

ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: MUSIC, RITUAL, AND DIASPORIC IDENTITY: A
 CASE STUDY OF THE ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC
 CHURCH

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This study examines the relationships between music, music-making, and ritual performance in the Armenian Apostolic Church. By looking at music-making as a ritual liturgical symbol of faith, I explain the meaning of liturgical music practice and its function in teaching the fundamentals of faith. Drawing upon the fields of ethnomusicology, theology, and ritual studies, I explore the theoretical orientations and methodological strategies that assist in the interpretation of music in ritual contexts. By examining various theories of symbol and ritual combined with fieldwork, I interpret Armenian Apostolic liturgical music using a theoretical methodology that investigates the operation of liturgical music within ritual contexts. Because “faith” is not empirically observable, I focus on “the conception of faith” as it is performed by participants in the Divine Liturgy.

In addition to looking at these aspects, I also extend my search past that of the “official” Christian Armenian community by asking what purpose the Armenian Apostolic Church serves in the community as a whole, even amongst non-Christians or non-practicing Armenian Christians. There is a discourse that runs through Armenian literature and politics that to be “Armenian” is to be “Christian.” Is this the reality of the situation? Is Armenian Christianity perceived as faith, heritage, or both, and to what extent does the Divine Liturgy play a role in realizing Armenian identity? The purposes of this study are to interpret ritual in light of our physical, social, political, moral, aesthetic, and religious existence, to analyze and interpret liturgical music, to contribute to the development of a critical theory of music as a ritual symbol, and to address issues of identity.

I conclude that if the symbolic activity of ritual performance evokes participation that is empirically observable, as an outward performance and transformation or “rite of intensification” of a deeper display of the conception of faith, liturgical music-making becomes integral to the liturgical rite itself. Also, in terms of Armenian identity, the Armenian Apostolic Church is essential to the negotiation of cultural identity outside of their historic homeland of Armenia, even amongst Armenians who do not actively perform the Divine Liturgy.

MUSIC, RITUAL, AND DIASPORIC IDENTITY:
A CASE STUDY OF THE ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH

by

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DEDICATION

To:

Józef Pacholczyk, my support

Mom and David, my inspiration

and

Kimberly, my love

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PART ONE:
THE PROBLEM AND THE RESEARCH METHODS

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Discourses and Ideologies

Introduction

Armenia is a small country surrounded by Georgia, Iran, Turkey, and Azerbaijan. The Armenians have a long history that spans some five millennia, dating back to the fall of the Uartian Empire (sixth century B.C.). Armenians know themselves as “Hye,” which derives from the Biblical historical archer, Hayk, grandson of Japheth, son of Noah.¹ Armenia has had periods of independence, but throughout most of its tumultuous history, it has been ruled by the Arabs, Byzantines, Mongols, Seljuks, Ottomans, Persians, Russians, and the Soviets. Indeed, Armenia’s history is marked with war and suffering, but the survival of its people is a testament of their resilience, adaptability, and versatility. To validate, in

¹ Bruce M. Metzger and Roalnd E. Murphy, “Genesis 10:1,” *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1994): 13.

a sense, their own national and ethnic identities, the Armenians have worked to maintain their culture not only within the confines of their historic land known as Armenia, but also throughout the diaspora.

As one of the oldest Christian cultures in the world, (they accepted Christianity in the fourth century A.D.), the Armenians have integrated Christianity into their psyche—a complex notion that pervades all Armenians, even non-Christian Armenians, which, in a sense, defines “Armenianness.” It is this character that points to the need for research on Armenian identity and its cultural manifestations. This dissertation studies Armenian identity by looking at religious practices of the Armenian Apostolic Church, specifically her *Soorp Badarak* (Divine Liturgy or Mass). The *Soorp Badarak* is a ritualized musical expression of Armenian faith and identity.

While working as a museum curator at the Armenian Library and Museum of America in the Boston, Massachusetts’s area, I became aware of the importance of religious heritage and practice in maintaining the cohesion of culture and identity. My present research with the Armenian community in the Washington, D.C./Baltimore area centers on the role of music, liturgy, and ritual in shaping and maintaining this identity.

The celebration of human cultural events is ubiquitous throughout recorded human history. Indeed, this “celebration of human cultural events” takes many forms, including religious practices, graduation, puberty initiation rites, parades, concerts, and sporting events, just to name a few. This rather broad concept forms the basis of my research for this dissertation, where I am looking at the function of

music-making both as a liturgical symbol and as a performance of adherents' *conception of faith*. Though my research centers on ritual in a religious context, I see the importance of understanding ritual theory from an anthropological/sociological perspective. By examining various theories and interpretations from ritual studies and ethnomusicology (music and ritual), combined with my own fieldwork in the Armenian Apostolic Church and Armenian community, it is my hope to develop a theoretical methodology that investigates Armenian liturgical music as a ritual symbol of the Eastern Orthodox *conception of faith* as well as a marker of "Armenianness" that extends past *faith* into heritage. The materials for this research are obtained primarily through fieldwork. Ethnomusicologists generally, define "fieldwork" as "observation of people *in situ*; finding them where they are, staying with them in some role which, while acceptable to them, will allow both intimate observation of certain parts of their behavior, and reporting it in ways useful to social science but not harmful to those observed."²

Identity: Religion and Ritual/Musical Performance

Identity is a recurrent topic within ethnomusicological discourse. The interdisciplinary theoretical orientation of ethnomusicology allows for diverse analysis into such topics as identity, gender, politics, and religion. As a concept, identity is extremely complex, not limited to the "who you are," but also

² E. C. Hughes, "Introduction: the Place of Field Work in Social Science," in *Field Work: Field Relations and Techniques*, ed. R. N. Adams and J. J. Preiss (Homewood, Illinois, 1960): 90—originally published as "reciprocity as a Field Technique," in *Human Organization* 11, no. 3 (1952): 34.

encompassing where and with what group you identify, as well as portraying the relationships maintained within different cultural situations. Manuel Castells says, in *The Power of Identity*:

By identity, as it refers to social actors, I understand the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or related set of cultural attributes, that is/are given priority over other sources of meaning. For a given individual, or for a collective actor, there may be a plurality of identities. Yet, such a plurality is a source of stress and contradiction in both self-representation and social action. This is because identity must be distinguished from what, traditionally, sociologists have called roles, and role sets.³

In teaching undergraduate courses, I am increasingly aware of the difficulty of the subject, especially in the context of the United States where young people, who belong to the world of the often mis-appropriated term “America,” search for their own cultural and personal identities. American society comprises a conglomerate of very different people with different ethnicities and national backgrounds. The notion of group identity is not maintained within distinct “country” borders, as it would be in an ethnic-specific country such as the Republic of Armenia. In the United States, Armenian communities, who tie their group identity to historic Armenia, not necessarily the current Republic of Armenia, can be found in most of the larger cities including New York, Detroit, Los Angeles, Washington, DC, and Boston to name a few. While religious ties do connect these communities, they remain somewhat isolated into various smaller social entities and attempt to find

³ Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity*. The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture. Volume II (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1997): 6.

their place amongst the “stew” of other ethnicities. As religious orientation is often tied to these same regions, religious performance through both music and ritual becomes a strong marker for cultural identity. Humans seem naturally drawn to identify with those to whom they draw historic ties, though this is certainly not a necessary truth. Identity, especially personal identity, is in constant flux:

Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a “production,” which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. This view problematizes the very authority and authenticity to which the term, “cultural identity,” lays claim.⁴

Having said this, cultural performance⁵ requires that humans reside in social structures (nation-states, communities, families, etc.). In terms of ritual performance, this environment exists as a place where cooperative religious celebration cements group collective identity.

If identities express individual as well as group meaning for the actors themselves, how can cooperative identities be sustained? Obviously, the relationships between national or ethnic culture and collective group identity is essential, for how can a culture maintain itself without performing those culture-binding displays, such as language, religion, music, art, dress, and food? In recent

⁴ Stuart Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora,” in *Identity: Community, Culture, and Difference*, edited by Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990): (222) 222-237.

⁵ For more on the nature of “culture” see Conrad Phillip Kottak, “Culture,” in *Anthropology: The Exploration of Human Diversity*, seventh edition (New York: McGraw, 1997): 36-47.

time, United States ideology has fostered the notion of distinct somewhat essentialized identities—for example, Asian-American, Irish-American, African-American, etc. Performing different identities in a society that beseeches a singular identity is rather difficult but not, shall we say, impossible. In looking at cultural displays of identity, it is useful to look at the outward versus the inward performance of the self (to use a postmodern expression). In ethnomusicology, we often demarcate these concepts by the emic and etic perspectives taken from linguistics.⁶ Kenneth Pike explains that “the etic viewpoint studies behavior as from outside of a particular system, and as an essential initial approach to an alien system . . . the emic viewpoint results from studying behavior as from inside the system.”⁷

Castells’s *The Power of Identity* offers yet another point of view for the study of identity. Castells proposes three forms of identity building:

Legitimizing Identity: introduced by the dominant institutions of society to extend and rationalize their domination *vis á vis* social actors

Resistance Identity: generated by those actors that are in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society.

⁶ The terms “emic” and “etic” come from “phonemic” and “phonetic.” They were coined by Kenneth Pike in his pioneering study on the relationship between language and human behavior. See Kenneth Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior* (The Hague: Mouton and Company, 1967): 37-72.

⁷ Kenneth Pike 1967: 37.

Project Identity: when social actors, on the basis of whichever cultural materials are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, by so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure.⁸

I find this a useful starting point for the discussion of the function of music in forming meaning in a culture outside of its homeland, especially in light of the context of “identity repression,” which has plagued Armenia, historically:

[T]he “making of nations” of the pre-national period . . . thereby increased ethnic solidarity and national consciousness in the non-Russian republics, even as it frustrated full articulation of a national agenda by requiring conformity to an imposed political order.⁹

The performance of religious rituals provides a means for the reciprocation of what ritual scholar Victor Turner called *communitas* or an awareness of being bound together with other people historically.¹⁰

Furthermore, it is useful to look at religious performances as rituals because it brings to focus even more questions. Could it be that people simply perform religious rituals out of true faith, routine practice, or, perhaps, for social or heritage adherence? Looking at the ancient religions, Robertson Smith concluded that it was ritual that was obligatory, not the explanation given to ritual, saying “while the practice was rigorously fixed, the meaning attached to it was extremely vague . . .

⁸ Manuel Castells 1997: 8.

⁹ Yuri Slezkine, “The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism,” *Slavic Review* 53, no. 2 (1994): 414-52. See also Taras and Bremmer (1993).

¹⁰ For more on this theme, see Victor W. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1995).

the same rite was explained by different people in different ways.”¹¹ In addition to the importance and/or role the music plays in shaping the expression and growth of the ritual itself, it is clear, that besides the conception of faith seemingly performed by the participants in religious ceremonies, social solidarity too provides important clues when discussing identity:

The prospect of men both acting together socially and thinking together culturally in entire mutuality fail to inspire, but it cannot cause us to forget the degree to which men value acting together and distrust thinking together about the meaning of that action. It cannot cause us to forget that the gut-feeling or moral community created by coordinated interactions such as ritual may be actually threatened by an attempt to achieve more community on the cultural level where the symbolic dimensions of interaction must be made explicit.¹²

A pivotal aspect of ritual, then, is the way people participate in spite of internal communal conflicts and differences between individual beliefs. Beliefs are privately held and in some sense, unknowable, while rituals provide public statements of acceptance of a group’s position. As Rappaport argues, it is the “visible, explicit, public act of acceptance, and not the invisible, ambiguous, private sentiment that is socially and morally binding.”¹³ Thus, ritual performances can promote social solidarity without implying that people share the same values, ethnicity, nationality, or even the same interpretation of the ritual necessarily.

¹¹ Smith, W. Robertson, *Lectures in the Religions of the Semites* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1907): 16.

¹² James W. Fernandez, “Symbolic Consensus in a Fang Reformation Cult,” *American Anthropologist* 67 (1965): 923.

¹³ Roy A. Rappaport, *Ecology, Meaning and Religion* (Richmond, California: North Atlantic Books, 1979): 194-95.

In addition to looking at the meaning of religion among those who actively participate, I also look at those Armenians who go against the “status quo” of Christianity. It is a misconception that “Armenianness” equates “Christianity” as a marker of *faith*. However, this does not mean that Christianity is not part of Armenian cultural heritage.

In religious experiences, ritual performances are ways of relating to the supernatural within the boundaries of space and time, but these performances are not necessarily always theologically aimed. Ritual celebration through worship provides an individualized as well as communal form of expression that demarcates specific groups from each other (established essentialism). This human activity is marked by symbols, a critical aspect of culture. In terms of musical performance, communal action finds itself in marriages, births, death, and other culturally important events—as Kenneth Burke has said, “we are able to express our uniqueness principally by aligning ourselves with other individuals, collectivities, or social organizations.”¹⁴

Armenian Music Scholarship

On the limited, but relatively clearly characterized subject of Armenian music, there is a very modest amount of literature in European languages. The most well-known among these in musicology and ethnomusicology is a collection of articles published in 1978 entitled *Essays on Armenian Music*, edited by Vrej

¹⁴ George Cheney, *Rhetoric in an Organizational Society: Managing Multiple Identities* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1991): 13.

Nersessian.¹⁵ This collection, written by Armenian musicologists, includes articles in English, French and German, and is the only significant collection based on relatively contemporary research dealing with Armenian music. Recently, two translations (into European languages) of older Armenian musicological studies have appeared. One is a collection of articles by Komitas Vardapet entitled *Armenian Sacred and Folk Music* (1998).¹⁶ Written about a century ago, Armenian musicologists treat it as one of the most important sources on the Armenian music tradition. The other is a work on the ancient Armenian *khaz* (neumatic) notation commonly employed throughout the Middle-Ages by the church, entitled *The Armenian Neume System of Notation* (1999).¹⁷ It was written about a half-century ago by perhaps the most respected scholar of Soviet style Armenian music—Robert At’ayan. In addition to these works, a new translation is in preparation of another classic text of Armenian musicological scholarship: Khristophor Kushnarev’s *Armenian Monodic Music*.¹⁸

¹⁵ Vrej Nersessian, ed., *Essays on Armenian Music* (Kahn and Averill: London, 1978). A collection of essays previously published in various journals between 1968 and 1977. The chief subject is notation.

¹⁶ Komitas Vardapet, *Armenian Sacred and Folk Music*, translated by Edward Gulbekian. (London, 1998). Komitas Vardapet, considered a pioneer in ethnomusicology, turned his attention to the anthropological, sociological, and historical aspects of comparative musicology. This work includes various articles by Komitas in the subjects of sacred and folk music.

¹⁷ Robert At’ayan, *The Armenian Neume System of Notation*, trans. from the 1959 edition by Vrej Nersessian (Surrey, England: Curzon, 1999 [1959]). Offers a thorough introduction to the Armenian *khaz* system of notation.

¹⁸ This has yet to be published.

Apart from Vrej Nersessian's *Essays on Armenian Music*, these works were all originally published in the early twentieth century and were influenced by a strong Soviet-Armenian ideology. Though every culture produces scholarship under the influences of its own ideologies, the tension between heavy Soviet censorship and a predominantly nationalist elite makes ideology a particularly obtrusive factor in the construction of musicological and other culture-related works in Armenia.

In recent years, there have been a number of short articles and encyclopedia entries dealing with some aspect of Armenian music—for example, *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2001), *Garland Encyclopedia* (2000), journals such as *Ethnomusicology* (one article), the *Journal for Armenian Studies* and a few others. Andy Nersessian's *Duduk and National Identity in Armenia* (2001) focuses on the duduk (a popular double-reed aerophone of Armenia) and gives an overview of Armenian music and its position in Armenian society today.¹⁹ However, this is a relatively short book, and it focuses on only one specific instrument. My book (co-authored with Andy Nersessian) *Armenian Music: A Bibliography and Discography* (Scarecrow Press: 2004), while specifically aimed at music scholars, is a resource for locating disciplinary and inter-disciplinary material.²⁰

¹⁹ See Andy Nersessian, *The Duduk and National Identity in Armenia* (Lanham, Maryland and London: Scarecrow Press, 2001).

²⁰ Jonathan McCollum and Andy Nersessian, *Armenian Music: Bibliography and Discography* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004).

Despite the scarcity of seminal literature on Armenian music in English (or other European languages for that matter), there is a considerable amount of literature that focuses on Soviet cultural policy, especially in the area of music in Soviet Asia, though these do not deal with Armenia specifically. These include, for example, Caroline Brooke's unpublished dissertation (1999) on Soviet musical policy in the 1930s and 40s, Boris Schwartz's well-known study on Soviet music and musicians (1983), Neil Edmund's work on the proletarian music movement in the Soviet Union (2000), Theodore Levin's work on Uzbekistan and Soviet musical policies (1980, 1993, and 1996), and Lionel Cannaugh's *Soviet Musical Policy and its Effect on Soviet Music* (1998).

Armenian Musicology in the Context of Soviet Ideology

There is an ideological and methodological differences between Armenian and Western ethnomusicology (this will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Eight). Important differences include the matters that Western ethnomusicologists would include in their studies, which, besides musicological issues, include anthropological and sociological contexts. The Armenian musicologist, in contrast, might address questions of origin, musical affinities among varied human groups (in this case, Armenian), their migration patterns, and instruments. Armenian folk and sacred music studies often focus exclusively on the texts of songs, often wholly omitting the musical aspects of these songs. However, more recently, Andy Nercessian's new work, *Armenian Music and Globalization*, treats to some degree

song texts and examines significant contextual issues.²¹ For Armenian musicologists, a second point of deviation from music is the study of its context. For the Western ethnomusicologist, the inclusion of ethnographic descriptions and analyses of the contexts of performance (such as weddings, religious ceremonies, ritual activities, etc.) is vitally important. Our questions concern music as lived experience. We look at music as a social practice, focusing on broad spectrums of race, region, class, politics, gender, belief, etc. Indeed, perhaps the most important aspect of music and culture are the concepts of meaning and representation.²² Text, context and other “non-musical” performative aspects are integrally part of the musical experience.

The discovery of music in its uncontaminated or uninfluenced form is exceptional, perhaps impossible considering our globalized world. Music, like all cultural manifestations, is subject to diffusion by both enculturative and acculturative forces. Andy Nercessian’s forthcoming work, *Armenian Music and Globalization* presents us with a new understanding of globalization in our world.²³ In this work, Nercessian considers that Armenian music, is, in addition to being a

²¹ Andy Nercessian, *Armenian Music and Globalization* (Wayne State University Press, forthcoming).

²² Clifford Geertz, whose methodology involving “thick description” of cultural “texts” moved the discipline away from the scientific method toward the interpretive practices of the social sciences and humanities. By incorporating textual analysis into thick descriptions, and by representing people making music, ethnomusicologists have gone past Geertz’s methodology to the point of actualizing the knowledge *about* music.

²³ See Andy Nercessian, *Armenian Music and Globalization* (Wayne State University Press, forthcoming).

sign of the Armenian people historically and culturally, also a manifestation of globalization, at least as it has been perpetuated in the context of sovietization, institutionalization, and classicization. His thesis is remarkable, in that it subverts the idea that ethnomusicologists must only look at a people's music from their emic, albeit important, perspective. Nercessian contends that other perspectives are indeed necessary parts of the musical culture that scholars have held so dear to be "pure" and "authentic"—to use terms so often relegated to controversy.

This is just one example where global influence perhaps changed previous forms of music. Though much literature on this subject has an obvious Marxist-Leninist bias, what some ethnomusicologists would call "the corruption of folk music" (as a result of the former Soviet rule) may have actually originated long before the onset of Soviet supremacy.²⁴ Having said this, despite the overlap between folk and sacred genres of music in the past, the twentieth-century Soviet institution has been, by far, the most important factor to the present state of musical genre overlap. In the case of sacred music, Armenian musicologists have made claims about the role of folk music in the church in the middle ages. Although most likely true, their works, in reality, are essentially attempts to defend the role of the church within the acceptable norms of Marxist-Leninist ideology.

²⁴ For more, see the "Introduction" of Andy Nercessian 2001.

Possible Trends in “Post” Soviet Armenian Musicology

During the Soviet control of Armenia, much of the scholarship made use of a state-centric analysis. Even in the wake of the fall of the USSR, the post-Soviet literature on Armenian music (of which little exists) continues in the same spirit.²⁵ Many scholars focus on the situation of rising Armenian nationalism and cultural identity (nationality).²⁶ In its earliest days, the process of determining one’s nationality was left entirely to the holder of the passport who could effectively “choose” what ethnic group or nation he belonged to. Later, this freedom of choice was removed and one’s nationality was based on his/her parents’ nationality—shifting, in effect, the basis of national identity from nation to ethnicity. This was particularly true for religious identity during the communist period:

A believer usually thinks that his religious convictions are his private matter and nobody else’s business since they do not interfere with other individuals. In fact, this is not so. As we have seen, a religious person is only an inferior builder of communism, who lacks the enthusiasm and the internal conviction without which successful communist construction is unthinkable. He remains in the grip of various vestiges of the past, and his mind and will are split so that he is inclined to doubt the ultimate success of his cause and would rather turn to God and pray.²⁷

²⁵ Jonathan McCollum, “Performing ‘Non-Collective’ Group Identity: The Role of Religion and Ritual Performance in the Former Soviet Union,” in *Pluralism, Identity, and Soviet Music* (Lanham and London: Scarecrow Press, 2005).

²⁶ Michael Bourdeaux, *Religious Minorities in the Soviet Union (1960-1970)* (London: Minority Rights Group, 1970): 1-13.

²⁷ F. Oleshchuk, “Table Calendar, 1941” (Moscow) as quoted in Igor Troyanovsky, ed., *Religion in the Soviet Republics: A Guide to Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Other Religions* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991): vi.

Of course, as the Soviet Union fell, ideologies changed, but change is a difficult concept to foster overnight:

We need spiritual values, we need a revolution of the mind. This is the only way toward a new culture and new politics that can meet the challenge of our time. We have changed our attitude toward some matters such as religion. Now, we not only proceed from the assumption that no one should interfere in matters of the individual's conscious; we also say that moral values that religion generated and embodied for centuries can help in the work of renewal in our country, too.²⁸

The notions of nationalism and identity are particularly powerful among the Armenian people—even in the diaspora. In my own fieldwork in the Washington, DC, New York, and Boston areas, I have found a profound sense of Armenian alliance among Armenian diasporic communities, in contrast to many other ethnic groups who may shy away from their native identity. This theme reveals itself in this quote concerning Armenians in Lebanon:

The community has preserved its national self-identity through its educational, religious, and political institutions. While in the neighboring countries the governments were placing restrictions on the Armenians, having in mind their total assimilation into the local population, in Lebanon the community has enjoyed full freedom in managing its internal affairs. The confessional system in Lebanon has therefore contributed greatly to the preservation of the national self-identity of Armenians²⁹

²⁸ Mikhail Gorbachev, “Quoted in *Time Magazine*” as quoted in Igor Troyanovsky, ed., *Religion in the Soviet Republics: A Guide to Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Other Religions* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991): vii.

²⁹ Hratch Bedoyan, “The Social, Political, and Religious Structure of the Armenian Community in Lebanon,” *The Armenian Review* 32, no. 2 (1979): 128.

Considering this, what are some potential questions scholars may ask? One could certainly apply this state-centric nationalistic framework to the study of music by tracing the effects of Marxism-Leninism on current policy formations (post-Soviet) at the highest administrative levels and examine how and for what reasons these apply to music. What would be the relations between music and other arts in the eyes of policy makers? What role did music play in forming the socialist regime and how did this effect post-Soviet policy in Armenia? Furthermore, what analogies can be drawn between music and literature or other arts? How did such questions influence the shaping of the original policy for music in particular? Some other questions that come to mind include the concept of culture, nation, and ideology. How do we, as scholars, truly define these concepts? Should the demarcations of these topics extend to inter-cultural definitions, *in situ*, or rather, should they remain steadfast in academic circles, merely applied as broadly understood concepts?

Rationale for the Structure of the Dissertation

Part One: The Problem and the Research Methods

In Chapter One, I introduce the topic of the dissertation and discuss the relevant music literature to date. I also describe topics explored in post-Soviet research in Armenian Music. This chapter sets up the framework for the study. In it, I conclude that there is significant work to be done in the area of Armenian music, especially that of Armenian sacred music.

In Chapter Two, “Paradigms and Theoretical Considerations,” I introduce the paradigms and theoretical perspectives that inform this study. Beginning with a discussion of the larger research paradigms of structuralism, hermeneutics, and ethnography, I discuss the various dimensions of how music is approached, concentrating on semiotics and symbolic analysis, and ritual analysis. I end by discussing the role of ritual in religious worship and the paradox of studying *faith*. In this chapter, I establish the tools that assist me in analysis, such as ethnography, Victor Turner’s three-part structure of ritual, and Richard Grime’s questions concerning ritual description. I use these as starting points for my own analysis of identity.

In Chapter Three, “Methodology: Fieldwork and Musical/Ritual Analysis,” I introduce the specific communities that provided the data and domain framework for this study in general. I explore the locus of my fieldwork and the people involved in my research. I conclude by discussing the methodological strategies I use to interpret the musical/ritual performance, specifically using ritual domainal description, performance ethnography, and identity.

Part Two: Background

In this part, I discuss the Armenian situation in the United States of America as well as provide background information on the Armenian Apostolic Church.

In Chapter Four, “The Armenian Diaspora in the United States,” I provide the history of immigration and highlight the plight and “move” of the Armenian people from Armenia to the United States of America. In this chapter, I conclude

that the notion of “Armenian” identity is expressed in various forms outside of Armenia. The Armenian Apostolic Church exists as one of the binding cultural idioms that provide a context for the expression of “Armenianness.”

In Chapter Five, “The History and Theology of the Armenian Apostolic Church,” I provide an introduction to the context for the study of the Armenian Church—namely the history of her Divine Liturgy (*Soorp Badarak*). I discuss briefly the impact of Armenia’s history and the development of the theology and ritual of the Armenian Church. Within this, I also explore the Armenian liturgical development in the context of Eastern Orthodoxy. This chapter provides the historical context from which much of my fieldwork was conducted, albeit it in a diasporic locus.

Part Three: Analysis

In Part III, I analyze the Armenian liturgy and sacred music through descriptive and performative/ethnographic analysis and explore the music of the Armenian Divine Liturgy and variants in its performance practice.

In Chapter Six, “Description of Ritual Contexts: Space, Objects, Sound and Language, and Identity,” I begin my analysis by describing the ritual space, objects, sounds and language, and identity within the ritual itself. By describing the ritual site and its components, I introduce the reader to the important domains of ritual performance. In addition, I consider the ritual event in terms of the previously described theoretical perspectives.

In Chapter Seven, “Official Ideological Expression: Liturgy as a Performance of Faith,” I connect the performance of the liturgy with the manifestation of “official” Armenian Christian ideology. In this chapter, I provide a descriptive analysis of a typical performance by clergy, laymen, and congregation. I look at the Divine Liturgy as an event that perpetuates “official culture” through the ritual action. I consider the theoretical orientations of Victor Turner and other ritual theorists, as well as the symbolic analysis of semiologists such as Jean-Jacques Nattiez.

In Chapter Eight, “Music, Music-Making, and Identity,” I look specifically at the music proper of the Armenian Divine Liturgy. I address its history and current performance practices. In my fieldwork, I have noticed a lack of participation by the congregation in the process of music-making. In spite of encouragement by the Celebrant and choir director, the people do not respond by active musical participation. In this chapter, I am trying to assess the reason for this disagreement and the meaning of the music for the congregation. To what extent is music a part of the identity of church-goers? I make the argument that despite minimal musical participation, the Divine Liturgy remains an essential component to Armenian identity in the diaspora.

In Chapter Nine, “Rethinking Official Ideologies: Christian Heritage, Faith, or Both?,” I consider the official ideological expression of *faith* outlined in the previous two chapters by looking at the community as a whole, extending my search to those Armenians who do not attend the Armenian Apostolic Church. This chapter, in essence, confirms the common “official” assumption that

“Armenianness” and “Christianity” go hand in hand. The data reveals that while some Armenians are not Christian, the liturgy and Armenian Christianness remains an integral part of their heritage. Thus, Armenian Christianity and the Divine Liturgy are essential to the historical character of identity that makes up the Armenian people.

In Chapter Ten, “Conclusions,” I make final remarks on the nature of ritual, its implications to the Armenian Divine Liturgy, and outline new directions for future considerations in research, specifically within Armenian music. I conclude by discussing how the expression of Christian liturgical ritual is inexplicitly tied to Armenian identity.

CHAPTER TWO

Paradigms and Theoretical Considerations

Principal Paradigms: Structuralism, Hermeneutics, and Ethnography

In the preceding chapter, I introduced the premise of this work, the available literature and discussed issues relating to Armenian musicology. In this chapter, I explore the theoretical orientations used in interpreting the function of Armenian liturgical music both ritualistically as well as symbolically. I focus on a more anthropological/ethnomusicological perspective rather than a theological one. The anthropology of religion does not necessarily deal with the perception of specific *religions* just as the anthropology of music does not deal with the specifics of a particular *music*. It is not that I think theology is unimportant—in fact, I believe theology to be one of the most important issues and thus, it will be discussed in Chapter Five, “The History and Theology of the Armenian Apostolic Church.”

The larger paradigmatic perspectives that provide the framework for this study are those of structuralism, hermeneutics, and ethnography. For the ethnomusicologist, the structural approach, often tied to Lévi-Strauss¹ and Ferdinand de Saussure², is often used in ethnomusicological works—indeed, it is the very basis of descriptive ethnography in general. Structuralism refers, in a very general sense, to the theoretical perspective that gives primacy to pattern over substance. Meaning, in turn, comes by looking at the relationships between various cultural performances. There are similarities between structuralism and structural-functionalism. Rather than finding meaning within social relations, structuralists are generally interested in structures of thought as structures of societies.³ While Claude Lévi-Strauss was interested in both the internal logic of culture and the relation to that logic to structures beyond cultural forms (ethnography, for example), Ferdinand Saussure utilized this concept in linguistics, fostering a number of distinctions now commonplace both in linguistics and the social sciences such as

¹ See, for example, Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, trans. Clare Jacobson and Brook Grundfest Schoepf (New York: Basic Books, 1963 [1958] [1945-58]).

² Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, trans. Wade Baskin (Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1974 [1916]).

³ A. R. Radcliffe-Brown used the term “structural form” for generalities based on observations of social structure. The term “structural functionalism,” as I take it, refers to the ideas of A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, emphasizing the functional relationships between social institutions. See for example, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *Structure and Function in Primitive Society: Essays and Addresses* (London: Cohen and West, 1931).

diachronic and synchronic⁴, and signifier and signified⁵ to name two. Structuralism emphasizes form over content and denies that there can be content without form.⁶ Because the structural approach is paramount in the initial stages of ethnography, I consider this an important aspect of my analysis. In ritual contexts, structure is important, and structuralists observe a society as a whole by looking for the interrelationships of its elements that derive meaning.

Hermeneutics of culture is a component of ethnomusicological analysis, but because of its subjective nature, it is perhaps the most problematic. E. E. Evans-Pritchard initially fostered this paradigm by rejecting the idea of anthropology as a “strict science.”⁷ Clifford Geertz’s *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973) sums up his approach as one of “thick description.” Geertz sees society as a “text” arguing for the anthropological understanding of “local” in tense interaction with the “global,” for an emphasis on the minutiae, even the trivia culture, and for culture as

⁴ This is essential to my thought because, as I believe the emic/etic debate as a dichotomous feature of culture is a bit problematic, Saussure too, saw that the diachronic and synchronic studies of language deserved equal prominence (language at a particular point in time) and (language changes through time). His notion of the signified and signifier will be discussed momentarily.

⁵ The distinction between the signifier (the word or symbol which stands for something) and signified (the thing for which the word or symbol stands) together make-up what Saussure called a ‘sign.’ What he meant by this is that there is no natural relation between the phonological properties of a word and its meaning. Likewise, in the study of culture, symbolic elements of culture take their meaning both according to the given culture and according to context within the culture.

⁶ Structures in language at any level (phonological morphological, syntactical, etc.) have potential analogies in culture.

⁷ E. E. Evans-Pritchard studied under C. G. Seligman and Bronislaw Malinowski at the London School of Economics. He made six major field expeditions to the Sudan and British East Africa.

a symbolic system.⁸ Geertz remains today one of anthropology's—indeed, social science's—most influential scholars.

In addition to structure, rituals are marked by process. In many ways, the processual or ethnographic theoretical approaches have strengthened in recent times because they tend to be flexible, which contrasts to overtly formal ideas of strict structuralism. Ethnography is, in many ways, a combination of the two previous paradigms and enables both functionally-minded and structurally-inclined scholars to look more closely at the nuances of social life and symbolic structures. While Lévi-Straussian structuralism is perhaps overly concerned with structure and Geertzian interpretivism concerns itself with interpretation, there is nevertheless great potential in drawing from all of these perspectives.

Theoretical Considerations

As my investigation of the Armenian liturgy deals with the meaning and its performance, I draw from the theoretical perspectives of semiotics and ritual studies.

Semiotics and the Notion of Symbolism

Semiology, or semiotics, can be defined as the science or study of *signs*. Ferdinand de Saussure, working during the early part of the twentieth century, was among the first to elucidate the central concept of semiology in a translation of his

⁸ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

*Sémiologie (Cours de linguistique générale 1922).*⁹ A *sign* comprises two entities, the *signified* and the *signifier*, which relate to each other through a process of referring or *semiosis*. The signified is an entity (a physical object, or idea) and the signifier is some representation of, or reference to, that entity. Historically, semiology arose among linguists trying to come to terms with the process of “referring” in language. Much of the linguistic-derived writing on semiotics has been in French, though most of the significant material used by ethnomusicologists comes from Jean-Jacques Nattiez’s theory of paradigmatic analysis (which actually derived from American linguistics). With the founding of the International Association for Semiotic Studies in 1969, the term “semiology” was abandoned in place of “semiotics,” though scholars continue to use the terms interchangeably. Prior to this, Michel Bréal’s *Essai de Sémantique* (1904) described the “science of signification” as “semantics,” chiefly concerned with the way words change their meaning, extending, narrowing, or shifting their original significations. Thus, the term “semantics” was distinct from phonetics and phonology, which are concerned with the structures of linguistic sound. The ethnomusicological understanding of the terms can be found in Vladimir Karbusicky’s *Grundriss der musikalischen Semantik* (1986):

- Semiotics (‘theory of signs’): theory of human communication with the help of signs, which traces especially the factors of sign-morphology and the establishment of sign-systems: the essential logic and categories of its elaboration in basic relations (relations according to means, object, and interpretant), its practical operation.

⁹ Ferdinand de Saussure 1974 (1916).

- Semantics ('theory of meaning'): theory of the conditions, psychological, anthropological, social-historical, cultural, and aesthetic, which traces the processuality of the creation of meaning, its metamorphosis and dissolution.¹⁰

The use of semiotics in musical analysis was born in the 1950s and 1960s, which has developed not into a singular discipline, but rather a varied collection of thoughts and practices.

Jean-Jacques Nattiez's *Music and Discourse*, which is a revision of his *Musicologie générale et sémiologie*, uses the ideas previously offered by C. S. Peirce (*Collected Papers*, vol. 1-6, 1931-35) who expanded Saussure's classic formulation of symbolic analysis.¹¹ Nattiez in his *Musical Analysis* (1990), attempted to grasp the totality of musical analysis by making distinctions between the poietic, neutral, and esthetic levels of semiotic analysis.¹² The poietic level deals with aspects of production in a piece of music; the neutral level deals with what Nattiez calls a "trace" or the written "music" itself; and the esthetic level deals with the consumption of music (perception, cognition, interpretation, and reception history). In addition to this three-tiered analytic structure, Nattiez explored how

¹⁰ Vladimir Karbusicky, *Grundriss der musikalischen Semantik* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1986): 17. See also his "The Experience of the Indexical Sign: Jakobson and the Semiotic Phonology of Leos Janacek," *American Journal of Semiotics* 2, no. 3 (1983): 35-58.

¹¹ Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Musicologie Générale et Sémiologie* (Paris: Bourgois, 1987). For more information on Peirce, see Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, eds. Charles Hartschorne, Paul Weiss, and A. W. Burk, 8 vols. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1931-1958).

¹² Jean Molino, "Fair musical et sémiologie de la musique," *Musique en Jeu* 17 (1975): 37-61.

musical semiology might illuminate various musicological problems. This includes, for example, “what is music?”; how to deal with cultures that have very different concepts of music from those studying the culture (the influence of cognitive ethnomusicology for example); and the problem of musical universals. There are many criticisms to Nattiez’s work—too many to discuss here. One of them points to the fact that he does not make a clear division between these levels of semiotic analysis.

The study of semiotics requires a rigorous scientific approach that social scientists argued was impossible in musical analysis. Nattiez was thought of as positivistic—perhaps failing to realize that theory has no basis in empiricist experimentation. In addition to Nattiez, there were, of course, some other influences from other linguistic schools including, in particular, the transformational-generative grammar of Chomsky, who looked at myth and musical works as myths coded in sounds instead of words, as did Claude Lévi-Strauss, and others.

One of the primary purposes of this dissertation is to look at music in ritual symbolic contexts. The notion that music, indeed, has referential functions is extremely important to the larger hermeneutic paradigmatic perspective that informs much of this work. These referential functions allow for interpreting how Armenian liturgical music mediates meaning through human symbolic music making in ritual actions. Often, scholars speak of ritual music as symbolic, withholding the importance of other ritual events tied to it. My intention is rather to look at the music in context and apply modified semiotic and musicological approaches

(structural interpretive), more specifically analyzing the ritual actions that support and imbue the music with meaning primarily through ritual action. These conceptual symbolic apparatus may include, for example, ritual objects, colors, actions, gestures, movements through and in space, the space or atmosphere itself, and both verbal and non-verbal qualities. Ernst Cassirer speaks to this in his famous work, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*:

Our investigations up to now have shown us how the perceptive world is built up as the particular contents that present themselves to consciousness are filled with increasingly richer and more diverse functions of meaning. The farther this process progresses, the broader becomes the sphere that consciousness can encompass and survey in a single moment. Each of its elements is now saturated as it were with such functions. It stands in manifold meaning-groups which in turn are systematically related to one another and which by virtue of this relationship complex we may call the world of our experience. Whatever complex we may single out from this totality of experience—whether we consider the coexistence of phenomena in space or their succession in time, the order of things and attributes or the order of causes and effects—always these orders disclose a determinate structure and a common formal character. They are so articulated that from each of their factors a transition is possible to the whole, because the organization of this whole is representable and represented in the whole. Through the reciprocal involvement of these representative functions consciousness acquires the power to spell out phenomena, to read them as experiences.¹³

Clearly, the nature of symbols is a complicated one, as symbolic thoughts and behaviors are among the most celebrated, indeed, critically important aspects of human society.

¹³ Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume 3: The Phenomenology of Knowledge*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1957): 191.

I believe music does evoke meaningful representations that are grounded in symbolic performance. Music has the power to refer to other things outside of the music itself and I believe it is this power of association that we may find the most useful method to determine the importance of liturgical music in ritual action, mainly with identity. This topic continues to be debated in musical circles, such as those following the Nattiez camp that music is “a play of forms and structures, but as products functionally related to the social, and most often ritual contexts in which they appear.”¹⁴ On the other side of the coin, there are also those, such as Eduard Hanslick, who emphasize only the surface aspects of music itself—as purely musical ideas.¹⁵

Ritual Studies

David I. Kertzer in his discussion of ritual forms in politics asks the question “What does ritual mean?:

What does ritual mean? Here, I take a middle path between an overly restrictive definition, which would limit ritual to the religious sphere and identify it with the supernatural, and an overly broad definition, labeling ritual any standardized human activity. In defining ritual, I am not, of course, trying to discover what ritual “really” is, for it is not an entity to be discovered. Rather, ritual is an analytical category that helps us deal with the chaos of human experience and put it into a coherent framework.

¹⁴ Jean-Jacques Nattiez, “Reflections on the Development of Semiology in Music,” trans. Katherine Ellis, *Music Analysis* 8 (1989): 22.

¹⁵ For more, see Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution Towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey Payzant from the eighth edition (1891) of *Vom Musicalisch-Schönen: ein Betrag zur Revision der Asthetik der Tonkunst* (Indianapolis: Hacket Publishing Company, 1986).

There is thus no right or wrong definition of ritual, but only one that is more or less useful in helping us understand the world in which we live. My own use of the term reflects my goal of shedding light on how symbolic processes enter into politics and why these are important.¹⁶

Though his work centers on politics, and mine on religion, I think there are similar themes present. Ritual follows highly structured, standardized sequences and is often enacted at certain places and times that are themselves endowed with special symbolic meaning. Ritual action is repetitive and, therefore, often redundant, but these very factors serve as important means of channeling emotion, cognition, and organization amongst groups. Michael Lawler speaks to this, saying “the total process of symbolization from beginning to end, from the first moment of the interpretation of the sensible reality into a symbol to the final moment of the transformation of that symbol, is controlled by the human symbolizer, and not by either the symbol or its meanings.”¹⁷

In Christianity, faith is of primary importance and the ritual, takes a secondary place, as a communal, open expression of this faith. Although in the secondary position, ritual can provide insight into the people’s understanding of religious and social issues, in particular their construction of identity.

In his work, *Rites of Passage* (1908), Arnold van Gennep (1873-1957), the father of formal processual analysis, noted the regularity and significance of the

¹⁶ David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988): 8.

¹⁷ Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Contemporary Sacramental Theology* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987): 11.

rituals attached to the transitional stages of human cultural development.¹⁸ Van Gennep utilized two sets of terms to describe the three phases of passage from one culturally defined state or status to another. Not only was he the first to use the terms *separation*, *margin*, and *reaggregation*; he also employed the terms *preliminal*, *liminal*, and *postliminal*. Van Gennep believed that the rites, studied and analyzed in the larger setting of the cultures they pertained to, could illuminate our knowledge of cultures as well as provide understanding of more general processes of cultural change.

Following van Gennep's approach, Victor Turner, the chief theorist in recent times, emphasized the transformative role that rituals play in societies. Extending Van Gennep's "rites of passage," Turner explored ritual in larger contexts—into ritual performance and ceremony, defining ritual as a "prescribed formal behavior for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical beings and powers."¹⁹ Turner described his approach to ritual studies as processual symbolic analysis involving "the interpretation of the meaning of symbols considered as dynamic systems of signifiers, signifieds, and changing modes of signification in temporal sociocultural processes."²⁰

¹⁸ See Arnold van Gennep, *Rites of Passage*, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

¹⁹ Victor W. Turner, "Color Classification in Ndembu Ritual," in *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Banton, A. S. A. Monographs, no. 3 (London: Tavistock): 166-68.

²⁰ For more on this theme, see Victor W. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine).

For Turner, symbols, both verbal and non-verbal, are units (or molecules) of which rituals are composed. Human rituals convey meaning by means of multi-vocal symbols, that is, symbols having meanings and significations.²¹ In order to interpret the many layers of meaning in ritual, Turner identifies three major dimensions of significance: the *exegetic*, the *operational*, and the *positional*. The *Exegetic Dimension* consists of the whole corpus of explanations of a symbol's meaning offered by indigenous informants (in musical performance, what does the music mean emically?). It may take the form of myth, interpretations, doctrine, or dogma.²² The *Operational Dimension* deals with a symbol's use, that is, what participants of ritual do with the symbol. When dealing with the operational dimension, questions to consider focus on the roles of the members of the group—1) the parts and roles in musical performance; 2) the function of music in including participants in the Liturgy itself; 3) meaning derived from these positions such as status, ethnicity, unity, *communitas*, and dynamics of gesture. The *Positional Dimension* of a symbol derives from its relationship to other symbols. Here, “we see the meaning of a symbol as deriving from its relationship to other symbols in a special cluster or *gestalt* of symbols whose elements acquire much of their meaning from their position in its structure, from their *relationship* to other symbols. Often a

²¹ Victor W. Turner, *Drama, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1974): 1, 7.

²² In the case of myth, the exegesis may be expressed through stories of cultural and societal origins—for, example, the story of Adam and Eve in Christianity. For more on this, see Victor W. Turner, “Symbols and Social Experience in Religious Ritual,” in *Worship and Ritual: In Christianity and Other Religions*, *Studia Missionalia*, 1-21 (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1974): 11-12.

symbol becomes *meaningful* only in its relationship to another symbols in terms of binary opposition or complementaries.”²³ In terms of liturgical performance, these may include the significance of the structure of the performance, the use of rhythm and temporal logic, and symbolic importance of the church. Symbols reveal crucial social and religious values; they are also transformative for human attitudes and behavior. Ritual exposes the power of symbols to act upon and change persons involved in ritual performance.

The scholar Ronald Grimes (*Beginnings in Ritual Studies* 1995) brings together the various aspects of ritual studies in anthropology, religious studies, and others to come to a general understanding of the meanings of rituals.²⁴ His view of ritual includes the idea that participants in rituals both enact and embody meaning in particular societies. In contrast with many previous studies, he takes a broad look at ritual studies—integrating many points of view. Grimes examines space, objects, time, sound and language, and the identity of actors (participants) and actions.

Tom Driver expresses “a need for ritual” in societies. By describing ritual ceremonies from Haiti, Papua New Guinea, Japan, Turkey, Korea, and other cultures, Driver approaches ritual as performance. He defines performance as an action that has unique effectiveness and often expresses more than words can. Rituals, he theorizes, are necessary for cohesion and transformation of cultures and

²³ Victor W. Turner 1974: 12-13.

²⁴ Ronald L. Grimes, *The Beginnings in Ritual Studies*, revised edition (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1995).

societies, in that rituals make and maintain order, deepen and strengthen communal bonds and allow for personal and social transformation. Driver contends that humans *must* engage creatively in ritual performance including rites of passage, rites of intensification, ceremonies to heal, for grief, political performances—all aimed at changing society in some way.²⁵

Music and Ritual in Religious Worship

The use of the term *liturgy* is often used to designate any system or set of rituals that is prescribed for public or corporate performance. In terms of Christian practice, liturgy has been described as “formal public worship of Christian assemblies” and a form of ecclesial ritual actions.²⁶ This “worship” is ritualistic itself, as well as its components. Therefore, since one of the essential elements of ritual is participation (through performance), music in the Christian Liturgy (ritual) also invites the worshipper to participate in the action of music-making. Singing, playing, listening, and kinesics allow the participant to enact or perform their conception of faith—heightening believers through the process of ritual: separation, liminality, and incorporation.

²⁵ See, for example, Tom Driver, *The Magic of Ritual: Our Need for Liberating Rites that Transform Our Lives and Our Communities* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991).

²⁶ Margaret Mary Kellher, “Worship,” in *The New Dictionary of Theology*, eds. Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, and Dermot A. Lane (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991): 1105-1106. The term “liturgical worship” is often used to describe any ecclesial action of communal actors in ritual performance.

Van Gennep saw ‘rites’ as organized events in which society took individuals by the hand and led them from one social status to another, conducting them across thresholds and holding them for a moment in a position when they were neither in one status nor another. He distinguished between three phases: the first separated people from their original status, the second involved a period apart from normal status, and the third conferred a new status upon the individual. By comparing rites of passage with moving from room to room within a house, van Gennep described these three phases of rites of passage in terms of the Latin word *limen* meaning ‘threshold’ or ‘doorstep.’ He spoke of:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1) separated people from their original status | |
| 2) involved a period apart from normal status | |
| 3) conferred a new status upon the individual | |
| 1) pre-liminal—Van Gennep | (Separation—Victor Turner) |
| 2) liminal—Van Gennep | (Liminal—Victor Turner) |
| 3) post-liminal—Van Gennep | (Reaggregation—Victor Turner) |

The above diagram illustrates the similarity between both Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner’s ritual processual analysis. Victor Turner (1969) took up this middle phase and developed the idea of liminality by exploring the relationships people have with each other during periods of change in social status. He suggested that during liminal periods, individuals experience what is called a sense of *communitas* or awareness of being bound together in a community of shared experience. Indeed, all of these characteristics of music-making as symbolic process contribute to the overall integrity of the liturgical process—therefore revealing worshippers’ conception of faith.

Believers worship through hymns and chanting. Words play a significant part, but music helps lift the word into another transformative realm. Both music and words often benefit from a particular setting—for example, cathedrals, churches, and chapels.²⁷ This is very important to the faith of Christian believers for words relay the importance of the relationship between God and humanity. In fact, the history of Christian worship involves the constant relationship between the inward reflection (faith) and outward performance of ritual worship. Considering this, it is understandable why Christianity focused so much on the concept of worship.

The relationship of music and ritual, especially in worship, has been the subject of serious reflection and study in the past century and stems from the concept of performance or the very instance of enactment or representation. Tom Driver's description of religious ritual is particularly enlightening in this context:

Religion's being danced out, sung out, sat out in silence, or lined out liturgically, with ideation playing a secondary role, is not something confined to religion's early stages, but is characteristic of religion as long as it is vital. This does not mean, of course, that ritual is mindless, nor anti-intellectual. It means that its form of intelligence is more similar to that of the arts than to conceptual theology, just as the intelligence of poetry is a different order than that of philosophy or literary criticism.²⁸

²⁷ “‘Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.’ The Jews then said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?’ But he spoke of the temple of his body. When, therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed . . . the word, which Jesus spoke (John 2: 18-22).” Bruce M. Metzger and Ronald E. Murphy, eds., “John 2: 18-22,” in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*, new revised standard edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994): 355 New Testament.

²⁸ Tom Driver 1991: 84.

Driver explicates that symbolism in the arts and performance is a crucial element of rituals in religious activities—not merely characteristics limited to “religion’s early stages.” Taking this further, it is clear that the language or interpretation of rituals parallels that of the arts. Indeed, Driver contends that artistic discourse is of a different order than philosophy, theology, or literary criticism.

This hermeneutic approach to ritual may also be applied to Christian theological interpretations. The theologian Avery Dulles identifies the ecclesial-transformative approach to theology in general—as one in which symbolism in worship plays a key role in the conception of faith for believers.²⁹ However, when speaking of “faith,” the question exists as to what extent “faith” may be explained from the viewpoint of the outsider. What I do believe we may speak about is the *conception* of faith—viewing the symbolic communication of music in ritual as imbued with a depth of meaning that surpasses conceptual thinking. In this approach,

. . . the primary subject matter of theology is taken to be the saving self-communication of God through the symbolic events and words of Scripture, especially Jesus Christ as the ‘mediator and fullness of all revelation.’ A privileged locus for the apprehension of this subject matter is the worship claimed and “re-presented” in ways that call for active participation (at least in mind and heart) on the part of the congregation. The interplay of symbols in community worship arouses and directs the worshippers’ tacit powers of apprehension so as to instill a personal familiarity with the Christian mysteries.³⁰

²⁹ See Avery Dulles, *The Craft of Theology: From Symbol to System* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1992).

³⁰ Avery Dulles 1992: 19.

According to Dulles, then, the teachings of the church are expressed symbolically in the Liturgy.

Ray Allen, in his dissertation “Singing in the Spirit: An Ethnography of Gospel Performance in New York City's African-American Church Community” focused on Christian worship within the African American community.³¹ As ritual practice, gospel performance serves as an extension of the Sunday morning worship service—a public occasion when sacred ideation, emotion, and experience become tightly entwined. Through song, testimony, and dramatic movement, gospel performance evokes deep spiritual, moral, and aesthetic sentiments. He showed that these rituals serve as symbolic vehicles for maintaining Southern rural identity, religion, and values in a northern urban environment. According to the author, songs and testimonies are rich with romantic imagery of the rural South, and urge listeners to go back to the past, to times when people worked harder, respected their family and elders, and “practiced genuine Christian values.” Changing patterns of performance style in African-American sacred singing reflect the complex forces of migration, urbanization, acculturation, and cultural revitalization that have shaped twentieth century African-American life.

Taking a historical perspective, Hans Baer examines the social and religious context of Christianity and the act of missioning to slaves during the late eighteenth

³¹ See Ray Allen, “Singing in the Spirit: An Ethnography of Gospel Performance in New York City's African-American Church Community,” Ph.D. dissertation (University of Pennsylvania, 1987).

and nineteenth century.³² Though focusing on Christian ritual practice, the work takes a different viewpoint for the function of music in Christian practice. Rather than concentrating on the typical worship ceremonies in Christianity—namely ritual—the author shows how rituals were adapted to maintain traditional identity resisting the hegemony. Rather than processual, music and ritual is presented only in the context of practice.

Edward Foley, in his *Music in Ritual: A Pre-Theological Investigation* investigates music in ritual, discussing music as power, communication, language, and symbol. The author concludes that music fills a void in worship with its symbolic import and is an integral part of ritual.

Alan P. Merriam, in his “Music Change in a Basongye Village (Zaire)” took the Basongye Village as a backdrop, and examined the disappearances of traditional ritual music amongst Christian believers and argues that in this case, wherever music is tied to events, the music ceases when the events no longer occur.³³ This is somewhat problematic because it fails to recognize that while the event may no longer exist, the music may continue. However, Merriam is correct that the circumstances, or ritual functions, of the music in its original format (or intention) will not remain. Whenever situations change, the ritual function of music will also change. This does not mean that the music will cease to exist. This work includes a

³² See Hans Baer, “An Overview of Ritual, Oratory, and Music in Southern Black Religion,” *Southern Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (1985): 5-14.

³³ See Alan P. Merriam, “Music Change in a Basongye Village (Zaire),” *Anthropos* 72 (1977): 806-46.

very helpful introduction of Christianity and a description of indigenous Presbyterian Church music.

Patricia L. Robertson's "The Role of Singing in the Christian Science Church" studies the role of singing in the Church of Christ Scientist.³⁴ This work traces the evolution from the Protestant hymn and solo singing tradition in the United States Christian Science services and reflects the views of Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910), who founded the church in 1879. Eddy was influenced by the Puritan belief that worship should be simple and without "ritual," but believed that music should play a vital role in worship.

Faith: A Study in Paradox

Determining a person's faith simply by observation is itself a seeming impossibility. One particularly important point which needs to be grasped when trying to understand people's religious life is the way that the historical tradition of a religion relates to the personal life of the believer. William A. Luljpen speaks to this in a rather forward statement:

Most of the time when *others* tell me what *I* believe I feel very unhappy. And since it happens rather frequently that others speak "on my behalf" in this way, I am all too often unhappy. For example, in the section *Religion* of the New York weekly *Time*, one can read: "The Catholic believes that . . ." Usually I cannot simply reject such a description in its totality but, at the same time, I cannot give an unequivocal affirmative answer to the question whether I really believe "this" or "that." What is the reason for this? . . . The Catholic, it is said, believes that: God has made heaven and earth; God is one Nature in three Persons . . .

³⁴ See Patricia L. Robertson, "The Role of Singing in the Christian Science Church: The Forming of a Tradition," Ph.D. dissertation (New York University, 1996).

Do I really believe all this? And if I don't, what would it matter.³⁵

In Turnbull's *The Human Cycle* (1984), he discusses the importance of religion in human life cycles.³⁶ Christian rituals and interpretations, in turn, play essential roles in periods of birth, adulthood, marriage, and death in extensive ways. In an effort to perhaps go 'blindly' past typical interpretations of ritual practice, I feel that by exploring Christian ritual worship in terms of social changes, we will have yet another method by which to 'picture' the deeper aspects of Christian ritual and in turn *faith* and heritage.

³⁵ William A. Luijpen, *Theology as Anthropology*, distributed by Humanities Press, New York (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1973): 72-73.

³⁶ See C. M. Turnbull, *The Human Cycle* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1984).

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology: Fieldwork and Musical/Ritual Analysis

Introduction

The community group chosen for my research is the diasporic Armenians located in the Boston, Massachusetts and Washington DC/Baltimore, MD metropolitan areas (see figure 1), though primary fieldwork for this dissertation has been conducted in the Washington, DC/Baltimore area. The members of this community are, to a significant extent first generation immigrants, with younger members born in the United States. The community has strong historical and cultural ties to Armenia, which are recognized by deep-seated religious, linguistic, and family links.



Fig. 1. Members of the St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church during Christmas Mass

Sources that inform and supply data for my study are multifaceted and, given the nature of fieldwork, take the form of oral interviews and observations. Documentation and descriptive observation are ultimately the most valuable sources of information for my research question(s). Thus, besides identifying both primary and secondary textual sources, data collection consisted of questionnaires, interviews, fieldnotes, sound recordings, transcriptions and transnotations of music, and photography. Music transcriptions in this dissertation are meant to show what I actually heard during fieldwork and not necessarily what is printed in Volumes I and II of the *Sacred Music of the Armenian Apostolic Church*. Therefore, those

familiar with this tradition may find that these transcriptions may deviate from standardized versions.

The Field: Context for Ethnography

This study builds upon my previous work that, though focused directly on ethnomusicological implications in ethnographic museology, also utilized the methodology of oral history to examine the musical culture of the Armenian community in Boston, Massachusetts, as well as surrounding areas including Watertown, Worcester, and other localities. As I was working specifically with museological and ethnomusicological theory in the context of this community, my early fieldwork in museum studies became, in many ways, my introduction to the culture that informs this present work. Further research led to fieldwork with the Armenian communities in the Washington, DC/Baltimore, Maryland areas.

My fieldwork was designed to yield empirically observable qualities of the liturgical performance, including significantly, the participants (both worshippers and leaders of this worship service). I also include my own perspective. Indeed, it is my firm belief that every time a researcher enters a field, he/she has to be aware of biases that cannot be extracted, no matter the effort.

Fieldwork

Boston, Massachusetts and Surrounding Areas

My initial impression of the Armenian community came as I took the position of Assistant Curator of Collections at the Armenian Museum and Library of

America in Watertown, Massachusetts. The Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) is an ethnographic museum founded in 1971 by a group of Armenians interested in conserving Armenian culture.¹ ALMA's mission is to preserve and promote Armenian history and culture through collecting, conserving, and documenting objects relating to Armenian culture. Various exhibitions, lectures, classes, and outreach programs create awareness and appreciation of the heritage and contributions of the Armenian people. ALMA was originally housed in the basement of an Armenian Church in Belmont, Massachusetts before moving to its current location in Watertown, Massachusetts. From humble beginnings, ALMA has acquired the most extensive collection of Armenian material in the United States, with over 40,000 items. These include Urartian artifacts, coins (90 BC – 14 AD), domestic metalwork (1500 AD – 1900 AD), illustrated manuscripts and prayer scrolls (1500 AD – 1900 AD), early printed books, rugs, textiles, paintings, historic photographs, maps, posters, ceramics, sculptures, works of art on paper, musical instruments, liturgical artifacts, costumes, personal accessories, stamps and currency, oral history recordings, music recordings, videotapes, newspapers, periodicals, archival documents, ephemera and other articles of historical or cultural interest. Because of this massive collection, the Armenian Church in Belmont was no longer able to contain the collection. Consequently, in 1988, ALMA purchased a four-story building in Watertown. ALMA chose this

¹Information presented in this chapter is a reflection of interviews of Gary Lind-Sinanian and Susan Lind-Sinanian (1999) and personal observations of the workings of the Armenian Library and Museum.

location because of the availability of real estate and because Watertown is home to the largest Armenian community in the United States. The current structure houses a main exhibition hall, several smaller ground floor galleries, a research library, the third floor gallery for contemporary art exhibits, studio space, conservation facilities, offices, meeting rooms, and climate controlled vaults for storage. The building's fourth floor space provides lease income to help support ALMA's operations until future expansion.

