacts with one another. This autonomy was expressed through the establishment of schools, monasteries and churches of their own religion and, in some cases, their own juridical-administrative authorities.¹²⁹ However, these were not isolated and always had active connections with other communities. This feature of social interactions reflects the on-going process of the creation of a dynamic world in this period, which then culminated in the period of Renaissance. As Aleksandr Osipian notes, the Armenians reached agreements with the Italians and were conducting trade in the Italian colonies and in turn were supplying Italy with the goods acquired from the continental trade. Besides, due to their “family and business-networks” with the other Armenians who lived in Muslims-dominated areas, non-Catholic Armenians were enlisted by the Genoese and Venetians to conduct trade in areas that were hostile towards Catholics. Such economic relations were profitable both for the

¹²⁷ The symbol of John, the eagle, peculiar mix of anthropomorphic and realistic representation: the eagle is dressed in monastic vestment with hanging hands, wearing red stockings and black shoes. Only the wings on his back and the eagle’s head suggests that it is a bird. [Izmailova], “Армянская рукопись написанная в Генуи”, 248.

¹²⁸ [Izmailova], “Армянская рукопись написанная в Генуи”, 243.

¹²⁹ An important way of preserving national identity was founding schools in monasteries where not only theological but also secular knowledge such as rhetoric, grammar, and painting were taught. One of these schools was in the monastery of Saint Anton not far from Kaffa. Two scribes of the first half of the fifteenth century, Thaddeus Avramenc and Christosatur, provide interesting information about this school. According to the former, the students in 1427-1428 were given lectures by Archimandrite Sargis on the philosophy of Aristotle and Porphyry. Thaddeus also notes that the students also studied the philosophical views of two eminent representatives of medieval Armenian philosophical thought, David the Invincible [David Anghaght] and Hovhan Vorotneci. Archimandrite Sargis, a great rhetorician and vicar of the Catholicos of Sis, participated in the Council of in Florence in 1439 See Mikaelyan, *Ղրիմի հայկական գաղութի պատմություն*, 90-91.

Italians and the Armenians and reflect how the “practices of religious exclusion were gradually loosened by the strategies of social inclusion”.¹³⁰

3.4 The contextualization of the two *Tetraevangelia*

In the following subchapter I attempt to view two *Tetraevangelia* in the context of the interrelation between the dissemination of artistic trends and the intensifying communication through trade routes. As mentioned in the first chapter, the question of existence of Armenian-Chalcedonian community in Crimea and its relation to the Principality of Theodoro or Principality of Mangup is crucial in this discussion.¹³¹ Unfortunately, the state of monument preservation in the territory of the Principality of Theodoro is presently unsatisfactory for conducting a thorough examination of the artistic heritage produced in this part of the peninsula. However, there are certain indicators that allow detecting possible traces of the Armenian-Chalcedonian presence in this area.

One of these indicators can be thirteenth-century representation of three warriors on horseback in the cave church at Eski Kermen. The church is known as the church of the Three Horsemen.¹³² One of the horsemen can be easily recognized since the warrior is depicted in the moment of spearing the dragon with his lance. This is common for the iconography of Saint Gregory who was highly venerated both in the Byzantine Orthodox and Armenian Apostolic tradition. The identification of two other horsemen is debatable. Emma Korxmazyan suggests that one of these two horsemen, depicted with a boy on horseback, is

¹³⁰ Osipian, “Practices of Integration and Segregation”, 359.

¹³¹ It was also called the Principality of Mangup after its center and fortress Mangup Kale. The Byzantines named it [Doros] Δόρος or [Dory] Δόρυ. The principality, which was situated in the southwestern part of the peninsula from the thirteenth century, took hold over the west coast of the Crimea, encompassing in its borders such important centers of trade as Cembalo (Balaklava), Kalamita (Inkerman), Lusta (Alushta). The confrontation with the Genoese was prompted by their desire to take control over these important trading outlets. As 1963 archaeological excavations in Crimea show, the principality had a well organized defensive system composed of a pair of fortresses wherein the first functioned as a coastal fortification and the second was a lookout point built to block enemies in the direction of the mountainous area of the southwestern part of the peninsula. [Oleg Dombrovsky] Олег Домбровский, *Фрески Средневекового Крыма* [The frescoes of medieval Crimea] (Kiev: Наукова Думка, 1966), 16, 18.

