To M. A. Callender, Esq.,
With best wishes
From the author
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MOVSES ERZINGAC'I'S « ADVICE ON CONFESSION »

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A fruitful branch of Armenian ecclesiastical literature is formed by the so-called *Xratk'* or treatises written by theologians on various matters concerning the faith for the advice of their fellow priests. The longest and most detailed work in this field is the *Xratk' kanonakank'* or « Canonical Advice » of Dawit' of Ganjak, a penitential composed at the beginning of the twelfth century [1], and this and other *Xratk'* attributed to such authors as Mxit'ar Goš, Vardan Vardapet, Yovhannēs Gařnec'i, Ařak'el Sinwec'i, and three priests of Erzinga — Kirakos, Yovhannēs, and Movsēs — are listed by V. Hatzuni in his survey of Armenian canon law [2]. Dawit' of Ganjak's works, which is devoted to matters arising out of confession, is shortly to be republished in the CSCO and it is principally in this connection that the comparatively minor *Xrat vasn xostovanut'ean* or « Advice on confession », attributed in Vienna (Mekhitarist) MS no. 324, dated 754 A = A.D. 1305, to « Movsēs vardapet », is presented here [3].

The best known vardapet of this name in the 13th and 14th centuries was the Movsēs of Erzinga mentioned by Hatzuni, and it is almost certain that he is the one referred to in the title of the present text. He was a pupil of Gēorg of Skewra (d. 1301) and he migrated from Cilicia to the monastery of the Holy Illuminator on Mount Sepuh in the canton of Daranałik' in Barjr

[1] The Armenian text was published by Professor A. Abrahamean in *Ējmiacin*, 1952-1953. An edition and translation of this work are shortly to be published in the CSCO.

[2] *Codificazione canonica orientale — Fonti*, fasc. VIII, Vatican, 1932, p. 167.

[3] J. Dashian (Daševan), *Catalog der armenischen Handschriften in der Mechitaristen-Bibliothek zu Wien*, no. 324, fol. 160 a-b, p. 770. The MS is a *Hawak'acoy* or « Collection » (of theological texts); the *Xrat* is in the oldest part of the MS, shortly before the colophon by Tirac'u of Xorin anapat, fol. 162 a-b. My thanks are due to Mr. R. W. Thomson of Trinity College, Cambridge, for placing at my disposal a photostat copy of the text from the library of the late R. P. Casey of Sidney Sussex College, and to the Mekhitarist Congregation of Vienna for permission to publish it.

Hayk' near Erzinga according to a notice written in 1314 by his own pupil Grigor or Grigoris of Xarberd : « When the vardapet Movsēs came from Cilicia with many books, he encouraged us and took us with him, and we dwelt in the canton of Daranałik' on the mountain of our great and holy Illuminator, six years » [4]. It is not too clear what Grigor means by the « six years ». Tēr-Movsesean [5] thought that it meant either that Grigor himself stayed there for six years or that the newly-founded fraternity subsisted for only six years. It could also mean that in 1314 the group had been in the monastery for that length of time, which would date Movsēs arrival at 1308. Tēr-Movsesean deduced from a notice by Movsēs in a bible copied by him that he was already in Daranałik' in 1292, but the date is conjectural and the notice says only that he *dedicated* the manuscript to the tomb of the Holy Illuminator [7]. Moreover, another colophon says explicitly that the manuscript was finished in Cilicia, and though in other particulars this colophon seems inaccurate, Tēr-Movesean was not justified in deducing « on the basis of this notice ... that the manuscript was begun in Cilicia and that the work was completed in the monastery of the Illuminator » [8]. The only positive date we possess concerning Movsēs is that of his death, put by Samuēl of Ani at 1327 [9]; he was therefore probably born ca. 1260-70.

4 Ł. ALIŠAN, *Sisuan*, p. 106, n. 2; it is one of the trials of Armenian studies that Ališan never thought it necessary to give exact references. This notice is reproduced, with Russian translation, by TĒR-MOVSESEAN, *Istoriya perevoda Biblii na armyanskii yazyk*, S. Peterburg, 1902, p. 115, and is included in L. S. XAČ'IKEAN, *Žd. dari hayeren jeṙagreri hišatakaranner (Pamyatnye zapisi armyanskikh rukopisei XIV veka)*, Erevan, 1950, p. 103. On Daranałik' and Mount Sepuh etc., see H. HÜBSCHMANN, *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen, Indogermanische Forschungen* XVI (1904), p. 284.

5 *Ibid.*, n. 3.