My position as assistant curator allowed me access into the community from a culturally accepted outsider's or etic perspective, which otherwise would have been rather difficult. The Armenian community is a close-knit society, which is, at least in my experience, suspicious of outsiders (non-Armenians wanting to study Armenians). The fact that I was able to enter this culture in such a position opened many doors for me. Somewhat ironically, as I am now at the University of Maryland, this position allowed for further acquaintance with the Armenian community in Washington, DC only a few miles away—specifically with Dr. Adrian Parsegian of the Armenian Educational Foundation. Dr. Parsegian came to me with genocide interview tapes that needed to be transcribed and preserved. It was his goal to eventually house those recordings, at least in part, at ALMA. Dr. Parsegian frequently lectures on oral history and remembrance of the Armenian Genocide. I will discuss him below.

ALMA's commitment to the celebration of Armenian heritage naturally draws the bulk of its constituency from various Armenian American communities, which exist throughout the United States. The ethnographic nature of the collection

stimulates interest from other immigrant populations who look to ALMA's presentations for comparison and contrast with their own experiences. ALMA's place in the community is further enhanced because it is the only museum in Watertown. ALMA is the site for the annual exhibition sponsored by the Watertown Art Association, a beneficiary of the Watertown Arts Lottery. In addition, ALMA frequently hosts other cultural activities in the township. In 1995, ALMA organized an exhibit entitled *Legacy of Lace: Historic and Ethnic Laces of Watertown*, designed to show the diverse cultural and historic significance lace has had in Watertown since the founding of a lace-making factory in Watertown in the 1820's. In addition to Armenian examples, the show featured lace from Watertown's Irish, Italian, Greek, Polish, and Slovakian communities and brought a diverse audience to ALMA.

Selected highlights from the collections travel from ALMA for presentation at other sites, allowing ALMA to broaden its geographic reach. Locations for these satellite exhibits have included Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, the Worcester Art Museum, Dartmouth College, Tufts University, Shawmut Bank in Belmont, and folk festivals in Worcester, Springfield, and Haverhill. Other national and international locations include the Fresno Art Museum in California, the Balch Institute in Philadelphia, the Montreal Textile Museum, and the Palaise de la Bourse in Marseilles, France. ALMA is one of the United States' most prominent Armenian cultural institutions. ALMA plays a leadership position in the formation of the *Consortium of Libraries*, which includes universities, public libraries and other organizations with sizable collections of material on Armenian subjects.

ALMA also serves as the repository for the Data Bank of the *Armenian Rug Society*. In addition, ALMA often houses significant events for the Armenian community. These include the New England press conference of American donors of humanitarian aid to Armenia, and national meetings or receptions for the *Armenian World Medical Conference, Armenian Medical Association, Armenian Bar Association, Armenian Nursing Association, and League of Armenian Voters*.

In addition, ALMA created the *Catalog for the State History Museum of Armenia*, setting a new standard for catalogs in Armenia. The seventy-two page work contains approximately 150 photographs, a Foreword by President Levon Ter Petrossian, a summary of Armenian history, a narrative of the collection and objects represented and a composite color map by the *National Geographic Society* showing the boundaries of Armenia today and during other historic periods. The most visible indicator of ALMA's success is that it continues to be the recipient of significant objects and collections from throughout the United States. Some of these items were cherished family heirlooms while others were accumulated over the years of careful acquisitions. Generous benefactors purchase a number of important objects at auctions specifically for ALMA. These gifts reveal the true importance ALMA in the lives of Armenians and Armenian Americans alike.

Contact with the various individuals that either visited, made contributions, or simply became affiliated with ALMA made for valuable relationships, especially for their ability to facilitate further relationships with other people. This also cemented authority for what I was trying to accomplish. Through networking, I located various informants of different backgrounds. As an "authority" on

Armenian musical culture, I came to know many people influential people throughout the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. My initial interest in Armenian sacred music and from these acquaintances, which allowed for visitation at various Armenian churches throughout the Boston area including:

Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts

Established: 1880

Estimated Number of Members: 1,334

Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church in Chelmsford, Massachusetts

Established: 1910

Estimated Number of Members: 550

Armenian Church of Metro West

Established: 2001

Estimated Number of Members: 600

The Armenian Church at Hye Point in Lawrence, Massachusetts

Established: This parish is not yet permanently established, though I did have contact with the then *St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Church* in Haverhill, Massachusetts.

Armenian Church of Cape Cod in Mashpee, Massachusetts

St. Mark Armenian Church in Springfield, Massachusetts

Established: 1958

Estimated Number of Members: 200

St. James Armenian Church in Watertown, Massachusetts

Established: 1900

Estimated Number of Members: 2,400

Armenian Church of Our Savior in Worcester, Massachusetts

Established: 1891

Estimated Number of Members: 740

Early on, as I attended services and spoke with participants of the Liturgical service, I was able to know about the community I would eventually more formally observe. This period of time (1999-2000) was extremely valuable for it provided much of my knowledge of the background data supplied in this study. It was during this time that I was able to meet Father Oshagon Minassian, choir director of the Erevan Choral Society, a sixty-voice choir dedicated to the performance of Armenian vocal music affiliated with the Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Father Minassian holds a masters (1962) and doctorate (1974) in theology as well as a masters in music (1975) from Boston University. Father Minassian grew up in Aleppo, Syria, one of the countries to which Armenians fled after the massacre by the Turks in 1915. He went to seminary first in Antelias, near Beirut, and then in Jerusalem, where he studied music with the Armenian composer Hampart Zoun Berberian. With his historical consciousness and knowledge of both music and theology, he was able to enlighten me with significant insight into the community as a whole.

Other influential people included Gary and Susan Lind-Sinianian, Curators of ALMA. In addition to their general knowledge on Armenia history, Gary and Susan Lind-Sinianian have researched many traditional dances of Western Armenia brought to the United States by the early immigrants by interviewing members of

the Armenian community who can remember those dances. Gary Lind-Sinianian studied dance anthropology at the University of Massachusetts in Boston and teaches dance notation (Sutton Movement Shorthand). Susan Lind-Sinianian is a special education teacher with extensive knowledge in dance and Armenian needlework. The Lind-Sinianians are the founders of the Middle East Folk Arts Cooperative and the directors of a dance group that performs traditional dances of western Armenia. They have lectured and taught dance workshops across the United States. As previously mentioned, they are also curators of the Armenian Library and Museum of America.

In addition to the vast number of community contacts in the Boston area, I was also given access to a wealth of scholarly information found at various institutions and libraries. Consulting primary sources proved challenging since most remained in Armenia. For example, at the American University of Armenia they have recently set up a computer database to make its 25,000 volumes more easily accessible to its 6,000 library users. The library is also the first Armenian library with open stack services. Unfortunately however, the Armenian language holdings at this library are very limited.² Most of its holdings are in English and come from the United States or Britain.

In the diaspora, I was greatly surprised to find that there is some available literature in Armenian on music and musical life. Gaining access to literature became a priority for me. Once I gained access to much of the material, I delved into numerous early twentieth-century ethnographic interviews from the archives

² Interview: Andy Nercessian (2002)

located in the Armenian Library and Museum of America and the Armenian Educational Council in Washington, DC.³ In the Boston area, the libraries at Harvard University⁴, Massachusetts Institute for Technology⁵, Tufts University⁶, and Boston University⁷ provided much information. In my search for resources in the diaspora, I also have found many publishers of Armenian works in such places as Athens, Paris, Los Angeles, and Detroit. I began consulting nineteenth and early twentieth-century ethnographies of traditional Armenian villages and reference materials compiled before and after the 1915 Armenian Genocide.⁸ For a more

³ Much of this information came from a series of interviews from Adrian Parseghian, president of the Armenian Educational Council.

⁴ The Harvard University Library is a department of the Central Administration and serves as the coordinating body for the more than ninety separate libraries that comprise the Harvard library system. These include the Office for Information Systems (which manages HOLLIS), the Harvard Depository (for off-site storage), the Weissman Preservation Center, the University Archives (including the Records Management Program), and the Library Digital Initiative.

⁵ The MIT Libraries support the Institute's programs of study and research. Five major subject libraries, for Architecture and Planning, Engineering, Humanities, Science, Management and Social Science, as well as five specialized libraries and the Institute Archives, offer access to a wide range of materials, both print and electronic.

⁶ The Tufts University Music Library's collection of approximately 35,000 items consists of musical scores, books on music, sound recordings (in compact disc, LP, and cassette formats), journals (including current subscriptions to about 75 journal titles), reference materials, and CD-ROMS. The Music Library regularly purchases new materials for the collection in order to strengthen its resources to support instruction, research, and study. Special collections in music are housed in the Tisch Library's University Archives and Special Collections.

⁷ The Boston University Music Library is a research collection supporting Western art music, music education, performance practice and ethnomusicology.

⁸ A consequence of the 1915 Armenian Genocide entailed mass diaspora of the Armenian people throughout the world. Thus, many traditional practices were lost.

“emic” Armenian experience, I examined V. H. Bdoyan’s *Hay Azgagrutyun: Hamarot Urvagits (Armenian Ethnography: Brief Outline)*, published in Yerevan in 1974.⁹ In this work, I was struck by the significant gap between Armenian and Western ethnographical concerns. The ideological impositions of Marxist-Leninist policy and the seemingly conflicting nationalist attitude in all areas of the study of Armenian culture, have contributed in significantly amplifying this gap. Ethnographies that recounted the histories of villages include Mary E. Durham’s *Some Tribal Origins, Laws, and Customs of the Balkans* (1928)¹⁰; M. B. Dzeron’s *Village of Parchanj* (1984)¹¹; Edit Fel and Tomas Hofer’s *Proper Peasants: Traditional Life in a Hungarian Village* (1969)¹²; Vatche Ghazarian’s *A Village Life Remembered: The Armenian of Habousi* (1997)¹³; Susan Pattie’s “The Armenian Communities of Cyprus and London: The Changing Patterns of Family life,” in *Armenian Women in a Changing World* (1995)¹⁴ to name a few.

⁹ V. H. Bdoyan, *Hay Azgagrutyun: Hamarot Urvagits (Armenian Ethnography: Brief Outline)* Yerevan, 1974.

¹⁰ Mary E. Durham, *Some Tribal Origins, Laws, and Customs of the Balkans* (London, 1928).

¹¹ M. B. Dzeron, *Village of Parchanj*, trans. by Suren M. Seron (Fresno, CA: Panorama West Books, 1984).

¹² Edit Fel and Tomas Hofer, *Proper Peasants: Traditional Life in a Hungarian Village* (Chicago, 1969).

¹³ Vatche Ghazarian, *A Village Life Remembered: The Armenian of Habousi* (Waltham, MA: Mayreni Publishing, 1997).

¹⁴ Susan Pattie, “The Armenian Communities of Cyprus and London: The Changing Patterns of Family life,” *Armenian Women in a Changing World* (Belmont, MA: AIWA Press), 1995: 133-143.

Baltimore, Maryland/Washington, DC Areas

Having arrived in the Washington, DC/Baltimore, Maryland area, I immediately began to establish contacts with the 7,000 Armenians in the community. My initial goal was to first find academics that could lead me to the community, as this was the way I entered the Boston community. I quickly learned that this method of “finding my community” would not work in this area. Not only were there no Armenian specialist scholars in the vicinity, I was surprised to find that the Armenian community had little influence in general.

I contacted Dr. Adrian Parsegian, whom I knew from a previous collaboration on a preservation project of genocide songs and interviews. Despite having no formal training in Armenian music, he was helpful in establishing contacts in the Washington D.C. Armenian community.

My previous trips to Washington made me aware of the Armenian material available at the Library of Congress. The catalogue of the Library of Congress has some 250 items that deal specifically with Armenian music. I also ventured into the Georgetown area of Washington, DC to Dumbarton Oaks, a magnificent research institution.¹⁵ I found their collection of Byzantine studies exceedingly fruitful, but their collection on Armenian studies is quite limited.

Though there were few resources to be found at Dumbarton Oaks, the cross-references brought me to the University of Maryland libraries. The University of

¹⁵ The Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection houses important research resources in the areas of Byzantine studies, the history of landscape architecture, and Pre-Columbian studies. The collections of Byzantine and Pre-Columbian art and the rare books and prints relating to the gardens are on public display.

Maryland, despite having no faculty who concentrated in Armenian studies had a number of holdings on Armenian culture. At this point, I began mapping out the available resources in Armenian music in general. I went to London, England to the British Library for further search for materials on Armenian music. I presented the results of my research in the book *Armenian Music: A Comprehensive Bibliography and Discography* (Scarecrow Press, 2004). The work on this book provided me with background for undertaking my work on this dissertation.

In the Washington D.C./Baltimore area, I did make a number of contacts in the Armenian community. I found two churches in the area, both of which provide the core source of field data for this dissertation. Following a meeting with Father Habesian, the Celebrant of *Soorp Khatch Armenian Church*, I began attending services at the *Soorp Khatch Armenian Church* in Bethesda, Maryland, a very “traditional” Armenian-American church. The atmosphere at *Soorp Khatch* was extremely conservative. I was struck by its simplicity and “guised-Armenianness.” What made the church building initially stand out was not that it did not adhere to my “expected” ornate façade, but rather its simplicity and odd location in the middle of a residential neighborhood. Below are two graphics of the layout of *Soorp Khatch*. The issue of space will be discussed more thoughtfully in Chapter Six.

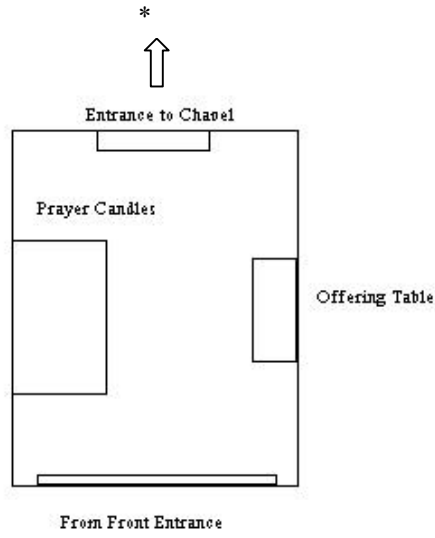


Fig. 2. Vestibule of Soorp Khatch Armenian Apostolic Church

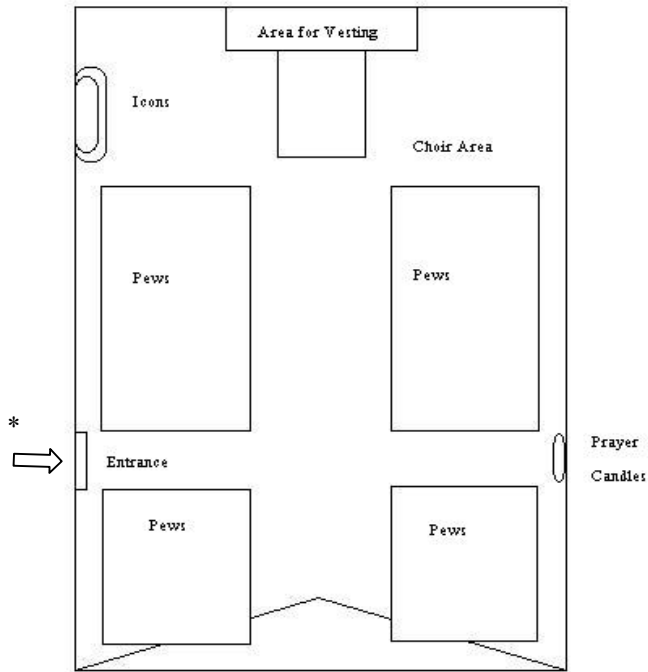


Fig. 3. Diagram of Soorp Khatch Armenian Apostolic Church

Unlike other some American parishes I had attended in Boston, there seemed to be a stark attempt to create an atmosphere “authentically” Armenian. In no case was there English spoken, only Armenian. Although I had a working knowledge of Western Armenian and had previously attended the Armenian Liturgy of which *Grabar* is the official language, I was not Armenian. Attending the service as often as I could, I also took part in other church activities. I began having meetings with the Celebrant and various church leaders in order to gain a firmer acceptance, that I viewed was lacking in my research. ArchCelebrant Father Khorin Habesian provided me with much information about his congregation in our initial meeting. In fact, it was he who originally invited me to attend the service. One thing he said to me in an interview struck me as particularly interesting:

The choir sings quite nicely, but we try to encourage the congregational participants to sing, but they do not. Music functions as the Liturgy itself and by participating, this expresses faith.¹⁶

Prior to this meeting, I had incorrectly assumed, that like many of the communities in Boston, participation of the audience in the form of singing would be commonplace.

A typical Sunday at *Soorp Khatch* would begin at 10:00 a.m. and at that time I would be one of only about ten people in attendance. By the time of Holy Communion, the number of participants increased significantly (to approximately

¹⁶ Interview: Father Khorin Habesian (2001)

fifty). However, the increase of the number of participants did not increase the actual “musical” participation.¹⁷

Through a colleague, I met a student who happened to be a member of *Soorp Khatch*, Harry Nazarian. Thinking that my interests lie primarily in music, and perhaps misunderstanding my research interests, Harry invited me to dinner at his home and to a concert at Soorp Khatch. This turned into a very meaningful event, one that changed my perspective completely, for I was finally given permission to enter the “insider’s home.” My conversations with the Nazarians, Lucy (Harry’s mother), George (Harry’s father), and his brother) proved to be one of the most enjoyable and helpful moments in the fieldwork process. Lucy Nazarian is extremely knowledgeable and has many community contacts—particularly high-ranking Armenian leaders in the United States, Canada, and of course, Armenia. We had a nice conversation, and she promised that evening to introduce me to the Armenian Ambassador to the United States.¹⁸ I also learned from this meeting that there was much more to the concept of faith. The concept of faith is not only “performed” on Sunday, but rather, it is a manifestation of a community—the Armenian community. Following dinner and conversations, we (Harry and myself, soon to be followed by Lucy) left for a concert at Soorp Khatch, which featured an opera singer, a cellist, and a twelve-year old prodigious Armenian pianist. The program of the concert was as follows:

I. Introduction to Performance

¹⁷ Interview: Father Khorin Habesian (2001).

¹⁸ Interview: Lucy Nazarian (2002).

a. *A woman introduced the program of the concert
(in Armenian)*

II. *Cello Performance by Dr. John Gevorkian*

a. *Former principal cellist of the Armenian
National Symphony.*

b. *Both Western Classical and Armenian
Classical/Folk music.*

III. *Voice Performance by Anoosh Barclay an opera
singer*

a. *Graduate of the Manhattan School of Music
(BM, MM)*

b. *Mixed Western and Armenian Classical Art
music.*

Sitting in the church and talking with members of the Armenian community, it became clear that the church plays a central role in the community—even during secular events. It seemed that in this context, the boundaries between secular events and sacred were blurred. I asked a number of audience members, in Armenian, what they thought of having a concert such as this in a church setting. It seemed so natural to them, as one anonymous man told me “For the Armenians, Christianity and being Armenian are not separable, therefore this issue is not actually a

question.”¹⁹ From this, I understood that the role of the Christianity extended beyond the boundaries of religion to that of national identity and heritage.

At this concert, I was also able to meet other members of the Armenian community, such as members of the Armenian community who did not attend church and political figures. I also started to speak with Father Habesian as well as to members of the other Armenian Church, *Saint Mary’s Armenian Apostolic Church*.

Saint Mary’s Armenian Apostolic Church is located just inside Washington, DC, on Fessenden Street, near the Columbia Heights Metro stop. This congregation consists of approximately 800 members. This church is more active in the Armenian community and is also less conservative than *Soorp Khatch*. The parish, which was established between 1932 and 1935 helped commemorate in April 1975, the 60th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide at the National Cathedral with the grandson of President Woodrow Wilson. In February 1989, the parish hosted a diplomatic banquet attended by (at that time) Vazken I, Catholicos of All Armenians, and Karekin II, Catholicos of the Holy Sea of Cilicia, to thank the United States for its support following the 1988 earthquake. Following the passing of Vazken I, Karekin II became the Catholicos of All Armenians. The Parish hosted the Diocesan Assembly in 1980; the Choir Association Assembly in 1967, 1984, and 1997; and the *Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA)* Sports Weekend in 1997. The Parish has also hosted receptions for Armenian

¹⁹ Discussion with anonymous member of Armenian community (2001).

Republic President Levon Ter Petrossian and British Baroness Carolyn Cox. From the outside, the church looks like a typical American Christian church, but with slight differences:



Fig. 4. St. Mary's Armenian Church Washington, DC

There are two crosses on either side of the door, a tower, a flag that celebrates 1700 years of Christianity and two American flags, signifying Armenian American identity. The outside tower, above the door is representative of traditional Armenian architecture:



Figs. 5 and 6. "Armenian Tower" reminiscent of Armenian Architecture

There was also a celebratory sign commemorating 1700 years of Christianity:



Fig. 7. Front of St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church

Armenian architecture is a hallmark of traditional Armenian identity and is something that, at its best, ties the diasporic community to its home country. While working with Lucy Der Manuelian at Tufts University, I became increasingly aware of the variety and distinctiveness of Armenian architecture, especially in the larger context of early Christian architecture.²⁰ Armenia's landscape is speckled with old

²⁰ See Lucy Der Manuelian, "The Monastery of Geghard: A Study of Armenian Architectural Sculpture in the 13th Century," PhD Dissertation (Boston, Massachusetts: Boston University, 1980); and *ibid*, *Armenian Architecture*, four volumes (Zug, 1981–7).

churches and monasteries. Early Armenian church architecture retained some elements of the earlier Urartian, Greeks, Parthians, Romans and Syrian styles. After the adoption of Christianity in 301 CE, Armenian architecture developed its own characteristics of balanced proportions (center towers) and rather simple exterior, which curiously contrasts with Armenia's rough topography:



Holy Etchmiadzin Cathedral

Fig. 8. Example of Traditional Armenian Architecture. Holy Etchmiadzin Used with permission from the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America (Eastern).

Traditionally, Armenian churches makes use of the double-intersecting arch that spans the interior space and the pyramidal dome. This architecture has little influence for Armenian churches in the United States, mostly because, often, the buildings were originally erected for other denominations. However, in many Armenian churches, one can find additions that tie the buildings architecturally to churches in the old country. Though the architectural style of the Armenian churches in America varies, one can see an effort to make them look “Armenian” by the use of an elevated, traditional pitched roof and a vaulted dome (see figure 8).

St. Mary's Armenian Church is significantly larger than *Soorp Khatch*:



Fig. 9. Inside St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church



Fig. 10. Inside St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church

There is some variation between the Liturgy between St. Mary's and Soorp Khatch. Rev. Fr. Vertanes Kalayjian, called Der Hayr by the congregation, is the pastor of this church. He conducts the Divine Liturgy in *Graber*, but gives his sermon in both English and Armenian.



Fig. 11. St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Choir

Personal Orientations: Emic and Etic Research

Initially, I thought that my entrance into this community would not be very difficult, as I am a Christian insider to the faith, as they are. Yeretzgin, Der Hayr's wife, said to me "In this church, Christian is Christian—you are welcome to celebrate with us," however, I quickly found out that the fact that I am not Armenian made me feel like an outsider.

I have come to realize that my position as both an insider and outsider was optimal and in observation, I could maintain a distance as well as ask emically sensitive questions.

Methodological Strategies for Interpreting Musical/Ritual Performance: Musical Ethnography and Ritual Analysis

In my role as a participant and an outsider observer, I asked such questions as 1) Who is conducting and participating in the ritual process, 2) What is being done, in terms of action- and language centered activities, 3) When is the ritual taking place and what is its significance, 4) Where is the ritual taking place, and what of its significance in terms of spatial importance, and 5) How does the ritual progress and what is its meaning to those participants and actors performing the ritual. Through ethnography, both personal and group functions may be revealed. Catherine Bell in her *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, considers ritual in the context of religion rather than simply a fact of society.²¹ Bell utilizes a perspective from performance theory, which maintains that ritual restores ritual action to social activity. A performance approach understands ritual as “encapsulations of culture” which the ritual interpreter decodes, providing “direct access to native units of experience and clear observation of sociocultural processes.”²²

Ethnography is a form of description and analysis and can be defined simply as writing about culture. Ethnography in musical performance allows for a systematic examination of music within specific cultural contexts—linguistic, individual, societal, occasion, kinesics, etc. John Blacking, in his work with the Venda, defined the ethnographic approach as “how sounds are conceived, made, appreciated, and (how they) influence . . . individuals, groups, and social and

²¹ Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford, 1992)

²² Catherine Bell 1992: 39.

musical processes.”²³ In addition to observations, ethnography is a portal to the people who participate within musical events through conversations, interviews and general comments. These observations and interviews provide important indicators of how music is understood within particular cultures and this certainly should be considered in ritual analysis. Ritual performance is an in-time activity that exists within contexts that are regulated by the participants of the ritual itself.

Besides descriptive analytical processes that may be observed, analysis of ritual events also asks the question “why do people engage in such activities?” Within ritual studies, there have been a number of scholars who have engaged in ethnographic-type analysis, such as Victor Turner and Ronald L. Grimes.

In Ronald Grimes’s *Beginnings in Ritual Studies*, he offers the following elements essential for the study of ritual:

- 1) Ritual Space—Where does the ritual enactment occur—indoors, outdoors, in a randomly chosen place, in a special place? If the place is constructed, what resources were expended to build it? Who designed it? What traditions or guidelines, both practical and symbolic, were followed in building it? What styles of architecture does the building follow or reject? Etc. . .
- 2) Ritual Objects—What, and how many, objects are associated with the rite? What are their physical dimensions, shape, weight, and color? Of what material are they made? Are the making and disposition of the object realized? What is done with it? What happens to it before and after the ritual? On whose custody is it? Where is it kept? What uses would profane it? Must it be in some specialized position? Etc. . .

²³ John Blacking, “Movement, Dance, Music of the Venda Girl’s Initiation Cycle,” in *Society and the Dance: The Social Anthropology of Process and Performance*, ed. Paul Spencer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press): 65.

- 3) Ritual Sound and Language—Does the rite employ non-linguistic sounds such as animal calls, shouting, or moaning? How does one learn them? Who interprets these sounds? Are words ever used causally or magically? Is language thought only to describe reality or actually affect it? How are instrumental and vocal sounds related—chorally, in unison, antiphonally? What musical sounds and instruments predominate? How would you characterize their style? Are there discernable connections between rhythmic or musical patterns and social circumstances? Are any elements of vocal or instrumental sounds archaic or imitative? What moods do the sounds most often evoke? What moods are avoided? Etc. . .
- 4) Ritual Identity—What ritual roles and offices are operative—teacher, master, elder, Celebrant, shaman, diviner, healer, musician? How does the rite transform ordinary appearances and role definitions? What roles extend beyond the ritual arena, and which are confined to it? Who participates most fully? Most marginally? Do participants have ritually conferred names, such as Christian names or *dharma* names? Do they have special names only when they are in the ritual precinct or when functioning in their ritual roles? Etc. . .
- 5) Ritual Action—What kinds of actions are performed as part of the rite, for example, sitting, bowing, dancing, lighting fires, touching, avoiding, gazing, walking? In what order do they occur? Does one kind seem more emphasized than another? What are the central gestures? What secondary actions facilitate them? What actions are ascribed meaning? What actions are regarded as especially meaningful and therefore symbolic? What actions are regarded as efficacious rather than symbolic? What meanings, causes, or goals do participants attribute to their actions? Etc. . .²⁴

²⁴ Ronald L. Grimes, *Beginnings in Ritual Studies*, revised edition (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1995): 26-37.

I will use some of these elements in my descriptive analysis of ritual, though my specific questions are different.²⁵

²⁵ Grimes outlines the typical views of ritual as 1) repeated, 2) sacred, 3) formalized, 4) traditional, and 5) intentional. He says, “ritualization is a process which occurs continually, and it may or may not result in stable structures that a culture deems as rites.” {Grimes 1995: 61}. He criticizes Victor Turner on this point, because Turner describes ritual as “formal behavior prescribed for occasions not given over to technological routine that have references to beliefs in mystical beings or powers.” (Victor Turner and Edith Turner, *Images and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press): 243).

PART TWO:
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CHAPTER FOUR

Historical Background The Armenian Diaspora in the United States

Introduction

The importance of identity of the Armenian diaspora cannot be fully understood without knowledge of Armenian history. “Diaspora” is a term traditionally associated with the Jewish exile, but is now used in cultural studies to cover a range of territorial displacements, either forced, such as indentured slavery, or voluntary immigration. When speaking of the diaspora, it is important to understand that as a discussion, the diasporic experience is tied to the complex notions of memory, nostalgia, and politics that bind the immigrant to an original homeland (or even an *imagined* homeland). Nearly every Armenian I have met has told me that “Armenians are everywhere,” indicating to me that “home” for the Armenians has become anywhere one Armenian meets another:

*I should like to see any power of the world destroy this race, this small tribe of unimportant people, whose wars have all been fought and lost, whose structures have crumbled, literature is unread, music is unheard, and prayers are no more answered. Go ahead, destroy Armenia. See if you can do it. Send them into the desert without bread or water. Burn their homes and churches. Then see if they will not laugh, sing and pray again. For when two of them meet anywhere in the world, see if they will not create a New Armenia.*¹

-William Saroyan

The concept of “home” then, is fluid, and is “defined less by unique locations, landscape, and communities than by the focusing of experiences and intentions onto particular settings.”² John Armstrong, in his *Nations Before Nationalism*, indicates the importance of national identity in the diaspora, saying the Armenians are an “archetypal diaspora,” having a “sacred myth” that underscores their communal identity.³ Like the Jewish community, the Armenians too have flourished under centuries of forced migration and genocide. Indeed, Armenia, the country, has become yet an imagined homeland or “imagined community” to those outside of Armenia, especially those Armenians who have never actually been there.⁴

Critically important in this context are the ideologies that manifest themselves in the diaspora including national identity, multi-ethnic identity,

¹ As quoted by William Soroyan. Website: <http://www.abrilbooks.com/Posterinfo/WilliamSaroyan.htm>. Accessed: June 2002.

² Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1978): 141.

³ John Armstrong, *Nations Before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1982).