¹³² Eski Kermen was a fortress city situated 5 kilometres north-west from Mangup Kale, the center of the principality.

Saint Sargis with his son Martiros and the third man is one of the renowned representatives of Gabras family, Theodore Gabras.¹³³ This is an indirect evidence for the existence of an active Armenian-Chalcedonian community in the Principality of Theodoro. This small but noteworthy piece of evidence points out the necessity to put together the scattered information from the material concerning the Armenian-Chalcedonian community in Crimea to reconstruct the whole picture.

Besides the Armenian genealogical line, the Gabras family was related to the ruling dynasty of the empire of Trebizond and the Palaeologos family. They used the Palaeologos coat of arms as their own armorial bearing (Figure 29).¹³⁴



Figure 29 The carved stone with the depiction of the Gabras' coat of arms and their monogram, the fortress of Funa, Crimea, accessed November 25, 2016, <http://byzantine-way.livejournal.com>.

On this evidence, the representation of this coat of arms in the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* is notable. Another noteworthy fact is that the frescoes in southwestern Crimea attest to the presence of reverberations of Palaeologan art. Unfortunately, the state of preserved visual

¹³³ The cult of Saint Sargis is wide-spread in the Armenian tradition unlike the Byzantine Orthodox tradition which considered him a heretic. However in the Armenian-Chalcedonian environment the representation of this saint is quite possible. Since this is beyond the purview of the present thesis, I will not delve into this issue. Nevertheless Emma Korkmazya's arguments seem convincing and definitely need further study. [Emma Korkmazyan] Эмма Корхмязян, "Новые данные о фреске в Эски-Кермене", [New information about the fresco at Eski Kermen] *Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես* 3 (1998):143-48; Korkmazyan, "О фреске храма Трех всадников в Эски-Кермене"[About the fresco in the church of Three horsemen at Eski Kermen] 42-44, accessed November 18, 2016, <http://armenianlegacy.eu/files/architecture/korkmazyan.pdf>.

¹³⁴ An example for such representation can be seen in the stone inscription at the fortress Funa, near Alshuta where the double-headed eagle is presented next to the monogram of the Theodorian princes.

material makes the investigation difficult yet, as it pointed out by Oleg Dombrovsky, such traits can be attested to in thirteenth-fourteenth century art in southwestern Crimea.¹³⁵ This fact alone is not sufficient to link the copying model of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* to the artistic environment of Mangup Principality because it can be just as well attributed to the empire of Trebizond which also had close trading relations with southeastern Crimea and Surxat. Though the Constantinopolitan origin of the copying model cannot be excluded, however, in view of the above mentioned arguments it seems justifiable to look for the copying model for the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* primarily in the Theodorian-Trapezuntine artistic environment. This suggestion needs further investigation which requires a thorough comparative study of the art of Principality of Theodoro and that of Trebizond. In addition, the penetration of the painterly trends may also have come through Trebizond from the cities of *Barjr Hayk* which, as mentioned previously, were situated along the trade routes.

Identifying rabbi Avetik, the commissioner of the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, as archimandrite Avetik Xotačarak is plausible since, as attested in the colophons of fourteenth-century Armenian manuscripts from Crimea, he is the only Avetik referred to as *astvaCareal srbaser rabbouni* [the holy and virtuous rabbi named Avetik] known so far. In this period, the colophons grant this kind of epithet only to one Avetik: Avetik Xotačarak.¹³⁶ If the commissioner of the *Tetraevangelion* was the archimandrite Avetik Xotačarak and, if as shown in the first chapter, the main master was Grigor Sukiassianc, whose artistic activity can be traced in the other manuscripts, it is justifiable to place the manuscript in Surxat. Importantly, there can be several potential sources of artistic influence on the illustrations which need further research such as the Principality of Theodoro, the Empire of Trebizond

¹³⁵ Dombrovsky, *Фрески Средневекового Крыма*, 17.

