

Gohar Grigoryan

Images of Christ Emmanuel and Christus Victor in British Library Add. 19548

Abstract: This article is a close study of the manuscript London, British Library, Add. 19548 from codicological, art-historical and liturgical perspectives. The manuscript in question is an incomplete *maštoc* (the principal ritual book of the Armenian Church), which contains two canons for performing the rites of the Priest's Ordination and the Blessing of Water. The analysis of the manuscript's heretofore unpublished illustrations suggests a strong connection with the artistic traditions of the Cilician Skewra monastery and its adjacent scriptoria, which flourished in the last quarter of the twelfth century under the patronage of the influential Lambron family. After presenting the archaeology and history of Add. 19548 and identifying the artistic milieu in which it was possibly created, the article continues with discussions of the images of Christ Emmanuel and Christus Victor, depicted in the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* and the *Canon of the Blessing of Water*, respectively.

1 Introduction

In a 2011 article about the miniature painting of non-biblical Armenian manuscripts, the late Nira Stone observed that there is a completely unstudied tradition of illustrated *maštoc* manuscripts.¹ *Maštoc* is the name of the principal ritual book of the Armenian Church, similar to the Greek euchologion and the Latin pontifical.² Although Stone's article overlooked Edda Vardanyan's detailed study of a fifteenth-century illustrated *maštoc*,³ her general assessment remains true one decade later. My own interest in this topic was sparked by a lucky coincidence when a few years ago, in the framework of other research, I had the occasion to see the elegant illustrations of the manuscript London, British Library, Add. 19548 (Figs 1, 4, 9–13, 16, 19–21).

1 Nira Stone 2011, 256. In the present article, Armenian letters are transliterated according to the system available in TITUS: <<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/didact/caucasus/geoarmsc.pdf>> (accessed on 8 November 2022).

2 Though spelled identically, the book *maštoc* has nothing in common with the name of Mesrop Maštoc, the fifth-century inventor of the Armenian alphabet.

3 Vardanyan 2003–2004.

In his monumental *Rituale Armenorum* published in 1905, Frederick Conybeare included Add. 19548 in his collations of the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* and the *Canon of the Blessing of Water*.⁴ These are the only extant canons of this parchment *maštoc'*, whose first and only description was published by the same scholar in 1913, when it was kept in the British Museum.⁵ On the strength of Conybeare's careful philological work undertaken in the *Rituale Armenorum*, the manuscript has never reappeared in scholarship. The present article allows the reader to appreciate the *maštoc'* Add. 19548 from an art-historical point of view, for its heretofore overlooked illustrations can clearly be associated with the artistic traditions of Skewřa and its adjacent workshops, which, in the last quarter of the twelfth century, flourished under the patronage of the powerful Lambron family – later also referred to as Het'umids.

The art-historical analysis of the miniatures in Add. 19548 (Sections 5–6) is preceded by a study of the manuscript's archaeology and afterlife, with a particular focus on its fourteenth-century textual spolia, which reflect ongoing liturgical developments (Section 2). The discussion continues with structures of the extant canons (Section 3), followed by the scribal colophons (Section 4), which have preserved the names of the original scribe and acquirer (*stac'oł*),⁶ identified as Kostandin and tēr Vardan, respectively. The paper does not set out to determine whether this Kostandin can firmly be identified as the twelfth-century scribe and painter Kostandin Skewřac'i. Nevertheless, the analysis of the iconography, style and ornamentation of the British Library's *maštoc'* will reveal eloquent analogies with the codices produced in the 1190s by two Het'umid masters: Kostandin Skewřac'i and Grigor Mličec'i. The article is accompanied by three appendices, which present, respectively, the textual contents of Add. 19548 (Appendix 1); the structure of the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* as preserved in the same codex (Appendix 2); and a synoptic table of the *Canon of the Blessing of Water* based on several manuscripts dating from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries (Appendix 3).

4 Conybeare 1905, XX–XXI, 235–242 (*Priest's Ordination*), 165–178 (*Blessing of Water*).

5 Conybeare 1913, 88–90 (but also see Nersessian 2012, 11, who mentions an unpublished catalogue of the British Museum Armenian manuscripts, completed in 1877 by Rev. Suk'ias Baronian. Here, Vrej Nerses Nersessian provides a list of manuscripts described by Baronian, in which we also find Add. 19548). The present article provides a more extensive description of the textual contents of Add. 19548 by identifying two more texts: *Prayer for Priestly Vestments*, extracted from the so-called *Sis Maštoc'* in 1372, and fragments of the apocryphal *Martyrdom of Apostle Philip* that were cut out from another manuscript and likely used as protective flyleaves for our manuscript. These texts, along with the two canons that constitute the principal content of Add. 19548, are discussed in Section 2 and presented in Appendix 1.

6 For the term and uses of *stac'oł* (lit. 'acquirer, recipient'), see Grigoryan forthcoming a.



Fig. 1: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 1^r; incipit page of the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination*, *maštoc'* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

2 Archaeology and history of the manuscript

As it stands today, the manuscript Add. 19548 begins with the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* (fols 1^r–27^r), whose incipit page contains the quire number Ը (eight) (Fig. 1). This means that seven quires preceded the current fol. 1^r in the original manuscript. An Armenian manuscript quire is typically composed of eight leaves, and the British Library *maštoc'* is not an exception, meaning that originally fifty-six leaves, which are now missing, preceded the ordination canon. There are currently a total of fifty parchment folios from the original manuscript.

The text of the ordination canon ends on fol. 27^r and is followed, on fol. 27^v, by two scribal colophons discussed below. Fols 28^r–29^v, made of paper, were inserted – according to the colophon (see Appendix 1) – in 1372 by a certain Nersēs *abela*, who, subsequently, offered the already incomplete manuscript to Archbishop Yovanēs from Melitene (in manuscript: 'Melitinē', which is the present-day Malatya, Turkey). The text that appears on these paper folios was written by the same Nersēs *abela* and is not disconnected from the preceding content. It starts with an unnamed prayer, which corresponds to the *Prayer for Priestly Vestments* (Աղաւթք ամենայն քահանայական զգեստոյց), known from the so-called *Sis Maštoc'* (Սսեցոյց մաշտոյց) or *mixed maštoc'* (Խառնամաշտոյց).⁷ The *Sis Maštoc'* is a mid-fourteenth-century mélange of 103 canons of Armenian and Latin rites, which is, so far, only attested in two manuscripts, the earliest of which was produced in 1345 in Sis for Bishop Yovhannēs – Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1173. The *Sis Maštoc'*, according to Gëorg Tër-Vardanean, did not enjoy popularity after the Cilician period, although various rites of its many canons penetrated the subsequently produced handwritten and printed *maštoc'* books.⁸ Given the rarity of the manuscripts containing that *maštoc'* and the fact that its text remains unpublished, it seems useful to reproduce in Appendix 1 the vesting prayer that was inserted into Add. 19548 in a period when the short-lived *Sis Maštoc'* was in use in Cilician Armenia.

7 My identification of this prayer is based on its comparison with that of the unpublished manuscript Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1173 (fols 120^v–121^r), which is the oldest extant codex of the *Sis Maštoc'*. Two detailed descriptions of this manuscript are available in Sargisean and Sargisean 1966, 143–192, and Tër-Vardanean 2012, 804–813, which helpfully provide a list of the canons and prayers included therein. I thank Father Vahan Ohanian for making the Venice manuscript 1173 available for study.

8 Tër-Vardanean 2012, 19–25, esp. 22 and 24. For the *Sis Maštoc'* and the Cilician ordination rite, see Gugerotti 2001, esp. 69–71.

The transcription of the *Prayer for Priestly Vestments* (see Appendix 1) reveals a remarkable difference from the earliest *Sis Maštoc* preserved in Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1173. In the London manuscript, that prayer is immediately followed by a slightly modified version of Prayer 34:2 of the tenth-century *Book of Lamentation* by Grigor Narekac'i (Saint Gregory of Narek), which is adjusted for liturgical service.⁹ Here, supplications are intended not for the person who says the prayer but for someone who is present. Thus, on fol. 28^v, we read (I italicise the deviations from the original): Կառկառեա ի վերա սորա զամենամերձ աջ քո և զաւրացոյ զսա շնորհաւք զթուրեան քո ('Extend over *this one* [*me* in original] your all-reaching right hand and strengthen *him* [*me* in original] with the grace of your compassion').¹⁰ It is also noteworthy that the supplications appear in the plural, modifying the original text where these are said in the first person singular: for example, աղաչեմ ('I beg') of the original text is transformed into աղաչեմք ('we beg'). The ritual mise-en-scène becomes especially discernible in a self-initiated sentence about the person who is about to enter the church service (the italicised part is an addition to Narekac'i's Prayer 34:2):¹¹

Շնորհեա և կոչելոյս այժմ առ ի քէն ի գործ վերակացութեան տնտեսութեան խորհրդոյ եկեղեցոյ սպասաւորել և համարձակութեամբ կենդանարար խորհրդոյ աւետեաց աւետարանիդ հետեւել:

Grant also me, *who is now called upon by you to the duty of overseership, to serve the economy of the mystery of the church and to follow with courage the life-giving mystery of the good news of your Gospel.*

The sequence of the quire numbers of Add. 19548 indicate that the *Canon of the Blessing of Water*, prior to the insertion of the bifolio by Nersēs *abēla* in 1372, followed the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination*. The presence of these two canons suggests that the original manuscript was a *mayr maštoc* (lit. 'mother' or *grand maštoc*), that is to say, the manual containing the rites performed by both bishops

⁹ The inclusion of Narekac'i's prayers in liturgical services is not unusual. Prayer 33 of the *Book of Lamentation*, for example, is featured in the preparatory rites of the Armenian divine liturgy. See Russell 1996–1997; Feulner 2006. See also below, n. 53.

¹⁰ Translation adapted from Terian (tr.) 2021, 157.

¹¹ Cf. Terian (tr.) 2021, 157: 'Grant event me, a sinner, to speak boldly of the life-giving mystery of the good news of your Gospel, that I might follow with swift mind the infinite course of the Testaments breathed by you.'

and priests.¹² The churchman for whom the manuscript was created was *tēr Vardan*. He was the brother of its scribe, *Kostandin*, and is mentioned alongside ‘all ranks of priests’ in the preserved colophon (see Section 4). The manuscript’s size¹³ and its fourteenth-century afterlife associated with an *abēla* and an archbishop, indeed, confirm that we are dealing with a *mayr maštoc*’.

In 1375, i.e. three years after Archbishop *Yovanēs* had acquired the manuscript, a new colophon was added on fol. 26^v, which documents the takeover of the Armenian capital *Sis* (present-day *Kozan*, Turkey) by *Yashekh Temur*, the Mamluk commander of *Aleppo*. This event marked the end of the Armenian state of *Cilicia* (1198–1375), which seems to have been witnessed by our colophon writer, judging from the immediacy and precision with which the city’s dire socio-economic situation is described.¹⁴

The subsequent history of the manuscript is poorly documented. We know from *Conybeare*’s 1905 publication that it was brought to England from *Aleppo*.¹⁵ A nineteenth-century handwritten note on the flyleaf, which is currently attached at the beginning of the manuscript, mentions that the codex was found ‘in the region of *Beria*’: Ձեռագիրս այս երկաթագիր գտաւ ի կողմանս Բերիոյ.¹⁶ In 1853, it was acquired by the British Museum and was registered under the inventory number *Add. 19548*.¹⁷ In the 1990s, the *maštoc*’ was moved to its current place of residence, the British Library, along with the manuscript collection of the British Museum.¹⁸

¹² For the types of *maštoc*’ books, see *Terian* 1998, 78–79, n. 4 and, more extensively, *Polarean* 1990, 96–120.

¹³ According to *Conybeare* 1913, 88, the external size of the manuscript *Add. 19548* is 9.5 × 7 inches. This is close to the measurements of the *mayr maštoc*’ manuscripts, listed in *Tēr-Vardanean* 2012, 35–38.

¹⁴ This colophon is published in *Conybeare* 1913, 89; *Xaç’ikyan* 1950, 516 (based on *Conybeare*); *Grigoryan* 2021, 87–88. See also *Sanjian* 1969, 99 (based on *Levon Xaç’ikyan*), which provides a slightly different translation than that proposed in *Grigoryan* 2021, 88, and misrepresents *Nersēs* as its scribe (*Nersēs*, as we saw, wrote his colophon in 1372).

¹⁵ *Conybeare* 1905, XXI.

¹⁶ *Beria* is the ancient name of *Aleppo*, used by the Armenians up until the modern times.

¹⁷ *Catalogue* 1868, 251, 214.

¹⁸ Email communication with *Francesca Hiller*, British Museum senior archivist (6 February 2020).

3 The structures of the canons of a *Priest's Ordination* and the *Blessing of Water*

In Add. 19548, the structures of the two extant canons of a *Priest's Ordination* and the *Blessing of Water* (Appendices 2 and 3) differ from those found in the oldest known *maštoc'* manuscripts dating from the tenth and early eleventh centuries that present shorter and less elaborate versions of these rites.¹⁹ Nevertheless, these structures also differ from those canons found in Cilician manuscripts created after the mid thirteenth century.²⁰ It is well-known that the rites of the Armenian Church underwent considerable elaboration in the Cilician period when the Armenian ecclesiastical and political authorities were engaged in active negotiations first with Byzantium, then with the Holy Roman Empire and the Pope. The political ambitions of Prince Lewon II (r. 1187–1198, then as king 1198–1219) accelerated the process of liturgical development that had already been under way for several years. By 1198, when Lewon's coronation – approved by the Pope and the Holy Roman emperor (also by the Byzantine emperor) – took place, a translation of a Latin pontifical was available in Armenian, prepared by Nersēs Lambronac'i (1153–1198), the erudite archbishop of Tarsus. Lambronac'i is known as a prolific liturgiologist, who authored an extensive commentary on the Armenian divine liturgy and was a protector of several ecumenically oriented rites that he himself was practicing despite the opposition of his compatriots.²¹ Tēr-Vardanean mentions that the principal motivation for translating the Latin pontifical was the *Canon of a King's Consecration* that would have been used for the much-

¹⁹ For the texts of these canons, as preserved in the oldest extant manuscripts, see Tēr-Vardanean 2012, 342–360 (*Blessing of Water*), 426–430 (*Priest's Ordination*). Cf. Conybeare 1905, 165–178 (*Blessing of Water*), 231–235 (*Priest's Ordination*).

²⁰ The structure of the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* in the manuscript Add. 19548 (Appendix 2) differs considerably from the ancient version, which prompted Conybeare to reproduce it separately (by collating it with the texts of two fourteenth-century codices): Conybeare 1905, 235–242. As for the *Canon of the Blessing of Water*, it is enriched with chanted sections but omits the readings from Exodus and Joshua (Appendix 3), which became common in the manuscripts created after the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. On the gradual elaboration of the *Canon of the Blessing of Water*, see brief but useful comments in Sargisean and Sargsean 1966, 52. For the musical elaborations of the Armenian *Canon of the Blessing of Water*, see Arevshatyan 1986, 40–44. For a general overview of the chanted sections of *maštoc'* books, see also Arevshatyan 1986–1987.

²¹ On Nersēs Lambronac'i, see, for example, Gugerotti 2001, 185–197, 226–259; Schmidt 1997b, 121–137; Akinean 1956.

anticipated event.²² Although scholars are uncertain of the actual extent to which the translated Latin rites were used in the Armenian Church, the consensus is that many elaborations incorporated into Armenian liturgical services were done in this period under the influence of Latin practices.²³

Whether the two canons preserved in Add. 19548 are the result of the liturgical revisions introduced at the time of Nersēs Lambronac'i is not my principal concern here. Rather, I highlight this question to place the *maštoc* of the British Library in a geographical and chronological framework which, as will be seen, is closely associated with the patronage of the Lambron family, and Nersēs Lambronac'i in particular. This ritual manuscript is, therefore, particularly significant as evidence for understanding the religious and liturgical milieu in which it was probably created. Conybeare, the only scholar who studied the London manuscript, drew the readers' attention to its old palaeography and orthography, cautiously dating the manuscript to the thirteenth century, but he did not raise the question of its provenance.²⁴ Unfortunately, the name of the acting catholicos, which was initially included in one of the litanies written on fol. 19^v and could have helped in establishing the dating of Add. 19548, appears to have deliberately effaced at an unknown point in time (Fig. 2).²⁵

22 Tēr-Vardanean 2012, 20. The translation of this rite was, nevertheless, done by Nersēs Lambronac'i by incorporating some confessional revisions which stress the origins of Armenian Christianity. For the structure(s) of this rite, with references to its Latin analogue(s) that can be identified with two recensions of the tenth-century *Mainzer Krönungsordo*, see Grigoryan 2023, 107–111 (Appendix A1–A2: 'The structures of Cilician Armenian coronation rites').