⁴ Benedict Anderson reflects on this concept in his *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

displaced identity, etc. Identity is a frequent topic in postcolonial discussions, and is sometimes referred to as the “who you are” or “how you construct yourself.” For the purposes of clarifying, one can think of identity as both personal and cultural:

Personal Identity:

- Essentialist Perspective: personal identity is fixed, based upon the thoughts and perspectives of an individual’s (or person’s) body, mind, and actions through time (both past and future).
- Non-Essentialist Perspective: Personal identity is not fixed, but is rather a production, constituted within particular representations (worldviews, belief systems).

Cultural Identity:

- Essentialist Perspective: Cultural identity constitutes a “collective” self, which only people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common.
- Non-Essentialist Perspective: Cultural identity is continuous. It is a matter of “becoming” as well as “being.” Cultural identity, then, is not something that already exists, but is in constant formation.⁵

Most would agree that a “healthy” combination of essentialism and nonessentialism is necessary in forming one’s own “complete” identity. Stuart Hall’s viewpoint is particularly useful for this discussion:

What recent theories of enunciation suggest is that, though we speak, so to say ‘in our own name,’ of ourselves and from our own experience, nevertheless who speaks, and the subject who is spoken of, are never identical, never exactly the same. Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, instead, of identity as a ‘production,’ which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside,

⁵ For more on identity, see Stuart Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora,” in *Identity: Community, Culture, and Difference*, ed. by Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990): 222-37.

representation. This view problematizes the very authority and authenticity to which the term, ‘cultural identity,’ lays claim.⁶

Many members of the Armenian community accept the diaspora as a permanent feature, while others advocate a return to Armenia in the sense of maintaining at least the ideal of *nation* in diaspora. For some, the new Republic of Armenia is an answer, for others it is only a piece of the puzzle. In *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1993), Anny Bakalian explores both shared and contested notions of *nation* by surveying a variety of understandings between generations and across different immigrations to the United States. Louis Snyder stresses this point as well, describing Armenian nationalism as “one of the most persistent mini-nationalisms in the world.”⁷ Indeed, there is often a distinct difference between “home” (the diaspora) and “homeland” (the Republic of Armenia or perhaps more correctly put, historic Armenia).

Armenia and the Diaspora

Like the Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, Jews, and Persians, the Armenians are one of the ancient races of the historic Near East and Eastern Europe. Because of its strategic geographic location between Asia and Europe, Armenia has been a buffer region between contending empires for more than three thousand years. The

⁶ Stuart Hall 1990: 222.

⁷ Louis L. Snyder. *Encyclopedia of Nationalism* (New York: Paragon House, 1990): 16.

historic lands of Armenia extended from the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea and from the Mediterranean to Lake Urmia (now in Iran) (see Figure 12⁸).



Fig. 12. Armenia in the Fourth Century, 299-387 A.D. Used with permission of The University of Chicago Press. H. Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas* (2001).

As a result of the fall of the USSR, Armenia exists today as a landlocked, independent republic and is home to some 3.5 million Armenians. It is located on a very small portion of what is considered the original historic lands of Armenia (see Figure 13)⁹.

⁸ Website: http://fhh1.hamburg.de/maps/english/asi/tuerkei_armenien.htm

⁹ The University of Texas at Austin General Libraries. Perry-Castaneda Library. Website: http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/commonwealth/armenia_pol_2002.jpg.



Fig. 13. Political Map of Armenia 2002. Public Domain Map. No Permission Necessary to Reproduce.

Armenians of the diaspora have established larger communities in such countries as Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Greece, Turkey, Iran, France, England, Argentina, Brazil, Australia, the United States and Canada. The constant struggle for Armenian sovereignty and the preservation of a national identity has plagued Armenians both

historically and present day. They have fought for their religion, historic lands, and self-preservation against Arab domination (642-800 A.D.), wars with Persia (from 1036 A.D.), Seljuk invasions (1048-1072 A.D.), Mongol invasions (from 1236 A.D.), and Turkish domination (from 1453 A.D.). In spite of foreign invasions, subjugation, and the resulting diaspora throughout the world, the Armenians have both survived and maintained their religion, national identity, and many cultural traditions. Today, it is estimated that more than seven million Armenians survive throughout the world.¹⁰

The Armenian Diaspora in the United States

There are numerous historical accounts that offer anecdotal stories of Armenians in this United States and their subsequent roles and contributions.¹¹ However, there is scarce evidence of Armenians arriving in the United States before the early nineteenth century, though one story comes to us from R. Mirak's *Torn Between Two Lands: Armenians in America 1890 to World War I* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1983). According to this work, "George ye Armenian" was offered a large amount of tobacco (some 4000 pounds) to raise silkworms in America.

¹⁰ Nora Dudwick. "Armenia: A Nation Awakes," in *Nation and Politics in the Soviet Successor States*, eds. Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 265.

¹¹ For example, see Arra Avakian, *The Armenians in America* (Minneapolis, 1977); Gary A. Kulhanjian, *The Historical and Sociological Aspects of Armenian Immigration to the United States 1890-1930* (San Francisco: R & E Research Associates, 1975); M. Vartan Malcolm, *The Armenians in America* (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1919); and James H. Tashjian, *The Armenians of the United States and Canada* (Boston, Massachusetts: Hairenik Press, 1947).

Despite this somewhat curious account, the most frequent early reasons for migration were religious. Missionary activities of the Protestant Churches of America in Armenia allowed for an increased migration of Armenians from the Ottoman Empire to other parts of the world.¹² In Armenia, graduates from the Protestant missionary schools often made their way to America to complete their education, in turn, creating new lives for themselves in America.

According to Vartan M. Malcolm's *The Armenians in America*, Armenians were listed in the United States records by 1854. The number listed was few—by 1870 about seventy. Most likely, there were many more.¹³ As the years passed, many arrivals were no longer graduates of the American missionary schools but young people with little education who belonged to the traditional Armenian Apostolic Church. Armenian men found work at the factories and mills of Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Soon, larger populations began growing, which, as a result, a few Armenian small businesses to emerge. By 1890, the number of identifiable Armenians in America had reached over 2,000.¹⁴

As conditions in the Ottoman Empire at the end of the nineteenth century worsened for the Armenians, there was a large-scale movement of Armenians to America. The emerging European standards of human rights for all citizens,

¹² In 1812, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was set up to coordinate missionary activities. For more see R.L. Daniel, *American Philanthropy in the Near East, 1820-1960* (Athens, OH, 1970).

¹³ Vartan M. Malcolm, *The Armenians in America* (Boston, MA, 1919; reprint, San Francisco, 1969): 57.

¹⁴ Arra Avakian 1977: 40.

particularly for subjugated groups such as the Armenians, did not align with the ideology of the fleeting Ottoman Empire. Hoping to rally resistance, Armenian revolutionaries from the Hnchaks Party infiltrated Turkey from the Caucasus. As a response, the Ottoman Government began massacring the Armenian people. From 1893 to 1895, nearly half a million Armenians in the interior of Turkey were massacred, were forced to flee throughout the diaspora, or were compulsorily converted to Islam.¹⁵

As a result of this atrocity, it was during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century when the largest groups of Armenians arrived in America. Armenian communities could be found in towns such as Cleveland, Ohio, Detroit, Michigan, Chicago, Illinois, East St. Louis, Missouri, and Racine, Wisconsin. Large groups also made their way to California to engage in agriculture; or moved to upstate New York to work in the electrical and chemical industries in Troy, Syracuse, Buffalo, and others towns.¹⁶

In 1908, Abdul Hamid's government of the Ottoman Empire was overthrown. As Turkey became involved in a series of devastating wars, radical groups took over the leadership of the government until a dictatorship came to power under a triumvirate of Enver, Talat, and Cemal pashas. In the final years leading up to World War I, the Turko-Italian War of 1912 and the Balkan Wars

¹⁵ C. M. Hamlin, "The Genesis and Evolution of the Turkish Massacre of Armenian Subjects," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, New Series 12 (1897-98): 288-94.

¹⁶ R. Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands: Armenians in America 1890 to World War I* (Cambridge, MA, 1983): 123-33.

greatly diminished movement from the Ottoman Empire. Between 1914 and 1924, nevertheless, about 25,000 Armenian immigrants came to America.¹⁷ Armenians also settled in Canada, Latin America, Cuba, and Mexico.

In 1914, the triumvirate led their country into World War I on the side of Germany against, chiefly, Russia, their historical enemy. Accusing the unarmed Armenians of giving aid and comfort to the enemy on the Russian front, the triumvirate decided to enact genocide on the Armenians. Described as “the first real genocide of the modern age,” these massacres culminated in 1915.¹⁸ However, many believe that the genocide was nothing more than propaganda perpetuated by the Armenians. This ideology persists among those who sympathize with the Turkish government:

The Armenian allegations regarding events of 1915 have been challenged and found by unbiased scholars to be unsustainable. Those events stemmed from an armed uprising by large members of Armenians who were Ottoman citizens seeking to impose the establishment of an exclusively Armenian state in an area of Eastern Anatolia that was predominately non-Armenian. Their uprising was instigated and supported by Tsarist Russia whose armies were invading the Eastern region of the Ottoman Empire.

Authoritative scholars insist that the events of 1915 can not be characterized as a “massacre,” let alone a “genocide . . .” Professor [Justin] McCarthy [of the University of Louisville] concludes, on the basis of exhaustive research in the archives of various European powers, as well as those of the Ottoman Empire, that Ottoman Armenians lost their lives during a tragic civil war as a result of famine, epidemics, and intercontinental fighting. Professor McCarthy also demonstrates that large numbers of non-Christian citizens of that region of the Empire

¹⁷ Arra Avakian 1977: 45.

¹⁸ Dikron Boyajian, *Armenia, The Case for a Forgotten Genocide* (Westwood, New Jersey: Educational Book Crafters, 1972): 1.

also died as a result of the same causes. Multitudes of Turks and other non-Christians died at the hands of self-proclaimed Armenian revolutionary groups.¹⁹

Nevertheless, there was continued active persecution against “Christians”—“discrimination was permanent and indeed necessary, inherent in the system maintained by both (Muslim) Holy Law and common practice.”²⁰ The systematic premeditated massacres and lethal deportations of Armenians began early in 1915 (see Figure 14).²¹

¹⁹ A letter from Ambassador Elekdag, reprinted in *The Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, January 26, 1985: 2 and 15.

²⁰ Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, “Introduction,” Braude and Lewis, eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society, Volume I: The Central Lands* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982): 3-4.

²¹ See V. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide* (Providence, RI, 1995) for a complete history of the Armenian genocide. For a complete bibliography, see “The Armenian Genocide: A Bibliography” prepared for the Holocaust Museum by Gerald Ottenbreit, Jr. available online at http://www.umd.umich.edu/dept/armenian/facts/gen_bibli.html.



Fig. 14. Map of Significant Areas of Genocide. Used with permission of The University of Chicago Press from H. Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas* (2001).

Armenians in Eastern Anatolia survived by leaving with the advancing Russian forces as they retreated into the Caucasus (see Figures 15²² and 16²³).²⁴

²²The University of Texas at Austin General Libraries. Perry-Castaneda Library. Website: http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/commonwealth/cucanus_cntrl_asia_pol_00.jpg.

²³ The University of Texas at Austin General Libraries. Perry-Castaneda Library. Website: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/commonwealth/ethnocaucasus.jpg>.

²⁴ The Caucasus is generally considered to be the region between the Black and Caspian Seas that includes Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia.



Fig. 15. Map of the Caucasus and Central Asia. Public Domain Map. No Permission Necessary to Reproduce.



Fig. 16. Ethno-linguistic Groups in the Caucasus Region. Public Domain Map. No Permission Necessary to Reproduce.

The Armenians in central Anatolia were expelled from their homes, massacred in large numbers, and the rest driven on marches into the Syrian Desert. It was during these horrible marches that many Armenians died. Armenians were also driven out of Western Anatolia, some transported by train before facing concentration camps in the desert.²⁵ However, R. Hovannisian's "Intervention and Shades of Altruism during the Armenian Genocide," in *The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, and Ethics*, reveals that a significant number of Armenians were saved by Muslims for various reasons ranging from enslavement to altruism (see Figure 17²⁶).²⁷

²⁵ The Armenian Library and Museum of America in Watertown, Massachusetts has a large collection of photographs documenting the treacherous death marches of the Armenians during this time period.

²⁶ The University of Texas at Austin General Libraries. Perry-Castaneda Library. Website:
http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/commonwealth/commonwealth_islamic_group.jpg.

²⁷ R. Hovannisian, "Intervention and Shades of Altruism during the Armenian Genocide," in *The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, Ethics*, ed. R.G. Hovannisian (New York, 1992): 173-207.

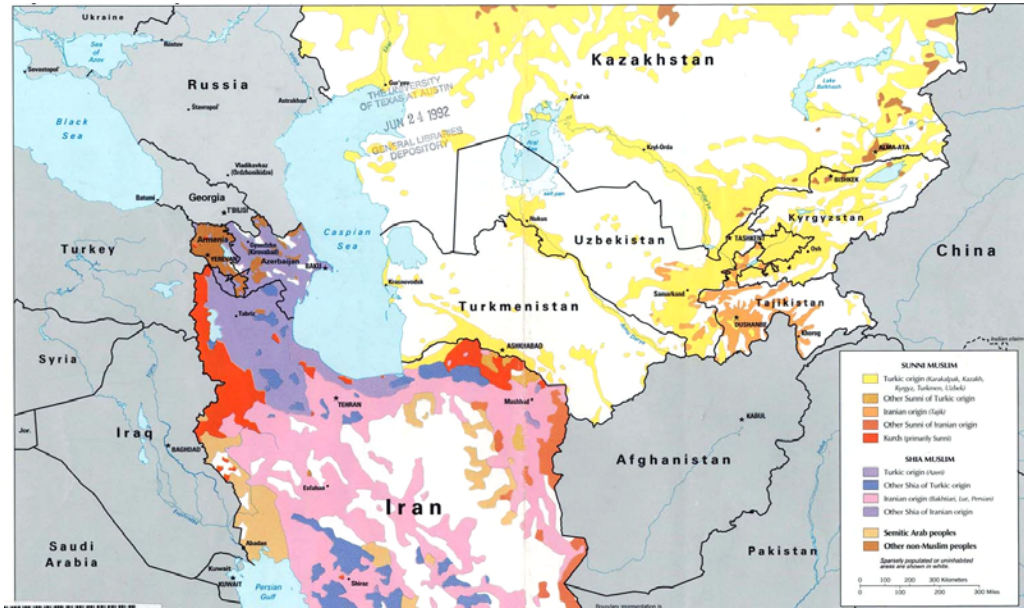


Fig. 17. Major Muslim Ethnic Groups in Armenia, Iran, and the Islamic Commonwealth States. Public Domain Map. No Permission Necessary to Reproduce.

Because of the harsh conditions and because many able bodied men were killed by the Turkish military, most immigrants to America during this period had little or no family left. Many families were broken-up during the torturous death marches and few members survived. In speaking with survivors and families of survivors, it is clear that the immigrants of this period did not intend to return to Armenia.²⁸ A 1909 weekly publication called *The Aveaper* recalls the reality of the immigration to the United States:

²⁸ For more on Armenian identity, see A. Balakian, *Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1993).

The first emigration for the purposes of study and business took place in 1850, on a small scale. The second emigration occurred between 1885-1895, consisting of 15,000, owing to Turkish persecutions. From 1905-1909 owing to the massacres in Adana, and elsewhere, many went as fruit-growers with their families to California. Since the last massacres in 1909, about a hundred have been leaving every week for the United States. Armenians in America, through one of their societies, find employment for Turkish immigrants. There are already 75,000 Armenians in the United States, of which number 35,000 have become American citizens.²⁹

Indeed, in my experience working with various diasporic Armenian communities, I have found this sense of “Armenianness” is passed on through generations in what I term a “living memory.” Speaking with children of immigrants or grandchildren of immigrants, there seems to be a sense that they too, lived through the Armenian genocide.

Survivors who came to America attempted to establish family units to survive and to produce offspring. Since there were no longer the matchmakers of the villages, or the societal relations of the towns and cities to bring the youth together, the process of finding a spouse was often very difficult, especially in the somewhat isolated communities. In a conference paper, “Armenian Wedding Laments: Performance of Scripts in Gender Construction and Power Hierarchy Revealed in Armenian Betrothal and Marriage Festivities,” I discussed this issue.³⁰

²⁹ *The Avedaper*, No. 20 (1909).

³⁰ Jonathan McCollum, “Armenian Wedding Laments: Performance of Scripts in Gender Construction and Power Hierarchy Revealed in Armenian Betrothal and Marriage Festivities,” n.p.

The concept of the “sovereign, unwavering family” provides the basis for the traditional Armenian marriage—“the last fortress to protect.”³¹ Villages were generally made up of only a few families, thus, “Marriage as a Church Sacrament,” and “Holy Nuptial Bed” remained long lasting ideals within traditional Armenian heritage.³² Matches were made through friends and relatives or even through newspaper advertisements.

Early immigrants made an effort to forget the Armenian genocide, though today, it has become an obvious symbol of strength for Armenian identity—a “virtual ‘character of identity’ even among families who had not directly experienced it.”³³ Survivors focused their energies on building a new life in a new country. The Armenian genocide did not become a community theme until the fiftieth anniversary of the genocide in 1965.³⁴ At that time, American-born Armenians took the initiative to organize public forums, demonstrations, and engage in political advocacy. Though the second generation in the United States was encouraged to become “American” by focusing their energies on education, the English language, and Western ideals, they began to incorporate “the old country”

³¹ Claire Mouradian and Anahide Ter Minassian, “Permanence de la famille arménienne,” *Cultures et sociétés de l’Est* (Paris, no. 9, 1988): 59-84.

³² For further discussion Shemaryehu Yalmon, “The ‘Comparative Method’ in Biblical Interpretation—Principles and Problems,” *Göttingen Congress Volume* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978): 320-56; Daniel Harrington, *Interpreting the Old Testament* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1981): 45-49.

³³ Nora Dudwick 1993: 265.

³⁴ See P. Balakian, *Black Dog of Fate: A Memoir* (New York, 1997), for an example of how people in America learned of the Armenian genocide from their families.

conceptions of identity through cultural manifestations, such as Armenian food, music, language, etc. In his introductory chapter on “Assimilation and Identity,” Balakian says that Armenians in America are still rooted in relationships within and between families, but can also depend on more broad based structures within the diasporic community for the mobile, fluid nature of “Armenian” identity.³⁵

Following World War II, the United States government adopted a special provision to the immigration law which allowed ‘displaced persons’ to enter the country and become legal residents and eligible for citizenship. Because of this policy, displaced Armenians from Southern and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union came to the United States.³⁶ The Lebanese civil war in the 1970s caused the next wave of Armenian immigration. These wealthier immigrants generally arrived with funds, excellent education, business experience, and linguistic competency in two or three languages. They adapted readily to life in America while at the same time retaining their Armenian culture, which they had preserved in the Middle East. This, in turn, helped to revitalize the diasporic community already present. The West Coast of the United States saw a huge influx of Armenians from Iran—a result of the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran. The Iranian Armenians, who had lived in Iran in large numbers since the 1600s, had actually never experienced massacres nor

³⁵ P. Balakian 1993: 140.

³⁶ These new immigrants were displaced for a variety of reasons; from Egypt, where new nationalistic policies and nationalization of property made it less hospitable for Armenians; from Turkey, where economic and social oppression had been renewed against Christians and Jews; from Greece, where widespread poverty and a civil war made it difficult for Armenians to live; and a few from the Soviet Union and Soviet Armenia itself, chiefly former soldiers who had been captured by the Germans or refugees who fled from the Soviet Union with the retreating German army.

had they faced significant governmental and social discrimination in decades.

These immigrants tended to move in their own circles and organizations, in which they spoke the Eastern Armenian dialect (as used in Armenia), and did not often mix with those of the previous immigrations.³⁷

The fall of the Soviet Union was particularly significant, for during the cold war, America's policy was to admit everyone fleeing Communism. Because Jewish leaders in America convinced the American government to support the influx of migrating Jews, a severely persecuted minority in the U.S.S.R., from the Soviet Union to Israel, Armenians too, were able to obtain the status of "a persecuted minority," though discrimination against Armenians in the Soviet Union was not at all as significant as that against the Jews.³⁸ Most of these Armenians who came to America went to live in the greater Los Angeles area (see figure 18). Few of these Soviet Armenian immigrants knew any English or any language other than Russian and Eastern Armenian, making adjusting difficult.

³⁷ See M. Bozorgmehr, G. Sabagh, and C. Der Martirosian, *Religio-Ethnic Diversity Among Iranians in Los Angeles* (Los Angeles, CA: G.E. von Gurnebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, n.d.).

³⁸ The Jews suffered not only because their ethnicity tied them to a religious belief system, but all because Jews had connections abroad in the West.



Fig. 18. Map of Armenian Diaspora in the United States. Used with permission of The University of Chicago Press from H. Hewsen, *Armenia: A Historical Atlas* (2001).

The Christian Church

The Church, for many, became a refuge for new immigrants to the United States. Because Christianity is so historically interwoven into Armenian culture, its continued importance cannot be understated. Protestant Armenians found initial refuge in the American churches of their own denomination, usually Presbyterian. However, faced with the difficulties of assimilation, Armenian Protestants began to form their own churches, with their own Armenian pastors, relating, as with other local parishes, to the larger national organization of the denomination. This led to the formation of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America (AEU) and the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA).

Those faithful of the Armenian Apostolic Church initially depended on traveling Priests who moved from town to town to perform the Divine Liturgy and the necessary sacraments such as Holy Communion, absolution, baptisms, marriages, and funerals.



Fig. 19. First United States Armenian Apostolic Church, Worcester, Massachusetts, circa 1891. Used with permission from the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern).

A. Ashjian's *A Century of Contacts between the Armenian and Episcopalian Churches in the United States* reveals just how strong the relations between the Episcopal Church and the Armenian Church in America were. Early Armenian immigrants were often permitted to use the facilities of the Episcopal Church.³⁹ In Archdeacon Dowling's *The Armenian Church*, he makes note of the significant relationships between both the Church of England as well as the Church of America:

At the Bishop of Jerusalem's Ordination on Trinity Sunday, 1889, the Armenian Patriarch and three of his Bishops were present at the Service. On one occasion the Patriarch informed the Bishop that he knew the Anglican Liturgy well, and possessed a *Book of Common Prayer* which was becoming dilapidated. The Bishop mentioned this to the Reverend A. R. Bramley, then Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxon, who sent out to the Patriarch a very beautifully bound black-letter edition of which only fifty copied were originally printed.⁴⁰

Cross-cultural misunderstanding, however, was commonplace:

The American Congregationalists have exceeded all other Christians in contributing men, women, and means for religious work among Armenians in Asia Minor. For this, they deserve great praise. But under the instruction many Armenians have, alas, severed their connection with the Apostolic Church! And lost the blessing of the Episcopate, which we agree with them in holding to be essential. It would seem that the American Church, whose policy, like the Church of England, is to give aid to

³⁹ For more, see A. Ashjian, *A Century of Contacts between the Armenian and Episcopalian Churches in the U.S.A.* (New York, 1991); Ch. Zakian, ed., *The Torch Was Passed: The Centennial History of the Armenian Church of America* (New York, 1998): 3-4.

⁴⁰ Archdeacon Dowling, D.D. *The Armenian Church* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1970): 99-100. Reprint from the edition of 1910, London. This quote is taken from Bishop Cosin's *Treatise on the History of Transubstantiation and the Doctrine of the Eucharist* (Armenian: Anglo-continental Society, 1860).

enlighten and strengthen, but not to proselytize, their fellow Christians of the East, has a God-given opportunity.⁴¹

It was during this time also that the *Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople* transferred responsibility for the American diocese to the *Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians in Etchmiadzin*. Catholicos Mgrdich I said,

It is the will of a mysterious Providence that our nation should live in exile, as settlers in foreign lands. ... The storm of violence in this world drove the Armenians from their native soil, scattering them to the far corners of the globe.⁴²

The catastrophe of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1916 and the subsequent fall of the first independent Armenian Republic in 1920, gave a serious blow to the Armenian community as a whole. The first Armenian Republic fell as the Russo-Soviet Empire came into being and as the Ottoman Empire took hold of the Republic of Turkey. These two mighty powers wanted to expand their reach into the Caucasus. Confronted by the Bolsheviks on the one side and the Nationalist Turks on the other, Armenia fell reluctantly to the side of the Soviet Bolsheviks, for fear of further genocide from the Turkish Empire. The Turks, if they had overrun Armenia as they attempted to do, would have completed the genocide, which they had begun in 1915.⁴³ They were not completely safe, though. The Marxist-Leninist ideology of the Bolsheviks resulted in the systematic killing or exiling of Armenian

⁴¹ Archdeacon Dowling, D.D. *The Armenian Church* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1970): 139-40. Reprint from the edition of 1910, London.

⁴² Ch. Zakian 1998: 8.

⁴³ V. Dadrian 1995: 356-61.

leaders. After some revolt from Armenian revolutionaries, the country yielded to the Soviet Empire.

As with all churches (and other religions as well), Soviet ideology played havoc on the Church in Armenia:

The Church was doubly suspect. It alone maintained its organization, it alone continued to put forward a view of life which undermined Marxism, and without Marxism there could be no real socialism . . . Already in February 1918 the attacks on Church property had induced the Patriarch and Synod to issue “instructions to the Orthodox Church against Government acts”; it laid down that “in cases of attack by despoilers or graspers of Church property, the Church people should be called to defense of the Church, sound the tocsin and send out runners, etc.”⁴⁴

The Bolshevik army attacked all the Churches in all the areas of the former Russian Empire that they controlled, killing churchmen, closing monasteries and seminaries, desecrating church buildings, and persecuting the faithful:

Many Church people were arrested and sent to Siberia or shot, and the Orthodox Church lost many of its leaders. The first effect of persecution was to draw Church people together into closer fellowship. The Church was reduced from power and riches to poverty and oppression, but the subtler forms of Stalinist pressure were not yet invented.⁴⁵

Curiously, many Armenian Americans, at this time, were suspicious of those Armenians in their home-country for fear that the Russian Bolsheviks had somehow influenced Armenians in Armenia. As a result of the fragmentation of the Armenian

⁴⁴ John Lawrence, *A History of Russia*, 7th Edition (New York: Meridian, 1993): 260.

⁴⁵ John Lawrence 1993: 261. The Roman Catholic minority also suffered a similar fate.

Church in America at the time of the Soviet occupation of Armenia, the Church was divided. Certain Armenian American parishes broke off from the Diocese, accusing those under the Diocese of being pro-Communist. Indeed, persecution was common in other Christian churches as well:

At the climax of this campaign against the Church of the Patriarch Tikhon [of the Russian Orthodox Church] was arrested. Thereupon some of the leaders of this radical movement inside the Church made strong representations to the Patriarch that the Church was suffering from his absence and asked to leave “to open the chancery . . . and start it functioning” . . . The radical Church leaders did open the chancery instead of handing it over to the persons designated by Tikhon, they proceeded to operate it on their own account and called a new council of the Church. This council voted to abolish the Patriarchate and substitute a more democratic form of Church order and called on “every faithful churchman . . . to fight with all his might together with the Soviet authority for the realization of the Kingdom of God upon earth . . . and to use all means to realize in life the grand principle of the October Revolution.”⁴⁶

For the Armenians, the division in the Church was particularly difficult. The Armenians have historically looked to the Church not only for religious and moral guidance, but also for heritage identity, especially those living in the diaspora. In 1957, the non-Diocesan churches, which had no separate diocesan organization, were taken under the wing of the Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, Zareh I Payaslian, in Antelias, Lebanon.

During World War II, the Primate of the Diocese was Archbishop Karekin Hovsepien. After having served the Diocese for several years, Archbishop Karekin

⁴⁶ John Lawrence 1993: 261. In the Russian Eastern Orthodox Church, this movement, called the “Living Church,” succeeded for a time in getting control of most of the parish churches.

was elected the Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia where he also served with the greatest distinction.⁴⁷ Tiran Nersoyan, a Vartabed (celibate Celebrant) of London, England, was chosen to replace the venerable Archbishop Karekin as Primate in America. Archbishop Tiran's brought new Celebrants from Jerusalem and Istanbul to meet the shortage of clerics in America and instituted the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA), which was to bring the young people closer to the Church and prepare a new generation of leadership.⁴⁸ His accomplishments advanced the state of the Armenian Church in America extensively.⁴⁹

The use of the Armenian language has continued to be an important feature of the Prelacy churches, which, has, in many ways, perpetuated the sense of being 'Armenian' in the youth. For the Diocesan churches, though, religion became the primary goal and maintaining national identity secondary.⁵⁰ While the differences between the two Apostolic churches persisted, the earthquake on December 1988 brought them together. The churches in America united in a common cause, sending aid to their mother country. Rescue missions came from all over the world.

⁴⁷ Ch. Zakian 1998: 36-37.

⁴⁸ The Washington, DC Chapter of ACYOA is particularly active.

⁴⁹ Ch. Zakian 1998: 44-49.

⁵⁰ For more, see R. Perroomian, "The Transformation of Armenianness in the Formation of Armenian-American Identity," *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* 6 (1992-1995).