¹³⁶ This assumption was also reinforced after discussion with Tatevik Sargsyan. For the colophons see Xaç'ikyan, *ՄԴ դարի հայերեն ձեռագրերի հիշատակարանները* [The colophons of fourteenth century Armenian manuscripts] (Yerevan: Armenian SSR AS Publication, 1955), 253, 399, 503.

and the Sienese School of painting. What is certain about this *Tetraevangelion* is that it exhibits the hallmark of a scriptorium that worked in the framework of an established artistic school. These artistic influences were well-understood and internalized and went beyond the imitation of external forms.

As the example of a fourteenth-century manuscript presenting the life of Saint Francis shows, it is justifiable to suggest that in the same manner the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* was produced in the Armenian Apostolic environment. Firstly, the date of its creation is given in the Armenian era in the colophon—ի Հայ թուականիս ՉՁԱ [in the year 781 of the Armenian Era].¹³⁷ Secondly its commissioner is archimandrite Avetik Xotačarak, a prominent representative of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Crimea. Thus, it can be inferred that the use of the Italian artistic models and of the Palaeologan style in the renderings of the miniatures manifest the influence of the contemporaneous painterly trends on the Armenian community which affiliated to the Armenian Apostolic Church.

As it recorded in the Greek synaxarion, the Armenian community of Sudak moved the celebration of Easter Sunday according to the Gregorian calculation to the following Sunday, on 16 April in 1292, to avoid celebrating it together with the Greeks on 6 April.¹³⁸ The Archimandrite Antonij noted that it was quite unusual that the Armenians moved Easter to a day which was not Sunday but Wednesday.¹³⁹ This concurrence happens once every ninety five years and, as opposed to other Christians, Armenians postponed the celebration by one week.¹⁴⁰ This piece of evidence is interesting since it suggests a strict demarcation constituted

¹³⁷ 781 in the Armenian era corresponds to 1332 in Western calendar.

¹³⁸ Korxmazyan, Buschhausen and Buschhausen, *Armenische Buchmalerei und Baukunst der Krim*, 47. The synaxarion (Codex Chalcesis 75, Athens National Library) was written in the eleventh century in Constantinople and then transferred to Sudak in the twelfth century where the marginal notes were executed illustrating the events between 1186 and 1318.

¹³⁹ [Archimandrite Antonij] Архимандрит Антоний, “Заметки XII-XIII в.в., относящийся к Крымскому городу Сугде (Судаку), приписанные на греческом Синаксаре” [Notes from the twelfth-thirteenth centuries, concerning the Crimean city Sugda (Sudak), written in the Greek synaxarion] *Записки Одесского Общества* vol.4 (Odessa: Городская типография, 1858), 609.

¹⁴⁰ [Abrahamyan], *Համառոտ նրվագիծ հայ գաղթականների պատմության*, vol.1, 161.

between communities, even though, Armenians and Greeks also often collaborate as it is illustrated by the example of the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*.

What could prompt such artistic collaboration? The phenomenon corroborates the assumption that the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* could have been related to the Armenian–Chalcedonian community, otherwise Greeks, who were in constant religious disputes with Armenians, would presumably not work on the illustration of an Armenian Four Gospels. Even in such a multi-cultural environment the segregation and integration patterns were quite active, especially ones regarding confessional issues. Unfortunately, there is no full colophon in the gospel which could tell us more about the provenance of the manuscript and the environment in which it was produced. This manuscript was illustrated across a longer period of time by the hands of different masters who had different level of proficiency. Its presence in Surxat in the nineteenth century does not mean that it was produced in Surxat since there is no evidence on the existence of an Armenian-Chalcedonian community in Surxat. The suggestion of Helmut and Heide Buschhausen that the masters were from Kaffa is plausible. It could have been created in a bigger center of the peninsula which had an active Armenian-Chalcedonian community.