23 The literature on this period is vast, but see the general remarks in Tēr-Vardanean 2012, 20–21, who also highlights the scarce scholarship on the transformations of the Armenian *maštoc* over the centuries, including especially during the Cilician period.

24 Conybeare 1913, 90. On the British Library website (accessed on 8 November 2022), the manuscript is dated to the twelfth century.

25 It is to be hoped that the use of modern technologies, such as infrared reflectography, can reveal the effaced proper name.

4 The scribe Kostandin and the Skewrā masters

The principal colophon of Add. 19548 is not preserved,²⁶ but there are two colophons at the end of the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* which name the scribe and the acquirer (Fig. 3). The script of these colophons is *erkat'agir*, similar to but larger in size than that used for the main text.²⁷ The first colophon is written in gold and divided into two blocks that have, in their middle, the second colophon written in dark red-purple and in angular-looking *erkat'agir*. This second colophon asks the users of this book to remember the scribe Kostandi(n), whose brother Vardan – as we learn from the first, gold-written colophon – was the intended owner of the manuscript. The textual division of the colophons is visualised by not only different colours and forms of the script, but also inserting black-and-red wavy ornaments – a typical scribal feature in Armenian manuscripts aimed at marking the end of a textual unit. The two colophons, transcribed below, occupy the entire space of fol. 27^v, creating an allusion to monumental inscription (Fig. 3).

Colophon 1.1 written in gold, above: ՅԻՍՈՒՍ ՔՐԻՍՏՈՍ ՎԱՅԵԼԵԼ ՏԱՅԷ ԶՏԵՏՐԱԿՍ
ԵՒ ԶԵՐԻՑԱՐԱՐՍ ՏԵԱՌՆ ՎԱՐԴԱՆԱՅ

Colophon 2 written in red-purple, in the middle: ԶՏՈՒԱԻՂԴ Ի ՏՈՒԱԻՂԷՆ ԱՌԵԼՈՅ,
ԸՆԴ՝ ԱՌՈՂԴԴ ՆՈՐԱԿԵՐՏԵԱՅ, ՄԻԱՆԳԱՄԱՅՆ ԵՒ ԶԱՄԵՆԱՅՆ ԴԱՄՍ
ՔԱՀԱՆԱՅԻՑ ԱՂԱԶԵՄ ՅԻՇԵԼ ԶՄԵՂԱՊԱՐՏ ԳՐԻԶՍ ԿՈՍՏԱՆԴԻ:

Colophon 1.2 written in gold, below: ԲԱԶՈՒՄ ԺԱՄԱՆԱԿՍ Ի ՆՈՒԱՍՏ ԵՂԲԱԻՐԷ
ԳՐԶԷ ԸՆԾԱՅԵԱԼ:

Translation:

(1.1) May Jesus Christ allow tēr Vardan to enjoy this book and ordinal (1.2) for a long time that was offered by (his) humble brother, the scribe.

(2) You who will give [this book] to a recipient, also you who will receive it, renew it!²⁸ Upon the whole, I beg all ranks of priests to remember the sinful scribe Kostandi[n].²⁹

²⁶ In Armenian codicology, the term ‘principal colophon’ refers to the final scribal colophon, which is usually a lengthy and informative text, starting with a doxology for the Holy Trinity.

²⁷ *Erkat'agir* is the name of Armenian uncial letters employed for parchment manuscripts. It fell out of use after the mid thirteenth century. See Michael E. Stone, Kouymjian and Lehmann 2002, 66–69, 100; Kouymjian 2015, 277–279.

²⁸ This sentence, as already observed in Conybeare 1913, 89, is obscure in diction.

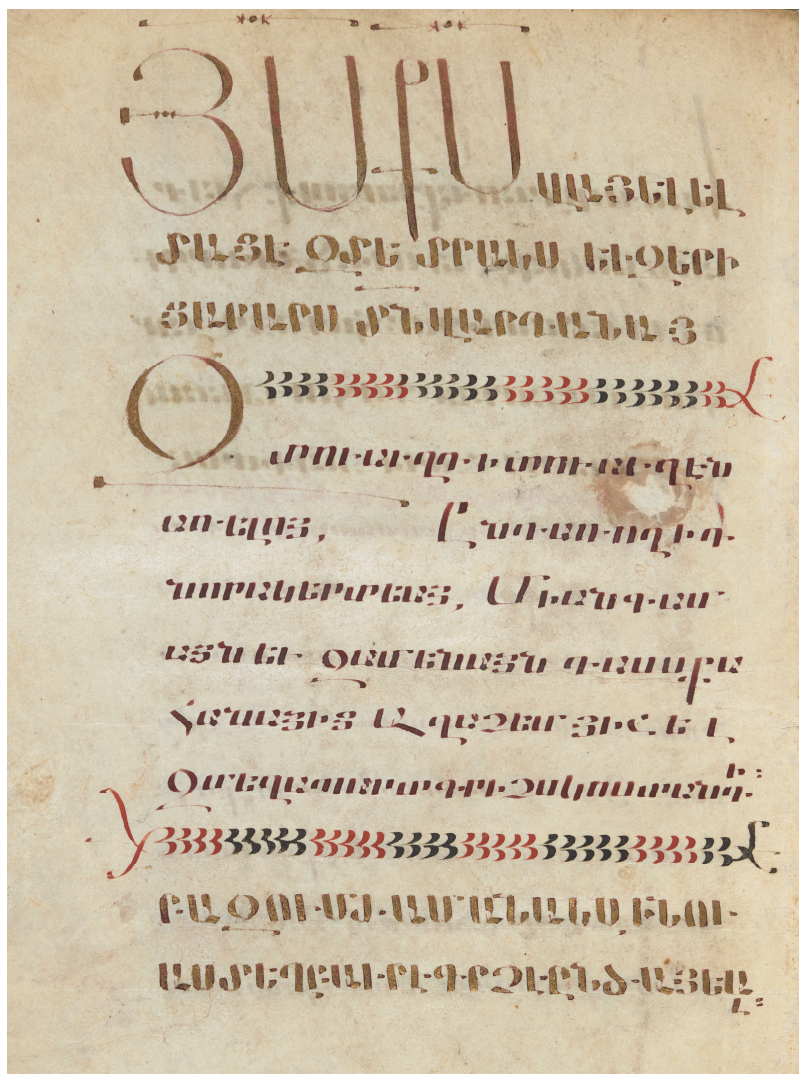


Fig. 3: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 27^r; scribal colophons, *maštoc'* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

²⁹ These colophons do not appear in the published volumes of Armenian manuscript colophons. They were reproduced previously in Conybeare 1913, 89, and Conybeare 1904, 276 (although here, the first colophon is given together with the last sentence of the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination*). My English translation is adapted from Conybeare 1913, 89.

It is possible that the scribe mentioned in the second colophon, Kostandin, is the same person who, in the 1190s, completed several manuscripts for members of the Lambron family who owned Lambron castle and controlled its neighbouring territories. In the All-Saviour Monastery of Skewřa, the Het'umids's protégé, Kostandin, copied and illuminated in 1193 a gospel manuscript for Nersēs Lambronac'i and his brother, Prince Het'um Sewastos (i.e. honoured with the Greek title *sebastos*). This parchment manuscript, now preserved at the Mekhitarist library in Venice as no. 1635, contains a lengthy colophon, at the end of which 'the sinful scribe Kostandin' (cf. the wording of the London manuscript) asks Christ to have mercy on a certain Vardan, without adding any information about the latter's identity. Barseł Sargisean and Garegin Yovsēp'ean, when studying the colophons of manuscript Venice 1635, suggested that Vardan could be either a relative or a co-worker of the scribe.³⁰ If my tentative identification of the Kostandin who copied Add. 19548 with the Het'umid master Kostandin is correct, these scholars' suggestion appears accurate, because the colophon (1.1–1.2) of our manuscript transcribed above refers to Vardan as a brother of the scribe.³¹ Moreover, as argued below and in Section 5), both codices share a particularly striking resemblance in terms of style, iconography and ornamentation (cf. Figs 4–5), which suggests they may have been decorated by Kostandin.

³⁰ Sargisean 1914, 558; Yovsēp'ean 1951, 565, 1238. For the principal colophon of Venice 1635, see also Ališan 1885, 82, 97–98; Der Nersessian 1937, vol. 1, 177–178 (text accompanied with French translation); Akinean 1956, 47–48, 73–74; Mat'evosyan 1988, 273–274. For an extensive analysis of its miniature painting, see Der Nersessian 1937, vol. 1, 50–86, plates XVI–XXXIII. See also Der Nersessian and Mekhitarian 1986, 30; Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 1, 16–21, 24–25; Azaryan 1964, 66–72. Contemporaneous to Venice 1635 is the Gospel W.538 of the Walters Art Museum, executed in 1193 for Bishop Karapet in the Pawłoskan monastery. This manuscript, although it shares general artistic features with the so-called Skewřa group of manuscripts, has often been associated with a workshop belonging to Hřomkła, the catholicossal see. On illustrations of W.538 and its relevance to other twelfth-century manuscripts, see Der Nersessian 1973, 6–9, plates 12–29, also 85–86 (for the colophon text); Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 1, 16–21. For the twelfth- and early-thirteenth-century manuscripts produced in Skewřa and Hřomkła, see Evans 1990, 49–74, also appendices I–II (155–167), which provide two useful lists of respective manuscripts.

³¹ Other clerics called Vardan are known from this period, although it can hardly be proven that these are the same tēr Vardan associated with our scribe Kostandin. In 1192, one of them copied in the Maškewor monastery the now famous manuscript Jerusalem, Ařak'elakan At'oř Srboc' Yakovbeanc', 121 – one of the three manuscripts of the published *Le codex arménien Jérusalem 121* (see Renoux 1971, esp. 155–157; the colophons of this manuscript are reproduced in Mat'evosyan 1988, 266–267). Another Vardan from the region of řahan is mentioned in a colophon written by Nersēs Lambronac'i in 1192 (for this colophon, see Akinean 1956, 164). Yet, one more Vardan is mentioned in one of the colophons of the Yerevan, Matenadaran, 1568, where he is referred as priest who died in 1173 (see Mat'evosyan 1988, 210).

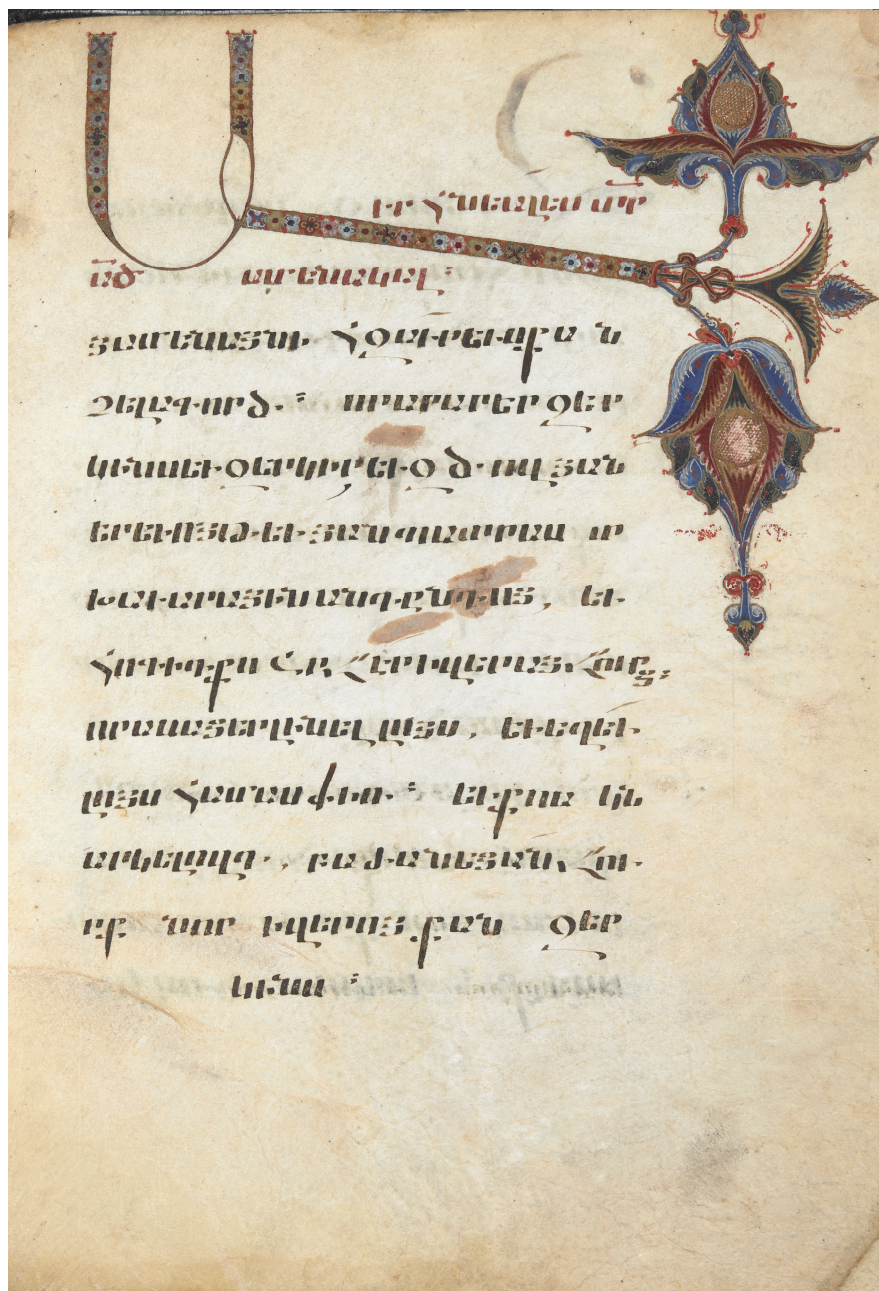


Fig. 4: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 39^r; *maštoc'* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

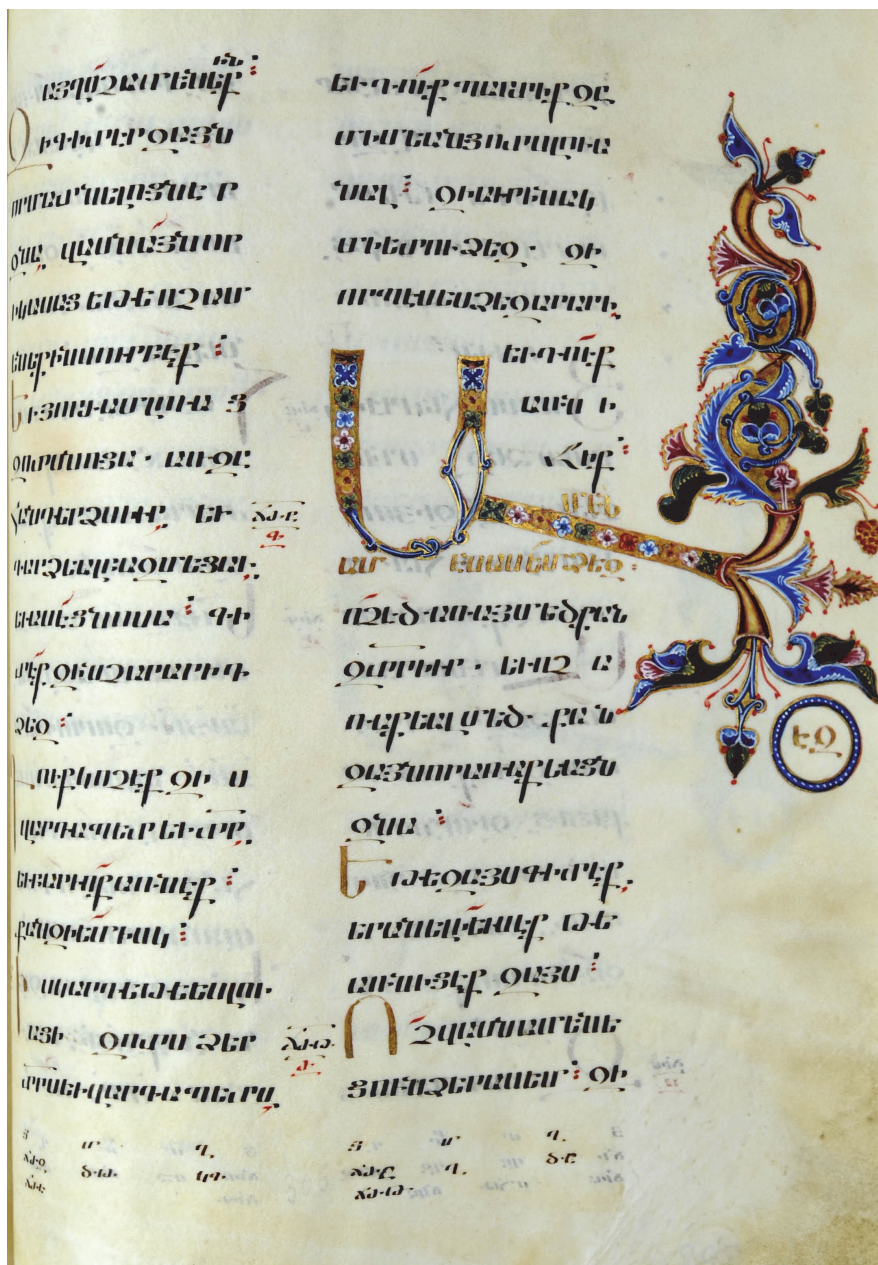


Fig. 5: Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1635, fol. 297^r; *Gospel of Nersēs Lambronac'i* and *Het'um Sewastos*, scribe and miniaturist Kostandin, Skewřa, 1193 CE; © Photo: Hrair Hawk Khatcherian.