The news media followed and reported their activities for weeks, keeping the name Armenia prominently on the television news broadcast and in the newspapers.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the declaration of Armenian independence in 1991 also served to unite the Armenian people. Armenia was now an independent republic, and once more Armenians of all factions in America gave support to the newly formed republic. The fall of the communist regime created a new beginning for the Armenian Church in Armenia without ideological barriers. This, of course, is a bit ridiculous, though. Obviously, ideologies did not change over night, but despite the split in the Church in America, both the Diocese and the Prelacy seem to be prospering.⁵¹

Identity—*Armenianness* Reconfigured

As with many ethnic groups, the Armenians have certainly responded to adversity. Maintaining both ethnic and national identities continues to be a challenge. Throughout history, the Armenians have been in the diaspora, indeed,

⁵¹ The Diocese currently has forty-two active parishes and twenty-three mission parishes, and sixty-one clergy. The Diocese of Canada has thirteen parishes and mission parishes, with seven priests. The Western Diocese has twenty-six parishes and mission parishes, with thirty-one priests. The Prelacy (including the East and Canada) has twenty-nine parishes and ten mission parishes. The Western Prelacy also has eight churches on the West Coast. There are also twenty-five Armenian Protestant, or Evangelical as they prefer to be called, churches and several Armenian Catholic churches, making the total number of parishes for all Armenian denominations over 200. Besides the parishes, the churches sponsor Sunday Schools, evening and Saturday language classes, cultural events, and auxiliary organizations of all types, mostly charitable and cultural. There are over one hundred weekly Armenian language schools and also over half a dozen Armenian fulltime day schools in the United States. For more, see “Diocese of the Armenian Church of America,” *Parish Directory, 2000-2001* (New York, 2000); “Eastern Diocese of the

they are a diasporic people. Their “mother country” is seemingly within themselves. In addition to the Church, the Armenians have organized themselves into political groups, businesses, and other organizations. The Armenians have been and always will be a people with firm connections with each other. However, Armenian-Americans still recognize the differences among themselves, typically by reference to their mother country—Armenian, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Iran, etc. In terms of identity, this typifies the complex notions of immigrant cultures resistant to change:

The reconstituted folklore complex allows its assorted carriers and enthusiasts to indulge in a fantasy of ethnic separateness and individuality without transgressing the limits and patterns presented and sanctioned by the surrounding English-speaking culture.⁵²

Balakian adds “the sociopolitical conditions in these host countries created differences in the way Armenianness was experienced.”⁵³ Indeed, in my work in the Armenian Church, where Armenians from a variety of countries are accepted, there is a clear difference in the way Armenians perceive themselves. The differences are contested in second and third generation immigrants as well as with new immigrants—“the assimilation of Armenian immigrants in the United States proceeds hand in hand with changes in the nature of [their] Armenianness.”⁵⁴

Armenian Church of America,” *Parish Directory for Canadian Diocese and Western Diocese, 1999-2000* (New York, 1999).

⁵² Robert B. Klymasz, “From Immigrant to Ethnic Folklore: A Canadian View of Process and Transition.” *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 10, no. 3: 139.

⁵³ A. Balakian 1993: 185.

⁵⁴ A. Balakian 1993: 319.

In the broader American context, Armenians can easily blend in—their identities become new formations which larger American culture can understand. As with many other ethnic groups, they too are subject to hyphenated ideals—“Armenian-Americans.” In light of the vast immigration of Armenians from host countries other than Armenia, this hyphenated, indeed, split identity is further complicated. The fact that you may come from Lebanon is irrelevant to the vast majority of American people who do well to view you as Armenian. The answer to “who are you?” is often a highly debatable and contested issue that will no doubt continue to provide the foundation for identity discourse.

While this debate is problematic on many fronts, especially with those whose identity becomes a place for finding one’s true self, the United States or *American* culture provides a forum for variety that is not always present in other host countries. I often hear from second and third generation Armenians that new immigrants often usurp their own notion of “Armenianness.” If someone directly from Armenia says, “You are not Armenian,” what argument do you have? I am reminded of a story presented in a seminar on identity: “Everyday I go to work, come home, and go to bed. Finally, on Sunday, I have time to be Armenian.” This story rings true for many immigrants, especially those who are descendants of immigrants:

I guess if there weren’t so many pressures and directions—what with work and bills and taxes and weeds—we might sit down with books and read about Judaism. But hell, we’d rather watch the Super Bowl.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ David Schoem, “Learning to be a Part-Time Jew.” *Zenner*: 96-116 (111).

In Washington, DC, there are certainly issues of identity at play, especially considering the notion of identity. On a very pragmatic front, the Church serves to connect the traditional culture of Armenian Christianity with those in the diaspora—a connection to their national identity from the “Old Country.” The church has become a battleground of sorts for maintaining traditional Armenian culture because “almost without exception Armenians are Christians, although often in a sociological rather than religious sense.”⁵⁶ In terms of musical performance, the Church, while historically a close link to an ancient tradition, also provides a means for transition, or as Margaret Sarkissian states:

The choirs and the type of music that they sing can . . . be considered transitional. Although the very institution of a mixed choir with its SATB arrangement and the harmonization of the repertoire are Western-derived, they have become an important part of the Armenian musical tradition. Furthermore, the adoption of these elements occurred prior to emigration.⁵⁷

The political issues that have permeated political discourse have, as previously described, divided the Armenian Apostolic Church. Historically, the church was divided into the Catholocasates of Etchmiadzin, Cilica, Aghthamar, and the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. After World War I, the Cilician Catholicosate transferred to Antelias, a suburb of Beirut. As a result, the present day clergy of Etchmiadzin refuse to legitimize the Antelias Clergy.

⁵⁶ Nora Dudwick 1993: 265.

⁵⁷ Margaret Sarkissian, “Armenian Musical Culture in Toronto: Political and Social Divisions in an Immigrant Community,” Master’s thesis (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1987): 84.

In Washington, DC, this divide does not seem to be problematic. However, one church remains strictly *Armenian* in the sense that English is rarely spoken, while one maintains a different ideology, which includes those who do not speak Armenian. The notion of the linguistic context is an essential component of context, which provides one way for performing one's identity. In discussing identity, we must realize that the sense of identity people gain through religious and cultural life comes through many channels—language, music, art, sociality, religion, and other cultural forms included.

Being Christian, the Armenians closely align their identities with the meaning gained through ritual worship. Clearly, identity is a complex notion but it refers to those things that offer individuals and the communities they belong to a sense of past, present, and future. It is at this community level that the shared performance of worship binds people together into a unified group, while at the same time separating them from those who do not align with their sense of worship.

CHAPTER FIVE

The History and Theology of the Armenian Apostolic Church

Introduction

Given the importance of context to the study of music in general, it follows that this context also exists for the area of Armenian sacred music. Because of Soviet enforced state ideologies, performance of and research on folk music became the central focus, whereas sacred music took a back seat.¹ As a result, relatively few works exist that focus solely on the subject of sacred music, making the need for new research in this area more important than ever. The ethnomusicologist interested in attaining a comprehensive look at a particular culture or genre should

¹ See for example, Andy Nercessian, “The Former Soviet Folk Ensemble: A Look at the Emergence of the Concept of National Culture in Armenia,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 9, no. 1 (2000): 79-94.

be inclusive of musicological, anthropological, sociological, historical, artistic, theological, and other contextual issues of musical performance. Continuing in this spirit, I will discuss briefly the impact of the history and development of the theology and ritual of the Armenian Church. Here, I also discuss Armenian liturgical development in the context of Eastern Orthodoxy.

To understand the contextual issues surrounding the performance of the Armenian liturgy, it is important to attain a greater understanding of how the Armenian liturgy reflects their belief system. The Armenian Apostolic liturgy is itself a musical expression of Armenian Christian identity. The Divine Liturgy, save for the sermon, is entirely sung (or chanted), making it particularly insightful for the ethnomusicologist.

A Brief Synopsis of the History of the Armenian Apostolic Church

A telling of Armenian history is a reflection of Armenia's long-held Christian status. As mentioned earlier, it is often said to be Armenian means to be Christian. Indeed, perhaps the most important point in Armenian history that has contributed to the vast social, political, and cultural changes was the adoption of Christianity as the state religion in 301 AD. The Armenian Church is apostolic, and this apostolic character that the Armenian Church claims can be traced theologically as well as historically to missionary work of two apostles, St. Thaddeus (A.D. 43-66) and St. Bartholomew (A.D. 60-68). Ecclesiastically, then, the apostolic origin of the Armenian Church is viewed as "authentically Christian":

The apostolic origin of the Armenian Church is hence established as an incontrovertible fact in ecclesiastical history. And if tradition and historic sources, which sanction this view, should give occasion for criticism, these have no greater weight than the difficulties created with regard to the origin of other apostolic Churches, which are universally admitted as such.²

Their pre-Christian religion was a form of worship akin to shamanism and the celebration of the natural world. Armenia's location, geographically, allowed for a number of cultural exchanges throughout its varied and exciting history. In addition to significant Persian influence, the invasion of Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) brought Hellenistic influences. Zoroastrianism deeply influenced Armenia in the early Christian period.³ According to M. H. Ananikian, the Armenians adopted the Mazdaist faith and the deities Ahura Mazda as Aramazt⁴ and Anaias as Anahit⁵, as well as other gods. Being "influenced" by other cultures as it

² Malachia Ormanian, *The Church of Armenia: Her History, Doctrine, Discipline, Liturgy, Literature, and Existing Condition*, trans. and ed. By G. Marcar Gregory (London: A.R. Mowbray and Co. Limited, 1955): 4.

³ Zoroastrianism, today, is only practiced by some 120,000 people throughout the world. Considered a national religion of the Persian Empire (third to seventh centuries), it lost its privileged position to Islam. Zoroastrianism is a religion founded by the prophet Zarathushtra. The sacred book of the Zoroastrians is called the *Avesta*, of which little survives today. The *Avesta* comprises the liturgy, the *Yashts* (sacrificial hymns addressed to specific deities), and the *Videvdad* or "Law Against the Demons." For more information on Zoroastrianism, see "*Avesta*," in *Sacred Books of the East*, vols. iv, xxxi, and xxxiii; and E. Benveniste, *The Persian Religion According to the Chief Greek Texts* (Paris, 1929).

⁴ Aramazt was the supreme deity and the creator of the heavenly and earthly realms. He functioned as the god of harvest. It is thought that Aramazt was borrowed from the Persian Ahura Mazda, the supreme deity of the Zoroastrians.

⁵ Anahit was the most important deity after Aramazt. The "Golden Mother" is thought to be an appropriation of the Persian goddess Anahita, but many scholars believe that, perhaps, the Persian goddess was exported from Armenia.

were, they eventually adopted the Greco-Roman deities, equating Aramazt with Zeus.⁶ Nature was indeed very important to early Armenians, so much so, that even today, Armenian Christian churches traditionally face the rising sun towards the east. Trees, water, fire, mountains—indeed, all of nature was revered for its spiritual qualities.

Moses Khorenatzi's *History of the Armenians* (480 AD), the first Armenian chronicle and comprehensive history, states that not only did St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew (Apostles of Christ) introduce Christianity in Armenia but they were also martyred and buried in that country:

She (the church) protects their graves, which are preserved and venerated in the ancient churches of Artaz (Maco) and Albac (Bachkale), situated in the southeast of Armenia.⁷

It is generally accepted that the Armenians have the distinction of being the first nation to accept Christianity as their national religion in the year 301 A.D.⁸

⁶ For more, see M. H. Ananikian, "Armenia (Zoroastrian)," *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (Vol. I (1922)).

⁷ Malachia Ormanian 1955: 3. In Eusebius, *The Church History*, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace, second series (New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1890), states that many legends, traditions, sacred spots, and historical allusions are cited as evidence of this missionary work.

⁸ The ancient Armenian calendar was based on the solar year of 365 days, with twelve, thirty-day months, and one five-day month. After Armenia adopted Christianity, this calendar was adapted to the Hebrew calendar. Through some manipulation, it was not until 1920 that Armenia adopted the Gregorian calendar. For prior history, see J. Avdall, "Note On the Origin of the Armenian Era, and the Reformation of the Hacican Calendar," *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* V (1836): 384-87; and Josi Gippert, "Old Armenian and Caucasian Calendar Systems: 2. Armenian *hosi* and *sahmi*," *The Annual of the Society for the Study of Caucasia* 1 (1989): 3-12.

Christianity spread throughout Armenia in a slow but gradual movement. There were severe persecutions against Christians in the beginning, but by the end of the fourth century, Saint Gregory the Illuminator (Krakow Lousavoreech or Srbotz Grigor Lusavoritsh) converted King Dertad III (Tiridates or Tiridad) and all of the Armenian nobility into the Christian faith.

Saint Gregory the Illuminator, still revered today in Armenian history, is thought to have been born between the years 233 and 235. According to a variety of historical sources, he refused to offer sacrifices to pagan idols and as such, was severely punished:

During a pagan festival Gregory refused to offer floral gifts to the goddess Anahit. Tiridates was sore vexed. Discovering that Gregory was the son of Anak, the assassin of his own father (Khosroes II), he was further enraged and placed him in prison for over ten years. While in chains, Gregory was summoned to pray for the recovery of Tiridates from lycanthropy. His cure led him to accept the Christian faith and was baptized.⁹

Saint Gregory acted as the first Catholicos, traveled extensively, and eventually retired to a monastery on Mount Manyea. He died in 331 A.D.; his son (Aristaces or Rhestakes) and brother (Vertannes) took his place as the spiritual leaders of Armenia.

The adoption of Christianity and the various facts and legends associated with Tiridad's conversion had a significant impact on literature, particularly historical accounts. For example, one may find the traditional version of that

⁹ Hagop A. Chakmakjian, *Armenian Christology and Evangelization of Islam* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965): 14.

conversion by the Armenian chronicler Agathangelos in his *Agathangelos, History of the Armenians* (edited and translated by Robert W. Thomson in 1976)¹⁰:

The Persian king employed a traitor named Anak to murder the Armenian king. Promised a reward by the Sassanids, Anak settled in Armenia, befriended Khosrov and murdered him and most of his family. Anak and his family were, in turn, slain by angry Armenian courtiers. Only two sons were saved from death; Khosrov's son Trdat (Tiridat), who was taken to Rome, and Anak's son, who was taken to live among Christians in Cappadocia.

Years later, Trdat, with the help of Rome, returned to Armenia to regain his father's throne. Passing through Caesarea, he met the son of Anak, who had been given the name Gregory by his Christian mentors, and, unaware of his true identity, took him into his service. After regaining Armenia Trdat, recognizing great abilities in Gregory, raised him in stature in court. Gregory, of course, had already accepted the Christian faith and refused to participate in pagan ceremonies. Soon rumors of his parentage began to surface, spread by jealous nobles, which led to his torture and imprisonment in Khor Virap. Years passed and Trdat, like godfather Diocletian, continued his persecution of Christians. Among the martyrs of that period were Gayané and Hripsimé, two virgins who had refused Trdat's advances and were put to death.¹¹

Other scholars have written extensively on the subject including: M. Ormanian's *The Church of the Armenians*, Sahag Der-Movsesian's *History of the Armenians*,

¹⁰ Agathangelos's *History* comprises five parts: 1) Introduction, 2) The Story of the Life of St. Gregory, 3) The Martyrdrom of the Hripsimiants Virgins, 4) The Teaching of St. Gregory, and 5) The Conversion of Armenia. Robert W. Thomson translated the second section of the this, which is in fact a dissertation (a sixty-day sermon preached by St. Gregory to the Armenian Court). This can be found in Robert W. Thomson, *The Teaching of Saint Gregory: An Early Armenian Catechism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1970).

¹¹ Agathangelos, *History*, 1976.

Leon Arpee's *A History of Armenian Christianity*, and F.C. Conybeare's *The Key of Truth*.

Following the initial conversion of Armenia to Christianity, paganism persisted, but eventually, paganism and pagan temples were destroyed or altered and replaced with Christian churches.¹² For example, the Armenian Apostolic Cathedral of Etchmiadzin replaced the Temple of Anahit in Vagharshapat. According to Armenian tradition, Gregory had a vision of Christ descending from Heaven and striking Vagharshapat with a golden hammer, after which, a magnificent Christian temple rose. Following this vision, Gregory built a “replica” of the church he saw in Vagharshapat, which was renamed Etchmiadzin, which means “Descent of the Only Begotten.” In congruence with missionary work enacted by Saint Gregory, schools were opened to propagate Christianity throughout Armenia and surrounding countries—Georgia for example.¹³ This was critical, for establishing Christianity throughout Armenia and the surrounding countries ensured Christianity's survival.

¹² Despite the attempt to destroy all pagan temples, the Temple of Garni (first century A.D.) remains.

¹³ As with the Russian Orthodox Church, the Georgian Orthodox Church is today part of the family of Orthodox Churches known as autocephalous. Founded in the early fourth century, and as such one of the oldest Christian countries, the Georgian Orthodox Church began through the missions of Saint Nina (Nino of Cappadocia), “the equal of the Apostles.” St. Nina converted the Georgian King Marian (265-342) to Christianity and Christianity was adopted as the state religion in (326)13, under the jurisdiction of the Antioch Patriarchate. It became autocephalous in the fifth century under King Vakhtang Gorgasali when a new structure for the Church was organized, headed by a Catholicos with twelve bishops below him. As in the first Christian nation, Armenia, following the Council of Chalcedon in 451, Georgia embraced monophysitism. Later, under Catholicos Kirion I (595–610), Georgia came under Byzantine influence, turning to Chalcedonian Orthodoxy. During this new development, important liturgical works were translated into Georgian. As this chapter concerns itself with musical identity, it is important to mention that during

In addition to its Christian heritage, the creation of the Armenian alphabet is perhaps the most significant event that has preserved Armenian culture throughout its extensive history.¹⁴ The Armenian alphabet was created by the Bishop Mesrop Mashdotz (361-439), which, in effect, resulted in significant development of the Armenian Church music and Armenian literature. One may credit the invention of the alphabet with the complete conversion of Armenia. There were serious problems with the conversion of all Armenians to Christianity. There was already a long history of nature worship and simply making people convert is not part of the theology of Christianity. Following the decision to make Armenia Christian, hundreds of thousands of people were baptized. However, most of the people converted not because of a profound change in *faith*, but rather, through “forced motivation” from the king himself. Thus, considerable missionary practice had to be enacted and given the illiteracy of the Armenian people at this time, all teaching was done through the oral tradition. Most of the early mission preachers came from

the sixth and seventh centuries, early Byzantine hymnography and Palestinian choral singing were translated into Georgian by Georgian scholars. The fall of Constantinople in 1453, combined with the fact that Georgia was surrounded by Muslim countries, resulted in Georgia becoming part of the Russian empire (1801). In 1811, the Church was forcibly incorporated into the Russian Orthodox Church, and finally gained independence once again in 1917 after the fall of the Russian Tsars. Having said this, it was not until 1943 that the Russian Orthodox Church officially recognized its independence. Following the fall of the Soviet Union, Georgia became an independent state. In 1990, there were approximately five million Georgian Orthodox believers in the former Soviet Union.

¹⁴ The Armenian language is an independent branch of the Indo-European family of languages.

Syria.¹⁵ This was indeed a problem—as a result of the outside Syrian influence, Armenia was in danger of losing not only her identity, but also her political independence.

By making Christianity “Armenian” and by correlation, Armenia “Christian” a chance was given to maintain and perpetuate *Armenianness*. Armenia had to not only be culturally independent, creating its own form of Christianity, but also, it had to be linguistically separate, both orally and written. Mesrop Mashtots, a celibate Celebrant, began work on the creation of the Armenian alphabet.¹⁶ Initially exploring the use of other writing systems, Mesrop Mashtots, with his students, eventually developed an original alphabet.¹⁷ The alphabet contains thirty-six characters designed to represent all of the sounds of the Armenian language.¹⁸ Given Mesrop Mashtots’s divine authority, many attribute the Armenian language to divine intervention:

In the *Cratylus*, Plato advances the view that there may be a necessary affinity between words and the objects they designate. At one point toward the end of the dialogue (438b), its main personage has this to say to Socrates: “I believe the true account of the matter to be, that a power more than human gave things their first names, and that the names which are then given are necessarily their first true names. “We are told elsewhere in the

¹⁵ Some Armenian religious terms are actually Syriac in origin—for example, *kahana* (married priest), *abegha* (priest), *urbat* (Friday), *Shabat* (Sabbath), and others.

¹⁶ Mesrop Mashtots (c. 362-440) was born in the town of Taron and studied both Greek and Syriac.

¹⁷ Mesrop Mashtots went to Greek and Syrian learning centers in order to make comparative studies of the phonetic principles of various alphabets.

¹⁸ In addition to the thirty-six characters created by Mashtots, two more were added in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

dialogue that what is true of names is true of their syllables and letters as well (424ff).

A religious variant of this Platonic theory is that an alphabet is authentic when it is given by God, a conviction that explains an otherwise peculiar behavior among Armenian scholars at the turn of the fifth century; they hear more or less reliable reports about Armenian letters and Mashtots himself goes here and there to look for them as if tracking down a hidden treasure! We know that in the end he comes to the conclusion that a God-given Armenian alphabet is nowhere to be found. He entreats God to give one to him, and God answers his prayer.¹⁹

Komitas Vartabed (1869-1935), the well-known composer and collector of Armenian music states:

Until the invention of the Armenian alphabet, the Armenian ritual consisted of psalmody (chanting). How the psalmody was sung is not known; in all probability they used the ancient pagan melody.²⁰

By the fifth century, the written language was known as *Grabar*, or Classical Armenian, which even today, remains the ecclesiastical language of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Divine Liturgy).²¹ The first work translated into Armenian was the Bible (see figure 20). The Armenian translation of the Old Testament was made from the Greek text of the Septuagint, but with many different readings in accordance with the Syriac tradition. The first translation was begun in 404 and was

¹⁹ Hagop J. Nersoyan, "The Why and When of the Armenian Alphabet," *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* 2 (1985-86): 58.

²⁰ Roupen Gregorian, "Church Music of the Armenians," *The Digest* 2 (1953): 79-82.

²¹ Outside of the Armenian Liturgy, two versions of the Armenian language, Eastern and Western Armenian are spoken in everyday contexts.

completed in 433. After the translation of the Bible, work began on translating the Armenian Liturgy, following the liturgy of Caesarea and borrowing from “national customs and from pagan rites.”²² With the creation of the Armenian alphabet and translation of the Bible into Armenian, the liturgy and rituals began to develop.



Fig. 20. Portrait and title page of St. Mark’s Gospel. The British Library, ms Add.18549, ff.43v-44r. See Vrej Nersessian, *The Bible in the Armenian Tradition* (London: The British Library, 2001).

²² Malachia Ormanian 1955: 18.

The translation of the Bible marked a significant step in preserving Armenian culture. It was not until Armenian delegates attended the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D. that the entire Book was translated.²³ According to F. C. Conybeare, the Armenian translation of the Bible is one of the oldest in the world.²⁴ The Bible's translation also says much about the contexts of the time:

Although the Bible provided Christianity with the medium for both unity of faith and the unity of culture in late antiquity, the first notable threat to Christian uniformity sprang from the variety of languages in which Scriptures had been transmitted.²⁵

Though converting an entire culture into a new faith was marked with challenges, Christianity did take hold and indeed, has had an important impact on Armenian culture. A significant step back occurred in 428 A.D., when Armenia lost its independence. It was split into two parts—becoming a part of the Persian Sassanid Empire and a part of the Byzantine Empire. Both enacted various forms of oppression—the Persian advocating Zoroastrianism²⁶ and the Byzantines forcing their own form of Christianity. Prior to this, the Armenian Church rejected the

²³ The entire work was revised and supplemented to agree with the Greek originals.

²⁴ In addition to the Armenian translation, the Old Syriac (second/third centuries, containing the four Gospels), the Coptic (fourth century), the Vulgate (fifth century), and the Syriac (fifth century).

²⁵ Vrej Nersessian 2001: 8.

²⁶ The Armenian Apostolic Church held a Council at Ashtishat in response to the Persian push towards Zoroastrianism.

Council of Chalcedon²⁷ (451), and remained part of the monophysite perspective.²⁸ The Council of Chalcedon centered on the debate of the divine nature of Jesus Christ with two opposing views—could one speak of the divine and human nature of Christ after the union of the two natures. The Armenian Apostolic, Coptic, Indian Malabar, and Syriac churches retained their monophysite position that the union (of the human and divine natures) could only be spoken of as one, not two natures. By 484 A.D., the Armenians signed a treaty with the Persians “Treaty of Nvarsak” which allowed the Armenians to practice Christianity. In 685 A.D., the Byzantine Emperor Justinian II attempted without success to force the Armenian Apostolic Church to join the Byzantine Church.

By the ninth century, an independent kingdom of Bagratids formed in Armenia, but ended by 1079. It is also at this time that Armenians assisted the Crusaders of the First Crusade in capturing the Holy Land from Islam. This contact with the Roman Church opened the door to reunification, when Manuel Comnenus (1143-1180 A.D.) invited Catholicos Nerses the Graceful to come together. A synod was called in Syria, where Assyrians, Greeks, Latins, and Armenians gathered:

- 1) To anathematize those who say “one nature” of Christ, . . . 2) To confess two natures, two wills, and two operations in Christ,
- 3) To move from the *Trisagion* the conjunction “and” and the words “was crucified.” 4) To celebrate the Christian feasts with the Greeks: the Annunciation on March 25; Christmas on

²⁷ During the time of the Council of Chalcedon, the Armenians could not attend because they were at war with the Persians at Avarair.

²⁸ The Council of Shahabivan was held in 444 and with it, the earliest Armenian canons were produced.

December 25; the Circumcision on January 1; the Baptism on January 6; the Presentation on February 2; and to change the Dominical feasts and those of the holy virgin Mother of God, John the Baptist, the holy Apostles, and other saints. 5) To prepare the *Muron* (charm) with olive oil. 6) To use leavened bread mixed with wine at the Communion. 7) During the Mass and other services of worship to keep the congregation in the church, excepting those who are on penance. 8) To accept the canons of the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh general councils . . . 9) To submit the election of the Armenian Catholicos to the approval of the Emperor.²⁹

After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Muhammad II devised the millet system for managing the civil and religious affairs of the Christian minorities of the Ottoman Empire.³⁰ The Turkish Republican government only abolished this system after World War I.

As Russia occupied the Caucasus, the Russian Orthodox exerted control over the Armenian Apostolic Church. Believing that the state of the human condition was based on economic exploitation and the dogmatic concerns of religion, Lenin's aim of communism was to create a new ideology for man.³¹ In reconstructing society, Marxist ideology sought to eradicate previous cultural models in often very narrow and even violent ways. Many political historians have

²⁹ Malachia Ormanian 1955: 123-22.

³⁰ Broadly speaking, the term 'Millet' in the context of Ottoman history means a religiously defined people. The Millet system had a socio-cultural and communal framework based, firstly, on religion and, secondly, on ethnicity which in turn reflected linguistic differences of the Millets consisted essentially of people who belonged to the same faith.

³¹ For more on this subject see Mark Cowling, ed., *The Communist Manifesto: New Interpretations*, including *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, translated by Terrell Carver (Washington Square, NY: New York University Press, 1998).

argued that the instrument for change was the modern twentieth-century totalitarian dictatorship, which, in the guise of creating a “model” society, in fact fostered violence, subversion, and prohibition of information that controlled all levels of society. The common people and workers (the Proletariat) made-up the largest class of people. The central goal for the government was to “re-enculturate” these largely uneducated people:

. . . the essential feature of the soviets was that they represented the primitive, politically inexperienced masses . . . The mass of members . . . were persons of no fixed program, easily swayed by the events of the moment and by the most attractive of the slogans put before them. In any parliament, the parties would be represented by experienced politicians, already possessing deeply defined political convictions. If the Bolsheviks took part in parliamentary politics, they would have to bargain and make concessions to other parties. But if they could capture the soviets, they would make themselves the leaders of the masses.³²

The Proletariat did not realize that this “education” was, in reality, a complicated form of propaganda that re-defined the prevailing world-view in terms of Marxist philosophy—the new “faith.” This new communist philosophy had prepared pre-fabricated answers to every question of life, and a solution for every problem. In this, the Marxist analysis of society ensured the eventual support from the working class.

While the “problem” of Capitalism was quickly being solved, the government realized that perhaps an even more significant obstacle to their “re-building of humanity” was not simply the old economic order, but religion. Though

³² Hugh Seton-Watson, *From Lenin to Khrushchev: The History of World Communism* (New York: Praeger, 1960): 365.

the October 1917 revolution proclaimed freedom of religious activities, the Bolsheviks were wary of religious leaders as political rivals. Under communism, all religions were suspect, for in contrast to governmental institutions, the very foundation of their theologies maintained their own individualized hierarchies and organizations.

During centuries of oppression by foreign powers, the Christian religion has become a shining badge of Armenian identity both in Armenia and in the diaspora. The Armenian Apostolic Church, as one of the oldest Eastern Orthodox churches, has successfully maintained autonomy throughout the centuries, accepting only the first three ecumenical councils—those of Nicea (325 AD), Constantinople (381 AD), and Ephesus (431 AD)—in which the fundamental dogmas of Christianity were adopted by all Christian churches. Because the fourth Ecumenical Council was held in 451 AD in Chalcedon while the Armenians were at war with Persia and for a variety of theological reasons, the Armenian Church does not accept the decisions of Chalcedon.

Throughout Armenia's history, the church has acted to maintain not only the national faith, but also the language, culture, and traditions of the Armenian people, both in Armenian and in the diaspora. With this, the music of the church has made a significant mark on Armenian culture in general. For most Armenians, the national faith is not simply a religion, but constitutes a larger cultural belief system.

Armenian Theology in the Context of Eastern Orthodoxy³³

The Armenian Church belongs to the Eastern Orthodox family of churches, known as the Oriental Orthodox, or Non-Chalcedonian Churches (the Armenian, Coptic, Syrian, Ethiopian and Indian Malabar churches).³⁴ The relationship between Byzantium (East) and Rome (West) deteriorated gradually and in the ninth century a schism between the Byzantine Church and the Church of Rome took shape during the time of Patriarch Photius. In 1054, anathemas were declared by both sides (Patriarch Michael and Cardinal Humbert), which lasted for centuries. In 1965, following the Vatican II Council, the anathemas were lifted by both sides in a spirit of ecumenism and understanding among the churches.