The stylistic and iconographic variety in the Crimean school of Armenian miniature painting shows its constant and active interactions with the inhabitants of the peninsula, especially with Greeks and Italians, as well as trading and cultural relations established between Crimean-Armenians and Cilician-Armenians. As noted by Ioanna Rapti, this artistic plurality is also the manifestation of the stratification of the society inside the Armenian community in the fourteenth and at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Society was comprised of middle-class clergy, as well as a predominantly mercantile middle-class. This new stratum with its taste and new artistic demands effected the changes transforming the artistic representation of

the day.¹⁴¹ Considering the artistic environment of fourteenth-century Crimea it is important to point out that multiple sources of inspiration coexisted and the process of reception and transformation intensified. The developed network of trade routes made travelling easier, thus the process of transition and dissemination of artistic trends and production became faster than ever before.

As demonstrated in this chapter, active trading relations in the Black Sea region promoted the intensification of the cultural interactions in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries across the huge area connecting the Eastern Mediterranean and Far Eastern Asia. The multi-cultural environment highly stimulated the versatility of artists. The patterns of artistic adoption and adaptation functioned more actively and were more receptive to novelty than in any other place where Armenians settled.

¹⁴¹ Ioanna Rapti, “Les Arméniens hors d’Arménie (XIIIe-XIVe siècle)”, in *Armenia Sacra: Mémoire chrétienne des Arméniens (IVe-XVIIIe siècle)*, (Paris: Louvre, 2007), 285.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis is to emphasize the interrelation between the artistic influences of fourteenth century Armenian community of Crimea and the trade routes of the Black Sea area. The case study examined was two *Tetraevangelia*, both allegedly produced in Surxat in the fourteenth century which bore the stamp of the Byzantine and Italian artistic influences.

In the first chapter the stylistic and iconographic analyses of the two *Tetraevangelia* revealed the use of certain stylistic principles and iconographic models and pinpointed possible sources of inspiration. The Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion* displays the use of the Palaeologan style in the rendering of the figures with more restricted composition and expressed monumentality. The use of almost transparent, pastel colors achieved by the tempera technique is also notable. The quality of miniatures suggests that the scriptorium of Grigor Sukiassianc' probably had contacts with the cities of the Theodorian principality and the Empire of Trebizond and was certainly familiar with contemporaneous Italian painterly trends.

In contrast, the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* in terms of composition and space organization follows the Byzantine tradition more strictly. In addition, apart from the Palaeologan style of the miniatures the reverberations of the Comnenian style can also be detected. The scale and richness of illustrations with use of gold suggest the high status of the commissioners of the manuscript. Considering the Armenian-Greek artistic collaboration in the production of the Armenian gospel book, it was argued that the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* may be associated with the Armenian–Chalcedonian environment. The chapter also highlighted that in this case the Armenian masters tried to imitate the Greek manner of painting, or rather that they were concentrating more on the outer forms than on the reconsideration of the style.

In the second chapter the political realities of the Black Sea region and the cultural environment of the southeastern cities of Crimea were presented with special attention to the involvement of the Armenians in the social life of big urban centers as Kaffa, Sudak and Tana.

Finally, in the third chapter I illustrated the role and significance of the trade in late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Crimea and Black Sea region in general. Then, I showed the parallel phenomena which took place both in the Palaeologan and Crimean societies in the period, such as the development of cities, the emergence of the middle class, the intensifying cross-cultural interactions. All this shows that these new realities created an artistic milieu wherein the new painterly trends could find fertile soil for development. The artistic patterns of reception and transformation became more versatile and increasing communication through trade routes made this process even faster.