Still on the subject of the scribe's identity, Sirarpie Der Nersessian had noticed back in 1937 that the individuals identified as Kostandin and Vardan in the colophon of Venice 1635 are the same people who assisted the scribe Grigor when the latter copied the *Gospel of Tigranakert* in 1173 and the *Gospel of T'oxat* in 1174 (Fig. 6).³² In the colophons of these now-lost manuscripts, Grigor mentions with gratitude and respect the assistance he had received from the 'God-pleasing' Vardan and Kostandin – the latter 'nicknamed K.O.Š.I.K.' (Կոստանդին մականուն Կ.Ո.Շ.Ի.Կ.).³³ Significantly, Nersēs Lambronac'i was involved in the activities of this network of masters, since he supplied the model of the *Gospel of Tigranakert*.³⁴ Lambronac'i's direct involvement – now as acquirer – was also important in the production of what is now Yerevan, Matenadaran, 1568, the earliest extant manuscript of the *Book of Lamentation*, copied in 1173 by the scribe Grigor.³⁵ The latter's identity is sometimes conflated with his namesake colleague, Grigor Mličec'i, who famously illustrated in 1198 the *Skewra Gospel* (Warsaw, Biblioteka Narodowa, Rps 8101 III), a sumptuous manuscript that commemorates the coronation of the first Cilician king Lewon I, to which I will return later.³⁶

32 Der Nersessian 1937, vol. 1, 52.

33 The colophon of the *Gospel of Tigranakert* is reproduced in Sruanjteants 1884, 442–444; Ališan 1885, 97 (partially); Yovsēp'ean 1951, 445–448; Mat'evosyan 1988, 212–213. For the colophon of the *Gospel of T'oxat*, see Sruanjteants 1879, 114–119; Yovsēp'ean 1951, 453–460; Mat'evosyan 1988, 215–217; Schmidt 1997b, 129. Two old photographs showing the incipit pages of the Gospels of Mark and Luke are the only testimonies of the illustrations of the *Gospel of T'oxat*. These photographs were taken by Garegin Yovsēp'ean before the Armenian Genocide of 1915. They are reproduced and discussed in Izmailova 1961, 95–97 and figs 13–14; Yovsēp'ean 1951, fig. 26. In June 2019, I had the opportunity to work in the Archives of Garegin Catholicos Yovsēp'ean in Antelias, Lebanon, and view the original photograph of the *Gospel of T'oxat*, which is reproduced here with kind permission of the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia (Fig. 6).

34 This is documented in the manuscript's principal colophon, as reproduced in Sruanjteants 1884, 443: Եւ որ զարինական շնորհեաց զՆերսէս սուրբ եւ ընտրեալ քահանայ գորդի մեծազար Սեւաստոսի պատրոն Աւշնի, որ ամենեւին հանգիստ եղել գրչիս տկարութեան յիւր սեպիական անապատն Սկեռայ անուն կոչեցեալ, որ է մերձ յանառողեակն Լամբրոնու (‘And (remember) also Nersēs, the saintly and virtuous priest, son of the mighty patron Awšin Sewastos, who offered the model [and] who was totally ignorant of my scribal incompetence in his own hermitage called Skewrāy, which is close to the impregnable castle of Lambron’, my translation).

35 For the colophons of the Matenadaran 1568, see Mat'evosyan 1988, 210–221. The illustrations of this manuscript are studied in Evans 1990, 63–65; Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 1, 12–13; Zakaryan 2006; Rapti 2009–2010, 467–468; Maranci 2018, 100–102; Manukyan 2021.

36 This manuscript is also known as the *Gospel of Lviv*, named after the city, where it was kept for a long time. It is currently preserved at the National Library of Poland and is available for consultation at <<https://polona.pl/item/ewangeliazr-ze-skewry,NTU3NzE2OQ/>> (accessed on 8 November 2022). For the colophons of this manuscript, see Akinean 1930, 6–10; Mat'evosyan 1988, 298–301; Schmidt 1997a

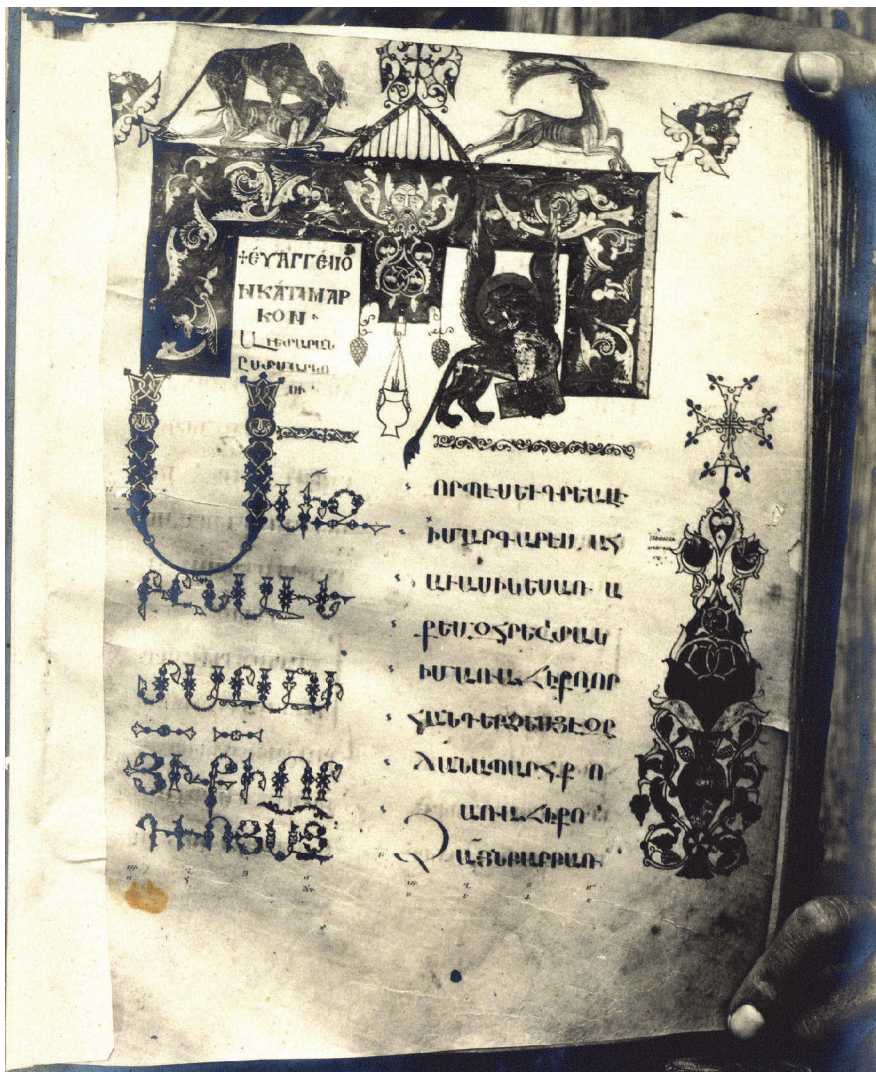


Fig. 6: Antelias (Lebanon), Kat'olikosowt'iwn Hayoc' Mec'i Tann Kilikiy (Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia), Archives of Garegin Catholicos Yovsēp'ean, No 24-1-579, file 98; original photograph showing the incipit page of the Gospel of Mark in the now-lost *Gospel of Toxat*, scribe Grigor, 1174 CE; © Kat'olikosowt'iwn Hayoc' Mec'i Tann Kilikiy; Photo: Gohar Grigoryan.

(for German translation). The illustrations of the *Skewra Gospel* are discussed in Akinean 1930; Azaryan 1964, 66–71; Der Nersessian and Mekhitarian 1986, 30, 33, 36; Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 1, 16–18, 20–21, 39–40; Prinzing and Schmidt (eds) 1997; Chookaszian 2017; Maranci 2018, 102–103; Vardanyan 2023.

Collaborative practices, as shown by the colophons discussed above, were not uncommon for Cilician scriptoria, which explains the stylistic, iconographic and palaeographic similarities between the manuscripts produced by the above-mentioned masters and those who are not known by name. Moreover, Kostandin Skewřac'i and Grigor Mlićec'i, who were active both as scribes and miniaturists, were probably associated through a teacher–disciple relationship.³⁷ Grigor's artistic skills are praised in the principal colophon of the *Skewřa Gospel*, written by the *stac'ol* (i.e. acquirer, recipient) Step'anos, who vividly describes the sensual experience of handling a gospel manuscript and also discloses some remarkable details about the production of this manuscript.³⁸ As for his elder colleague Kostandin, his responsibilities as a scribe and artist are mentioned on two occasions.³⁹ It is this Kostandin – ‘the honourable old man’ (պատուական ծերունի),

37 For such approaches, see Polarean 1989, 5–9; Schmidt 1997b, 127–129; Azaryan 1964, 55. The identity of the scribe and painter Grigor, better known as Grigor Mlićec'i, has been subject of debates, for his work was preceded and, then, continued by homonymous masters, who all share common artistic and scribal traditions. See Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 1, 13, 36–37; Der Nersessian and Mekhitarian 1986, 30–36; von Euw 1997, 80–82; Azaryan 1964, 54–55. See also Der Nersessian's review of Levon Azaryan's book: Der Nersessian 1965, 396–397.

38 The colophon of the *Skewřa Gospel*, fol. 421^v, reads as follows: Սոյնպէս եւ ես զբանս նորս որ հոգի է եւ կեանք, աշխատութեամբ նաւեցի ի Կիպրոս եւ գտեալ նիւթ, զբանն ի մարմին փոխարկեցի. զի անյագաբար վայելեցից ուրախութեամբ ձեռամբ շաւշափմամբ համբուրիւք եւ մտաւք, եւ հոգւով ի բանէն կենդանացայց, եւ զայս ոչ վայրապար, այլ ի ձեռն մեծահոջակ գովեալ գրչի որ գեր ի վերոյ եւ անհաս գտաւ ի սեսո մեր ոչ մէկնաւ միայն, այլ եւ երանգոց եւ դէղոց նկարագարդ վայելչութեամբ. ոչ ըստ զարդութեան եւ կարողութեան իւրոյ արուեստին, այլ ըստ իմուսն զիջեալ աղբատութեամբս ('Likewise I, after having sailed with difficulty to Cyprus and having found [writing] material, transformed into flesh the Word of Him [cf. John 1:14] who is spirit and life, so that I may insatiably enjoy [the Word] through the touch of hands, through kisses and thoughts, and become again spiritually alive from the Word. And this [was done] not randomly but by the hands of the highly acclaimed scribe Grigor, who is considered excellent and unattainable among our [human] race not only for [mastering] the ink but also for the gracefulness of colours and picturesque paints. [Yet, this was undertaken] not due to the virtue and talent of his skill but because of my own indigence', my translation).

39 In the principal colophon of Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1635, written in 1193, Kostandin reveals his artistic skills in this sentence (fol. 320^v): հրամանս էտուն ինձ Կոստանդեայ հոգեւոր երկամբք ծնեալ որդւոյ սատարութեամբ գրչի աւարտել եւ երանգաւք ծաղկոց զարդարել. զի ի խորհրդական ժամու սրբոյ պատարագին արստաւրէ ի տաճարս Աստուծոյ ընթերցցին. եւ ես ըստ կարի տկարութեանս իմոյ յանգ հանի զպատուէր տերանց իմոց եւ իշխողաց ('[Nersēs Lambronac'i and his brother Het'um Sewastaws] [...] commanded me, Kostandin, born in spiritual fear, to complete [this book] with the help of pen and to adorn it with the colours of flowers, so that at the solemn hour of the holy liturgy it might be read every day in the temple of God. And I, in the measure of my incapacity, carried out the order of my lords and rulers', my translation). In an earlier manuscript executed in 1190 (Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di

as Grigor labels him in the colophon of the *Gospel of T'oxat* – who administered the manuscript production of the Het'umid-controlled scriptoria for at least two decades.⁴⁰ According to Der Nersessian, Kostandin Skewřac'i was 'the favorite artist of the Het'umids'.⁴¹ His name appears for the first time in Grigor's above-mentioned colophon dating from 1173 and for the last time in 1195, in the colophon of the gospel manuscript 27/24, kept at the Armenian Holy Saviour Monastery of Isfahan (New Julfa). The figurative miniatures of the Isfahan manuscript were violently cut out (Fig. 7), but the principal colophon is fortunately complete and allows us to better appreciate the scope of the Het'umid patronage of Cilician scriptoria.⁴² It appears, on its basis, that this manuscript was also acquired by a Lambron aristocrat – Prince Apirat, the brother of Nersēs Lambronac'i and Het'um Sewastos.⁴³ Noteworthy also is that the scribe of the Isfahan manuscript 27/24 writes his name as *Kostandi*,⁴⁴ just as the homonymous (same?) scribe of the colophon of the London *maštoc'* does.

Yet another late-twelfth-century manuscript, Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 92, has preserved the name of a certain *Kostandi(n)*, who is referred to as the manuscript's miniaturist. I was not able to view the illustrations of this codex but its content and provenance, closely associated with Nersēs Lambronac'i, point at the same Kostandin Skewřac'i as the most probable author of its miniatures. In fact, this codex was copied for Nersēs Lambronac'i by one of his disciples, Samuēl *vardapet* Skewřac'i, in 1190 and contains Lambronac'i's own *Commentary on Psalms*. According to Sahak Čemčemean, it origi-

S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 92), Kostandin inserted his name (և զնկարիչս կոստանդիս – 'also me, the painter Kostandi[n]') into one of the non-principal colophons that was written by the scribe Samuēl who hoped to be remembered by readers. This interlinear addition was likely done by Kostandi(n) when he completed the manuscript's illustrations (see below, n. 45).

⁴⁰ Schmidt 1997b, 129, 122–123.

⁴¹ Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 1, 16.

⁴² For the description and colophons of Isfahan (New Julfa), Sowrb Amenap'rkic' Vank' (Holy Saviour Monastery), 27/24, see Tēr-Awetisean 1970, 35–37; Mat'evosyan 1988, 288–289 (but see below, n. 44). For its miniature painting (mostly cut though), see Der Nersessian and Mekhitarian 1986, 30.

⁴³ For the genealogical table of this family, see Schmidt 1997b, 128.

⁴⁴ In Mat'evosyan 1988, 288–289, the scribe's name is given as *Kostandin* without editorial comments. This colophon is also reproduced in Tēr-Awetisean 1970, 36: Եւ ես գրիչս Կոստանդի աղաչեմ զտեսարս իմ եւ եղբարս, որք վայելէ ի սմա, զնուստութեանս իմոյ սպասաւորութիւն աստուածային մատենիս աստուածապարգէւ արհեստիւս յիշատակի արժանի արարէք, զի զտից ողորմութիւն ի Քրիստոսէ ('And I, scribe Kostandi[n], beg you, my lords and brothers, who will enjoy this [book], make worthy of remembrance my unworthiness who accomplished this divine book with God-granted art, so that I may find mercy in Christ', my translation).

nally had high-quality marginal ornaments, which are now badly damaged because of natural and human hazards.⁴⁵



Fig. 7: Isfahan (New Julfa), Sowrb Amenap'rkic' Vank' (Holy Saviour Monastery), 27/24, fol. 139r; beginning of the Gospel of Luke, showing the preceding folio of parchment (cut out) originally containing the evangelist's image; *Gospel of Prince Apirat Lambronac'i*, scribe Kostandi(n), 1195 CE; © Photo: Hrair Hawk Khatcherian.