6 *Loc. cit.*, p. 113. The MS bears the date 600 Arm = A.D. 1151, which is impossible. The date 1292 is a conjecture of Tēr-Movsesean, p. 116.

7 TĒR-MOVSESEAN, p. 109. Another notice from the same manuscript quoted ibid., pp. 109-110, reads *greank'd vasn dasi en drel i duṙn surb Lusaworč'id* « those books of yours are placed for teaching purposes in your monastery of the Holy Illuminator », but another, p. 110, refers to *surb Lusaworič's* « this (monastery of) the Holy Illuminator ». See below, n. 13.

8 *Loc. cit.*, p. 113.

9 Translated by M. BROSSET, *Collection d'historiens arméniens*, S.-Pétersbourg, 1876, t. 2, p. 480.

Thanks to his weakness for lengthy asides and a constant readiness to air his views — Armenian scribes are in general a lively race — we can form a better idea of Movsēs' personality than of that of many more famous writers. He was an accomplished scribe and teacher of scribes, but, as Tēr-Movsesean pointed out [10], he was something more than that. Apart from the verses in the Ējmiacin manuscript mentioned by this scholar, he composed on the occasion of the death of his master Gēorg of Skewra a long lament in rhymed couplets of some merit [11], and the British Museum MS no. Add. 27,300 contains an acrostic in his name [12], although this is indifferent in matter and devoid of any personal detail. Through him the monastery of the Holy Illuminator acquired a good library of manuscripts, and towards these his attitude was an enlightened one : « Whoever withholds these books ... from the teacher and vardapet », he says, « to him shall God's gates be shut; for those books are placed in your monastery of the Holy Illuminator for teaching purposes and entry into life eternal shall be barred to him who shuts them up » [13]. He did not intend the manuscripts to be restricted for the use of the members of the monastery alone : « May he who jealously withholds these bibles and other doctrinal works to be found in the monastery of the Holy Illuminator from the schools in the surrounding monasteries fall under a curse, like the servant who buried his lord's silver and like those (lawyers) who do not enter themselves and will not allow others to enter ... The weapon belongs to the warrior ... » [14]. Cilicia's contact with the West had done much to broaden the horizons of the Armenian writers and Movsēs had respect for secular learning and the will to instil it into the more conservative East [15]. There is evidence

10 P. 108.

11 Quoted in full in ALIŠAN, *loc. cit.*, p. 104, n. 1.

12 Fol. 179 b; see F. C. CONYBEARE, *A catalogue of the Armenian manuscripts in the British Museum*, London, 1913, p. 68.

13 TĒR-MOVSESEAN, pp. 109-110; see above, n. 7.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 110. Refs. to Matthew 25.25 and Luke 11.52.

15 The *pax mongolica* imposed on the East had favoured cultural exchanges between the two Armenias. The Eastern historian and theologian Vardan Vardapet was able to travel to Jerusalem ca. 1240, on his return to stay in Cilicia, and in 1246 to visit a large number of dioceses and monasteries in the Eastern regions on behalf of the Catholicos at Hłomklay (see Kirakos of Ganjak, *Concise history*, ch. XLI). Some time before 1267 Vardan was

that he knew Greek [16], an achievement which would have earned him scant applause in the Eastern regions, at least among those princes and churchmen who wrote to the catholicos Grigor Anawarzec'i (1293-1307) in the lifetime of Movsēs that « we would rather descend into Hell with our forefathers than ascend into Heaven with the Greeks » [17]. No branch of learning should be neglected : « the study of the holy scriptures is necessary, and deep knowledge of them, but an acquaintance with secular discourse and words and expressions is also essential, and one must acquire a discerning mind in order to determine which words (or matters) are corrupt » [18]. The Polonius of Armenian vardapets, he stressed the importance of the conditions under which one studies : « soundness of body and health of mind are very necessary; and also a quiet time and a place free from distraction, with all one's books in one place that one may be continuously engrossed in them and become truly erudite » [19]. And his warning to scholars on the dangers that lie in wait for them is rather terrifying : « The laws and commandments of God teach us to take measure of ourselves and not to overreach ourselves, for the penalty for hybris is demonstrably more severe than the punishment of sins, especially since unthinking bravado and meddling in matters beyond one's capabilities are censured by everyone. Not only this, all such undertakings are futile and infantile and criticized by all for their clumsiness and indecisiveness; and within oneself one is stricken by one's conscience, ever doubtful about undertaking a task, realizing the reproof of one's own mind to be an irreprochable accuser ... » [20].