Having in mind all these, revisiting the research questions of the present thesis is in order:

1. The adoption and adaptation artistic patterns in the multi-cultural environment such as Crimea cannot be framed in a strictly determined formula. The same goes for the Armenian community of Crimea in the fourteenth century. The community itself comprised of Armenians with different confessional affiliation and artistic background. Nevertheless a certain dynamic can be inferred through the example of the two *Tetraevangelia*: two currents can be detected wherein the first displays the representation of adopted forms with less reconsideration. This can be seen in the Vienna *Tetraevangelion* whose miniaturists tried to imitate the Greek manner of painting, however, the final result was inconsistent. And in the second one the adoption process is not just an attempt of imitation of external forms but is also a process of contemplation and reinterpretation, and the master obviously has several sources to draw upon besides the copied model. This is the process of creating a new

original piece of art which, although it has point of departure, stands as an independent, original piece of art.

2. As attested to by surviving historical accounts and colophons of the manuscripts produced in Crimea, the majority of the Armenians were adherents of the Armenian Apostolic Church. However, the higher classes of society, engaged in social-economic affairs with Italians, at least nominally, if not fully, accepted the dominance of the Roman Catholic Church. The latter entails close interactions with Catholic culture, in the case of Crimea mostly Italian culture. Catholic missions often passed through Crimean cities, which also contributed to these interactions. The active trade affairs and travelling across Crimean cities brought about a well-developed cultural and artistic communication.
3. The process of artistic interactions was conditioned both externally and internally. As mentioned in the third chapter, the existence of Theodoro Principality may have been a potential source of Byzantine influence on the southeastern cities of Crimea. In addition, the Catholic presence in big centers of Southeastern Crimea such as Kaffa and also Surxat (e.g. the Catholic friary) suggests that there was a considerable internal potential. At the same time the communication with Italian cities and trade with such important trade outlets as Constantinople, Pera, Trebizond and cities of *Barjr Hayk* underpin the existence of external factors as well. In the case of Surxat at this stage of research it is difficult to specify which one was stronger here.

The present research is the first step in the investigation of an intricate field of research like the study of the patterns of adoption and adaptation in a multi-cultural environment. It maps the route which should be trodden to arrive to even more far-reaching conclusions. It is my intention to expand the findings of the present thesis by analyzing a greater number of manuscripts and seeking further historical accounts relevant for this

topic, potentially complementing the hitherto purely qualitative study with the dimension of quantitative methodologies.

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Appendices

The colophon of the Matendaran Tetraevangelion

Fol. 436r Շնորհիւ աստծոյ ամենակալի սկսայ և ողորմութեամբ խնամոյ նորա կատարեցի զսուրբ և ցանկալի աւետարանս, յաւրինակէ սրբոյն Սահակայ հայոց թարգմանչի՝ երկորդ լուսաւորչի Հայաստանեայցս:

Ի Հայ թուականիս ՉՁԱ (1332), յաշխարհս Ղրիմ, ի քաղաքս Սուրխաթ, ընդ հովանեաւ սուրբ Աստուածածնին, ի հայրապետութեան տեառն Յակոբայ, և ի թագաւորութեան բ[արեպաշտ] " պատանոյն Լևոնի: Գրեցաւ սուրբ և ցանկալի աւետարանս ձեռամբ իմով՝ Գրիգոր Սուրբիասանց, ի խնդրոյ աստուածարեալ սրբասէր թաթուոյն, որ Ավետիք [յ]որջորջի, զի ստացեալ ստացուածս աստուածային կենդանի յարդար ընչից իւրոց, յիշատակ բարեայ ինքեան և ծնկաւղաց իւրոց: Արդ, որ ընթեռնոյք և կամ ընդ աւրինակ դնէք, հաստատուն մտաւք հաւատացէք ստուգութեան բանիցդ և ցանկուցդ, և զսրբասէր թաթունին զԱվետիս զստացող սորա և զծնաւդսն իւր յիշեսջիք ի տէր, ով սուրբ հարք և եղբարք: Ընդ նոսին և զանարժան և զբազմամեղ զծաւղս՝ զԳրիգոր, և զծնաւորդսն իմ, և զեղբորս յիշեսջիք ի տէր...:

[By the grace of the Omnipotent God, I have started and by His mercy and care completed this Holy and desired gospel from the copy of Sahak, the translator and Second Illuminator of Armenia.

This holy and desired gospel was completed, in the year 1332 of the Armenian Era, in the country of Crimea, in the city of Surxat, under the patronage of the Holy Virgin Monastery, during the patriarchy of Jacob and in the reign of the pious juvenile Leo, by me, Grigor Sukiassianc', by the request of the holy and virtuous rabbi named Avetik. Remember him and his parents since I received this holy living thing (i.e. manuscript) from his honest fortune in kind memory of him and his parents. Thus, when reading or copying, do not doubt the

accuracy of its text and tables, remember in the Lord rabbi Avetik, the commissioner of this manuscript, and his parents, oh holy fathers and brothers. And along with them remember in the Lord me, the unworthy and sinful scribe Grigor, my parents and my brother].

The inscriptions in Armenian from the Vienna Tetraevangelion

Fol. 186v ՉՍիմեոնն ապիրատ գրիչս յիշել աղաչեմ:

[Beg you to remember Simeon, an untalented scribe].

Fol. 238v Չապիրատ գրիչս զՍիմեոնն երեց եւ զծնաւդսն իմ յիշել աղաչեմ:

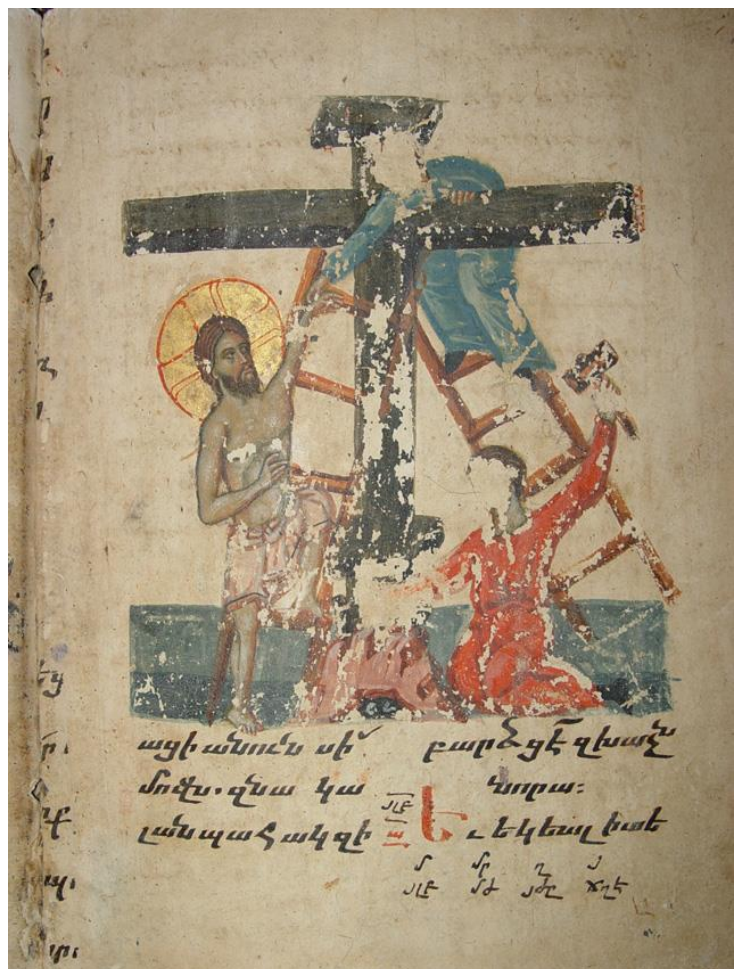
[Beg you to remember an untalented scribe priest Simeon and my parents].