⁴⁵ This manuscript was obtained by the Mekhitarists of Venice in 1882 and was described, for the first time, in Čemčemean 1996, 871–876 (which, however, does not reproduce the non-principal colophons but only the principal one). Previously, this codex was quoted in Ališan 1885, 98, n. 1 and 99, fig. 20), which helpfully includes a photograph of the colophon where Kostandi(n) is mentioned as the manuscript's artist (while the scribe is the 'sinful Samuēl') (see above, n. 39). On this manuscript, see also Polarean 1989, 5, and Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 1, 16 (both based on Ališan 1885).



Fig. 8: Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1635, fol. 151^r; incipit page of the Gospel of Luke; *Gospel of Nersēs Lambronac’i and Het’um Sewastos*, scribe and miniaturist Kostandin, Skewrā, 1193 CE; © Photo: Hrair Hawk Khatcherian.

Returning to the British Library *maštoc’*, I attribute it to the network of Kostandin Skewrāc’i and Grigor Mličec’i, based not so much on the names of its scribe and acquirer (who are mentioned together in other manuscripts as well), but in light of stylistic and iconographic evidence preserved in this codex that is clearly relevant to artistic traditions of the masters of Skewrā and its adjacent scriptoria.⁴⁶ Based on the

⁴⁶ A localisation in Greater Armenia is excluded as a possibility because of obvious differences in style and iconography. For Greater Armenian manuscript illumination in the last quarter of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, see e.g. Izmailova 1981, 95–99, figs 25–29; Izmailova 1984; Izmailova 1988.

considerations above and the art-historical analysis that follows, I would argue that Add. 19548 was created in the last quarter of the twelfth century in a Skewřa workshop or, alternatively, in the first decades of the thirteenth century by an *émigré* artist trained in Skewřa. The latter possibility is based on the knowledge that the activities of those artists who enjoyed the patronage of the Lambron family declined abruptly after 1201. In that year, this family's long-time rival King Lewon I Ērubenid – encouraged by his recently obtained royal status and the absence of the influential Nersēs Lambronac'i (d. 1198) – imprisoned Prince Het'um, declaring that 'never again would there be a lord of Lambron'.⁴⁷ Der Nersessian has convincingly shown that, although some of the Skewřa masters managed to find refuge and complete their works elsewhere (e.g. in Tarsus and Sis), the dynastic rivalry caused a temporal decline in the promising progress achieved in Skewřa between the 1170s and 1190s.⁴⁸

5 The image of Christ Emmanuel in the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination*

The decorations of the incipit pages of the two canons (Figs 1 and 16) in Add. 19548 follow the decorative system used for the incipit pages of Armenian gospel manuscripts, which, from the twelfth century on, consistently include three elements: rectangular or Π-like headpieces, large decorative initials and long marginal ornaments, often topped with a cross (see e.g. Fig. 8). The title on the opening page of the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* is written in a quatrefoil frame, inserted into the richly ornamented headpiece, which also displays images of two birds facing each other (Fig. 1). Here, as on the frontispiece of the *Canon of the Blessing of Water*, the beginning of the main text is written in gold and continued with black on the following pages, except for the instructions, which are written in red. The pauses and new content throughout the text are mainly visualised with a gold-written first letter (see e.g. Fig. 2), richly decorated initials and/or elegant marginal ornaments (Figs 1, 4, 9–12 and 16). The marginal decorations occasionally transform into thematic images to accentuate, in visual terms, the culminating idea of the respective rite (Figs 13 and 19).

⁴⁷ Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 1, 36 (with further references).

⁴⁸ Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 1, 36–38. For a more detailed analysis of the political context of these events, see Ter-Petrossian 2007, 264–267. It was only in the second half of the thirteenth century that Skewřa emerged again as an important intellectual centre and scriptorium (on which see e.g. Badalyan 2013).

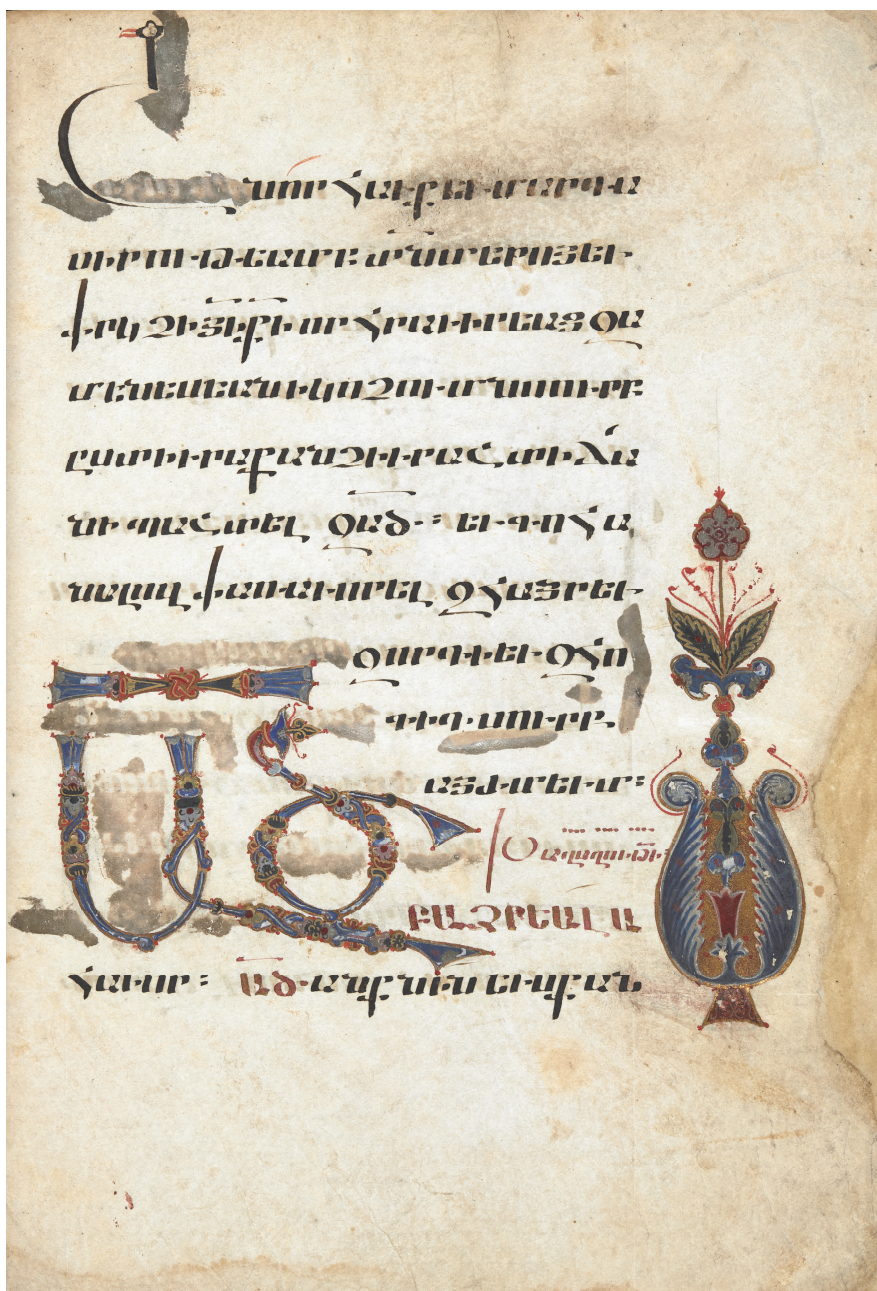


Fig. 9: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 2^r; *Canon of a Priest's Ordination*, *maštoc'* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

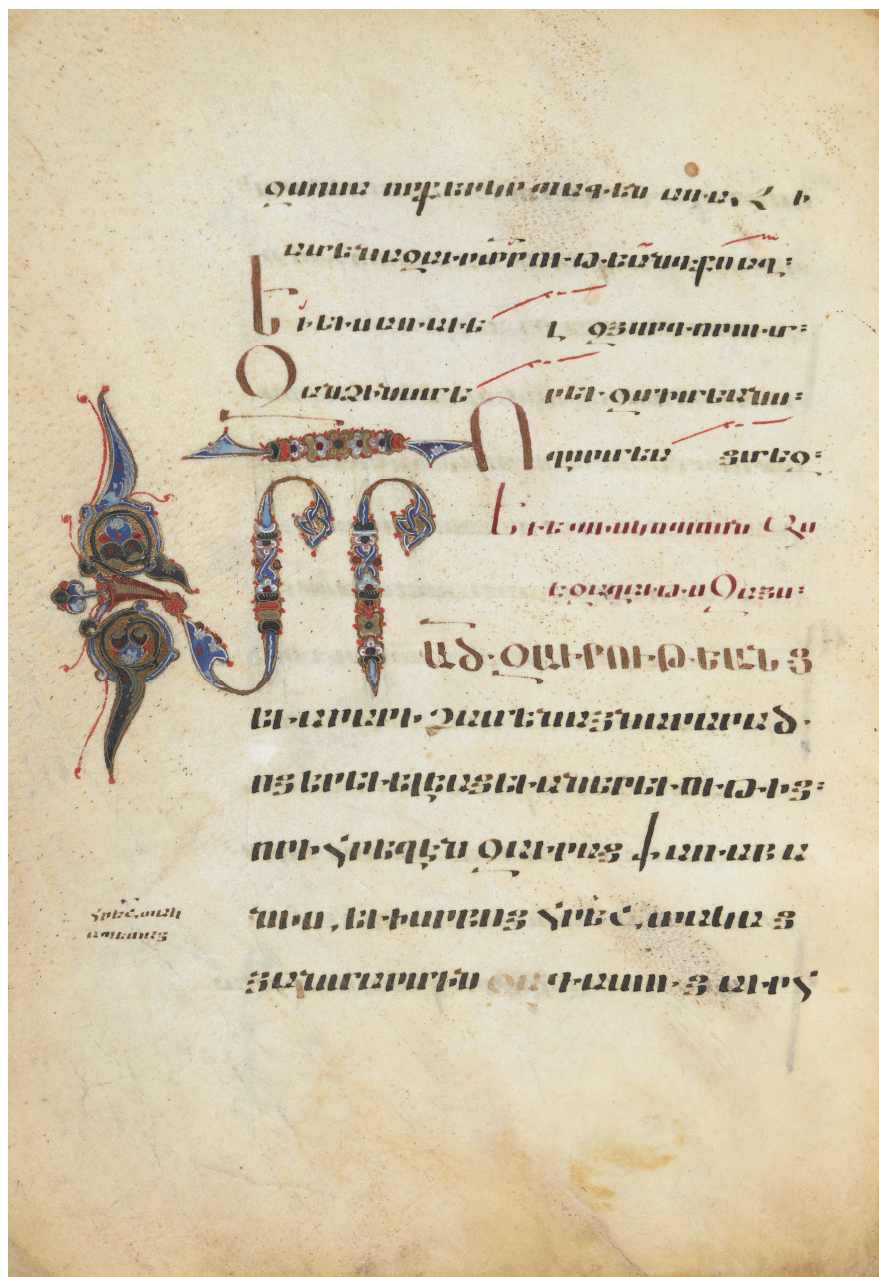


Fig. 10: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 20v; *Canon of a Priest's Ordination, maštoc'* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

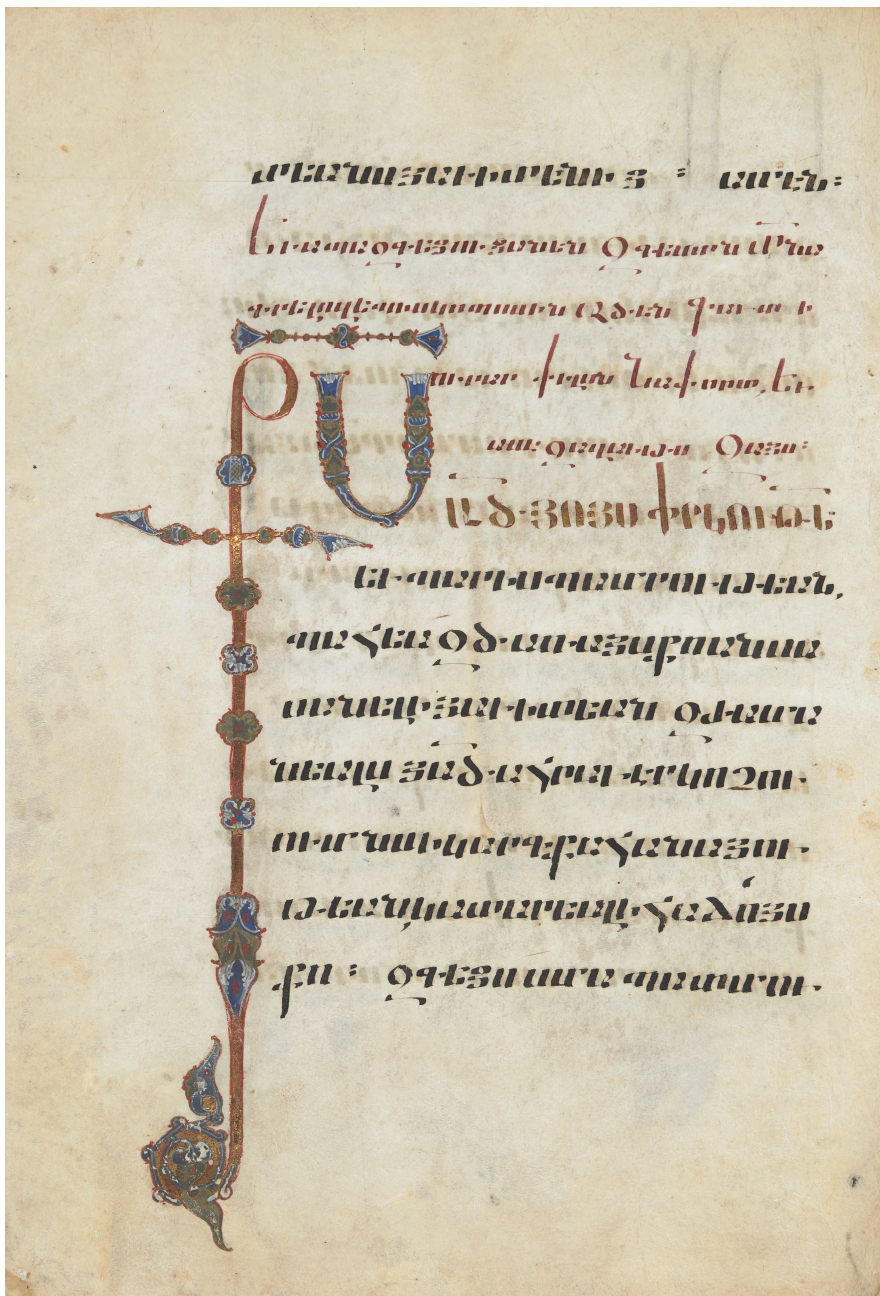


Fig. 11: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 25^v; *Canon of a Priest's Ordination, maštoc'* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