Movsēs was a great giver of advice, but for all his learning and intelligent outlook, his original works are very few. One is even justified in asking whether the short text « Advice on confession »

himself visited by Gēorg of Skewra, a native of Lambron, who studied with him and in other Eastern monasteries before returning to teach in Cilicia (ALIŠAN, *Sisuan*, p. 102); his pupil Movsēs of Erzinga, as we have seen, left Cilicia to teach in Greater Armenia.

16 TĒR-MOVSESEAN, p. 108.

17 Step'annos Ōrbēlean, tr. BROSSET, *Histoire de la Siounie*, t. II, p. 207.

18 Introduction to his revision of the *Girk' or koč'i Meknut'iwn Ałōt'ic'* of Xosrov, bishop of the Anjewac'ik', [Constantinople, 1730], pp. 2-3; this passage is quoted by ALIŠAN, *Sisuan*, p. 106, n. 2.

19 *Loc. cit.*, p. 3.

20 *Loc. cit.*, p. 2.

bearing his name is in fact his work, for he has himself supplied reasons to doubt this in a passage written by him concerning the works of his teacher Gēorg of Skewra : « he composed also words of advice concerning confession as an aide to ignorant priests » [21]. Since this clearly describes the work presented below, one is tempted, despite the fact that the manuscript from which it is taken was written in his lifetime, in 1305, to assume a confusion of identity on the part of the scribe and to attribute the work to Gēorg of Skewra. On the other hand, it may be a revision by Movsēs of the earlier treatise by Gēorg, a similar example then being Movsēs' revision of the « Commentary on the Breviary » by Xosrov, bishop of the Anjrewacik', enlarged by Movsēs from the work of other vardapets on the grounds that Xosrov's work was inadequate [22]. Also important for the question of authorship is the reference in the rather abrupt conclusion to the *Xrat* to the burning of the monastery of Drazark by the « lawless ones », a common term for the Mameluks [23]. The only manuscript at my disposal being that of Vienna, it is not possible to state for sure that the phrase belongs to the author rather than the scribe. If the latter, one may note that the colophon on fol. 126 a-b likewise refers to a time of troubles : « Now the desired end of this book was reached in the province of Cilicia in the famous hermitage called Xorin [24], under the protection of the Holy Mother of God and Gregory our Illuminator, in the Armenian year 750 and four (A.D. 1305) [25], during the patriarchate of the Lord Grigor and the reign of Het'um [26], in a bitter and evil time, oppressed (as we are) by the nation of Ismael, for in this year on account of our wicked deeds the Egyptian army entered the land of Cilicia and inflicted merciless punishment upon many places, taking away

21 ALIŠAN, p. 103 : *gcēr ... ew bans xratakans vasn xostovanut'ean aṙ i yōgut tgitac' k'ahanayic' ...*

22 Introduction to *Girk' or koč'i Meknut'iwn Alōt'iç*, p. 3 : *oč bawakan hamarelov zarareln ...*

23 Below, pp. 146 and 149.

24 See ALIŠAN, *Sisuan*, pp. 151-2.

25 DAŠEAN, p. 771, says: « The date ՌՉԾ and ՌԾ is sure, but the Չ is hardly visible and the Ծ a little indistinct ... ». Not having a photograph of this part of the MS, I have had to assume Dašeans reading to be correct.

26 Het'um II had abdicated in 1301 in favour of his nephew Leo IV but continued to advise him until their execution in 1307; see GROUSSET, *L'Empire du Levant*, Paris, 1949, pp. 400-401.

the young men and children as prisoners; we the survivors remain in danger, terrified by day and night ... » Dašean [27] corroborates the scribe, saying (I do not know his source) that the year 1305 did in fact witness a Mamluk attack in which a troupe of 8,000 raided Armenia, but I have been unable to find any mention of the monastery of Drazark being burned down in that year. The passage is, I think, more likely to be by the author of the *Xrat*. The most obvious date for this conflagration is 1266, when Sis itself was taken and burned by the Mamluks [28]. Drazark was only one day's journey to the west of Sis and was the residence of its archbishop [29]; the scribe Step'annos writing in 1328 at Drazark closely associates it with Sis [30]. In describing the capture of Sis in 1266 Grigor of Akner mentions that the Mamluks « took many captives from the lands and villages ..., leaving the land of Armenia half ruined » [31]; Step'annos Episkopos says they « laid waste Sis and other regions *(zayl ašxarh)* » [32]. Another possible date is 1275 or 1277 when Sis is said to have been burned again [33]. If the passage in the *Xrat* refers to either of these episodes, it cannot have been written by Movsēs, who was then too young; but Georg of Skewra who died in 1301 [34] and was born ca. 1230-40 could have written it. In the absence of any definite information on the burning of Drazark, however, one has insufficient evidence upon which to deprive Movsēs of the credit for the « Advice on confession », and the fact that it was copied during his lifetime must count for something. The abrupt conclusion may be yet another expression of his individuality, examples of which we have seen above, and the general outlook of the author is quite consistent with what we know of Movsēs' mind.