Fol. 216r Չպապանուն երեց յիշ(եսջիք):

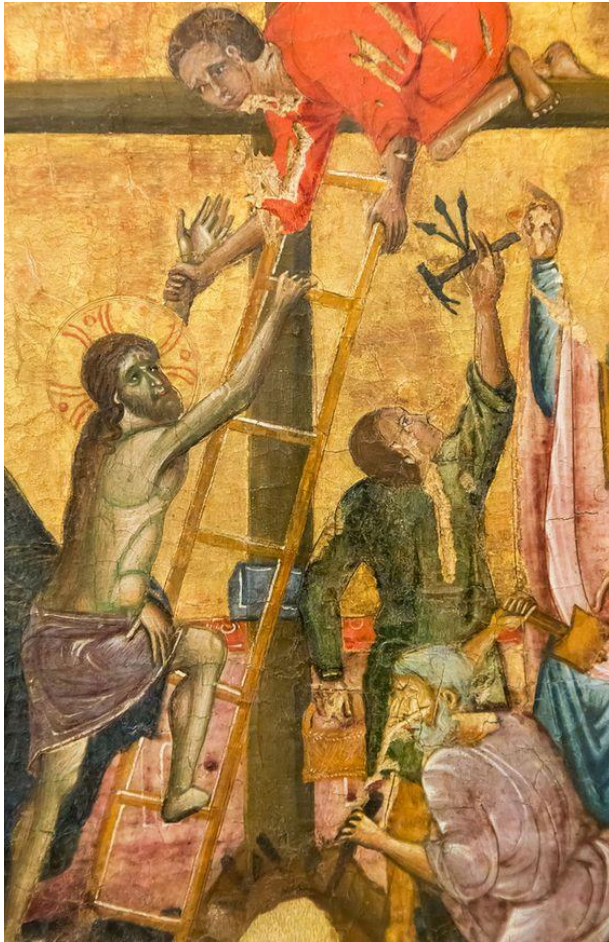
[Remember Papanun priest].



Detail from the inscription in Greek from the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, Myrrhbearers, fol. 235r, Mechitarists' Congregation library.



Ascend to the Cross, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 120v, Matenadaran collection.



Ascend to the Cross, panel painting, Guido da Siena,
circa 1275-1280, accessed November 25, 2016,
<https://it.pinterest.com> .

The Wedding at Cana,
mural painting, church
of St. Nicetas, Cucer
(Macedonia),
fourteenth century.
Photo is made by
Svetlana Petruchik
Ushakova.





Detail from Raising of Lazarus, mural painting, Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos, 1312, accessed November 25, 2016, <https://www.pinterest.com> .



Ascension of Christ, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 340r, Matenadaran collection.



Faith of Canaanite Woman, the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 93v, Mechitarists' Congregation library.



Annunciation, *Tetraevangelion*, BNF grecus 54, fol. 176r, accessed November 25, 2016, <https://ica.princeton.edu>.



Myrrhbearers, the Matenadaran *Tetraevangelion*,
fol. 429v, Matenadaran collection.



Myrrbearers, the Vienna *Tetraevangelion*, fol. 235r, Mechitarists' Congregation library.



Myrrhbearers, *Tetraevangelion*, Iviron cod.5, fol. 131v, Image reproduced from *The Treasures of Mount Athos, Illuminated Manuscripts Miniatures The Monasteries of Iveron, St. Panteleimon, Esphigmenou & Chilandari*, vol. 2, S. Pelekanidis, P. Christou, Ch. Tsioumis, S. Kadas, (Athen Ekdotike Atheneon, Patriarchalisches Institut für patristische Studien, 1979).