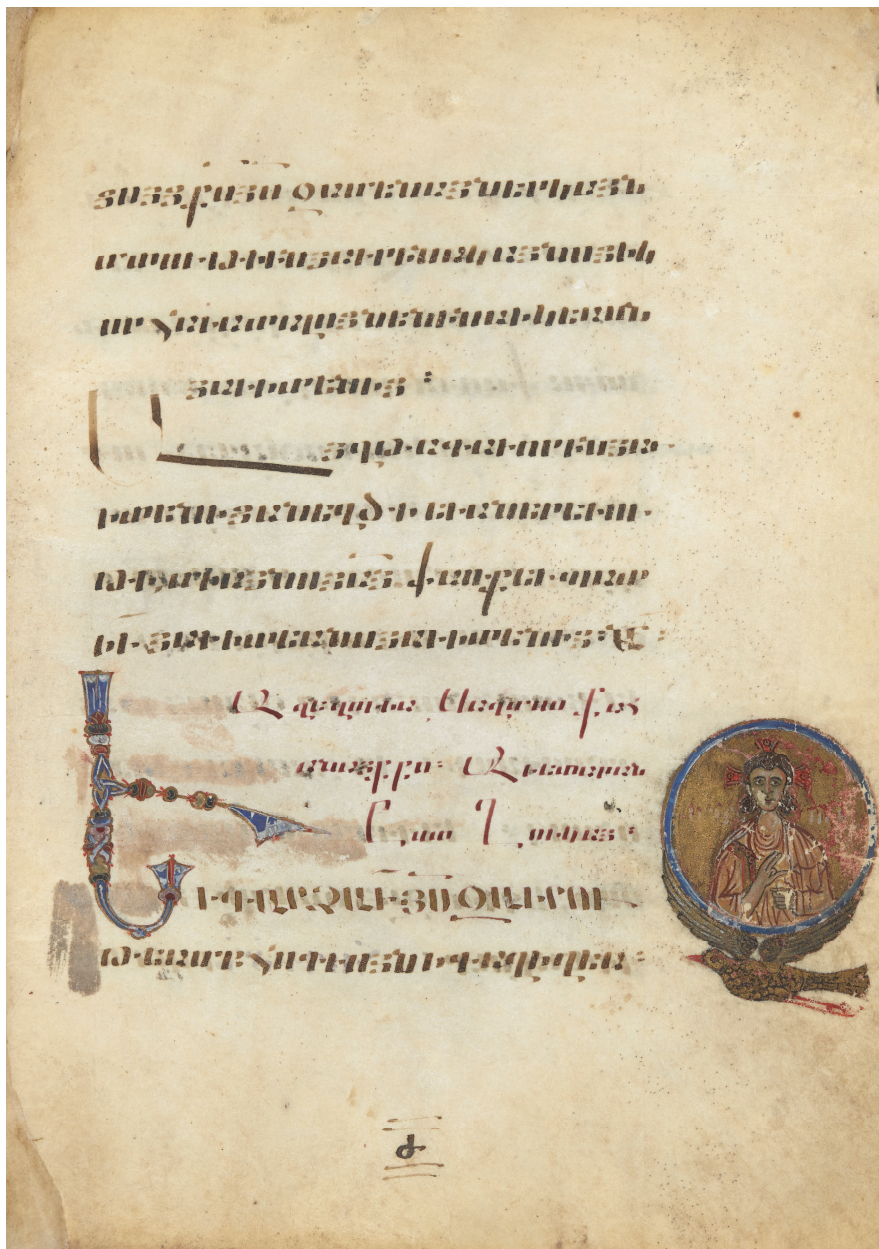


Fig. 13: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 17r; image of Christ Emmanuel marking the beginning of Luke 4:14; *Canon of a Priest's Ordination, maštoc'* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

The most elaborate marginal image in the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* represents Christ Emmanuel in a medallion that is held upon the wings of a dove that symbolises the Holy Spirit (Fig. 13). Here, a scarcely visible but legible inscription in white uncial letters labels Christ ՄԱՆՈՒԷԼ, i.e. Manowēl.⁴⁹ The image of the Christ Child marks the beginning of Luke 4:14–22, which is the only gospel pericope recited during the ordination ceremony (see Appendix 2).⁵⁰ In this gospel text, the youthful Christ reveals the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1–2 ('The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to proclaim good news'), which was also recited during the ordination rite.

An almost identical image of Christ Emmanuel, placed next to the same Lukan pericope, appears in the two gospel manuscripts discussed above originating from Skewra: the gospel book of Nersēs Lambronac'i and his brother Het'um, copied and illuminated by Kostandin in 1193, Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1635 (Fig. 14), and the *Skewra Gospel*, illustrated by Grigor Mličec'i in 1198, Warsaw, Biblioteka Narodowa, Rps 8101 III (Fig. 15).⁵¹ In all three manuscripts, the dove that holds Christ's medallion is depicted flying towards the evangelical text, while Christ's static bust is shown en face, blessing with his right hand and holding a scroll in his left hand (Figs 13–15).

A comparable image of Christ Emmanuel in a medallion can be found in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century decorations of several churches from Cappadocia to Monreale, Sicily.⁵² Due to their prominent location within the liturgical space, most of these images have been interpreted as bearing Eucharistic symbolism, which evoke the idea of the sacrifice of Christ Emmanuel, 'which means God is with us' (Matthew 1:23).⁵³ We find in the ordination canon of the Armenian *maštoc'* an allusion to the redemptive effects of the Eucharistic liturgy (e.g. when referring to Christ's flesh and blood as capable of liberating 'the race of men from

49 The legend Մաւոնւէլ/Manowēl placed next to the image of Christ Emmanuel can be read in other Armenian manuscripts dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, some of which are discussed in Rapti 2009, 791–793.

50 The earliest extant *maštoc'* manuscripts dating from the tenth and eleventh centuries (see above, n. 19) do not include the Lukan pericope in the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination*. There, the only gospel pericope is Matthew 16:13–19.

51 In her discussion of the mentioned two gospel manuscripts, Evans 1990, 66, misinterprets the bird that holds Christ's medallion as an eagle.

52 Schroeder 2008, esp. 35.

53 On the Eucharistic meaning of the image of Christ Emmanuel, see Schroeder 2008, esp. 35–38. It is noteworthy, in this respect, that Narekac'i's Prayer 33:4, included in the Armenian divine liturgy (see above, n. 9), refers to Christ as 'Emmanuel' – a designation which, according to Terian (tr.) 2021, 153, n. 22, is a hapax in the *Book of Lamentation*.

the curse and sentence of condemnation' and of reconciling them with the Father), with a special emphasis on the office of priesthood – the celebrants and distributors of the Eucharist.⁵⁴ The dove-held image of Christ Emmanuel placed within the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* (Fig. 13) alludes particularly to the holders of 'the grade and office of priesthood', who are empowered by the reception of the Holy Spirit upon their ordination.⁵⁵ Once anointed and graced by the Holy Spirit, the priests are ready to 'proclaim the good news' and conduct other tasks, as mentioned for Jesus in the accompanying Lukan text. This image was, thus, meant to underscore the beginning of a priestly ministry characterised by the imitation of Christ. In fact, the Lukan passage which accompanies the image marks the start of the youthful Christ's teaching in Galilee, which was comparably led by 'the power of the Spirit' (Luke 4:14).

It appears that the identical image of Christ Emmanuel in the *Skewra Gospel* (Fig. 15) similarly functions as an allusion to a new ordination. Edda Vardanyan has recently demonstrated that the thematic choice of the marginal images of the *Skewra Gospel* hints at the four different functions of Christ: as anointed, king, priest and prophet.⁵⁶ The images inserted into the margins of the Gospel of Luke, including especially the dove-held image of Christ Emmanuel, are interpreted by Vardanyan as symbolising Christ as the Anointed One, hinting at the ideas of anointment and ordination in general. Such a choice, Vardanyan argues, was motivated by the anointment and coronation of King Lewon I in 1198 – an event that is emphasised in the principal colophon of the *Skewra Gospel*. Although Vardanyan's iconographic analysis of the *Skewra Gospel* focuses on a different type of ordination from the one mentioned in Add. 19548, her conclusions are supported by the evidence offered by our *maštoc*' manuscript.

54 See Conybeare 1905, 240 (emphasis is mine): 'But because of your infinite love of man you did humbly stoop from your Father's bosom of your own will down to our nature, compassionate offspring of the Father. And you did put on flesh from the Holy Virgin and did free the race of men from the curse and sentence of condemnation; by the shedding of your incorruptible blood you made peace in heaven and earth and did reconcile the Father to his creatures. *But you have also chosen for yourself a special people of your own, your holy church.*'

55 This can further be seen in the bishop's prayer said over the priest-to-be, as preserved in the ordination ceremony of Add. 19548. See Conybeare 1905, 236: 'Grant to this servant of yours to receive the grade and office of priesthood, through calling and laying on of hands to become worthy of the reception of the Holy Spirit, to take the overseership bestowed on him in all worthiness thereof [...] Heavenly Father, send your Holy Spirit and bless this novice, who stands before your holy table, that he may take the office and grade of priesthood, and become an overseer of your people and a sharer of the throne of your Apostles.'

56 Vardanyan 2023, esp. 294, 295, 288.

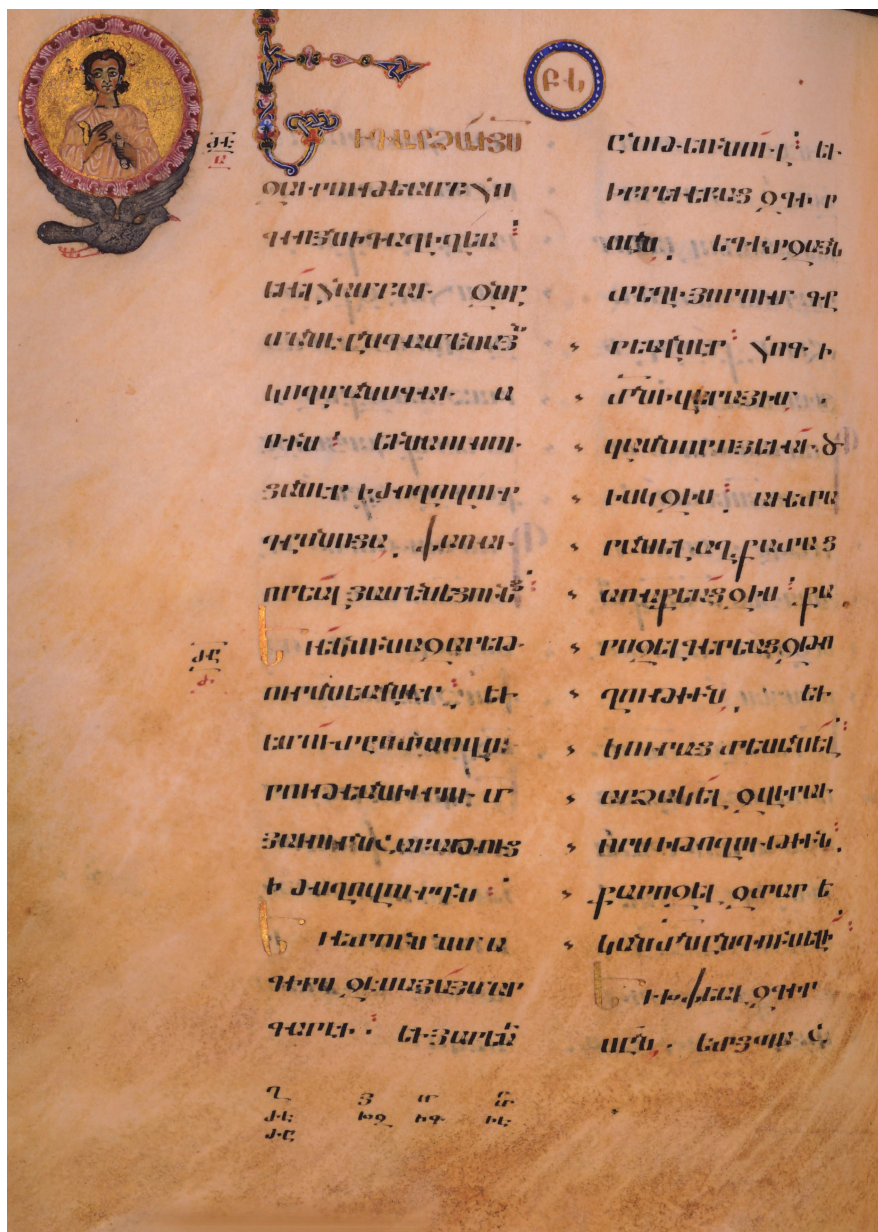


Fig. 14: Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1635, fol. 164^r; image of Christ Emmanuel marking the beginning of Luke 4:14; *Gospel of Nersēs Lambronaci and Het'um Sewastos*, scribe and miniaturist Kostandin, Skewra, 1193 CE; © Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni.

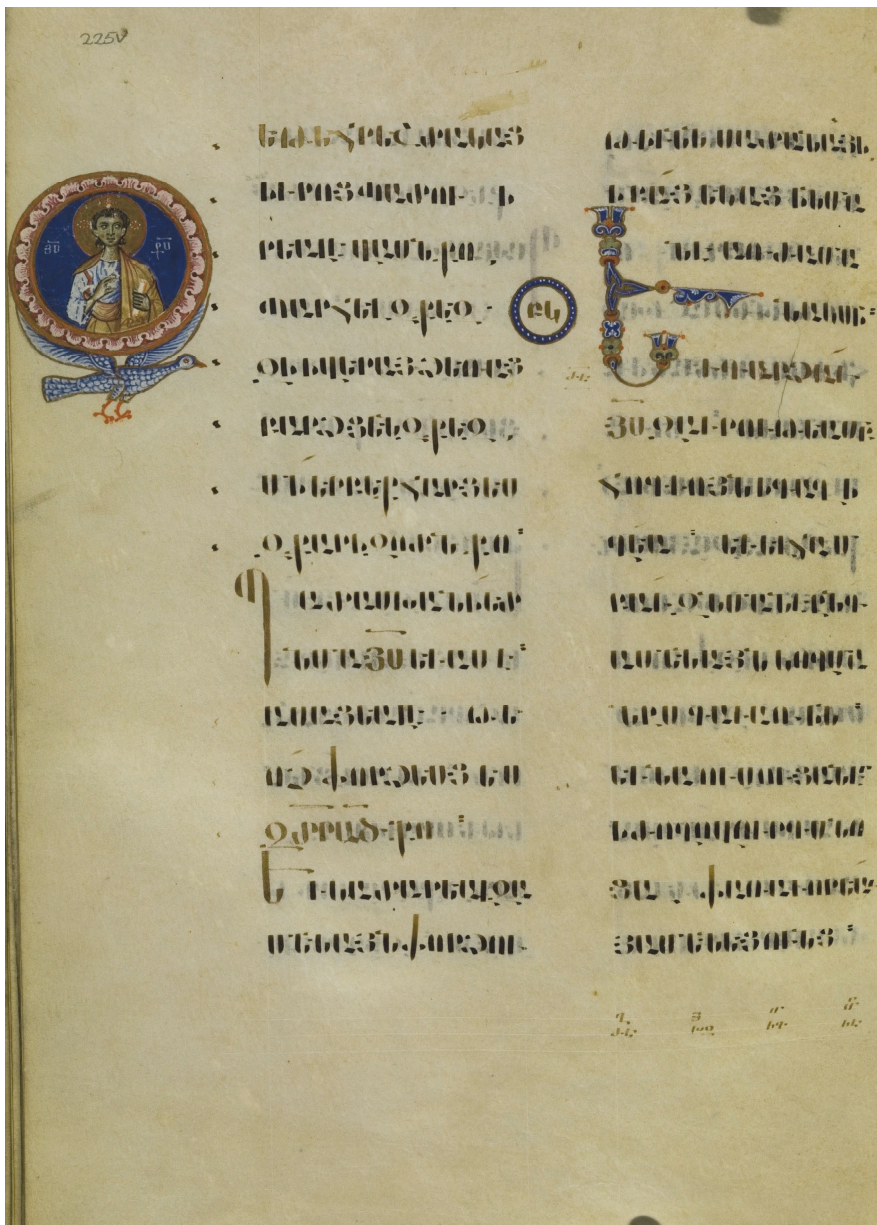


Fig. 15: Warsaw, Biblioteka Narodowa, Rps 8101 III, fol. 225^v; image of Christ Emmanuel marking the beginning of Luke 4:14; *Skewra Gospel*, miniaturist Grigor Mličec'i, Mlič and Skewra, 1198 CE; public domain image.

No less important to my argument is the evidence provided by the Armenian Church's *Canon of a King's Ordination*, which instructs a citation of Luke 4:14–22 before vesting the future king in his royal chlamys and cloak.⁵⁷ A similar structure is found in the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* in Add. 19548, in which Luke 4:14–22 – the only gospel pericope of this rite – is followed by deacon's proclamation and bishop's prayer to be culminated by the vesting ceremony of the newly ordained priest (see Appendix 2). The associations of the ordinations of a priest and a king should come as no surprise because both were 'called' to their respective offices as overseers over a congregation and over people, respectively. Graced by the Holy Spirit, both were supposed to accomplish their duties with 'wisdom and justice' and in imitation of Christ – the high priest and the heavenly king.⁵⁸ The ideological parallel between the holders of the offices of priesthood and of kingship in Cilician Armenia was even reflected in their official vestments. The *coronation ordo* translated by Nersēs Lambronac'i, for instance, instructs that the king-to-be should be first clothed in priestly vestments before being clothed in his royal garments.⁵⁹ The priestly 'unbelted mantle' (զօւեղնոծ պատմութեան), as Lambronac'i explains in his *Reflections on Church Orders*, was to be seen as equally honourable as the king's unbelted mantle, for it signifies being a ruler and a supervisor of the people.⁶⁰

57 Grigoryan 2023, 112 (Appendix B: 'The Armenian *Canon of a king's ordination* as preserved in Jerusalem, Afak'elakan At'oṙ Srboc' Yakovbeanc', 2673'). This canon is different from the *Canon of a King's Consecration* mentioned previously, the Armenian translation of which was done from a version deriving from the *Mainzer Krönungsordo*.