27 *Loc. cit.*, p. 771.

28 See GROUSSET, *loc. cit.*, p. 399.

29 ALIŠAN, *Sisuan*, p. 230.

30 L. A. XAČ'IKEAN, *Žd dari hayeren jeŕagreri hišatakaranner*, Erevan, 1950, p. 212 : *i Drazarg anapatn, or i Sis.*

31 *History of the Nation of the Archers* ..., ed. R. P. BLAKE and R. N. FRYE, Cambridge/Mass., 1954, pp. 358-9 (90-91).

32 V. A. YAKOBEAN, *Manr žamanakagrut'yunner xiii-xviii dd.*, t. I, p. 43.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 61, n. 83 and refs.

34 750 Arm. according to Samuēl Aneci, on the 11th January according to Movsēs of Erzinga, quoted by ALIŠAN, *Sisuan*, p. 103, that is, 11th January 1301 (not 1300 as Ališan).

The *Advice on Confession* is a document to be read against the general background of Roman Catholic-Armenian Orthodox relations in Cilicia, and it is a pity that one can fix no date more precise than the *terminus ante quem* of 1305 provided by the date of the manuscript. If it had been written in 1266 it would have been at a time when the formerly warm feelings of Constantine II of Barjrberd (1221-1267) towards Rome had considerably cooled [35]. This coolness continued in greater or less degree until Grigor VII Anawarzec'i (1293-1307) during whose term of office the *Xrat* was copied and who, in Grousset's words [36], « adopta, en matière disciplinaire, une attitude assez nettement latine ». But, of course, there is no reason why the work of an individual vardapet should reflect the policy of his catholicos at a time when any policy was certain to evoke opposition from one section or another of the clergy. The attitude of the Cilician author towards matters of confession was largely in accord with that of Rome and much more evolved than that of the very conservative Dawit' of Ganjak. The latter still upheld a modified system of public penance and aimed at fixing a definite period of penance for each particular sin, a period varied in accordance with the sinner's age, estate and intentions, but still expressed in a fixed number of days or years. The Albanian penitential was written about two hundred years before the present « Advice », but the fact that it continued to be copied for many centuries indicates that confessors still used it; one year after the scribe Tirac'u had copied the present *Xrat,* in fact, in 1306, another scribe was copying Dawit''s work in what is now Jerusalem (St. James') MS no. 2481. The Western Church had progressed to a system of private penance. The catholicos of Armenia Yovhannēs VI Sseci, who in 1205 had received the pallium from Innocent III [37], had been informed of the decision to hold the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 [38], and the canons on penance promulgated by this council, by which the system of private penance was officially recognized [39], find an echo in Movsēs' insistence on

35 See R. GROUSSET, *L'Empire du Levant*, Paris, 1949. p. 412 and refs.

36 *Ibid.*

37 GROUSSET, p. 411 and refs.

38 HEFELE, *Histoire des conciles*, t. 5 pt. II, p. 1318.

39 See *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. CROSS, s. v. *Penance*, and refs.

the attention to be paid to the character and background of the confessant in determining his penance : *sacerdos autem sit discretus et cautus, ut more periti medici superinfundant vinum et oleum vulneribus sauciati; diligenter inquirens et peccatoris circumstantias et peccati, per quas prudenter intelligat, quale illi consilium debeat exhibere, et cuiusmodi remedium adhibere, diversis experimentis utendo ad sanandum aegrotum*[40]. In harmony with this is Movsēs' psychologically sound recommendation to avoid the mention of sins of which the confessant knows nothing but which he might be quick to learn, while the remark that a sinful but knowledgeable priest is in matters of confession preferable to a good but ignorant one appears to be an original, and realistic, idea on the part of the Armenian vardapet.