The main theological differences between the Eastern Churches (including the Armenians) and the Church of Rome (Catholics) are: 1) according to the teachings of the Church of Rome, the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, proceeds from the Father and the Son, while the Orthodox teach that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father only; 2) Roman Catholics consider the Pope the “Vicar of Christ,” while the Orthodox churches consider him only as “first in honor” and in pastoral diakonia; 3) Catholics follow a “monarchical” model of

³³ See Hagop A. Chakmakjian, 1965. See also his “Notes of Some Ancient Ecclesiastical Practices in Armenia,” *Folklore* 18 (1907): 432-35, and his “The Armenian Church,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 15 (1914): 471-73.

³⁴ See Peter D. Day, *Eastern Christian Liturgies* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1972).

ecclesial polity, while the Orthodox follow a “conciliar” model, i.e., church councils determine church dogma, canons and policies.³⁵

There are also other differences among these two main branches of Eastern Orthodox churches, such as the rules of fasting; manner of conferring confirmation; celibacy of clergy; divorce; purgatory; the West has a more “analytic” approach, the East has a more “mystical” approach to theological issues.

The main difference between the Byzantine Chalcedonian tradition and the Armenian Church, (together with other non-Chalcedonian churches) has been on the issue of Christology, i.e., the dogma related to Christ’s Divine and Human natures:

The Greek Church, making pretext of the fact that Armenians do not recognize the Council of Chalcedon (which in A.D. 451 was held in the city of Chalcedon, now called Kadikeuy, for refuting the heresy of Eutyches), for a long time endeavored to bring the Armenians into subjection to the Council. But Armenians, while repudiating the heresy of Eutyches, did not undertake to recognize the Council of Chalcedon, in which they had no part, and which supreme over Eastern Churches. Had the Armenian Church recognized the Council of Chalcedon, her free Apostolical Patriarchal See would have been lost, and her independence would have been to the authority of the Greek Church.³⁶

³⁵ According to R. C. Zaehner, “Christianity: The Eastern Schism and the Eastern Orthodox Church,” *Encyclopedia of the World’s Religion* (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1997): 83, “Orthodoxy starts with the community, and sees the individual as a member thereof. Western Christianity begins with the individual, and interprets the community as an outcome of a decision made by individuals to act together. The Western mind, being more analytical, approaches spirit and matter as distinct and even opposite entities, whereas Orthodoxy conceives matter and spirit as two interdependent manifestations of the same ultimate reality. These two attitudes are not contradictory but complementary to each other; yet their own way they colour every aspect of Church life, and, as a result, the same terms are differently understood by the Christian East and West.”

³⁶ Archdeacon Dowling 1910: 63.

The hierarchy of the Armenian Church is similar to other Eastern Orthodox Churches. It comprises deacons, married Celebrants, celibate Celebrants, bishops, patriarchs, and Catholicos. The spiritual leader of the Armenian Church is the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians in Etchmiadzin (see Appendix II: Aspects of Armenian Christology). The Armenian Church also comprises a Catholicos in Antelias, Lebanon and two patriarchs (one in Jerusalem and one in Constantinople). The Armenian Church also recognizes a number of Saints and as its central profession of faith, the *Nicene Creed*, in Armenian *Hankanag Havado* or *Havadamk* (we believe):

The Sacraments of the Armenian Church were not completely established until the twelfth century. The term “sacrament” comes from the Latin term “sacrare” which means to “duplicate”—its Armenian equivalent “Khorhoort” or “mystery.” Considering the term theologically, each sacrament is received “mysteriously.” In the Armenian Church, there are seven sacraments:

- 1) Baptism
- 2) Chrism (Chrismation)
- 3) Penitence (Penance)
- 4) Holy Communion
- 5) Marriage
- 6) Holy Orders
- 7) Anointing the Sick

According to Christian tradition, as birth is the beginning of life, baptism is necessary to begin one's life anew as a "Child of God." As reported in Dowling:

Holy Baptism is usually administered with great pomp and solemnity. On the eighth day after birth, the midwife takes the child in her arms, and accompanied by the godfather, and some of the relations, goes to the church. Outside the entrance of the porch, after the Clergy have recited the 21st and 131st Psalms, and during the singing of a hymn, the Celebrant takes two strings, one white, the other red, known as *the twisted thread* (emblems of the water and the blood that flowed from the side of the Saviour of the world)—plaits them together, and fastens them to the cross, and, and lays them upon the catechumen or child to be baptized. This is evidently a last trace of former white baptismal robes with red embroidery.³⁷

Baptism, Chrismation, and Holy Communion are all given at the time of Baptism. Chrismation, an integral part of baptism, is simply the act of anointing oil "sealing the Holy Spirit." Holy Communion (*Haghortootiun*) also takes place at baptism, but also during the Divine Liturgy. This is considered the most important sacrament:

The (Holy) Communion is administered without distinction of age, in both elements, by means of the consecrated wafer being soaked in the element of wine. The wafer consists of unleavened bread, unfermented and of sufficient texture, which is prepared and baked by the Celebrants on the day of mass; it is of circular form, and is stamped with the sign of the cross and certain ornamental designs.³⁸

³⁷ Archdeacon Dowling 1910: 113. *The Order of Holy Baptism of Catechumens* is printed in Captain Fortescue's *Armenian Church* (London: J.T. Hayes, 1872): 291-321.

³⁸ Malachia Ormanian 1955: 102.

The Sacrament of Marriage exists for man to join woman in love and for the glory of God. Holy Orders is “appointed” by God for people to dedicate their lives directly to God and the service of the Church.³⁹ The final sacrament is the Anointing of the Sick, for healing the body and soul of the sick:

According to the rubrics, this sacrament properly requires the presence of seven Celebrants, but now in practice this has been modified. Essentially the Armenian rite resembles the rite obtaining among the Copts, who use a seven-branched lamp. The practice of anointing the sick with the oil from a church lamp is quite ancient; St. John Chrysostom speaks of it as being most efficacious.⁴⁰

Conclusion

Though converting an entire nation into a new faith was marked with challenges, Christianity did take hold and greatly affected Armenian culture. During centuries of oppression by foreign powers, the Christian religion has become an emblem of Armenian identity both in Armenia and in throughout the diaspora. The Armenian Apostolic Church, as one of the oldest Eastern Orthodox churches, has successfully maintained autonomy throughout the centuries. Throughout Armenia’s history, the church has acted to maintain not only the national faith, but also the language, culture, and traditions of the Armenian people, both in Armenian

³⁹ According to Malachia Ormanian, “Among the Armenians this is a very lengthy rite. It is often referred to as ‘the Imposition of the Crown.’ On the day of marriage, which is usually Monday or Thursday, the clergy go to the bride’s house, and there the ring and the robes are blessed. With the arrival of the bridegroom, the clergy recite more prayers, and then the wedding party proceeds to the church, accompanied by band music. The relatives carry candles. Inside the church, the bridal couple stand side by side at the sanctuary gate, and the priest places the Bible on their heads and recites the sacramental form.” (1955): 23.

⁴⁰ Malachia Ormanian 1955: 21.

and in the diaspora. With this, the music of the church has made a significant mark on Armenian culture in general. For most Armenians, the national faith is not simply a religion, but constitutes a larger cultural belief system, embodying what it means to be Armenian.

PART THREE:

ANALYSIS

Victor Turner described his method for ritual analysis as involving “the interpretation of the meaning of symbols considered as dynamic systems of signifiers, signifieds, and changing modes of signification in temporal sociocultural processes.”¹ The three dimensions he identified in ritual analysis included the exegetic, operational, and the positional. As previously described in Chapter Two, the exegetic dimension consists of the explanations of a symbol’s meanings offered by indigenous informants or “official explanations.” The operational dimension deals specifically with what the participants of ritual do with the symbols. The positional dimension indicates the symbol’s relationship to other symbols. These dimensions relate also with Peirce’s categories of the semantic, the syntactic, and the pragmatic (also described in Chapter Two). Ultimately, these dimensions deal with interpretation. The following chapters focus primarily on these dimensions through structural, hermeneutic, and ethnographic analysis.

¹ Victor Turner 1985: 11.

CHAPTER SIX

Description of Ritual Contexts: Space, Objects, Sounds and Language, and Identity

Introduction

In order to analyze the religious performance of the *Soorp Badarak* of the Armenian Apostolic Church in terms of ritual action, I will first interpret the ritual in light of the domains of ritual space, objects, sounds and language, and identity.

Ronald Grimes speaks of the difference between liturgical ritual and other forms of ritual:

What is unique to liturgy is not that it communicates (decorum communicates), proclaims (ceremony proclaims), or exclaims (ritualization exclaims), but that it asks. Liturgically, one approaches the sacred in a reverent, “interrogative” mood, waits “in passive voice,” and finally is “declarative” of the way things ultimately are. In liturgy, ritualists “actively act” in order to be acted upon . . . This paradoxical acting toward inaction runs through liturgical acts as diverse as the Christian Eucharist, Sufi

dance, Taoist alchemy, Zen meditation, and Jewish synagogue worship.¹

Speaking of liturgy symbolically, he goes further to differentiate it from other rituals:

Liturgy is a symbolic action in which a deep receptivity, sometimes in the form of meditative rites or contemplative exercises, is cultivated. In it participants actively await what gives itself and what is beyond their command. This is what separates liturgy from magic and what lends it an implicitly meditative and mystical character. Since liturgy is a structure waiting upon an influx of whole-making (holy) power, it is inescapably a spiritual exercise. There is a sense on which a liturgical rite is but mere practice, a preparatory exercise, and a way of biding valued time. The exercise is the heirophany.²

My analysis of the ritual contexts will be discussed in the following manner:

Ritual Space

- Entry and Occupation of Space
- Main Hall description and Occupation of Space
- Sanctuary (Located a step up from the Main Hall)

Ritual Objects

- Vestments and other Congregational Clothing
- Processional Candles
- Sacrificial Gifts
- Holy Bible
- Icons
- Crosses

Ritual Sounds and Language

- Sounds
- Language

Ritual Identity

- Role of Church Leaders

¹ Ronald Grimes 1995: 51.

² Ronald Grimes 1995: 52.

Role of Congregation Participants

The principle loci for the ritual performances are the *Saint Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church* and *Soorp Khatch Armenian Church*, though, for the purposes of continuity, I focus primarily on *Saint Mary's*. This is where most of my active fieldwork was conducted in the Washington D.C./Baltimore areas. However, I draw references to *Soorp Khatch* for comparison.



Fig. 23. Front of St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church

Each Sunday, approximately 200-300 people attend the *Divine Liturgy* service at *Saint Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church*:



Fig. 24. Photograph of Congregation. St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church

The ceremony lasts approximately two hours. There are more adults than children and their ages range from the very young to the very old. This group, not unlike other Armenian groups that I have studied, is highly educated. Many of them speak multiple languages and have college and graduate level degrees.

Ritual Space

To look at ritual as a performance, a study of the context is essential for a complete picture. Marcia Herndon and Norma McLeod in their *Music As Culture* consider two types of contexts, “physical” or “social” depending on the perspective

of the observer.³ Ritual space is tied to both of these contexts. Without a “space,” a ritual event cannot take place.



Fig. 25. Ceiling of St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church



Fig. 26. View from the Right Side of St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church

³ Marcia Herndon and Norma McLeod, *Music As Culture* (Richmond, California: MRI Press, 1990): 25-51.

The Church is divided into three primary areas: the *entry way* or *vestibule*, the *main hall*, and the *sanctuary* (which contains the Altar).

Entryway or Vestibule

In the entryway, the vestment area is located to the side, out of the way from the congregants. One will also find prayer candles, which members of the congregation light and make prayers. In this area, on the right side, there is also a table where members and visitors alike may make a tithing or offering to the church. In addition to serving as the entryway into the main worship hall, it provides a place where congregants can talk prior to beginning and at the end of the Divine Liturgy. There is very little decoration in this area.

Main Worship Hall.

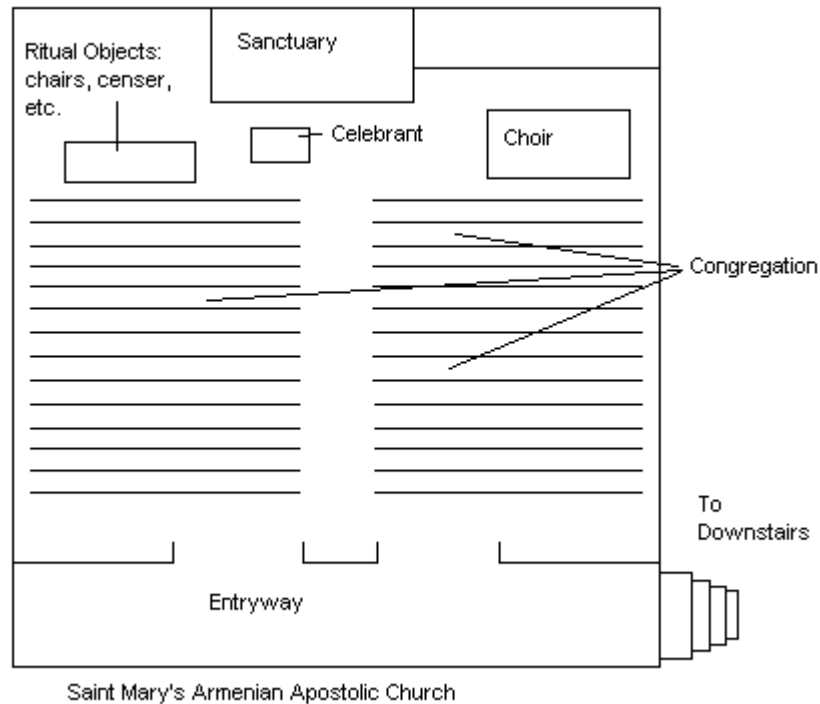


Fig. 27. Diagram of St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church

The main hall contains more objects than does the vestibule. The space is decorated with stained glass windows, Armenian rugs, pictures, a model of a traditional Armenian church enclosed in glass, and Christian ritual objects such as icons, crosses. It is furnished with pews, chandeliers, chairs, and tables:



Fig. 28. Inside Saint Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church

In the church in Armenia, the congregation stands during the entire service. In America, the Armenian Church is furnished with pews. This custom of sitting during the service was most likely adopted from Protestant churches. There are ample areas for sitting and the pews have the capacity to accommodate approximately 300-350 persons. During special ceremonies, it is common to see many people standing on the side and at the rear (close to the vestibule) because there is no seat available. In the pews in the Armenian American church, one can find copies of two books, the *Armenian Bible* and *The Armenian Divine Liturgy*.

Beautiful Armenian rugs line the floor. They are both in the front, before the sanctuary and in between the pews. Traditionally, Armenian rugs were status symbols, placed on the floor or hung on the wall to create an ambiance within a home, palace, or church. Historically, the Armenian Church has regarded Armenian

rugs as treasures of the church. Rugs have been woven to commemorate special events, such as weddings, for a church consecration, or to honor the dead.⁴

In the front right area, there is an area for the choir and Choir Director. Close to this area, stands an electronic organ.

Windows, chandeliers, and a large number of votive candles light the space of the worship hall. Candles, in particular, can be found throughout the main worship hall. They line the walls as well as the sanctuary area. They are simple, white, and odorless and are typically placed on gold or silver candleholders.

At the front left of the worship hall, one will find a series of three chairs, which are used by the residing Celebrant, and any visiting Bishop or Archbishop during *Soorp Badarak*. One will also find the censer beside the far-right chair. A podium can also be found in this general area and is typically covered with an embroidered cloth. From this podium the Celebrant gives his sermon during the Divine Liturgy.

The walls of the worship space also have approximately twelve stained-glass windows. The stained-glass windows provide a light source, as well as decorum. Above each stained-glass window, there is a painted curved arch. The arches are reminiscent of the architectural elements of traditional Armenian churches.

⁴ For more on Armenian rugs, see H. M. Raphaelian, “Rugs of Armenian, Their History and Art” (New Rochelle, New York: Anatol Sivas Publishers, 1960).

Sanctuary

The Sanctuary is slightly raised above the congregational level (or nave) of the church; the Altar is in full view, unlike the hidden Iconostasis as is typical of other Eastern Orthodox churches in America.⁵ The Altar is a wooden table placed atop Armenian rugs. There is a screen-curtain placed in front of the Sanctuary proper. This curtain serves to conceal the Celebrant and deacons at certain points during the *Soorp Badarak*. During the *Soorp Badarak* no one, save for the Celebrant and deacons, are allowed in the Sanctuary. Above the Sanctuary, one can see replicas of three towers reminiscent of traditional church architecture.



Fig. 29. Sanctuary and Altar

⁵ The Cathedral in Etchmiadzin is an exception and includes an Iconostasis.

Ritual Objects

Ritual objects consist of vestments and other congregational clothing, processional candles, sacrificial gifts, Holy Bible, icons, and crosses.

Vestments of the Clergy and Members of the Choir

Ritual Vestments are the ecclesiastical liturgical clothing worn by clergy in the celebration of the *Soorp Badarak*, or other sacred occasions. The quality of clothing is exceptionally good, made of the finest cloths and silks. The vestments of the Celebrant, bishops, deacons, and Altar servers include the alb, stole, vakas, chasuble, cuffs, and slippers. During the Divine Liturgy, the Celebrant may even wear a crown. The colors of the garments are typically red and gold. The alb is the full-length robe worn over normal clothing and under the chasuble, or outer robe. The stole is worn around the neck of the Celebrant and bishop and across the shoulder of the deacon. It hangs down in front and over the flat cincture or belt. The vakas (high collar) is placed around the back of the neck. The chasuble resembling the full cape without its hood is then placed on the Celebrant. Finally, the Celebrant puts on a pair of slippers and two cuffs.

Vesting separates each member who is participating as well as denotes hierarchies within the church.

A handcross is used by Celebrants and Bishops to bless the people, except between the Consecration and Holy Communion when only the hand is used. Altar servers and deacons wear colored ungirdled albs, embroidered at the shoulders, breast, and wrists.



Figure 30. Celebration of 1700 Years of Christianity. St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church.

Vesting for the choir is simpler. The men in the choir wear white gowns with blue collars and cuffs, and women in the choir wear white gowns with red collars and cuffs. Women in the choir also cover their hair. The Choir Director, who happens to be a man at *Saint Mary's*, wears the same vestment as the other men in the choir.

Vestments of the Congregation

Members of the congregation generally wear nice, well-kept clothing. Men might wear a suit with a tie, or perhaps a nice button-down dress shirt with a tie and slacks. Some men prefer to dress “down” and come in less formal attire. Women wear either semi-formal dresses or a combination of skirt and blouse. Younger men and women tend to dress less formally than older members of the church.

Processional Candles

There are many candles used during the Armenian Liturgy. Large candles are placed on the Altar. Small candles are also used during the procession, especially at Christmas time and other special occasions. The candle symbolizes the Christian need for light, not only for practical purposes, but also to symbolize certain events and “the light of the Lord.”

Censer

The Censer is a silver or gold container suspended on a chain with a cover. During the Divine Liturgy, incense is placed inside the censer on hot ambers:

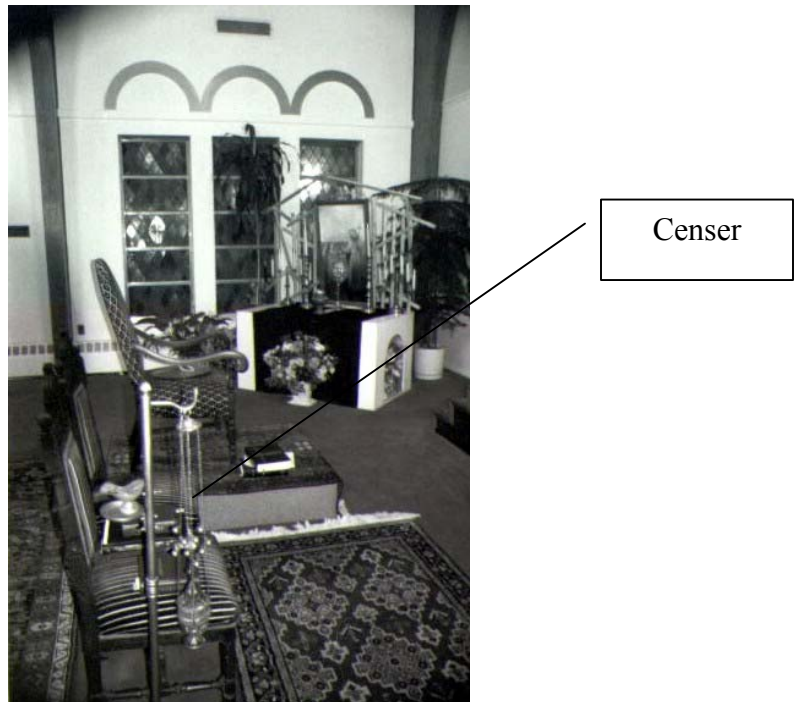


Fig. 31. Chairs and Ritual Objects (Censer in forefront)

Censing symbolizes purification. For example, during the Synaxis of the *Soorp Badarak*, the curtain of the Altar is drawn and the Celebrant, Altar servers, and deacons form a procession and go to each member of the congregation. The choir sings the “Hymn of Censing” and the congregation stands. When the Celebrant passes by, censing, the faithful make the sign of the cross and say: “Remember us also before the immortal Lamb of God.” The Celebrant responds: “Ye shall be remembered before the immortal Lamb of God.”

Sacrificial Gifts

The Sacrificial gifts used in the Divine Liturgy are bread and wine:

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation of the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we partake of the one bread. (1 Cor. 10:16)

In contrast to many Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Armenian Apostolic Church uses unleavened bread. After consecration, the transubstantiated bread is broken into small pieces and distributed to members during Holy Communion. The wine used in the Divine Liturgy is pure, and without the addition of water. A vessel is used for the bread and a chalice made of precious metals is used for wine.

Armenian Bible

An elaborately bound, gold, copy of the Bible is used during the service. It is in the Armenian language of *Grabar*. Armenians call the Bible *Astuadsashubtch*,

which means “Breadth of God.”⁶ During the Divine Liturgy, a book that contains the New Testament is used. The formation of the official Canon of the *Armenian Bible* is a debated topic and discussed quite thoughtfully in Vrej Nersessian’s *The Bible in the Armenian Tradition*:

The growth of the Armenian canon is complex because the evidence available is far from complete and there is no clear and consistent conception of canonicity . . . The twenty-two unhidden books correspond to the books of the Hebrew canon. The second reference comes in the form of an instruction attached to Canon XXIV of the Council of Partav summoned in 768 by Catholicos Sion I Bawonetsi.⁷

The Four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) are always placed on the Altar next to the Cross. During the Divine Liturgy, the deacon takes the book and recites the proclamation “Be attentive” (“Broskhoomeh”):

Broskhoomeh (Let Us Look Attentively)



Fig. 32. *Broskhoomeh*

⁶ Vrej Nersessian, *The Bible in the Armenian Tradition* (London: The British Library, 2001): 12.

⁷ Vrej Nersessian 2001: 25.



Fig. 33. Title page of gospel according to Luke Artist - Grigor Tatevatsi, 1378. Gospel, 1297. www.armsite.com.

This is critical to symbolism within the church:

The Gospel symbolizes belief in the ‘real presence’ of Christ throughout the service. Before reading the lesson from the Gospels, selections are read from the Old Testament and the Epistles from the chancel in the nave. The Gospel is always read by the Celebrant celebrating the Mass or by a deacon, who instructs the congregation to stand and begins the reading by declaring, ‘God speaks.’ The sermon preached after the reading of the Gospel was originally meant to be a commentary on what had been read in the lessons. After this the whole congregation confirms its faith by reciting the Nicene Creed.⁸

⁸ Vrej Nersessian, *The Bible in the Armenian Tradition* (London: The British Library, 2001): 78.

Divine Liturgy Books

The Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church book is one of the most important objects used in this ritual and can be found in the backs of the pews. This book explains the Divine Liturgy and also includes much of the music. It helps the members of the congregation follow the *Soorp Badarak*.

Icons

Icons are part of Armenian Christology and are objects of veneration. The notion of icon veneration is controversial. According to the Second Commandment, “You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth” (Ex. 20:4, 5). In Eastern Orthodoxy, the honor of icons is interpreted differently, “God promises to meet and speak with us through his imagery!” (Ex. 25:22). The Armenian Church does use icons and views them as “windows into heaven”:





Figs. 34 and 35. Examples of Armenian Icons. www.armsite.com

Icons are typically wooden panels with a painting, usually in tempera, of Christ, the Virgin Mary or another religious subject. Typical icons consist of small paintings embellished with a repoussé cover of silver or other metal, cut out to reveal the central part of the picture.

Crosses

In the Armenian Church, the cross has become an object of veneration. Its meaning can be interpreted as a symbol of Christ. Some see it as a symbol of His victory over death or as a memory of the site of His sacrifice. In *Saint Mary's*, there are many crosses placed throughout the worship areas. The most visibly important rest on the Altar, walls, or in small coves along the sides of the walls. Also, during worship, adherents often make the sign of the cross.

Ritual Sound and Language

Sounds and language are components of every type of ritual. Sounds may be described as musical, linguistic, or even non-linguistic sounds such as coughing, and other non-lexical utterances. I have structured my description of ritual sound and language into two primary parts, “general sounds” and “language-specific sounds.” Within “general sounds,” I look at both the music (hymns) and verbal non-lexical utterances. Within “language,” I consider the language of the text of the liturgy itself and contrast it to the language of the people.

General Sounds

In the Armenian Divine Liturgy, hymns and recitations are chanted by the choir, the Deacons, the Altar servers, the Celebrant, and, at times, by the congregation. The choir director stands facing the congregation, acting both as a conductor for the choir and the congregation. For most of the *Soorp Badarak*, the choir remains stationary. The choir comprises approximately twenty to twenty-five people and the space allocated in *Saint Mary’s* is ample for this number of people. Acoustically, the sound of the choir is enhanced by the construction of the church. The vaulted-arched ceiling (with chandeliers), which is reminiscent of traditional Armenian churches, amplifies the choir’s sound. During the Divine Liturgy, a flow of music, which, despite some variation between the common and the proper, remains the same in every performance. Below is a chronological ordering of the Yekmalian’s *Badarak*, as it pertains to the music of the Choir specifically:

Khorhoort Khorin [The Hymn of Vesting]
Sharagan Khngargootyan Parekhosootyamp [Hymn of Censing]
Introit: Miyadsin Vorti [Only begotten Son and Word of God . . .]
Yev unt hokvooyt koom [And with the spirit]
Arachee ko Der [We are before you, Oh Lord]
Soorp Asdvadz [Holy God]
Der Voghormya [Lord have mercy upon us]
Yev unt hokvooyt koom [And with the spirit]
Park kez Der [Glory be to You, Oh Lord our God]
Aseh Asdvadz [Speak, Oh God]
Park kez Der [Glory be to You, Oh Lord our God]
Der Voghormya [Lord have mercy upon us]
Yev unt hokvooyt koom [And with the spirit]
Arachee ko Der [We are before you, Oh Lord]
Amen
Marmeen Deroonagan [The Body of the Lord]
Hagiody-Hureshdagayin . . . Asdvads [Oh God, You have filled Your Holy . . .]
Der Voghormya [Lord have mercy upon us]
Getso Der [Save us]
Yev unt hokvooyt koom [And with the spirit]
Arachee ko Der [We are before you, Oh Lord]
Kreesdos Ee Mech [Christ has been revealed among us]
Ar Kez Asdvadz [Behold Christ, the immaculate Lamb of God . . .]
Voghormootyoon [We ask for mercy and peace and blessed sacrifice]
Amen Yev Unt [Amen. And with Your spirit]
Ooneemk [We have lifted them to You, Oh Lord, Almighty]
Arzhan yehv irav [It is proper and right to do so]
Sanctus-Soorp Soorp [Holy, Holy]
Amen
Amen . . . Hayr Yergnavor [Amen. Heavenly Father]
Hamenaynee Orhnyal yehs, Der [In all things blessed are You, Oh Lord]
Yev unt hokvooyt koom [And with the spirit]
Arachee Ko Der . . . Vortee Asdoodzo [We are before you, Oh Lord]
Hokee Asdoodzo [Spirit of God]
Heeshya Der [Be mindful of them, Oh Lord, and have mercy]
Park harootyan ko Der [Glory be to Your Resurrection, Oh Lord]
Heeshya Der [Be mindful of them, Oh Lord, and have mercy]
Usdamenaynee [According to the needs of all and for all]
Yev unt hokvooyt koom [And with the spirit]
Der Voghormya [Lord have mercy upon us]
Getso Der [Save us]
Heeshya Der [Be mindful of them, Oh Lord, and have mercy]
Hayr Mehr [Lord's Prayer]
Yev unt hokvooyt koom [And with the spirit]
Arachee ko Der [We are before you, Oh Lord]
The Doxology-Meeayn Soorp [Jesus Crist]

Amen
Hayr Soorp [The Father is Holy]
Der Voghormya [Lord have mercy upon us]
Amenasoorp Yerorotootyoon [Oh, All-Holy Trinity]
Ungal Der [Sing Psalms]
Kreesdos Badarakyal [Blessed is the Lord]
Asdvadz Mer [Our Lord and our God]
Thanksgiving-*Lutsak* [We are filled with your goodness]
Der Voghormya [Lord have mercy upon us]
Kohanamk [We thank You, Oh Lord]
Orhnyal eh Asdvads [Blessed is God]
Amen
Yev unt hokvooyt koom [And with the spirit]
Park kez Der [Glory be to You, Oh Lord our God]
Aseh Asdvadz [Oh Christ]

General Sound Quality

In terms of timbre, traditionally, men are the only ones to sing or chant the Divine Liturgy, though today, one will find that women actively participate in singing the Divine Liturgy. The vocal line is smooth and connected. This exemplifies what is typical of chant genres in general—quiet, gentle, with minute climatic points (in terms of amplification). This solemn chant emphasizes the importance of text, which enunciated quite precisely, falls between laconic and medium-wordiness.

Interaction Among Musicians, Texture, and Duration

Typically, the overall texture is monophonic, with periods of unintentional heterophony (if more than one person is singing along). This, I believe has more to do with the level of musicianship rather than what is indicated by the music itself. Monophony is typical of Armenian chant, especially those that are a part of the

sharagan tradition. If an organ is used, the texture can be described as homophonic. The group of singers performs in a responsorial form (solo—choir in unison, etc.).