58 Conybeare 1905, 240: 'Fill Your servant whom You have chosen and called to the guidance of this congregation and to the ministry of Your holy church with Your Holy Spirit. Strengthen him [...] to shepherd the flock with wisdom and justice.' The same qualities were required from an Armenian sovereign upon his anointment as king. For the model of the 'wise and just' king, as constructed in Cilician Armenian political theology, see Grigoryan 2023, esp. 97–104. For the king as 'shepherd over his flock', see Grigoryan 2017, 200, 278.

59 This is preserved in the version that is based on the so-called *Mainzer Krönungsordo*. The religious vestments worn by the king over the 'priestly linen cloth' are 'subdeacons' red silk and deacons' honourable red pallium with long-sleeves and left unbelted', see Grigoryan 2023, 110 (Appendix A1).

60 Unlike those whose cloaks 'should be bound with a girdle', which symbolises being in service. See Nersēs Lambronac'i 1847, 85. The ceremonial and theological significance of belts is discussed in Grigoryan forthcoming b.



Fig. 16: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 30^r; incipit page of the *Canon of the Blessing of Water, mas̄toc'* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

6 An apotropaic image of Christ in the *Canon of the Blessing of Water*

The incipit page of the *Canon of the Blessing of Water* in Add. 19548 is decorated with the same principle as that of the previous canon, i.e. with the same three decorative elements: a headpiece, a marginal ornament and a large initial (Fig. 16). Here, the marginal miniature and the headpiece images are invested with meanings that convey notions revolving around the significance of water. In the right margin, a huge vessel is placed upon a pool of vivid water, which is depicted with wavy patterns. A comparable, but more eloquent, allusion to the rite of the Blessing of Water is visualised on the incipit page of another Cilician *maštoc* dating from the twelfth or early thirteenth century, Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1159 (Fig. 17), where a large cross is shown emerging from the stylised water as if from a ‘frothing whirlpool’ – to borrow a phrase from Wilbrand of Oldenburg’s description of the river in Sis, where he attended the Armenian celebration of the Blessing of Water in 1212.⁶¹ Other images, such as the full-page illustration of Christ’s Baptism, were also used by Armenian artists as frontispieces to the *Canon of the Blessing of Water*, as showcased by an episcopal *maštoc* – Jerusalem, Aṙak’elakan At’oṙ Srboc’ Yakovbeanc’, 2027 – which was lavishly illustrated by T’oros Roslin in 1266 (fols 131^v–132^r) (Fig. 18). The relationship of this latter image to the *Canon of the Blessing of Water* is most evident since this rite is a commemoration and re-enactment of Christ’s Baptism in the Jordan River, aimed at achieving the same regenerative effects as the rebirth through baptismal waters.⁶² The blessing is performed on the day of the Epiphany, which Armenians celebrate together with Christ’s Nativity and Baptism – a practice that earned Wilbrand of Oldenburg’s surprise when he visited Cilician Armenia.⁶³

⁶¹ Pringle 2012, 79.

⁶² Winkler 1982, 446; Vidalis 2001, 237–238, 241, 256; Denysenko 2012, 24; this scholar also highlights the ‘profoundly visual’ nature of the Eastern traditions of the blessing of waters (p. 1), aimed at connoting Jesus’s presence by plunging the cross (occasionally other items) into the water (pp. 2, 11).

⁶³ On the origins of this combined celebration, see Renoux 2003, 56, n. 15. For Wilbrand’s account on this rite, see Pringle 2012, 78: ‘On the day, that is to say the feast, of the Epiphany, which the Armenians call the Baptism, we came to Sis, to which the lord king had invited us to celebrate his feast [...] During the twelve preceding days, which we spend in enjoyment and banquets, they spend in honour of their feast in penitence and fasts, abstaining from fish, wine and oil. On the holy eve itself, they abstained from these things all day, so that after dusk they might celebrate masses and while away the whole of that night in the divine offices without sleeping. On the day



Fig. 17: Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1159, fols 110^v–111^r, with the incipit page of the *Canon of the Blessing of Water, maštoc'* (ritual book), Cilicia, twelfth to thirteenth centuries; © Photo: Hrair Hawk Khatcherian.



Fig. 18: Jerusalem, Aṙak'elakan At'oṙ Sṙboc' Yakovbeanc', 2027, fols 131^v–132^r; Baptism and the incipit page of the *Canon of the Blessing of Water, maštoc'* (ritual book), scribe Awetik', miniaturist T'oros Roslin, Hfomkla, 1266 CE; © Photo: Hrair Hawk Khatcherian.

itself they celebrate the feast of the Lord's Nativity, saying that on that one and self-same – and indeed, more distinguished – day the Lord had been born and, after His thirtieth year, baptized.'

The frontispiece to the *Canon of the Blessing of Water* in Add. 19548 displays another element that is associated with water: the pair of fish-hunting birds which, together with another pair of birds, flank the central cross of the headpiece (Fig. 16). In several Armenian commentaries on Canon Tables, the images of piscivorous birds are explained as symbolising the Apostles-fishermen, who were hunting men at the Lord's command 'with their magisterial (fishing) nets, thus saving them from the recalcitrant dragon that wants to hunt everyone with its own nets in order to cast them into the eternal fire'.⁶⁴ This interpretation can be extended to the fish-hunting birds depicted in the London *maštoc*, although here it is the clergy – the intended owners of our codex – who are expected to triumph over the dragon, the symbol of evil.⁶⁵ This is explicitly referenced in the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* as preserved in the same manuscript (fol. 25').⁶⁶

As you have given courage and liberty to all the faithful to tread upon asps and vipers, and upon the power of the enemy – so grant to him [that is, the priest-to-be] even now, Lord, victory by your all-conquering cross to walk upon asp and viper and to bruise the head of the venomous dragon.

The victory over evil is, thus, possible with the help of the cross, which, on the frontispiece to the *Canon of the Blessing of Water*, is prominently depicted between the birds (Fig. 16). The small golden circle that is painted at the intersection of the cross arms is likely a generic representation of the gold crown worn by the Son of Man (Revelation 14:14). This type of cross adorned with the golden crown was a beloved motif of the Skewřa miniaturists⁶⁷ and reappears in the London manuscript in the apotropaic image of Christ, who slays a huge dragon in the Jordan River with his long cross (Fig. 19).

⁶⁴ Quotation taken from Grigoryan 2020, 105–106.

⁶⁵ Furthermore, on one occasion, the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination* refers to priests as 'sharers of the throne of Apostles' (see above, n. 55).

⁶⁶ Translation adapted from Conybeare 1905, 241.

⁶⁷ The 'Sign of the Son of Man' adorned with a gold crown is depicted e.g. in Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1635 (next to Matthew 24:29–30) and Matenadaran 1568 (fol. 266^v, next to Grigor Narekac'i's Prayer 67), in both cases, over the empty throne. For the former image, see Der Nersessian 1937, vol. 1, 65, fig. 52; Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 1, 20–21, fig. 42.

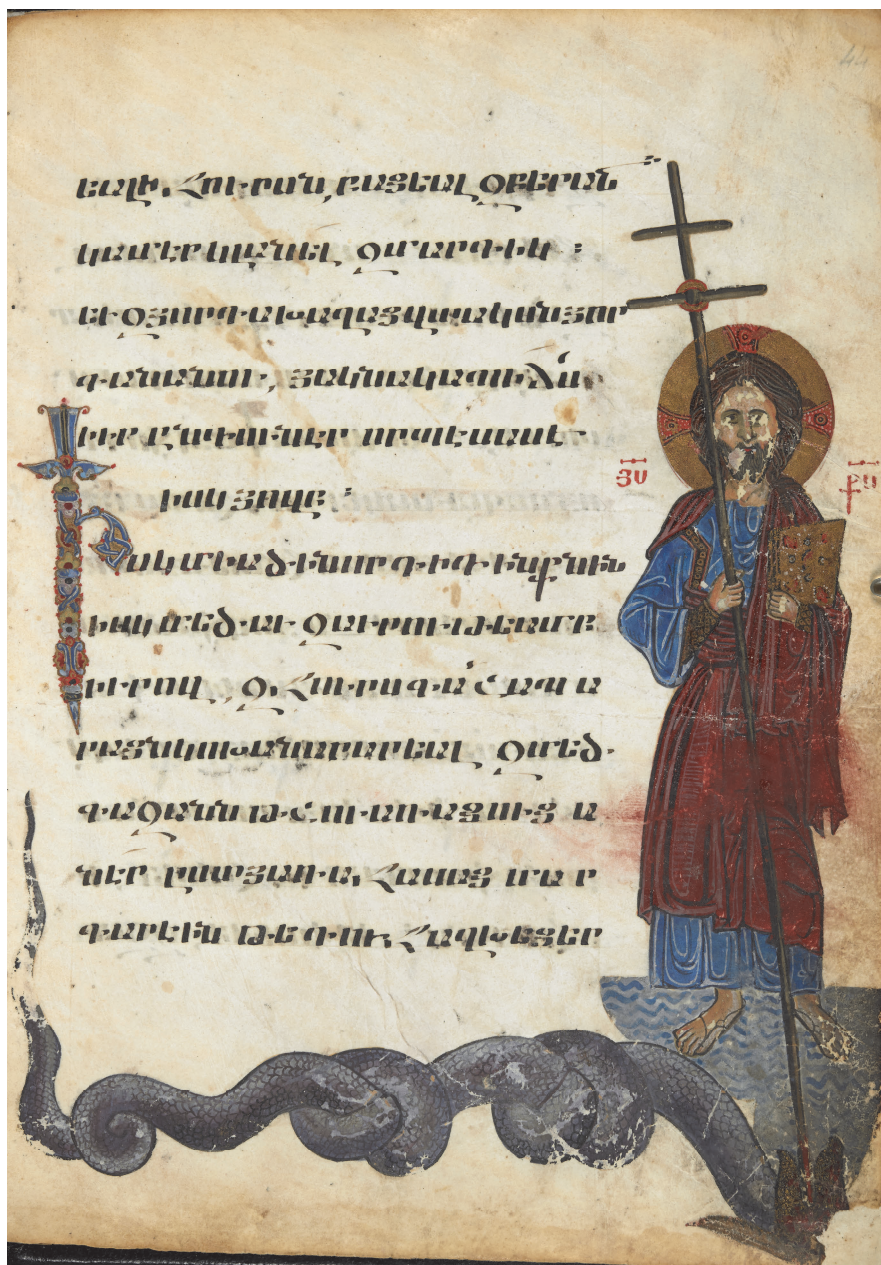


Fig. 19: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 44^r. The dragon-slayer Christ in the Jordan River, *Canon of the Blessing of Water, maštoc* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

The image of the dragon-slaying Christ is the largest and most remarkable illustration of Add. 19548.⁶⁸ Christ's static appearance, captivating gaze and careful hair-style are reminiscent of the solemnly standing Christ depicted in the southern apse mosaics of the Cathedral of San Giusto in Trieste, traditionally attributed to Byzantine artists of the late twelfth/thirteenth centuries.⁶⁹ The Trieste image shares not only stylistic but also thematic analogues with the Armenian example, for it depicts Christ trampling under his feet two malefic animals, a basilisk and a lion. Inspired by Psalm 90:13, this image of Christus Victor appears also in the Pontifical of Chartres, an early-thirteenth-century Latin manuscript, where Christ pierces a basilisk with his cross-staff and tramples over it together with a lion.⁷⁰ The theme serves here as the frontispiece to the *Canon of Mass*, disclosing the Eucharistic symbolism invested in the iconography of Christus Victor. The same symbolism, as demonstrated by Marcello Angheben, is also evoked in some twelfth/thirteenth-century Mosan altar shrines that include images of the beast-slaying Christ.⁷¹ The Cilician image of the Victorious Christ – although sharing some thematic and iconographic analogues with the Western examples mentioned above – was fashioned based on a different, non-biblical, textual source.

In our *maštoc'* manuscript, Christ's image accompanies the *Prayer for the Blessing of Water*, attributed to Saint Basil of Caesarea.⁷² The Armenian tradition, which does not question this attribution, claims that the prayer was composed by the Cappadocian father in the fifth or seventh year of his patriarchate; then Xosrov, one of the fifth-century Armenian translators of the Bible, found it in Jerusalem (a smaller group of manuscripts says 'in Caesarea') and brought it to Armenia at the command of Catholicos Sahak.⁷³ Whatever the authorship and origin of this

68 The only legend accompanying this miniature is written in red near Christ's halo: ԅԻՍՈՒՍ ՔՐԻՍՏՈՍ, i.e. JESUS CHRIST.

69 For the mosaics of this cathedral, see Gioseffi 1975, 287–300 and figs 14–15; Rizzardi 1985, 151–175 and figs 97–98; Mason 2010; James 2017, 428–429 (for dating and further bibliography). For the standards for fashioning Christ's facial appearance, see Bacci 2014.

70 Angheben 2019, 91, fig. 4. The Pontifical of Chartres is available for consultation at <https://ccfr.bnf.fr/portailccfr/jsp/index_view_direct_anonymous.jsp?record=eadcgm:EADC:D18010952> (accessed on 9 November 2022). Analogous images of Christ trampling the beasts mentioned in Psalm 90:13 appear, for example, on the southern portal of the cathedral of Chartres and on the central portal of the cathedral of Bourges.

71 Angheben 2016. See also Angheben 2019.

72 For different authorship of this prayer, see Vidalis 2001, 245–249; Denysenko 2012, 75 (also 58–59 for the complexity of the Armenian attribution to Saint Basil); Renoux 2003, 60, n. 36.

73 This information, represented above synoptically, is described in the so-called *Orhnut'aber tsutsak*, lit. *List of Blessings* (i.e. 'blessing rites'). This text, usually found at the end or beginning of *maštoc'* manuscripts, is basically a narrative list of the canons included in *maštoc'*, providing

prayer and rite, the central idea of the Armenian *Canon of the Blessing of Water*, as Nicholas Denysenko has summarised, is God's victory over humanity's enemies, 'punctuated by Jesus' baptism in the Jordan which destroys the dragon who personifies all evil spirits'.⁷⁴ It is exactly this culminating idea that is evoked in the apotropaic image of Christ in the manuscript Add. 19548. The prayer text nearby narrates how the only-begotten Son of God trampled the head of the great dragon in the Jordan River, revealing there his divine nature which, in turn, was confirmed by the descent of the dove-like Holy Spirit.⁷⁵ The dove is absent from the accompanying image of Christ, but it is depicted separately descending gracefully on the next fol. 44^v (Fig. 20). A marginal image of a descending dove is also found on fol. 37^v, at the end of the baptismal pericope Matthew 3:1–17 (Fig. 21). Here again, I shall refer to the iconographic tendencies of the *Skewra Gospel*, where fol. 223^r is occupied by a single image of a dove that flies down towards the text of Luke 3:21–22, which describes the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the newly baptised Christ.⁷⁶

The accentuation on the dove of the Holy Spirit appears to find an eloquent echo in an actual performance of the rite of the *Blessing of Water*. In his aforementioned eyewitness account, Wilbrand of Oldenburg writes that in the final part of the outdoor ceremony, when the cross was baptised in 'the simulated River Jordan', a dove was also released, a practice that is not found in the instructions of the respective canon. The German traveller concludes his report by describing how the worshippers sprinkled themselves with the blessed waters – the Syrians even 'washed themselves completely naked' – apparently in the belief that the act would regenerate them.⁷⁷

brief information about the authors who composed one or another canon or prayer. Twenty-five versions of this *List of Blessing Rites*, preceded by a critical analysis and further references, are reproduced in Tēr-Vardanean 2012, 654–708 (see esp. 670–673 and 704 for the *Canon of the Blessing of Water* ascribed to Basil of Caesarea). While the date of the *Prayer for the Blessing of Water* remains undetermined, we know that its text inspired Bishop Step'anos Siwnec'i in the eight century to compose the funeral prayer for the sealing of the grave. See Findikyan 2014, 197–212, esp. 206–212. Cf. Tēr-Pōlosean 1969, 152–155 (also 131–138 for a list of Armenian manuscripts containing the *Prayer for the Blessing of Water*).

⁷⁴ Denysenko 2012, 33.

⁷⁵ Conybeare 1905, 168–169.

⁷⁶ The folio can be consulted at <<https://polona.pl/item/ewangeliaz-ze-skewry,NTU3NzE2OQ/446/#item>> (accessed on 8 November 2022).

⁷⁷ Pringle 2012, 79.