Մովսէս վ[ա]րդ[ապետ]ի վ[ա]ս[ն] խոստով[ան]ութե[ան]

Արդ վ[ա]ս[ն] խոստովանութե[ան] առաւել պարտ է զգուշանալ ք[ա]հ[ան]ա[յ]ից և ժողովրդոց և բազում հոգ յանձին առնել զի մի տգիտութ[եամ]բ կորիցեն երկոքին կողմանքն. զի յայլ ա[մենայն] քահանայութի[ւն]ան զս[ուր]բ և զերկեղած ք[ա]հ[անայ] պարտ է ընդրել թէև տգէտ իցէ, իսկ ի խոստովանութի[ւն]ն լաւ է մեղաւոր գիտուն քան ս[ուր]բ և տգէտ, զի բազում ինչ գայթագղեցուցանէ տգէտ ք[ա]հ[ան]այն զխոստովանողն ի ժամ խոստովանութե[ան]ն: Է զոր ճչդիւ խեղդէ, և է զոր թուլութ[եամբ] կորուսանէ, նաև յանպատչաճ հարց[ո]ւածն մեղք ուսուցանէ, և ի լռելն և յանփոյթ առնելն կորուսանէ. երբեմն յուսահատութ[եամ]բ ընկղմէ և այլ երբեմն անյարմարութ[եամ]բն համարձակութի[ւն] տա[յ] ի մեղս, և թեթեւացուցանէ առ զղջացեալ զմեղացն ծանրութի[ւն]ն: Եւ այսպիսիք

40 HEFELE, *op. cit.*, p. 1350, cap. 21. The reference to medical doctors in both documents has no significance, this being one of the commonplaces of writings on confession.

յոլովք լինին անընդրուժիւնք ի տգէտ բժշկաց, յորոց ձեռն փոխանակ բժշկելո[յ] խոցեալք և վիրեալք լինին բազում անգամ որք զան առ այնպիսիսն ի խոստովանութի[ւն]. վ[ա]ս[ն] որո[յ] առաւել զգուշանալ պարտ է զի մի զանձն և զընդերին կորուսանէ և յԱ[ստուծո]յ դատապարտի, զի որպէս ի սրոյ պարտ է փախչել ի խոստովանեցնելո[յ] տգէտ ք[ա]հ[անայ]ին: Եւ ոչ փառասիրութ[եամ]բ և ագահութ[եամ]բ ի վերա[յ] վազել և յօժարել ի խոստովանեցնելն: Եւ գիտել պարտ է զի խոստովանադրամ առնուլն մեծ և ծանդր մեղք է զոր ոչ կարեմ զանուն ասել զի մի տրամեցուցից զձեզ. այլ զգուշասցիք զի մի առնուցուք: Զի բազումք վ[ա]ս՚ն] ամօթո[յ]դ արտակա[ն] ձեռն[ա]ութե[ան]ն, զրկին ի խոստովանութենէ, վ[ա]ս[ն] որո[յ] բազում անգամ ասել պարտ է ք[ա]հ[անայ]ից՝ թէ բնաւ չկա[յ] խոստովանադրամ, եկայք յա[մենայն] ժամ ի խոստովանութի[ւն], և առաւել յաւուր կիրակէի: Զի կիր[ակէ] ի բանն վ[ա]ս[ն] այն է խափնած զի քրիստոնէն զա[մենայն] բան ի բաց դնէ յաւուր կիր[ակէ]ին, և արք և կանայք հանդերձ զաւակօք սիրով և յօժարութ[եամ]բ դիմեն յեկեղեցին յաղօթք և ի խոստովանութի[ւն] և յունկնդրութի[ւն] գրոց սրբոց և ի հաղորդութի[ւն] մարմնո[յ] և արեան Ա[ստուծո]յ մերո[յ]: Եւ ասել պարտ է ք[ա]հ[անայ]ից յա[մենայն] ժամ և ոչ ճանճրանալ, զի հովիւ է ք[ա]հ[անա]յն հօտին Ք[րիստոս]ի. զի թէ անփոյթ առնէ և ոչ խրատէ զարիւն ժողովրդեանն ի ք[ա]հ[անայ]է խնդրէ Ա[ստուա]ծ և զք[ա]հ[անայ] ընդ անհաւատսն դասէ վ[ա]ս[ն] անփոյթ առնելոյն, իսկ որք բարիոք հովվեն մեծ վարձս պարգևէ Ա[ստուա]ծ այնպիսեացն: Եւ յորժամ գա[յ] ոք ի խոստովանութի[ւն] պարտ է հա[յ]ել ք[ա]հ[անայ]ին ի մարդոյն գղջումն, յահն և յամօթն և ի դիմացն և ի բանիցն ճանաչել զերկեղն և յայն որ վերա[յ] զապաշխարութի[ւն]ն սահմանել: Այլ և պարտ է հա[յ]ել թէ ծեր է,