Melody

Melodically speaking, there is little embellishment or ornamentation. The text is sung in a melismatic manner, though the beginnings of each phrase are marked with a slight accentuation. The Celebrant, Deacons, and Altar servers chant throughout the Divine Liturgy in a recitative style.

Other Sounds

There are also other types of sounds that can be heard in the liturgical setting. I frequently heard people coughing, chatting with each other, breathing, and moaning. Some quieted crying babies. Other sounds came from walking with hard-soled shoes, or saying a prayer in the vestibule. Still, many people tried to remain quiet, save for heavy breathing or rustling of papers. These sounds, in contrast to the structured liturgical music, are not prescribed and thus vary from performance to performance.

Language

Language plays a critical role in the *Soorp Badarak*. In *Saint Mary's*, there is an obvious difference in the levels of linguistic understanding amongst members of the congregation. The official language of the Armenian Divine Liturgy is Classical Armenian, or *Grabar*. In my fieldwork, I found that not one of the

members of the congregation knew *Grabar* well, save for the Celebrant, though many understood the gist of the text of the *Soorp Badarak* on some level. Through years of practice, many had memorized various texts associated with the chants, actions, and liturgical event.

Saint Mary's, indeed all diasporic Armenian churches in America, comprise newer immigrants, older immigrants, as well as those Armenian Americans born in the United States. Some of them came from Armenia and understand very little English, but are fluent in both Russian and Eastern Armenian. Still, there are others who came from areas such as Turkey and understand very little English, but are fluent in Turkish, perhaps some Arabic, and Western Armenian. Most Armenian-Americans, if they can speak Armenian at all, speak Western Armenia, but only the specific dialect their parents may have spoken at home.

To ease the situation, Der Hayr often gives the “sermon” in both English and Western Armenian. This is not the case in all churches. For example, at *Soorp Khatch*, Father Habesian gives the sermon only in Western Armenian. This may be because there are fewer in attendance and there might be an implied sense that everyone understands Armenian. However, this could also mean that he is making a political, perhaps theological, statement by keeping the entire *Soorp Badarak* in some form of Armenian.

Ritual Identity

In this section, I discuss the role of both the people performing the ritual as well as the people participating within the ritual, for example, Celebrant, congregant, deacon, etc. Do these roles extend past the liturgy proper? How does this ritual transform individuals in terms of faith. I have structured my analysis in two parts, the role of church leaders and the role of participants.

Role of Church Leaders

As with most Christian traditions, in the Armenian Church, there is an organizational hierarchy.

Catholicos of All Armenians

His Holiness Karekin I was born in 1951 in the village of Voskehat, near Etchmiadzin, and baptized Ktrij Nersissian. He was elected the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians on October 27, 1999.

Armenian Church Hierarchy

The Hierarchy has four leaders. The Catholicos of All Armenians and Supreme Patriarch, who resides in Holy Etchmiadzin, is the leader of the Armenian Church. Below him is the Catholicos of Cilicia, who resides in Antelias, Lebanon. Next is the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who resides in Jerusalem, Israel and the Patriarch of Constantinople, who resides in Istanbul, Turkey.

Major Orders

(Arch)Bishop ((Ark)Yebiscopos)
Celebrant (Kahana)
Celibate (Goosagron/Hayr Soorp)
Married (Amoosnatsadz/Der Hayr)
Deacon (Sargavak)

Patriarchates and Dioceses Under the Jurisdiction of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin

The Brotherhood of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin
The Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Brotherhood of St. James
The Patriarchate of Constantinople

Diocese of Ararat
Diocese of Shirak
Diocese of Gugark
Diocese of Siwnik
Diocese of Georgia
Diocese of Azerbaijan
Diocese of Arts'akh
Diocese of Nor Nakhichevan and Russia
Diocese of Atrpatakan Tabriz
Diocese of Teheran
Diocese of Isfahan
Diocese of Egypt
Diocese of Paris
Diocese of Marseille
Diocese of Lyon
Diocese of America, Eastern
Diocese of America, Western
Diocese of Argentina
Diocese of Brazil
Diocese of Uruguay
Diocese of Canada
Diocese of Iraq
Diocese of Australia and New Zealand
Diocese of England
Diocese of Romania
Diocese of Bulgaria
Diocese of Greece
Office of the Pontifical Legate of Central Europe (Vienna)
Spiritual Ministry of Sweden
Diocese of Germany

Diocese of Switzerland
Pastorate of India
Pastorate of Italy (Milano)
Pastorate of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa)
Pastorate of Sudan (Khartum)

At the top of this hierarchy are the Archbishop and Bishop. The role of these leaders extends past that of *Saint Mary's* to other churches for which they are responsible. The Archbishop or Bishop may reside over certain events or special occasions. One can argue that there is an indirect leadership in that the Bishop or Arch-Bishop undoubtedly influences the Celebrant, who, as one can expect, influences his congregation. The Celebrant, on the other hand, does play an integral role not only in the liturgy itself, but also as a leader within the community as a whole. He is primarily responsible for the conducting the Divine Liturgy and to oversee the performance of the other Sacraments. However, in the case of this community, he is not only a spiritual leader, but also a social leader. Therefore, even those who do not regularly attend church find his role in the community indispensable. The deacon's liturgical role is to assist the Celebrant in the Divine Liturgy. The deacons play an important role within the community in that they serve as intermediaries between the lay community and church leadership. At the bottom of this hierarchy are the Altar servers, who are appointed by the Parish Celebrant. These young people are in training to become church leaders themselves sometime in the future. It is necessary for them to attend choir rehearsals and continue their education of liturgical music.

The Choir Director is appointed by the Parish Celebrant with the consent of the Parish Council and is subject to the authority of the Parish Celebrant. The duties

of the Choir Director are primarily to conduct the choir during services, rehearsals, or programs, to teach the music and understanding of the Divine Liturgy, the Offices and special services, as well as other Armenian music. He also supervises the conduct of the members of the choir during services, rehearsals, or programs. The Choir Director may select one or more assistants, with the approval of the Parish Celebrant, who are also subject to the authority of the Choir Director. Members of the choir must be at least sixteen years of age, be baptized or confirmed members of the Armenian Church, and be approved by the Parish Celebrant and the Choir Director.

Role of Congregation Participants

At *Saint Mary's*, members of the congregation come from a community that numbers about 7,000, though only about 800-1000 are full members of the church. They also come from a variety of professions, from shop owners, to lawyers and doctors. They are expected to conduct themselves with a sense of morality and maintain appropriate manners throughout the ritual service.

CHAPTER SEVEN

“Official” Ideological Expression: Liturgy as a Performance of Faith

Introduction to the Armenian Divine Liturgy

With the creation of the Armenian alphabet and translation of the Bible into Armenian, the liturgy and rituals also began to develop and become standardized.¹ After the translation of the Bible, Armenian scholars began work at translating the Armenian liturgy, following the liturgy of Caesarea and borrowing from “national customs and from pagan rites.”² The Armenian liturgy and its music comprise the *Soorp Badarak* (Mass or Divine Liturgy), which is sung or chanted throughout, the *sharagan* chanted at the services of the hours, and *sharagan* chanted for the

¹ See A. S. Arevsatyan, “Mastocnery erazstakan kazmi aranjnhatkutyunnere.” *Lraber* 1 (1985): 76-81; “JrorhnekI ev otnjvayi kanonnere Mastoc cisanum.” *Ejmiacin* 1 (1986): 40; “L’évolution littéraire et musicale du rituel arménien.” *Revue des Études Arméniennes* 20 (1986/87): 153-66.

² Malachia Ormanian 1955: 18.

sacraments such as baptism, matrimony and funerals. The general function of music in the liturgy is to lend spiritual meaning to the text and continuity to the various parts of the services. In the Armenian Church, the word to designate the Divine Liturgy is *Soorp Badarak*, which means (Holy Sacrifice). The Armenian Liturgy presently used was influenced by the Byzantine Liturgy of St. Chrysostom in the tenth century and by the Roman Liturgy during the eleventh century:

From the Greek Liturgy of St. James (Jerusalem) are derived, among others, the Caesarean Office, a Liturgy of St. Basil, with its offshoots, that of St. Chrysostom and the Armenian (Gregorian). This Liturgy of St. James is said to be of earlier date as to its main fabric than A.D. 200. St. Basil's Liturgy is a recast of St. James's, as St. Chrysostom's in an abbreviation and new edition of St. Basil's. From St. Basil's sprang the Armenio (Gregorian) Rite, as at present used. It may be ranked amongst the most ancient and beautiful of all the Liturgies in the Oriental Churches.³

The Armenian liturgy has not been substantially changed since 1177 A.D., the date when Nerses of Lampron (Nerses Lampronatzi) wrote his commentary on the liturgy.

There are eight separate services of public worship, one of which is the *Soorp Badarak*. The remaining seven are prescribed services of worship performed at different times during the day—called the services of the hours (or “office”):

³ Archdeacon Dowling 1910: 116.

Keesheraheen Jshamerkootiun (Nocturnal Service) [performed after midnight]
Aravodyan Jshamerkootiun (Matins Service) [performed at dawn]
Arevakalee Jshamerkootiun (Prime Service) [performed at sunrise]
Soorp Badarak (Mass) [performed later in the morning]
Jashoo Jshamerkootiun (Sext Service) [performed at noon, prior to the midday meal]
Yeregoyan Jshamerkootiun (Vespers Service) [performed two hours before sunset]
Khaghaghagon Jshamerkootiun (Peace Service) [performed one hour after sunset]
Hankustyan (Compline Service) [performed before retiring for bed]⁴

The primary focus of my research is the *Soorp Badarak*. In the United States, the remaining seven services are only performed at seminaries on very special occasions. The *Soorp Badarak*⁵ is composed of four distinct parts of varying importance. These are:

Badrastootiun [The Preparation]
Bashdon Jashou [The Synaxis]
Soorp Badarak [The Sacrifice]
Orhnutiun yehv Artsagoomun [The Last Blessing and Dismissal]

Liturgy as Performance of Faith

Ethnomusicology has as one of its goals the search for meaning in music performances and one of the methods used for this purpose is ethnography based on fieldwork. Ethnography is a “thick” description of the activities of particular groups of people and an interpretation of those activities as symbolic cultural manifestations. Ethnomusicological ethnographies describe musical performances

⁴ Arsen, Torossian, *The Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church* (Boston: Azk Press, 1919): 256.

⁵ The wafer is called *Neshkhar* or *Soorp hatz* (Holy bread).

in light of elements of social life and cultural practices. In ritual practice, performance is equated to ritual action, which comprises both musical expression and gestural movements.

There is the implied assumption that the researcher should offer an “unbiased” point of view. This is difficult, or even impossible, considering the difference in backgrounds of the researchers and those observed.⁶ There are two possible perspectives—as an outsider, where the researcher steps back and tries to “impartially” observe a culture and as an insider, where the researcher closely

⁶ Phenomenology (transcendental phenomenology), a discourse which stemmed from literary theory has established the centrality of the human subject—the “science of subjectivity,” which when combined with cultural perspectives, involves the obviously important component of context. However, the discourse of phenomenology, while important for subjectivity, is problematic in ethnomusicology. I believe, when combined with context (hermeneutical phenomenology), which phenomenology (or transcendental phenomenology) in literary theory on the surface ignores, it provides a useful look into social structure. See Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics* (Evanston, Illinois, 1969). Other works in the tradition of hermeneutical phenomenology are Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (New York, 1956); Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London, 1962); and Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy* (New Haven, Connecticut and London, 1970) and *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* (Cambridge, 1981). In Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, second edition (Minneapolis, Minnesota: The University of Minnesota Press, 2001): 51, he says, “Phenomenological criticism is an attempt to apply the phenomenological method to literary works. As with Husserl’s “bracketing” of the real object, the actual historical context of the literary work, its author, conditions of production and readership are ignored; phenomenological criticism aims instead at a wholly ‘immanent’ reading of the text, totally unaffected by anything outside it. The text itself is reduced to a pure embodiment of the author’s consciousness: all of its stylistic and semantic aspects are grasped as organic parts of the complex totality, of which the unifying essence is the author’s mind. To know his mind, we must not refer to anything we actually know about the author—biographical criticism is banned—but only to those aspects of his or her consciousness which manifest themselves in the work itself. Moreover, we are concerned with ‘deep structures’ of this mind, which can be found in recurrent themes and patterns of imagery; and in grasping the way the writer “lived” his world, the phenomenological relations between himself as subject and the work as object.”

identifies himself with the observed, risking the possibility of his feelings interfering with his objectivity. As Kenneth Pike has pointed out:

It proves convenient—though possibly arbitrary—to describe behavior from two different standpoints, which lead to results which shade into one another. The etic viewpoint studies behavior from outside of a particular system, and as an essential initial approach to an alien system. The emic viewpoint results from studying behavior as from inside the system.⁷

In my performance ethnography, I have tried to be inclusive of both these perspectives. Indeed, the fact that I am “Christian,” denotes that I am an insider to a certain extent. However, I am an outsider as well—I am neither Armenian nor Eastern Orthodox. However, I feel my position is advantageous for ethnography and balances these two perspectives.

Whose Voice is Heard: The Data and Its Interpretation

In my description of performance, I give voice to the church leaders and the members of the congregation, as well as give my own account of the events, based on observation. My principal informants are:

Church Leaders

- ArchCelebrant Father Khorin Habesian, Soorp Khatch Armenian Apostolic Church
- Father Oshagon Minassian, choir director of the director of the Erevan Choral Society, a 60-voice choir dedicated to the performance of Armenian vocal music affiliated with the Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁷ Kenneth L. Pike, *Languange in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structures of Human Behavior*, second edition, revised (The Hague: Mouton, 1971): 37.

- Socrates Boyajian, Choir Director, St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church
- Reverend Father Vertanes Kalayjian, St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church
- Yeretzgin Anahit Kalayjian, wife of Reverend Father Vertanes Kalayjian
- Sylva Der Stepanian, Director, Diocesan ALLARC
- Rev. Dr. Nareg Berberian

Prominent Community Leaders

- Abraham Terian
- Arman J. Kirakossian, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia in the United States of America
- Adrian Parsegian, Armenian Educational Foundation and Chief of Laboratory of Physical and Structural Biology, NICHD, National Institutes of Health
- Lucy Der Manuelian, Tufts University
- Gary Lind-Sinanian, Curator, Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc.
- Susan Lind-Sinanian, Textile Curator, Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc.

Members of the Congregation

- George Nazarian
- Harry Nazarian
- Kevork Bardakjian
- Lucy Nazarian
- Anonymous Members of the Congregation (Soorp Khatch Armenian Apostolic Church)

- Anonymous Members of the Congregation (St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church)
- Nora Kasparia
- Sara Terian

In interviewing and observing, I attempted to gather answers to the following questions concerning identity, ritual action, and musical awareness:

Identity:

- What does it mean to be Armenian in the diaspora?
- How does this speak to your own feelings of Armenian identity?
- What do you bring to this performance?
- Why do you attend church? Is it because of faith or for other reasons?
- What does this ritual tell you about your identity?
- What functions, do you feel, does the music play in the overall conception and/or reflection of Christian faith?

Ritual Action:

- Do you know the story behind this ritual?
- What does it mean for you to experience the “sacred?” Can you describe it to me?
- Are you looking for an “experience of the holy” or rather something else? What you are getting out of this ritual, if possible?

Musical Awareness:

- What can you tell me about the relationships between the sung text and the hymnal proper that might help me understand the function of the musical form in this religious ceremony?
- Is there room for variation, to your knowledge?
- What do you call this hymn?
- What is the hymn's theological importance?
- Why were these songs appropriate?
- What are your reactions to the music at this ceremony?
- How does the form reflect the overall ritual flow?
- Was this a typical ritual performance?
- Could you comment on the interaction between the Celebrant (Celebrant), musicians, and the practitioners?
- Are there any other contexts that this would be performed?
- How does this connect to the overall ritual flow-connectedness?

In my observation, I concentrated on ritual and symbolism:

Ritual:

- Describe what the participants do during the service.
- What kinds of symbolic activity can I identify?
- How often is the ritual repeated? Is this a "rite of passage"?

- What does the ritual tell me about the greater worldview of the believers?
- What impact does this ritual have on the Armenians? Does it affect a lot of people or just a few?
- Is this ritual conventional?

Symbolism:

- What are the symbols? Are they physical objects or sounds?
- Where do these symbols appear in the ritual?
- Are they important to the overall efficacy of the ritual?
- What special meaning do they have for the believers?

Ritual action of the congregation is less important than that of the Celebrant, deacons, Altar servers, and choir. However, the structured performance of the Divine Liturgy in reality combines both of these perspectives. Without an audience, a performance cannot be called a “performance.” This is indicative of performance unity and group unity:

Orthodox unity . . . is realized in the world in a different manner, not by unity of power over the entire universal Church, but by the unity of faith, and, growing out of this, unity of life and of tradition, hence also the apostolic succession of hierarchy. This internal unity exists in the solidarity of the entire Christian world, in its different communities, independent but by no means isolated from one another. These communities recognize reciprocally the active force of their life of grace and of their hierarchy; they are in communion by means of the sacraments (intercommunion).⁸

⁸ Sergius Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, translation revised by Lydia Kesich (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1988): 90.

The congregation formally participates in the Divine Liturgy by movement (kneeling, sitting, singing [sometimes] standing, going to the Altar in a procession, and making the sign of the cross. In the liturgical context, ritual action can also include less formal actions, such as those that occur that are not governed by the liturgical rite. These actions include, for example, coughing, blowing one's nose, holding hands, kissing on the cheek, holding children in their arms, talking with each other, etc. For an overview of ritual action, both of the clergy and participants, see Appendix Three.

Preliminary Conversations

At my first meeting with Father Kalayjian, I inquired about Armenian sacred music, its function, and the liturgy itself. I asked about the participation of the congregation in the Armenian Divine Liturgy. He offered me advice on how to begin my search for what I was looking:

Reverence is of supreme importance. One must have an attitude of reverence and respect when attending *Badarak*. Your entrance must be reverent and gentle. As a devotional practice, we burn candles in front of the holy pictures. While making the sign of the cross, you say a short prayer for you and your dear ones, then take your place. When you take your place, bow your head down silently, make the sign of the cross, and in audibly say "The Lord's Prayer." It is then that you will be ready to properly participate in the beautiful service. I am sure you are already familiar with this.⁹

⁹ Interview: Reverend Father Vertanes Kalayjian (2001). The significance of making the cross has symbolic meaning with each movement: "The beginning of the sign is from the forehead to the breast which signifies the Lord Jesus Christ who came from the heights of heaven to the earth. The fingers at the left should typify the redemption of our earthly bodies from the paths of

I was actually quite surprised to find that he wanted me to *actively* participate in the service. Some churches I visited in the past have not been so (inwardly) inviting to outsiders. I asked myself, “Had I told him I was Christian or did he just assume it.” I suppose he felt that I would not be interested in a culture that was so very Christian in terms of group identity, were I not Christian. Father Kalayjian went on to say:

Concentration on the ceremony should form your main concern in the church. Therefore, don’t turn around and look at anyone, your friends, your wife (if you bring her), anyone. Doing this is bad manners.¹⁰

One of my informants, Harry Nazarian, a student at the University of Maryland, accompanied me to *St. Mary’s Armenian Apostolic Church* in Washington, D.C. He made my initial entry into the church comfortable. I asked him if he went to church every Sunday and he answered that “Armenians don’t have to go to church every Sunday.”¹¹ It was obvious that this was not an accepted truth. I thought, perhaps, this is why so many come late. In an interview with Father Kalayjian (Der Hayr), I made it a point of asking about this. He quickly noted to me, saying:

We take our Church membership very seriously, we must go to church every Sunday. This is our first and foremost religious duty—of every Christian. If you are late, well . . . come in

darkness. The paths of truth and light are at the right shoulder. Finally, the cleansing of our sins and the acceptance of us as children of Christ is indicated by the hand at the heart.”

¹⁰ Interview: Reverend Father Vertanes Kalayjian (2001).

¹¹ Interview: Harry Nazarian (2001).

anyway. There is no need to feel embarrassed. It is better for you to arrive late than not to attend at all.¹²

He reiterated the point to me:

Always remember that you are *not* a spectator, but a participant in the church services. If you are familiar with the tunes and hymns sung by the choir, softly join in, but do not sing with me (the officiating Celebrant and the person serving as Deacon at the Altar).¹³

His wife, Yeretzgin Anahit Kalayjian, who has been my Western Armenian language teacher, also expressed this viewpoint.

Performance of Ritual/Musical Performance

The general structure of the Armenian Divine Liturgy is as follows:

Part I: Preparation for the Divine Liturgy

- Spiritual Preparation: *Soorp Badarak* Begins
- The *Soorp Badarak* Begins: Procession Into the Church and Up to the Altar

Part II: The Liturgy of the Word (Synaxis)

- Hymn to Jesus Christ
- The Gospel Procession (The Lesser Entrance)
- The Reading of the Scriptures
- The Reading of the Holy Gospel
- The Nicene Creed: Common Faith
- The End of the Liturgy of the Word

Part III: The Liturgy of the Eucharist: Badarak for the Communicants

- A Hymn about the Holy Communion
- The Procession with the Gifts of Bread and Wine

¹² Interview: Reverend Father Vertanes Kalayjian (Der Hayr) (2001).

¹³ Interview: Reverend Father Vertanes Kalayjian (Der Hayr) (2001).

- The Kiss of Peace
- The Eucharist
- The Eucharist Prayer
- The Preface
- Sanctus: The Hymn of the Angels: *Holy, Holy, Holy*
- The Last Supper [the Transubstantiation]
- The Epiclesis
- The Intercessions
- The Conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayer
- Prayers and Hymns Before the Holy Communion
- Two Hymns of Praise
- Before Holy Communion
- Confession and Absolution
- Holy Communion
- Two Thanksgiving Hymns Following Holy Communion

Part IV: Conclusion of the Divine Liturgy: Prayer and Gospel

Part I: Preparation for the Divine Liturgy

Before the Soorp Badarak Begins: Spiritual Preparation

Before beginning of the *Soorp Badarak*, members of the Armenian Church traditionally fast. They do not take food or drink from the time they get up in the morning until they receive Holy Communion. According to the Nazarians, fasting helps to focus both the “mind and hearts” of the faithful.¹⁴ Prayer is the spiritual preparation for the *Badarak*. Lucy Nazarian told me that in order to participate fully in the Divine Liturgy, the faithful should devote at least fifteen minutes of quiet time with God either on Saturday night, or Sunday morning.¹⁵ This period of

¹⁴ Interview: Nazarian family (2001).

¹⁵ Interview: member of the congregation, Lucy Nazarian (2001). “The significance of making the sign of the cross: The beginning of the sign is from forehead to the breast which signifies the lord Jesus Christ who came from the heights of heaven to

solitude serves to assist in focusing on the “mystery” of being with God. Part of this period might include reading of and meditation on relevant passages from the Bible (see chapter on theology), or prayer and personal or communal reflection. As relayed to me by Der Hayr and his wife Yeretzgin Anahit Kalayjian:

The *Badarak* is a procedure with a beginning, middle, and an end. Therefore, it is very important to arrive in Church at least five minutes before the Divine Liturgy begins, and to remain attentive to the end. When we enter the Church, we make the sign of the Cross, take a place—preferably not in the rear pews—and standing, recite the Lord’s Prayer. Then the members of the congregation may be seated in silence until the servers and I enter the church.”¹⁶

Preparation of the Celebrant

For the celebrating Celebrant (Celebrant), the Divine Liturgy begins in silent prayer in the vestry, away from the general congregation. There, the Celebrant and deacon alternatively recite the verses of Psalm 131:

O, Lord, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high, I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. But I have calmed and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like a weaned child that is with me (Psalm 131).

The Celebrant continues saying “Let your Celebrants cloth themselves with righteousness; and let your saints exult with joy” and then prays to God,

earth. The fingers at the left shoulder typify the redemption of our earthly bodies from the paths of darkness. The paths of truth and light are at the right shoulder. Finally, the cleansing of our sins and the acceptance of us as children of Christ is indicated by the hand at the heart.”

¹⁶ Interview: Father Kalayjian and Yeretzgin Kalayjian (2001).

“acknowledging his own sinfulness and the extraordinary privilege given to him by God to lead the people of God in the offering of the Divine Liturgy.”¹⁷

The various vestments worn by the Celebrant are inspired by those worn by the Jewish Celebrant in the Temple, as described in Exodus 28:

You shall make sacred vestments for the glorious adornment of your brother Aaron . . . These vestments that they shall make: a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a checkered tunic, a turban, and a sash. When they make these sacred vestments for your brother Aaron and his sons to serve me as Celebrants, they shall use gold, blue, purple, and crimson yarn, and fine linen (Exodus 28: 2, 4-5).

As each element of clothing is handed to the Celebrant by the deacon, the Celebrant says a brief prayer. As the Celebrant puts on each successive garment, he prays that “God will cloth him with the grace and virtues to preside worthily at the *Badarak*.”¹⁸ Der Hayr translated the prayer to me, “Cloth me with a radiant garment and fortify me against the influence of the evil one, that I may be worthy to glorify your gracious name.”¹⁹

The Beginning of the Soorp Badarak: Processional Entry

The Mass begins when the Celebrant moves from the entrance to the Altar. The Congregation stands when the Celebrant enters. I asked one of the members of the congregation why and was told that “Accession is symbolic of the Celebrant entering into the divine presence and we, the people stand to show that we are also

¹⁷ Interview: Father Kalayjian (2001).

¹⁸ Interview: Father Kalayjian (2001).

aware of God's presence."²⁰ I also noticed that whenever anyone walked on one side of the Chancel to the other side of the Altar, he/she turned to the Altar, and made the sign of the cross. In terms of symbolic action, making the sign is important:

The beginning of the song is from the forehead to the breast, which signifies the Lord Jesus Christ who came from the heights of Heaven to Earth. The fingers at the left shoulder typify the redemption of our earthly bodies from the paths of darkness. The paths of truth are at the right shoulder. Finally, the cleansing of our sins and the acceptance of us as children of Christ is indicated by the hand at the heart.

Led by the candle-bearers and Alter servers, the Celebrant enters the sanctuary from the vestry while the choir sings, *Khorhoort Khorin (Profound Mystery: The Hymn of Vesting)*:

Text to *Khorhoort Khorin*:

Oh God, You are a profound mystery, incomprehensible and without beginning. You have arrayed your heavenly Kingdom with a veil of inaccessible light and the hosts of angels with splendent glory. You created Adam with Your ineffable wondrous power, in Your Lordly image, and dressed Him with majestic glory in the Garden of Eden, the abode of felicities. Through passion of Your Only Begotten Son all creatures came to life anew; and man made immortal, adorned in inviolate garments.

Khorhoort khorin anhas anugispn, vor zartaret'ser sverin bedootyount i haraqasd anmadooyt's loosoyn querabands parrok ztasus hreghinat's. Anjarrahrash zorrootyamp sdeghdser zAtam badger diragan, yehv nazeli parrok zquesdavoret'ser I trakhhdn Ateni degghi pergranat's. Charcharanok ko soorp Miyadsnin noroquet'san arardsk amenayn yehv verusdin martn anmahat'sav zartaryal I zqesd angoghobdeli. Taqavor

¹⁹ Interview: Father Kalayjian (2001).

²⁰ Interview: member of congregation (2001).

*yerganavor zegheghet'si ko anshars bahya zergurbaqoos anvanut
koom bahya I khaghahootyan.*

Khorhoort Khorin--Hymn of Vesting on Ordinary Sundays

Moderato non troppo

Voice

Khor - hoort khorin an has a n-us gogn vor sar ta - re - t'ser sva-rin be-dour -
yount i ha ra-qasd an - ma - dooyt's loo soo - yn qe - ra bands pa - ro - k sta - nos
kre - ghu - nats. An - ja - ra hra - sh zo - ro - ot yamp sdagh - ds - er zA - tem
bad ge - r di - ra - gan yelov na ze - li pa - rok sqe - s - da - vo - re - t'se r - i trakhun
A - te - ri - de - ghi perg - ra - nats Char - chu - ra - nok lo so - arp M - i ya - ds - nin
no - r - o qe - t'sen a - ra - radk a - me - naye yelov ve - rus - din ma - rin an - ma - ha - t'sa - v
zar - tar yal i sqe - sd an - go - ghob - de - li Anz - re - va dsm pa - sa - g kr - a h - o san

Fig. 36. *Hymn of Vesting. Khorhoort Khorin*

*Khorhoort Khorin, According to the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church
(Eastern):*

The acrostic text spells the name of the poet-musician Khachadour Daronetsi, who administered the Haghardzin monastery (near Dilijan) at the turn of the thirteenth century. According to certain sources, Father Khachadour created it on the occasion of an open-air liturgy organized at the request of Prince Zakaria, who commanded the army that freed Northeastern Armenia from the Seljuks in 1206. After referring to the Creation, Original Sin, and Christ's salvation of mankind, *Khorhourt khorin* alludes to various parts of the clerical vestment—the belt, cuffs, stole, and cope—in a metaphorical context. On special occasions, it is introduced through a highly florid solo melody.²¹

A drone accompanies the *Hymn of Vesting* on the organ. The organ is not typically used in Armenia, though it is quite common in Armenian American churches.

Ideally, all of the congregation participates in singing; however, as Father Kalayjian and later, Socrates Boyajian, the choir director, indicated to me that the congregation does not feel comfortable singing these chants. Instead, as I observed, the members of the congregation preferred to celebrate the “mystery” through gestural actions. Throughout this performance, the congregation made frequent movements, for example forming a procession, standing, kneeling, or sitting. Also, members of the congregation often made the sign of the cross, which seems to be the most effective and communally accepted method of gestural performance. The “mystery” they are speaking of in this was described to me:

The “mystery” is Jesus Christ who became human in order to fill us personally with his divine blessings, with eternal life.²²

²¹ Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern). <http://www.armenianchurch.org/worship/music/notes.html>. Accessed June 2003.