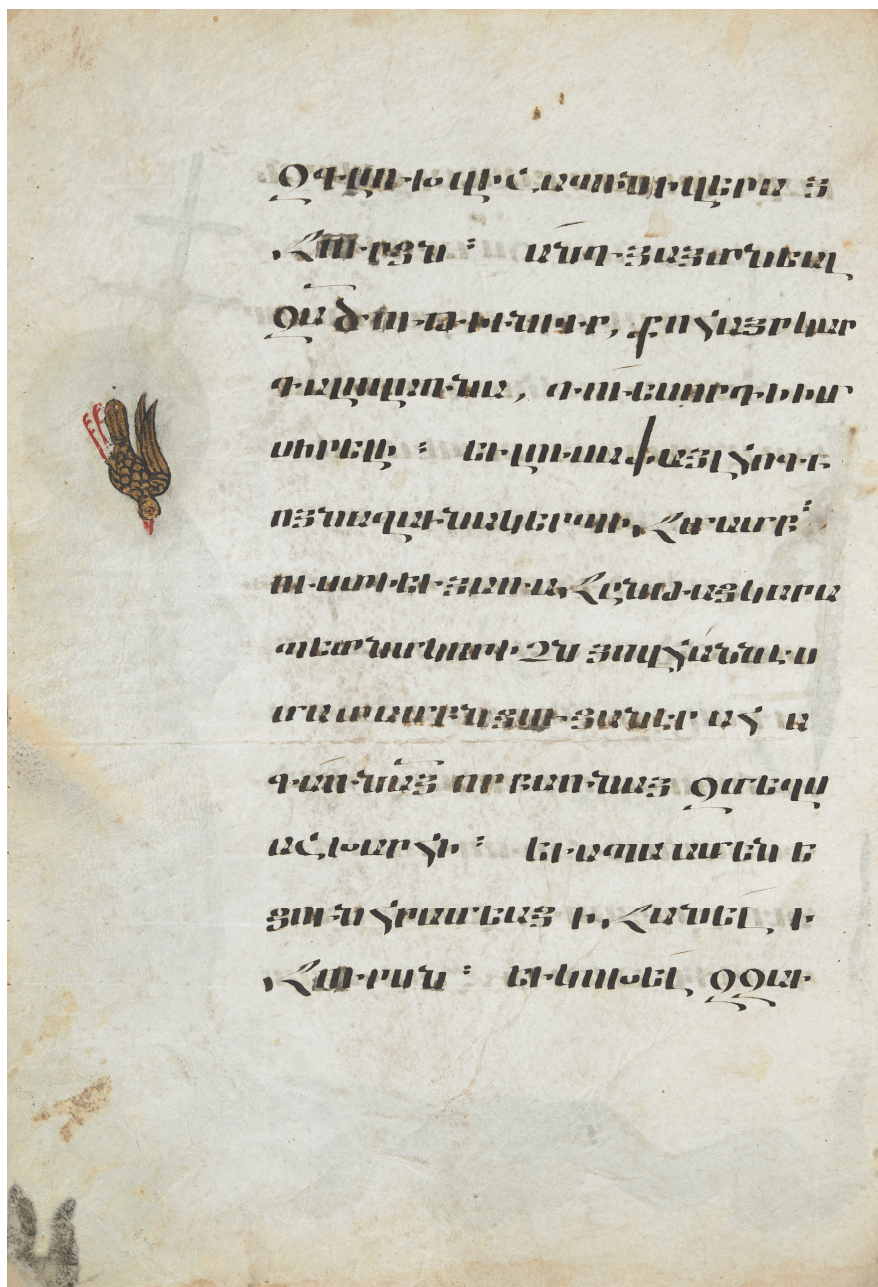


Fig. 20: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 44v. The dove-like Holy Spirit, *Canon of the Blessing of Water, maštoc'* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

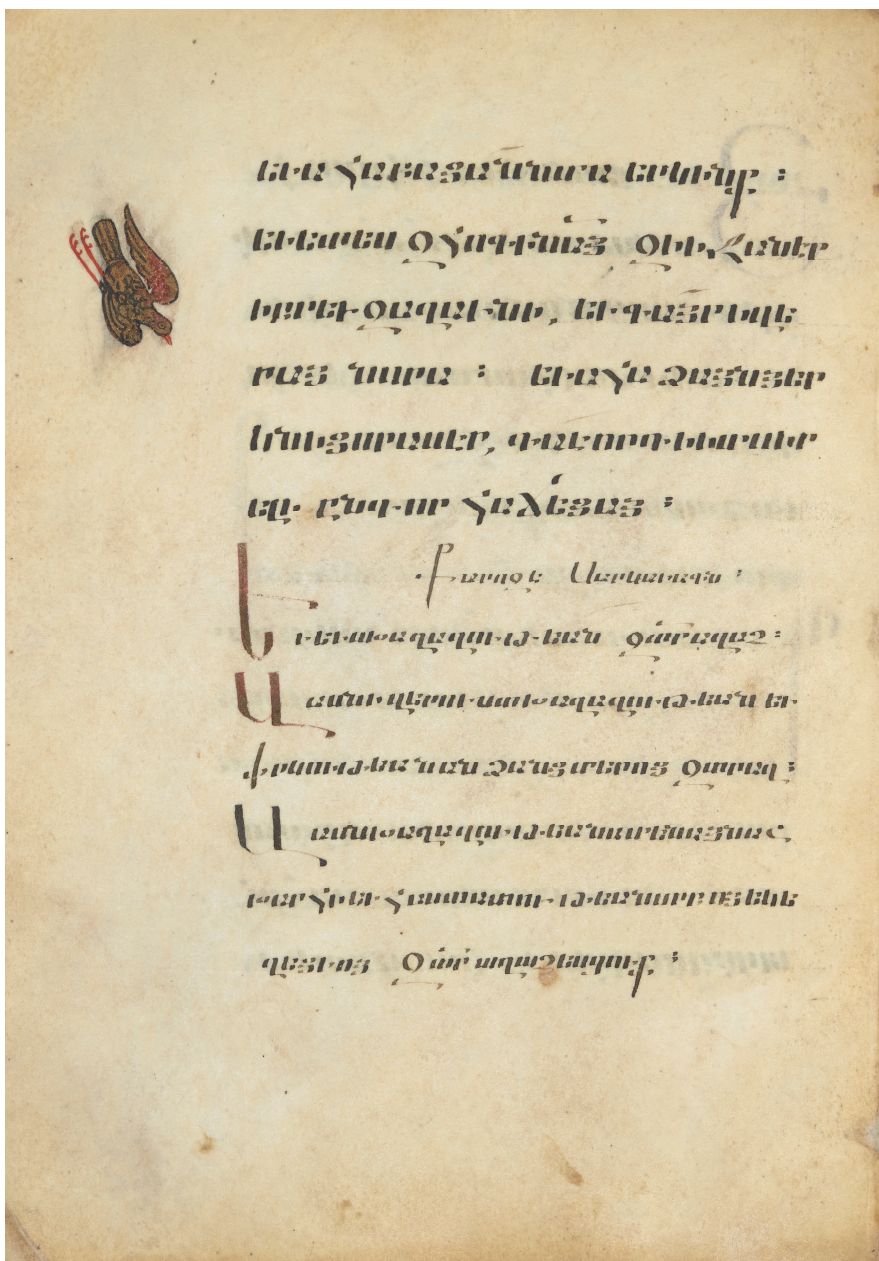


Fig. 21: London, British Library, Add. 19548, fol. 37^r; the dove-like Holy Spirit marking the end of the baptismal pericope Matthew 3:1–17, *Canon of the Blessing of Water, maštoc'* (ritual book), scribe Kostandi(n); © The British Library Board.

An element that captures the beholder's attention in the British Library manuscript is the remarkable size of the serpent and its bleeding head stabbed by Christ's cross-staff. This harkens to a miniature in a twelfth-century Armenian homiliary – Yerevan, Matenadaran, 1522, where Bishop Atanagine bruises the head of the horned dragon to save the child from its enormous mouth (Fig. 22).⁷⁸ A vast number of theological writings and popular narratives in medieval Armenia refer to a malefic monster, often a serpent-like dragon, which lives in water.⁷⁹ The theologian Eznik Kołbac'i (Eznik of Kołb), for example, wrote extensively about the aquatic dragon in a fifth-century apologetic treatise, hoping to reject the apparently widespread belief that this imaginative animal was capable of taking an anthropomorphic form and causing troubles. This belief, Kołbac'i continues, is inspired by the evil one, the dragon's lord, who wants to make humans turn away from their creator.⁸⁰ Despite Kołbac'i's rejection of the material existence of evil, the image of the aquatic monster remained strongly present in Armenian tradition, as seen, for example, in a thirteenth-century miniature of Christ's Baptism, where the trouble-maker is depicted as half-human and half-serpent (Fig. 23). It is noteworthy, in this respect, that most Armenian illustrations of the Baptism, deviating from the respective Gospel narrative, include a depiction of the soon-to-be-defeated monster at the feet of Christ who is being baptised by John the Baptist.⁸¹ In this way, the artists underscored the apotropaic power of Christ who, in Nersēs Lambronac'i's words, revealed his godly nature in the Jordan River by demonstrating 'his first victory and the innocence of our nature'. Lambronac'i also describes the evil defeated by Christ as a 'venomous old serpent', which was deceiving humans and hunting them down.⁸²

⁷⁸ Cf. Gevorkian 1996, 20.

⁷⁹ Mahé 1980; Mahé 1994.

⁸⁰ Mahé 1994, 181–182.

⁸¹ For Baptism images which include the aquatic monster, see e.g. Der Nersessian 1993, vol. 2, figs 36, 121, 199–201, 302, 324, 346 and 362–364. Some of these monsters are depicted holding a jug in order to collect the baptismal waters, on which see Nira Stone 1999, 168–169 (with an overview of the apocryphal approach to Armenian images of Baptism).

⁸² Terian (tr.) 2022, 108–109: 'He came to the Jordan to dedicate His most perfect impeccability to the Father, and was acknowledged by Him to be of equal honor, the beloved Son [Matthew 3:13–17]. Led by the Spirit, He went to confront openly the slanderous enemy [Matthew 4:1] and He recognized the treacherous darts of the venomous serpent who was deceiving (humans), so as to mislead them into the abyss of sin through the law of nature. [...] Right then the Lord, aware of the trapping pitfall, rebuked his machinations, exposed the hidden snare by which he used to hunt down people, unmasked him before His Father and the angels, and by His sovereign will chased the deceiver away [...] He trampled over the old serpent, demonstrating to His Father and to the angels His first victory and the innocence of our nature.'



Fig. 22: Yerevan, Matenadaran, 1522, fol. 56^v; homiliary, scribe Yohannēs, twelfth century; © Matenadaran.



Fig. 23: Isfahan (New Julfa), Sowrb Amenap'rkich' Vank' (Holy Saviour Monastery), 36/156, fol. 4^r; Baptism, gospel manuscript copied and illustrated by Ignatios, 1236 CE; © Photo: Hrair Hawk Khatcherian.

Beliefs about a malefic serpent in medieval Armenia could have also been nourished by the legend of ‘the huge dragon of Mount Tarsus’ (not mount Tarpeus on the Capitoline Hill, as in the Greek version). According to the Armenian version of *Vita Silvestri*, this creature was imprisoned by Pope Sylvester, who, in this way, liberated a group of frightened pagans, who were subsequently ‘baptised in Christ’.⁸³ The theme of baptism, as we see, is intermingled with the idea of salvific victory over dragon-looking evil. It was also this belief that inspired John Chrysostom to write, at the end of the fourth century, that those who are baptised in Christ are ‘able to hold the serpent in check’.⁸⁴ There was, finally, the legend of the *Cheirograph of Adam* (CAVT 37), a popular apocryphal text, which narrates how Christ destroyed Satan’s contract signed by Adam and trampled the dragons in Jordan at the time of his baptism.⁸⁵ Here again, as in our *Prayer of the Blessing of Water*, mankind’s redemption and liberation from Satan were made possible through the Baptism of Christ.

The fight against the dragon in Add. 19548 is further underscored by Christ’s attire (Fig. 19). In fact, beneath Christ’s standard clothing, we see a military outfit, by which the artist aimed to portray him as a warrior.⁸⁶ Christ’s weapon is the cross held in his right hand, while he displays the richly adorned gospel in his left hand. The latter detail is relevant to another image on the same folio: the sophisticated initial Ի (I) that is designed like a sword and most probably takes its inspiration from Hebrews 4:12 (‘For the Word of God is alive and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to dividing soul and spirit’). The implementation of sartorial rhetoric, including especially the metaphorical evocation of items of military appearance, was a common practice in medieval Armenian spirituality,⁸⁷ whence comes the local artists’ interest in giving visual forms to invisible ideas.⁸⁸

⁸³ Tēr-Movsēsean (ed.) 1896, 704–708. On the Armenian versions of *Vita Silvestri*, see Shirinian 1997; Shirinian 2006 (for the legend in non-Armenian traditions, see esp. 72). That this was a popular motif, especially in circles around King Lewon I, is attested by the citation of this episode in the *Letter of Love and Concord*, where, however, ‘Mount Tarsus’ is not mentioned. See Pogossian 2010, 366–367.

⁸⁴ Harkins (tr.) 1963, 169–170: ‘After He anoints all your limbs with this ointment, you will be secure and able to hold the serpent in check; you will suffer no harm.’ And soon after, when the catechumen is being baptised: ‘There can be no serpent here, but Christ is here initiating you into the regeneration that comes from the water and the Spirit.’

⁸⁵ Michael E. Stone 2000; Michael E. Stone 2002; Michael E. Stone and Timotin 2023.

⁸⁶ An early but suitable analogue of this can be seen in the mosaics of the Archbishop’s Chapel, Ravenna, where Christ is clothed as militant who tramples the beasts. The image can be consulted at <https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/SCALA_ARCHIVES_10310196907> (accessed on 8 November 2022).

⁸⁷ Cf. Brock 1982, which investigates the clothing metaphor in Syriac spirituality.

⁸⁸ Yovhannēs Garnec’i (c. 1180–1245), for example, in his *Daily Prayers for the Week*, employs a military image of an unprepared believer, whose spiritual dress code did not include the neces-

7 Conclusion

Relying on codicological, liturgiological and art-historical methodologies, this article has offered a close study of the British Library *maštoc* Add. 19548, which contains important evidence on the art and rite of Cilician Armenia. The comparative analysis of the style, ornamentation and iconography allowed me to contextualize this manuscript within the artistic tradition of the Skewra monastery and its associated workshops. Having noted that caution is needed, the essay argues that its scribe Kostandin could be identified with the scribe-miniaturist Kostandin Skewrac'i, who, in the 1190s, completed several manuscripts for the members of the influential Lambron family, including most notably Archbishop Nersēs Lambronac'i. This suggestion is further supported by the choice and placement of the manuscript's heretofore unknown illustrations, which resonate perfectly with the visual repertory of the Skewra masters and reflect the theological and liturgical realities in the time of Nersēs Lambronac'i.

It was further demonstrated that the image of Christ Emmanuel (Fig. 13), which marks the beginning of the gospel pericope Luke 4:14–22 in the *Canon of a Priest's Ordination*, was meant to underscore the beginning of the Christ-like priestly ministry. I suggest therefore that this image aimed to uphold the role of the office of priests, who were also the intended owners of the London *maštoc*.

A very different image of Christ is analysed in the final section. Christ is shown here slaying a huge dragon in the Jordan River, which is, so far, the only known artistic interpretation of the *Prayer of the Blessing of Water*, which it accompanies (Fig. 19). By visualising the apotropaic power of Christ, the Cilician artist emphasised the culminating idea of the respective rite – namely, Christ's salvific victory over evil, which set humans free.

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sary items of protection (among them the sword of the Word of God), for which he tasks God to take the armament and come to his help. See St Nersess Armenian Seminary (ed. and tr.) 2001, 12: 'Stir up your strength and come to revive me. The seditious ones stripped me naked and inflicted wound upon wound, for I was not wearing the armour of justice, nor had I the helmet of the hope of salvation upon my head, nor was I carrying the shield of faith, nor the sword of the Word of God. O most powerful and mighty one, take your armament and buckler and come to my help.'

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Abbreviations

CAVT = Jean-Claude Haelewyck, *Clavis Apocryphorum Veteris Testamenti* (Corpus Christianorum), Turnhout: Brepols, 1998.

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Appendix 1: The Textual Contents of British Library Add. 19548

Fols 1^r–27^r: Կանոն ձեռնադրության քահանայի: Պարտեալ լինել Լ. ամաց եւ ապա կոչիլ ի յաստիճանս (*‘Canon of the Ordination of a Priest, who must be 30 Years Old before being Ordained’*).