տղա[յ] է, երիտասարդ է, վայրաբնակ է, չինական է, քաղաքացի է, ռամիկ է, լիբր է թէ երկեղած, ծանօթ է պատ[ո]ւիրանաց Տ[եառ]ն թէ տգէտ օրինացն Ա[ստուծո]յ, պարզամիտ է թէ խորամանդ արհամարհանօք է յօրէնս Տ[եառ]ն, թէ տգիտութ[եամ]բ ի նոյնն բերի. զի յիւր բնութե[ան]ն և գնացիցն ի վերա[յ] պարտ է զինքն սահմանել որ կարէ տանել: Զի զոմանց պարտ է ձրի զմեղքն թողուլ, և ոմանց ընդ փոքր մեղացն ծանր ապաշխարութի[ւն] դնել, և կիսոց ընդ մեծ մեղաց թեթև, որպէս ճանաչէ զմարդոյն կերպն և գնացքն: Եւ յեղանակ խոստովանութե[ան]ն այսպէս լիցի. յորժամ եկեսցէ ոք առաջի ք[ա]հ[անայ]ին նախ .պ.ծուներ դնէ առաջի Ա[ստուծո]յ և ասէ՝ գոհանամ զքէն, Տ[է]ր Ա[ստուա]ծ իմ, որ արժանի արարեր զիս գալ ի խոստովանութի[ւն]. և արդ, Տ[է]ր, տուր ինձ ըստ քո հաճո[յ]իցդ խոստովանել զմեղս իմ առանց ամօթոյ, և հալածեա յինէն զսատանա[յ] զի մի մոռացօնս արասցէ մեղաց իմոց և զբաղուսին և ցնոր և չարամօթ արկցէ ի միտս իմ և չտա[յ] ճշմարտութ[եամ]բ խոստովանել. այլ հերքեա յինէն զչարին խորհրդակցութի[ւն] զի յուսով և երկեղիւ բացից զբերան իմ և ասացից զմեղս իմ առաջի քո մեծաւ հաւատով և ընդալայց ի քէն տիրապէս զթողութի[ւն] զչնորհս և զողորմութի[ւն] առատապէս: Եւ ապա հրաման տա[յ] ք[ա]հ[ան]այն նստել, թէ այր է զգլուխն բանալ և զծունկն ի դեհին դնել, և ասել՝ հաւատամ ի Հայր և յՈրդի և ի Հոգին Ս[ուր]բ: Եւ ապա ասէ՝ մեղա[յ] Ս[ուր]բ Երրորդութե[ան]ն, Հաւր և Որդւոյ և Ս[ուր]բ Հոգւոյն. մեղա[յ] Ս[ուր]բ Ա[ստուա]ծածնին և ս[ուր]բ առաքելոցն և ա[մենայն] արբոց. մեղա[յ] հրեշտակապետաց և հրեշտակաց և ա[մենայն] երկնա[յ]ին զօրացն. մեղա[յ] այն հրեշտակին որ կու պահէ զիս իմ մանկութենէ իմմէ մինչև ցայժմ. մեղա[յ] առաջի քո սրբութե[ան]դ, Հայր և տեսուչ հոգւոյ իմո[յ]: Եւ ապա տացէ համար-

ձակուքի[ւն] ասել զոր ինչ գործեալ իցէ, յորդորելով
թէ՝ մի՛ ամաչել, զի և ես մարդ եմ, ընդ մեղօք անգեալ·
և թէ՝ զոր ասա ամաչես և յինէն թաքուցանէս յահեղ
հրապարակին առաջի երկնաւորաց և երկրաւորաց
կանչես լալով և չդտանես թողուքի[ւն]· վ[ա]ս[ն]
որոյ ասա ասա՛ իմ առաջի միայնոյ և ես դիւրաւ առնեմ
թողուքն[ւն]: Եւ ապա փոքր մի ներուսին պարտ է տալ
զի ինքն յինքենէ չարժեսցի և ասէ որչափ կարէ· և
դարձեալ կրկնել թէ՝ այլ ասա՛· և երիցս միջոց տալ և
հետ նեղել թէ՝ ասա՛, մի՛ վախեր, մի՛ ամաչեր, չդնեմ
ծանր լուծ, դիւրաւ առնեմ թողուքի[ւն], լու՛ր միայն,
ասա՛, մի՛ պահեր յինէն: Եւ յորժամ դադարէ ասելով
թէ՝ այլ ոչինչ գիտեմ, ապա քննել պարտ է թէ՝ զո՞յս ինչ
և զո՞յս գործեալ իցես, որ թէ մոռացեալ իցէ ի վերա[յ]
հասցէ, և թէ վախէ կամ ամաչէ համարձակուքի[ւն]
առցէ ի հարցմանէն և ասասցէ՝ այո՛: Եւ որպէս ասացաք
զգուշուքի[եամ]ը հարցցէ՛ և մի՛ առանց ընդրուքե[ան]
զի մի՛ գայթագղի· զի թէ ողջախոհ մարդ իցէ և
անտեղեակ այլանդակ մեղաց, ի հարցանելն զայսոսիկ
ամբոխի և միտքն ի պատերազմ անկանի և ասէ թէ՝
այսպիսի մեղք այլ կու գործի, և յայնմհետէ կամ
փափագէ գործել կամ հպարտանա[յ] թէ՝ իմս թեթև է,
և անզեղջ ճնա[յ]: վ[ա]ս[ն] որոյ յիւր բանք ի չար
պարտ է զինքն հարցանել: Եւ վ[ա]ս[ն] ժամանակին
պարտ է քննել թէ՝ յի՞նչ ժամ գործեաց զմեղքն,
յերիտասարդուքե[ան]ն, ի ծերուքե[ան]ն, իւր կամաւ
թէ այլք նեղիցին, ի պահոց ժամ թէ յուտից, յան-
կարծակի եղև թէ ի վաղ ժամանակէ խորհէր գործել,
ինքն զնաց առ մեղաց ընդերն թէ նա եկն, ի գործելն
հեչտացաւ թէ խղճմտանօք գործեաց, յետ զղջացաւ թէ
ուրախ եկաց, ա [= միոյ] հետ եղև թէ այլ հետ,
ա [= միոյ] մարդո[յ] թէ հետ բազում· իմացան այլ
զիւրեանց գործն թէ ոչ: Եւ վ[ա]ս[ն] յիշոցաց թէ՝ ի՞նչ
ազգ էր· զայր մարդ անարգեաց թէ զկին, զբերան թէ

զպատկեր, զմեռեալք թէ կենդանիք, և զոր սարսափելին է՝ զհաւատս զպաշտելիք, զհրեշ[տ]ակ. և ծանուցել պիտի թէ յիշողքն ուրացուԹի[ւն] է և հերձուածուԹի[ւն] և ընդ նզովիւք է: Եւ վ[ա]ս՛ն գողուԹե[ան]. Թէ մեծ իրք էր Թէ փոքր, ի կարիք էր Թէ անկարիք. տէրն Թէ կենդանի է յետ պարտ է տալ, Թէ ոչ՝ յազգն իւր, Թէ ազգ չկա՝ յաղքատսն. Թէ չունի իրք որ վճարէ ապաչխարէ որչափ կարէ: Բազում ինչ պարտ էր գրել վ[ա]ս[ն] այսորիկ այլ յամբոխեալ մտաց և ի տարակոյս ժամուս այս բաւական է. զի յայսմ աւուր ի ժամուս լսեցաք Թէ զԴրազարկն անաւրէնքն այրեցին:

Now, with regard to confession, priests and layman must be especially cautious and take great care lest both perish through ignorance; for in all other (matters concerning the) priesthood one must choose a holy and reverent priest although he may be ignorant, but for confession a sinful but knowledgeable man is better than a pure but ignorant one, for the ignorant priest in many ways causes offence to the confessant at the time of his confession. There are some whom he strangles by severity and others whom he causes to perish by lenience, and by untoward questions he teaches them sins, and by remaining silent and unconcerned he destroys them; sometimes he sinks them in despair, and at other times, by his incompetence, he gives them licence to sin, and he treats lightly before the penitent of the weight of his sins. And many such indiscretions are perpetrated by ignorant physicians at the hands of whom, instead of being healed, (their patients are) bruised and wounded, (as also) on many occasions (are those) who come to such (ignorant men among the priests) for confessions; therefore one must take great care not to destroy one's self and one's neighbour and be condemned by God, for as one must flee from the sword (one must avoid) causing (a sinner) to confess to an ignorant priest. And (one must) not out of vanity and greed act excessively or indulgently in making them confess. And one must know that the taking of confession-money (*xostovanadram*) is a great and grievous sin whose name I cannot pronounce lest I depress you; but take care that you do not accept it. For many out of shame will not cooperate [1] and escape confession, wherefore the priest must repeat many times

1 MS : *vasn amōtʿod artakajeṙnutʿe[an]n*; I have read *vasn amōtʿoyd artaka[n] jeṙn[t]utʿe[an]n* « out of shame stand aside from help or cooperation ».