Fols 28^r–29^r: *Prayer for Priestly Vestments* (copied by Nersēs *abela* in 1372 on the subsequently added paper folios): Տէր Յիսուս կատարումն արինաց և մարգարէից և բաշխաւ ողորմութեան արինեա զպատմուճան և զարտախորակ սորա, որպէս արինեցեր ի ձեռն մովսէսի զպատմուճան և զարտախորակն ահարոնի, և որոց նորա և որպէս ի նախնումն յակովբ յարինէր զծաղկեա պատմուճանն յովսէփա, արինեա՝ տ(է)ր զգեստ և զպատմուճան սորա, որպէս արինեցեր զմաշկեակն եղիայի յորոյ ձեռն հանգեաւ հոգին եղիայի ի վերա եղիսէի, արինեա՝ հայր երկնատր զպատմուճան սորա, զի հանգիցէ ի վերա սորա արինութիւն

ա(ստուա)ծաստեղծ պատմունանի քո՝ անկեալ ի վերուստ, զորմէ նախագուշակեալ մարգարէին ասէր, ո՛վ է որ դիմեալ գա յեղովմայ գեղիցիկ պատմունանաւ և զաւրութեամբ, նոյն արիննութիւն հանգիցէ ի սա՝ և ի պատմունան սորա լիութե(ամ)բ շնորհաց քոց, և մեք ամենեքեան⁸⁹ աղաչեմք զանփոփոխելի տէրութիւն, ամենազար իոգոյղ իզարի: Առաքեա տէր զգաւղ քաղցրութեան քո և բարեգործեա ի յանձին և յիշխանական ազդման զգայութեան զամենայն շնորհ բազմապարզն քո ողորմութեանդ (‘Jesus Christ, fulfiller of laws and prophets [cf. Matthew 5:17] and dispenser of mercy, bless the garment and the headdress of this [priest-to-be], as you have blessed the garment and the headdress of Aaron and of his sons by the hand of Moses, and as, in the past, Jacob made Joseph’s cloak of many colours [lit. flowers]. Bless, Lord, the garment and the cloak of this [priest-to-be], as you have blessed the mantle of Elijah, by means of which “the spirit of Elijah did rest on Elisha” [4 Kings 2:15]. Bless, Heavenly Father, the garment of this [priest-to-be], for the blessing of your God-created garment that came down from above shall rest upon him, of whom, in accordance with the prophet’s prediction, it was said: “Who is this that comes from Edom with beautiful garment and strength?” [Isaiah 63:1]. May the same blessing rest upon this [priest-to-be] and upon his garment, filled with your graces. And we all⁹⁰ beg your immutable lordship, omnipotent spirit, send the dew of your delightfulness’).⁹¹

Fol. 29^v: unwritten.

Fols 30^r–51^v: Կանոն ջուր արիննելոյ յաւուր Յայտնութեան Տեառն մերոյ եւ Յիսուսի Քրիստոսի (‘*Canon of the Bless-ing of Water on the Day of the Epiphany of Our Lord and Jesus Christ*’).

Fol. 52^r: The preserved part begins with: Փարատեա ի մէնջ զամենայն սատանայական մըտածմունս (‘Dispel all satanic thoughts from us!’).⁹²

⁸⁹ See my next note.

⁹⁰ Until here the prayer corresponds to Venice, Biblioteca dei Mechitaristi di S. Lazzaro degli Armeni, 1173 (the oldest extant manuscript of the *Sis Mastoc*), where it ends with a doxology (fol. 68^v): *և ամենեքեան փառաւորենք զքեզ ընդ հա՛ւր և ս(ուր)բ հ[ոգոյ]* (‘and we all glorify You, together with the Father and Holy Spirit’). In the manuscript Add. 19548, the text continues with Grigor Narekac’i’s Prayer 34:2 from the *Book of Lamentation* (Terian (tr.) 2021, 156–157), which, as mentioned previously, is adjusted for ritual use.

⁹¹ Translation mine.

⁹² The previous and subsequent contents are not extant.

Fols 53^r–54^v: Martyrdom of the Apostle Philip.⁹³

Colophon:

Fol. 27^v: By the scribe Kostandin (see Section 4).

Later colophons:

Fol. 26^v: On the Mamluk takeover of Sis in 1375.⁹⁴

Fol. 29^r: By Nersēs *abēla*, 1372.⁹⁵

Ով ա(ստուա)ծարեալ արհիեպիսկոպոս տէր յովանէս մելիտինոյ ընկալ զսակաւ գիրս
և յիշեա զանարժան հողս զներսէս արեղայս, ի թվ(ին) ՊԻԱ. հոկտեմբեր ԺԹ. արն:

‘O, archbishop tēr Yovanēs of Melitinē, appointed by God, accept this incomplete book and remember this unworthy bit of dust, Nersēs abēla. In the year 821 [= 1372 CE], nineteenth of October.’

Appendix 2: Structure of the *Canon of a Priest’s Ordination* (London, British Library, Add. 19548)

Canon of the Ordination of a Priest, who must be 30 Years Old before being Ordained

They cause the priest-to-be to kneel and they say:

– Psalm 24(25):2: *To You, Lord, I lift up*

⁹³ Cut out from another manuscript, these paper folios have likely served as protective flyleaves for our *maštoc* codex. The extant text of the apocryphal *Martyrdom of the Apostle Philip* begins with the following words: *որն բուռն հարեալ զհերաց կնոջն, քարշէր զնա Էնթադրելով եւ ասէր*. Cf. Č’rak’ean 1904, 302. On the Armenian version of the *Martyrdom of Philip*, see Calzolari 2022, 221–239.

⁹⁴ For references to the text and translation of this colophon, see above, n. 14.

⁹⁵ Cf. Xač’ikyan 1950, 506. In Conybeare 1913, 89, followed by Grigoryan 2021, 87, the colophon is erroneously dated to 1371. In Xač’ikyan’s publication, although it is based on Conybeare’s reproduction, the date is correctly calculated as 1372. My recent verification done directly from the manuscript Add. 19548 confirms Xač’ikyan’s calculation.

- Psalm 25(26):1: *Judge me, Lord*
- Psalm 26(27):1: *Lord, my Light and my Life*
- Deacon's proclamation
- Bishop's prayer *Lord God Almighty, Creator of All Things*
- *Peace to All*
- Prayer *God, Exalted and Terrible*
- The priest-to-be turns towards the west, and the priests sing *Divine and Heavenly Grace*
- The congregation confirms the worthiness of the candidate, who turns towards the east and kneels before the holy table. The bishop lays his right hand on the head and says the prayer *The Divine and Heavenly Grace*.⁹⁶
- *Peace to All*
- Prayer *Lord God of Hosts, God Mighty and All-Powerful*
- Psalm 131(132) *ktsurd*
- Ezekiel 33:7–9
- [Amos]⁹⁷
- Malachi 2:5–7
- Jeremiah 1:1–10
- Jeremiah 33:15–18
- Isaiah 61:1–6
- 1 Peter 5:1–4
- 1 Timothy 1:12–17
- Alleluia Psalm 131(132):9: *Your Priests*
- Luke 4:14–22
- Deacon's proclamation *God, Great, Mighty and Worker of Wonders*
- Bishop's prayer *Lord God of Hosts and Creator of All Creatures*
- *Peace to All*
- Prayer *Lord, Lord and God Almighty of All Existing Things*⁹⁸
- Vesting (girdle, stole, *p'ilon*, cope)⁹⁹
- Prayer of the new priest *Christ God, Hope of Salvation*

⁹⁶ This prayer (fols 4^r–8^v) is the same as in Tēr-Vardanean 2012, 426–427 (ՃԾԷ. Աստուածային եւ երկնաւոր շնորհք), but has several variations in wording.

⁹⁷ Despite the title *A Reading from the Prophet Amos* (Ընթերցում Յամովսեայ մարգարէէ), the text reproduces Jeremiah 33:17–18 (fol. 11^r). Jeremiah 33:15–18 reappears on the folios 13^v–14^r (see above).

⁹⁸ This prayer (fols 23^r–25^v) is an extended version of the bishop's prayer reproduced in Tēr-Vardanean 2012, 428 (ՃԾԹ. Տէր Աստուած ամենակալ ամենայն լինելութեանց ...). Cf. Conybeare 1905, 241.

⁹⁹ In the manuscript, respectively: գաւտի, ուրար, փիլոն, նափորոս.

- *Peace to All*
- The new priest is conducted to ‘the office of the hour’. Eucharistic liturgy, offered by the bishop.
- The new priest shall be greeted and blessed by the bishop and other priests.
- ‘And he shall abide forty days in the church, and shall be taught the office, and shall come to know himself, in respect of the event’.¹⁰⁰

Appendix 3: *Canon of the Blessing of Water* as preserved in several manuscripts dating from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries

Ancient <i>maštoc</i> ^c manuscripts: Venice 457 (10th c.) and Matenadaran 1001 (early 11th c.) ¹⁰¹	Add. 19548, <i>maštoc</i> ¹⁰²	Venice 1159, <i>maštoc</i> ^c , late 12th / early 13th c. ¹⁰³	Jerusalem 2027, <i>maštoc</i> ^c , dated 1266 ¹⁰⁴	Matenadaran 979, <i>Lectionary of Crown Prince Het’um</i> , dated 1286 ¹⁰⁵
<i>Canon of the Blessing of Water on the Day of the Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ</i>	<i>Canon of the Blessing of Water on the Day of the Epiphany of Our Lord and Jesus Christ</i>	<i>Canon of the Blessing of Water</i>	<i>Canon of the Blessing of Water on the Day of the Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ</i>	<i>Canon of the Blessing of Water</i>
Procession to water with the cross and the gospel book				

100 Conybeare 1905, 242.

101 The structure is extracted from Tēr-Vardanean 2012, 342–360. Cf. Conybeare 1913, 165–178; Denysenko 2012, 32 (based on Conybeare’s edition).

102 Cf. Conybeare 1913, 165–178 (version L).

103 I translate here the structure reproduced in Sargisean and Sargsean 1966, 51–52. I omit the ends of readings because these are not indicated in the given publication.

104 The structure is extracted using the digitalised manuscript (fols 132^r–155^v) available at <<https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00271074086-jo/?st=gallery>> (accessed on 15 November 2022).

105 The structure is extracted from Alek’sanean and Lazarean (eds) 2019, 33–40. It is to be noted that the earliest Cilician lectionary dating from 1154 does not include the *Blessing of Water* in the eight-day celebrations of the Epiphany. See Renoux 2004, 86–89.

Ancient <i>maštoc</i> ^c manuscripts: Venice 457 (10th c.) and Matenadaran 1001 (early 11th c.)	Add. 19548, <i>maštoc</i> ^c	Venice 1159, <i>maštoc</i> ^c , late 12th / early 13th c.	Jerusalem 2027, <i>maštoc</i> ^c , dated 1266	Matenadaran 979, <i>Lectionary of Crown Prince Het'um</i> , dated 1286
Psalm 28(29):3 <i>ksurd</i> : 'The voice of the Lord is upon the waters'	Psalm 28(29):3 <i>ksurd</i> : 'The voice of the Lord is upon the waters'	Psalm 28(29):3 <i>ksurd</i> : 'The voice of the Lord is upon the waters'	Psalm 28(29):3 <i>ksurd</i> : 'The voice of the Lord is upon the waters'	Psalm 28(29):3 <i>ksurd</i> : 'The voice of the Lord is upon the waters'
–	–	–	–	P'ox Psalm 28(29):1: 'Give to the Lord'
IV(II) Kings 2:19–22 –	IV(II) Kings 2:19–22 –	IV(II) Kings 2:19–	IV(II) Kings 2:19–22 Exodus 15:22–27 Joshua 3:14–4:1, 16–18	Exodus 15:22–27 Joshua 3:14–4:1, 16–18 IV(II) Kings 2:19–22
Isaiah 12:3–6 Ezekiel 47:1–12 – –	Isaiah 12:3–6 Ezekiel 47:1–12 – –	Isaiah 12:3– Ezekiel 47:1– Exodus 15:22– Joshua 3:14–	Isaiah 12:3–6 Ezekiel 47:1–12	Isaiah 12:3–6 Ezekiel 47:1–12
I Corinthians 10:1–7	I Corinthians 10:1–4	I Corinthians 10:1–	I Corinthians 10:1–4	I Corinthians 10:1–4
Alleluia, Psalm 92(93):1: 'The Lord reigns'	Alleluia <i>aruesti</i> , Psalm 95:11: 'Let the heavens rejoice'	Alleluia <i>aruesti</i> , Psalm 95:11: 'Let the heavens rejoice'	Alleluia <i>aruesti</i> , Psalm 95:11: 'Let the heavens rejoice'	Alleluia <i>aruesti</i> , Psalm 5:12(11): 'Let them be glad'
Matthew 3:1–17 Deacon's proclamation	Matthew 3:1–17 Deacon's proclamation * The same litanies as in the ancient version but adds 'For the descent of the Holy Spirit into these waters and rebirth of those who are baptised children of light and of truth'	Matthew 3:1– Deacon's proclamation	Matthew 3:1–17 Proclamation * The same litanies as in the ancient version but adds 'For the descent of the Holy Spirit into these waters and rebirth of those who are baptised children of light and of truth, let us pray unto the Lord'	Matthew 3:1–17 Proclamation * The same litanies as in the ancient version but adds 'For the descent of the Holy Spirit into these waters and rebirth of those who are baptised children of light and of truth, let us pray unto the Lord'

Ancient <i>maštoc</i>^c manuscripts: Venice 457 (10th c.) and Matenadaran 1001 (early 11th c.)	Add. 19548, <i>maštoc</i>^c	Venice 1159, <i>maštoc</i>^c, late 12th / early 13th c.	Jerusalem 2027, <i>maštoc</i>^c, dated 1266	Matenadaran 979, <i>Lectionary of Crown Prince Het'um</i>, dated 1286
Prayer <i>Blessing of Water</i> , attributed to St Basil of Caesarea	Prayer <i>Blessing of Water</i> , attributed to St Basil of Caesarea ¹⁰⁶	Prayer <i>Blessing of Water</i> , attributed to St Basil of Caesarea	Prayer <i>Blessing of Water</i> , attributed to St Basil of Caesarea	Prayer <i>Blessing of Water</i> , attributed to St Basil of Caesarea
<i>Peace to All</i>			<i>Peace to All</i>	<i>Peace to All</i>
Prayer <i>Living God</i>	Prayer <i>Living God</i> ¹⁰⁷		Prayer <i>Living God</i>	Prayer <i>Living God</i>
The sign of the Lord is made with the cross and the myrrh, saying, 'Let this water be blessed [...]'. Dismissal –	One of the priests or the bishop makes the sign of the Lord's cross on the water. And the bishop pours out the holy myrrh, saying, 'Let this water be blessed [...]'. (Canticle) <i>Sun, the Ally in Warfare of Angels</i> ¹⁰⁸	The bishop makes the sign of the Lord with the cross, saying: 'Let this water be blessed [...]'. Then he pours out the holy myrrh, saying, 'Let this water be blessed [...]'. Dismissal –	The sign of the Lord is made with the cross and the myrrh, saying, 'Let this water be blessed [...]'. Dismissal –	One of the priests makes the sign of the Lord with the cross on the water. And the bishop pours out the holy myrrh into the water, saying, 'Let this water be blessed [...]'. <i>Sun, the Ally in Warfare of Angels</i> ¹⁰⁹
–	Grigor Narekac'i's <i>Ode for the Blessing of Water (Good news!)</i> ¹¹⁰		–	Grigor Narekac'i's <i>Ode for the Blessing of Water (Good news!)</i>

106 Several pages are missing between the present-day fols 50^v–51^r, because of which the prayer attributed to St Basil is discontinued after fol. 50^v (Այսպիսի ի հին տրամ[ուրեանց]; cf. Tēr-Vardanean 2012, 355). On fol. 51^v, we read the last part of the prayer *Living God* (the preserved part starts from զաք, զքիծ եւ զախս; cf. Tēr-Vardanean 2012, 359–360).

107 See the previous note.

108 I could not identify this in the sources available to me. The English translation follows Conybeare 1905, 178 (version L). In manuscript: Եւ սկսանին Արեգակն. Հրեշտակաց զինուորու. կցուրդ.

109 In manuscript: Եւ սկսանին՝ Արեգակն. և ասեն՝ Հրեշտակաց զինու. See Alek'sanean and Łazarean (eds) 2019, 40. See also my previous note.

110 Cf. Terian (tr.) 2016, 4–7, also 3–4 for Terian's comments on the authorship and use of this ode.