« There is no such thing as confession-money. Come at any time to confession, above all on the Day of the Lord ». For Sunday, in the word concerning it, is a day of rest, for the Christian puts everything aside on the Day of the Lord, and men and women with their children in love and goodwill go to Church for prayers and confession and to listen to the Holy Scriptures and to partake of the body and blood of the Lord our God. And one must tell the priests at all times not to relax, for the priest is a shepherd of the flock of Christ; for if he is negligent and does not admonish (the erring), God shall demand of him the blood of His people and class the priest with the unbelievers for his neglect, but to such as tend (their flock) well, God shall give great rewards. And when any one comes to confession, the priest must consider the man's repentance, his fear and shame, and from his expression and speech assess his fear and determine his penance accordingly. And he must consider also whether he is an old man, a child or a youth, a country-dweller, a villager or a townsman, a commoner, whether he is shameless or fearful, whether he knows the commandments of the Lord or is ignorant of the laws of God, whether he is artless or cunning, one who scorns the laws of the Lord, and whether he was lead into the same (sin) through ignorance; for from a man's character and behaviour one must determine what (penance) he can endure. For some one must let their sins go unpunished, while on others one must impose heavy penance for small sins, and on others light penance for grievous sins, (according to how the priest) assesses the appearance and conduct of the man. And the form of confession shall be thus : when any one comes before the priest he shall first perform three genuflexions before God and shall say : « I rejoice in Thee, Lord God, who madest me worthy to come to confession; and now, Lord, cause me in accordance with Thy pleasure to confess my sins without shame, and banish from me Satan lest he make me forgetful of my sins and introduce distractions and delusions and evil shame into my thoughts and cause me to confess untruthfully; drive from me community of thought with the evil one, that in hope and fear I may open my mouth and relate my sins before Thee in great faith, and receive from Thee as (my) Lord remission, grace and mercy in abundance ». Then the priest gives the order to be seated, if it is a man to bare his head and kneel on the ground and to say : « I believe in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost ». And then he says : « I have sinned against the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; I have sinned against the Holy Virgin and the Holy Apostles, and all the saints; I have sinned against the archangels and angels and all the heavenly hosts; I have sinned against the angel which has watched over me from my childhood until now; I have sinned before Thy holiness, Father and watcher of my soul ». And

then he shall give him leave to say what he has done, exhorting him not to be ashamed, (saying) : « I also am a man who has fallen into sin, and that of which you are now ashamed and conceal from me you shall cry out weeping at the awful tribunal in the presence of the celestial and terrestrial and shall find no forgiveness; therefore recite them here before me alone and I shall readily give absolution ». And then one must spare him a little that of himself he be moved to say as much as he can. And again (one must) say « Tell me something else », and a third time (one must) give him a moment's pause and then urge him, saying « Say something else, do not be afraid, do not be ashamed; I shall not impose a heavy burden, and shall readily give absolution; but speak, mind, and keep nothing from me ». And when he stops, saying « I know of nothing else », one must question him, (saying) : « Did you do this or that? », so that whatever he may have forgotten be brought to light, and that if he was afraid or ashamed he may take courage from the question and answer « Yes ». And as we have told you, question cautiously, that no offence is caused; for if it is a healthy-minded man ignorant of extravagant sins, he may be confused by questions about these and his thoughts fall into conflict, and he may say to himself « So such things too are done? », and consequently he may either desire to commit them himself or grow conceited (and say to himself) « My sin is a (comparatively) small one » and remain unrepentant. For these reasons, one must question him in accordance with his own mode of expression. One must examine also concerning the time, at what age (the confessant) committed his sin, in youth or in old age, whether by his own free will or at the constraint of others, at the time of fasts or meat-days; (one must consider) whether it happened on the spur of the moment or with forethought, whether he went to his fellow to sin or whether the latter came to him, whether he enjoyed the commission (of his sin) or had a conscience about it, whether he afterwards repented or was happy, whether it happened with one or with another (i.e. with that one or this one?), with one person or with many, whether they understood what they were doing or not. Concerning swearing, (one must determine) what kind it was; whether (the sinner) insulted a man or a woman, (whether he insulted him or her) face to face or (his or her) image [2], (whether he swore at) the dead or the living, or, what is most horrible, the Faith or objects of adoration, (or) his angel; and one must tell him that swearing is apostasy, heresy and anathema. And concerning theft, (one must determine) whether the things (stolen) were big or small, whether (the thief) was in need or not in need; if the owner is alive, (the thief) must give back (the object

[2] MS : *zberan t'ē zpatker*, eclipsis for *zberan i beran* ...

stolen) to him, if not, to his family, and if he had no family, to the poor; if (the confessed thief) no longer has the things to restore, he shall repent as much as he can.

It would be necessary to write much more about this matter, but this is enough from a confused mind at an uncertain time; for on this day at this very hour we have heard that the lawless ones (the Mamluks) have burned down the (monastery of) Drazark.

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