²² Interview: Father Kalayjian (2001).

While the choir sings *Khorhoort Khorin* (the *Hymn of Vesting*), two candle bearers, the deacons, and, the Celebrant enters the chancel. While standing in front of the pulpit, the Celebrant washes his hands, while reciting the *Psalm of Ablution*:

*I will wash my hands in innocency: so will I compass your Altar,
Oh Lord;*

*Judge me, Oh Lord; for I have walked in my integrity; I have
trusted also in the Lord; therefore I shall not slide.*

Examine me, Oh Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

*For your loving kindness is before my eyes; and I have walked in
thy truth.*

*I have not sat with vain person, neither will I go in with
dissemblers.*

*I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with
the wicked.*

*I will wash my hand in innocency; so will I compass your Altar, oh
Lord;*

*That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving and tell of all
your wondrous works.*

*Lord, I have loved the habitation of your house, and the place
where your honor dwells.*

Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men;

In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes.

*But as for me, I will walk in my integrity: redeem me, and be
merciful unto me.*

*My foot stands in an even place in congregations will I bless the
Lord (Psalm 26).*

The Celebrant stands in the middle; the deacons and Altar servers stand on his right. One of the members of the congregation said to me “this procession is symbolic of the Celebrant entering into the divine presence.”²³

At the Altar, the Celebrant acknowledges his “weakness and human infirmity” as a sinner”: “Oh Lord, through your intercession of the Holy Mother of God, receive our supplications and save us.” While this continues, the choir concludes the hymn; the Celebrant says:

My soul will joyfully praise the Lord, because he has clothed me in a robe of salvation and a vestment of gladness. He has crowned me like a bridegroom, and like a bride I have been dressed in jewels; through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom power, glory, and dominion are due now and forevermore.

With the gesture of lifting his hands, he makes a sign that he relies on God to forgive his sins. He then turns toward the people and confesses his sinfulness, asking them to pray that God forgive him.

Following this, the congregation offers praise, “Make a shout to the Lord, all lands; serve the Lord with Gladness.” Alternating the verses of Psalm 43, the Celebrant and deacons go up to the Altar, where the Celebrant prays “. . . in his dwelling of holiness, in his habitation of angels, this place of the expiation of mankind; before these holy signs and the holy place that hold God up to us and are made resplendent . . .” (Psalm 43):

Vindicate me, Oh God, and defend my cause against ungodly people (unholy, unjust and deceitful men)! For you are God in whom I take refuge; why have you cast me off? Why am I sorrowful because of the oppression of the enemy? Oh send our your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling . . . (Psalm 43)

²³ Interview: member of the congregation (2001).

Following the prayer, the congregation sits.

Behind the Closed Curtain

With the curtain closed, the Celebrant offers a prayer to St. Gregory of

Narek (d. 1003):

In this holy abode and in this place of glorification, in this dwelling place of angels and in this Temple of purification; before these God-accepted and resplendent holy symbols and before this holy sanctuary, we all humble ourselves and worship you with awe; we praise and glorify Your holy wondrous and triumphant resurrection, and together with the heavenly hosts we offer You praise and glory together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and always forever and ever, Amen.

At the same time, the choir or a soloist sings a hymn appropriate to the feast or liturgical season. One of these is *Donemk*:

Donemk

Melody for Ordinary Sundays

The image shows a musical score for the 'Donemk' (Excerpt) in G major, 3/4 time. It consists of six staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'Voice' and contains the lyrics 'Do mo'. The second staff contains the lyrics 'mk ur - ko'. The music features several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above the notes) and various melodic lines. The score ends with a double bar line and the marking 'rit.' (ritardando).

Fig. 37. *Donemk* (Excerpt)

When he has finished this prayer, the Celebrant receives the Eucharist bread and wine from the deacon.

The Celebrant prays “they be acceptable to God the Father.” While the deacon offers incense, the Celebrant proclaims over the bread and wine the very same words that the angel Gabriel said to Mary when he announced that she would miraculously give birth to the Son of God: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you and

the power of the Most High will overshadow you” (Luke 1: 35). While the Celebrant and deacon attend to the preparation of the bread and wine, the other Altar servers are busy lighting candles and forming the procession into the church. The main reason why the curtain is closed at this point in the Liturgy is so that the people will not be distracted from their prayer and reflection by the liturgical actions taking place at the Altar.

The Liturgy of the Word

*The Procession and the Beginning of the Liturgy of the Word
(Synaxis or Midday Office)*

When the Altar and the Eucharistic gifts have been prepared, the curtain opens and the deacons lead the Celebrant in a procession around the Altar and down into the nave. The choir, forming a procession and singing *Parekhosootyamp* (Hymn of Censing), proceeds from the right or North side of the church:

Text to Parekhosootyamp

Through the intercession of Your Mother the Virgin, accept the supplications of your servants; Oh Christ, with Your Blood, You have made Your holy church as splendid as the heavens above and within her, after the pattern of the heavenly hosts, You have ordained the order of Apostles, Prophets, and Holy Teachers. Today, we, here assembled, the ranks of Celebrants, deacons, acolytes, and clerks, offer incense to You Oh Lord, after the name of Zachariah of old. Therefore, accept from us also, our incense-like prayers, like the sacrifice of Abel, of Noah and of Abraham. Through the intercession of Your heavenly hosts, keep forever unshaken the See of Armenians.

Parekhosootyamp mor ko yehv goosi, ungal zaghachuns kot's bashdoneyit's. Vor qeraqooyin kan zerginus baydsarat'soot'ser soorp zegeghet'si aryamp kov Krisdos; yehv usd yergnayot'sn garqet'ser I sma ztasus arakelot's yehv marqareit's soorp vartabedat's. Aysor soghovyal task kahanayit's, sargavaqat's, tubrat's yehv gugherigosat's, khoong madoot'sanemk arachi ko Der, horinag usd hnoomn Zakaria. Ungal ar I mench

*uzkhunganver maghtans, vorbes zbadaraqn Apeil, Znoyi yehv
zAprahamoo; parekhsootyamp verin ko zorat 'st mishd anshars
bahya, zator haygaznyat's .*

Parekhsootyamp--Hymn of Censing for Ordinary Sundays

Voice

Pa - re - kho - soo tyā - mp mo - r ko yehv goo - si

4 un - ga - l za - gha - cha - ns kot - s bash - do - ne - yit's Vor qe - ra - qooyn

8 kan zer - gi - nus bay - dsa - ra - t'soo - t - ser soorp ze - ge - ghe - t'si ar -

12 yamp kov Kris - dos, yehv usd yerg - nay - no - t'sum gar - qe - t'ser i sma ztass

16 a - ra - ke - lot's yehv mar - qa - re - yi - t's soorp var - ta - be - dats

21 Ay - sor so - ghov - yal task ka - ha - na - yit's sar - ga - va - qat's tub - ra - t's yehv -

25 gughe ri - go - sat's khoong ma - doo - t'sa - nemk a - ra - chi ko Der ho - ri - nag

Fig. 38. *Parekhsootyamp* (Excerpt)

The Celebrant offers incense to the main and side Altars, the baptismal area, the sacred icons, and all of the people. As the Celebrant makes his way around the church, the faithful come up to him, kiss his hand and say, “*Heeshescheer yev zees arachee anmah kareenun Asdoodzo*” [“Remember me, too, before the immortal Lamb of God”]. They do this making the sign of the cross. Father Kalayjian explains, saying “Remember me, too, before the immortal Lamb of God” acknowledges that during the Divine Liturgy, believers encounter “the Lamb of God,” Jesus Christ himself.²⁴ The Liturgy of the Word opens with the *Hymn to Jesus Christ, Meeyadzeen Vortee yev Pant Asdadz* [Only begotten Son and Word of God]. The words of this ancient hymn express the conviction that Jesus Christ “is the immortal son of God”:

Text of Meeyadzeen

Only begotten Son and Word of God and Immortal Being, Who did consent to become incarnate from the ever Virgin, the Holy Mother of God. Oh Christ Our God, You Who are unchangeable, Who became man, and were crucified and did conquer death by Your death. You Who are one of the Holy Trinity, equal in glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit, deliver us from our sins.

Miyadsin Vorti yeahv pant Asdvads yehv anmah eyootyoun, vor hantzn arer marmnanal i surpoohvo Asdvadsadsen yehv i mishd goosen, Anpopohkeit mart yeghyal, khachet'sar, Krisdos Asdvads mer, Mahvamp uzmah gokhet'ser. Mint i Surpo Yerortootenen, paravorgagit's uni Hor yehv unt Surpo Hoqvooyyn, get'so uzmez.

²⁴ Interview: Father Kalayjian (2001)

Another hymn, called *Jashoo Psalm* is part of the Proper of the mass and changes each Sunday. The Psalm always focuses on Jesus Christ and the gift of salvation that he made available for believers.

The Lord reigned, he is appareled with majesty; The Lord is appareled, he had girded himself with strength (Psalm 93:1-5).

Following this recitation, the choir then sings a hymn appropriate to the day. The congregation stands right before “The Lesser Entrance.” The Celebrant says “Oh Lord, You are the might and the power and the glory forever. Amen.” The following excerpt comes from the *Jashoo Hymn for Christmas*:

Jashoo Hymn: Soorp zAsdvadsadzninn
Jashoo Hymn for Christmas

Voice

Me - dsa - t'soos - t'seh antm im uz De - r yekw t'sun - dsas - t'seh ho - qi

5
im As - doo - dsov purg - chav i - mo - v. Soorp Zas - dva - dsa - dsi - m - orth - noo -

10
tya - mp me - dsa - t'soo - t'sa - nemk. A - ve - da - vor hresh - dagn a - ve - da -

Fig. 39. *Jashoo Hymn for Christmas* (Excerpt)

Following a *Jashoo Psalm* or *Hymn* the congregation stands.

The Gospel Procession (The Lesser Entrance)

Since the Gospel contains the words of Jesus, it is chanted with great solemnity. The senior deacon calls everyone to attention by chanting, *Broskhoomeh*, “Be attentive.” He takes the ornately-bound Gospel book from the Celebrant and elevates it above the Celebrant’s head. This is a sign of the authority of God’s word:

Broskhoomeh (Let Us Look Attentively)



Fig. 40. *Broskhoomeh*

The Altar servers follow the senior deacon in procession around the Altar. At the end of the procession, the deacon lowers the Gospel book so that those who will be reading the day’s Scripture readings may kiss it as a sign of their faith and devotion. The hymn that is sung during the Gospel procession, *Soorp Asdvadz* [*Holy God*], is also in honor of Jesus Christ, who, according to believers, is “holy, mighty, and immortal”²⁵:

²⁵ Interview: Father Kalayjian 2001).

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, who did rise from the dead have mercy upon us (repeated three times).

Soorp Asdvads

Voice

Soorp Asd - vads soorp yehw hu - zor yehw an - mah vor har - yar

i me re - lot's vo - ghor - kya mez vo - ghor - nya mez.

Fig. 41. *Soorp Asdvads*

According to the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern):

Soorp Asdvadz [“Holy God”], or the Trisagion (“thrice holy” in Greek), is a glorification of God the Son who became incarnate as Jesus Christ. When it is sung, the celebrant elevates the Holy Gospel with both arms to symbolize this adoration. *Soorp Asdvadz* is chanted during the Synaxis, the portion of the service preceding the Holy Sacrifice, when people not fully initiated into Christian faith (i.e., not baptized) were, in earlier times, still allowed to be present in the sanctuary. The first reference to *Soorp Asdvadz* is traced to the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in 451. (The modern name for Chalcedon, a suburb of Istanbul, is Kadikoy.) The version used in the Armenian Church, with the added text, “who was crucified for us,” was devised by Peter the Fuller, the Patriarch of Antioch, in the late fifth century. *Soorp Asdvadz* is sung with an alternate text on different feast days; the version given here is the one for Eastertide.²⁶

²⁶ Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern).
<http://www.armenianchurch.org/worship/music/notes.html>. Accessed June 2003.

The hymn is followed by a litany chanted by the deacons. A litany is a series of chanted petitions, or prayer requests, in which the deacon invites the people to pray for various intentions: the peace for the world, for the bishops of the church, for the Catholicos in Etchmiadzin, etc.²⁷ (see Appendix Two), for the clergy and faithful, and for the sick and deceased. The deacon ends each petition with the words, *uzDer aghachestsook* [*Let us beseech the Lord*]. The choir and people respond, *Der voghormya* [*Lord have mercy*]. During and after the litany, the Celebrant prays that God will answer their prayers.

Der voghormya [Lord have mercy]



Fig. 42. *Der Voghormya*

According to the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern):

Der voghormia [“Lord Have Mercy”] is not, strictly speaking, a part of the Divine Liturgy proper. The text by the eighteenth-century Catholicos Simeon of Yerevan was published in 1772 in his *Kirk aghotits vor gochi zposaran hokevor* [“Prayer Book, also entitled Spiritual Refreshment”]. Catholicos Simeon was known for his educational reforms, as founder of the Etchmiadzin press and reviver of the Etchmiadzin school. *Der voghormia* is sung during the ministration of Communion to the clergy, which takes place behind the closed altar drape and before the faithful receive

²⁷ His Holiness Karekin I was born in 1951 in the village of Voskehat, near Etchmiadzin, and baptized Ktrij Nersissian. He was elected the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians on October 27, 1999.

Holy Communion. In the Armenian Church, Communion is administered by intinction: steeping the bread in wine, in order to minister the consecrated elements of the Eucharist together.²⁸

The Reading of the Scriptures

The focus of the Liturgy of the Word is the public reading of passages from the Old and New Testaments. Every Sunday in the Armenian Church, specific Bible passages are read—selected according to an ancient system rooted in fourth-century Jerusalem, the cradle of the Church. The Scripture passages are read by *tubeerk* [readers]. This is done both in America and Armenia.

The Reading of the Holy Gospel

The Gospel is the culmination of the Liturgy of the Word. It is chanted from the elevated bema by an ordained deacon. Before the deacon begins to chant the Gospel, the Celebrant makes the sign of the cross over the people, saying *Khaghaghootyoon amenetsoon* [Peace to all]. An Altar server advises the people to “be attentive.” The fathers of the Armenian Church emphasize that the solemn chanting of the Gospel during the *Badarak* is not only a lesson “for the minds,” but a real meeting with Jesus Christ. This is why the choir proclaims, *Aseh Asdvadz* [*God is speaking*] right before the deacon chants the Gospel. It also explains why *Park kez Der Asdvadz mer* [Glory to you, Oh Lord our God] is chanted by the choir both before and after the Gospel is chanted. During this time, there are also points

²⁸ Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern). <http://www.armenianchurch.org/worship/music/notes.html>. Accessed June 2003.

of frequent dialogue between the Celebrant, deacons, choir, and members of the congregation.

The Nicene Creed: Common Faith

The *Nicene Creed* is the official declaration of the principal doctrines of the church. It was composed by all the churches at the ecumenical Council of Nicea in 325 AD. This is chanted rather than spoken at every Divine Liturgy as a formal declaration that those participating in the *Badarak* are unified by the same understanding of who God is:²⁹

And yet each time we thoughtfully recite the Nicene Creed, the same declaration of faith that has unified Christians throughout the world for 1700 years, we can sense our inclusion in the great, universal Church that extends beyond time and space. We begin to realize that our faith is not strictly a personal affair. It is rooted and nourished by the 'one, catholic and apostolic holy Church' with Jesus as its head' (Colossians 1:18).

Text to the *Nicene Creed*

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, of things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of God the Father, Only-Begotten, that is of the substance of the Father. God of God, Light of Light, true God of God, Begotten and not made. Himself of the very nature of the Father by whom all things came into being in heaven and on earth, both visible and invisible. Who for us men, and for our salvation coming down from heaven, was incarnate, was made man, was born perfectly of the Holy Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit. Thus He assumed flesh, soul, and mind and everything that is man, truly, and not semblance. He suffered and was crucified and was buried, and on the third day He rose again; and descending into the heaven with the same body, sat at the right hand of the Father. His is to come with the same body and with

²⁹ Interview: Father Kalayjian (2001).

the glory of the Father, to judge the quick and the dead, of whose kingdom there is no end. We believe also in the uncreated and perfect Holy Soirit who spoke through the Laws and the Prophets and the Gospels; Who descended in Jordan, preached through the Apostles and dwelt among the Saints. We also believe in only One, Universal, Apostolic, and Holy Church; in one Baptism, in repentance, in the absolution and forgiveness of sins; we believe in the resurrection of the dead, in the everlasting judgment of souls and bodies, in the kingdom of heaven and in the life everlasting

Havadamk i mi Asdvads, i hayrn amenagal, hararichn yergi yehv yerghi, yerevelayt's yehv anerevootit's. Yehv i mi Der Hisoos Krisdos, hortin Asdodoso, dsnyaln, aysinkn heyooteneh Hor. Asdvads hAsdoodso, looys i looso, Asdvads jushmarid, hAsdoodso jushmardeh, dsnoont yehv voch ararads. Nooyrn inkn i pnooteneh Hor, vorov amenayn eench yeghev hergins yehv i vera yergri, yerevelik yehv hanerevooytk. Vor haghags mer martgan, yehv vasun mero pergootyan, ichyal i hergnit's marmnat'sav, dsnav gadarelaves i Maryama surpo goosen, Hoqvovun Surpov. Vorov eyar zmarmin, zhoqi yehv zmid, yehv zamenayn vor eench eh i mart, jushmardaves, yehv voch gardsyok. Charcharyal, khachyal, taghyal, herort avoor harot'syal, i yelyal hergins novin marmnovn, nsdav unt achmeh Hor. Qalot's eh novin marmnovn yehv parok Hor, i tadel uzgentanis yehv uzmaryals, voro taqavorootyann voch qo vakhjan. Havadamk yehv i soorp Hoqin, haneghn yehv i gadaryaln, vor khoset'sav horens yehv i marqares yehv havedarans. Vor echn Hortanan, karozyat's harakyalsun, yehv pnaget'sav i soorpsn. Havadamk yehv i mi miyan, unthanragan yehv arakelagan Soorp Yegeghet'si. Ee mi mgrdootyoun yehv i toghootyoun meghat's. Ee harootyoun merelot's, i tadasdann havidenit's hoqvot's yehv marmnot's, harkayootyoun yergnit's yehv i gyansun havidenagans.

According to the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church:

Havadamk [“We Believe”], or the Creed, is a formal statement of the basic tenets of Christian faith. The doctrine was formulated in A.D. 325 in Nicea (now Iznik, known for its exquisite tiles made mostly by Armenian artisans) and finalized in 381 in Constantinople during the Ecumenical Councils convened there to address certain heretical issues. The Armenian representative to the Nicene Council was St. Arisdages Barteve, the son of Catholicos St. Krikor Lousavorich [Gregory the Illuminator], the patron saint of Armenia. In the Armenian Church, the faithful recite the Creed with their hands joined in front of their chests. The

chant is without melodic interest, so as to focus the reciter's attention on the text.³⁰

The End of the Liturgy of the Word

The Liturgy of the Word ends with a litany and a prayer. The closing prayer is specifically for those who are not yet baptized and thus not members of the Church. Since they are not yet permitted to receive the sacrament of the Holy Communion, the unbaptized were originally dismissed at the end of the Liturgy of the Word. Speaking on their behalf, the Celebrant prays, "Make us equal to your true worshippers, who worship you in spirit and in truth." This quotation from the Gospel according to St. John reminds us that being a baptized Christian is a privilege, not a right: "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such a Father seeks to worship him" (John 4:23). The Liturgy of the Word concludes with the Celebrant's blessing over the people and is sealed with their acclamation, "Amen."

Part III: The Holy Sacrifice

The Liturgy of the Eucharist: Badarak for the Communicants

At this point in the Divine Liturgy, the deacons "dismiss" the unbaptized and others who have not committed themselves fully to the church, saying, "Let none of the catechumens, none of little faith and none of the penitents or the unclean draw

³⁰ Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern).
<http://www.armenianchurch.org/worship/music/notes.html>. Accessed June 2003.

near to this divine mystery.” Most often, though, people are content to remain seated.

A Hymn about Holy Communion-Marmeen deroonagan

As the choir kneels, the Eucharist begins with a *Hymn to Jesus Christ*. The first hymn of the Eucharist asserts that when believers receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion, they are joining the “Son of God”: “The body of the Lord and the blood of the Saviour are present before us. The heavenly hosts invisibly sing with unceasing voice: Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts” *Marmeen deroonagan*.

Marmeen Deroonagan

Voice

Mar-min de-roo na - gan yekw a-ryoon pang - cha - gan ga a -

6 ra - chi yerg-na - yi - n zo-rooyoumkha - ne - revooyis yer-qen yev a - se-n an-ha - n-

13 qisd par - pa - rov soorp soorp soo - ip De zo - root - yant's.

Fig. 43. *Marmeen Deroonagan* (Excerpt)

This hymn describes the meaning inherent in Holy Communion; believers become one with God and are literally tapped into the divine power of God, for whom “All things are possible” (Matthew 19:26):

Text to *Marmeen Deroonagan*

The Body of the Lord and the Blood of the Saviour are represented before us; the invisible heavenly hosts are singing and saying with unceasing voice: Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts.

Marnin deroonagan yehv aryoun purgchagan ga arachi, yernayin zorootyounk hanerevooyts yerqen yehv asen anhanqisd parparov. Soorp, Soorp, Soorp, Der zorootyant 's. (see CD #10)

According to the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern):

Marmin derounagan [“The Body of the Lord”], or the Hymn of the Great Entrance, marks the beginning of the Holy Eucharist portion of the Divine Liturgy. The Great Entrance also alludes to Christ’s entry into Jerusalem, where the cross became the altar of His sacrifice. It is sung during a solemn procession in which the eucharistic bread and wine are carried to the altar. According to Armenian custom, the bread (*nshkhar* in Armenian), which symbolizes Christ’s body, is unleavened and prepared with unbleached wheat flour. Round and flat, it is embossed with a cruciform design. The red wine (*kini*), signifying Christ’s blood, is pure and undiluted with water.³¹

After this, the choir and the congregation kneel, while a soloist sings the *hagiody*—

Surpasatsootoun (Hureshdagayin) appropriate to the day:

Text to *Hagiody*

Oh God, You have filled Your Holy Church with angelic order.
Thousands of thousands of archangels stand before You, and
myriads upon myriads of angels minister to You, and yet You are

³¹ Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern).
<http://www.armenianchurch.org/worship/music/notes.html>. Accessed June 2003.

pleased to accept praise from men who sing in mystical voice;
Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts

*Hureshdagayin garqavorootyamp lut'ser, Asdvads, uzko soorp
zEgeghet'si. Hazarak hazart's hreshdagabedk gan arachi ko,
yehv pyour pyourot's hreshdagk bashden uzkez, Der, yehv, i
martganek hajet'sar untoonil zorhnootyoun, tzayniv
khorhertaganav; Soorp, Soorp, Soorp, Der zorootyant's.*

Hureshdagayin

Hagiody for Ordinary Sundays

The image displays a musical score for the hymn "Hureshdagayin". It consists of four staves of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with the word "Voice" and contains the lyrics "Hi re". The second staff starts with a measure rest and contains the lyrics "sh da". The third staff contains the lyric "ga". The fourth staff contains the lyrics "yi n." and ends with a double bar line. The music features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Fig. 44. *Hureshdagayin*

The Procession with the Gifts of Bread and Wine

Preceding "The Laying of Gifts," the congregation stands. The "Laying of Gifts" symbolizes the laying of Christ on the cross and in the tomb, as upon the Altar of sacrifice. After laying the "Gifts" on the Altar, the Celebrant censes them,

in remembrance of the incense, which was brought to the sepulcher of Jesus. The deacon goes around the Altar elevating the veiled chalice above his head. As in the procession with the Gospel in the Liturgy of the Word, this action draws attention and devotion to the bread and wine, which becomes, for believers, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

While the deacon moves around the Altar, the Celebrant prays once again that God will make him worthy to preside over this sacrament: “. . . cleanse my soul and my mind from all the defilements of the evil one; and by the power of your Holy Spirit enable me . . . to stand before this holy table and to consecrate your spotless body and your precious blood.” At the end of the procession, the deacon hands the gifts to the Celebrant as they alternate verses from (Psalm 24). The words of the Psalm express the faith that the contents of the chalice will become the Lord, “strong in his power . . . mighty in battle.” As the deacon hands the chalice to the Celebrant he says “*Sa eenkn eh takavor parats*” [“This is the King of glory”].

The Procession with the Gifts concludes with a proclamation by the deacon, leading into a prayer by the Celebrant. On behalf of all those present he asks God to “grant this bread and this cup to be for us, who taste them, a remedy of forgiveness of our sins.”

The Kiss of Peace

When worshipping, Armenian Christian communities, as with most Christian communities, “greet one another with a holy kiss” (Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:26, 1 Peter 5:14). The

deacon says, “Greet one another, Oh you faithful people, with the holy kiss; and let those who are not worthy to partake of his divine sacrament go outside the doors and pray there.” This was a visible sign of their unity and their common vision of love in Jesus Christ. It was also an evocative reminder of Jesus’s warning: “If you are offering your gift at the Altar and you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the Altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23).

A ritualized greeting of peace and reconciliation is found in the Eucharist of all ancient churches. In the custom of the Armenian Church the person offering the greeting moves his head first to the right, and then to the left of the person being greeted. The person offering the greeting says *Kreedos ee mech mer haydnetsav* or “Christ has been revealed among us.” The one receiving the greeting responds, *Ornyal eh haydnootyoonun Kreesdosee*, “Blessed is the revelation of Christ.”

The “Kiss of Peace” reminds believers of their personal responsibility to “live peaceably with all” (Romans 12:18). This is the necessary condition for believers to enjoy the blessings of the Divine Liturgy. *Kristos i mech* (The Hymn of the *Kiss of Peace*) brings together this complacent aspect of worship:

Text to Kiss of Peace

Christ has been revealed among us;
He who is God is here seated,
The voice of peace has sounded,
The command for Holy greeting has been given.
The church has become one soul,
The kiss has been given as full bond,
The adversity has been removed,
And love has been spread among us all.
Now, Oh you ministers, raising your voice,
Give praise in unison,

To the united Godhead
To whom Seraphim give praise.

*Kristos i mech mer haydnet'sav;
Vor enn Asdvads asd pazmet'sav,
Khaghaghootyan tzayn hunchet'sav,
Soorp voghchooyni hraman duvav,
Yegeghet'sis mi antzn yeghev,
Hampooyrus hot lurman duvav,
Tushnamootyounun heart'sav sern unthanoorus supret'sav,
Art bashdonyayk partzyal uztayn,
Dook zorhnootyoun i mi peran,
Miyasnagan Asdvadsootyany voroom Srovpekn yen surpapan.*

Kristos i mech

Voice

Kris-tos i mech mer hayd-ne-t'sav Vor en Asd-vads asd-paz-me-t'sav

5 Kha-gha-ghoo-tyan tzayn lum-che-t'sav soorp vogh-choo-ni hra-man du-vav

9 Art bash-don-yayk partz-yal uz-tzayn, dook zorh-noot-youn i mi pe-ran Mi-yas-na-gan

14 asd-va-dsoot-yan vo-room strov-pekn ye-n sur pa-pan.

Fig. 45. *Kristos i mech*

According to Armenian theology, Jesus Christ is “revealed” in the bread and wine.

Through the *Kiss of Peace*, believers “seal their love for one another,” and when

they receive Christ in Holy Communion, then Christ unites them in a bond of love and the Church becomes “one soul.” The task of creating “one soul” in the church parish belongs to each person of the faithful. With this, group identity is expressed and reconfirmed. According to the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern):

Krisdos i mech mer haydnetsav [“Christ Has Made Himself Known to Us”], also known as the Hymn of the Kiss of Peace, is chanted while a ceremonial embrace is exchanged by the members of the congregation. The Kiss of Peace is a ritual gesture emphasizing Christian love and unity. Originally an actual kiss, it is now a bow, to the left and to the right of the person being greeted, practiced now only in the Armenian Church. Received from the priest, it is carried by the deacon to each member of the faithful, who salutes his or her immediate neighbor with the following exchange: “*Krisdos i mech mer haydnetsav*”; “*Orhnyal eh haydnoutyounen Krisdosi*” [“Christ is revealed among us”; “Blessed be the revelation of Christ”].³²

The Eucharist

After the *Kiss of Peace*, the deacons invite the people to give their “undivided attention” to the Eucharist Prayer, the main prayer of the *Badarak*. In the course of this long prayer the Celebrant, praying on behalf of all the people, asks God to “do for us just what Jesus promised at his Last Supper: to fill us with His Body and Blood, the sacrament of His holiness and divine life, in the bread and wine of Holy Communion. In preparation for this important prayer, the deacons call on us to “lift up your minds in the fear of God, to give thanks to the Lord with the whole heart.”

³² Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern). <http://www.armenianchurch.org/worship/music/notes.html>. Accessed June 2003.

The Eucharist Prayer

The Eucharist Prayer of the Armenian Church is attributed to the fourth-century Egyptian theologian St. Athanasius, who strongly influenced Armenian theology.³³ Eucharistic is a poetic declaration of the Armenian Church's understanding of God's intervention in human history, mostly in the person and deeds of Jesus Christ. The prayer retells the whole story of the salvation for believers, focusing on the beginning and the end of Christ's life: his birth as a human being, and his death on the cross as a sacrifice to God the Father. Here, again, we see the connection between the three phases of the Divine Liturgy as connected with the life of Jesus Christ.

In the Armenian Church, the prayer is called "Eucharist" because salvation in Christ pivots around Christ's Last Supper. It was during that meal in the Upper Room, on the night before his execution, that Jesus gave his Disciples bread and wine, declaring them to be His Body and Blood. More important, Jesus told them that in this ritual meal, he had established "the new covenant in my blood" (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). Meaning can be found in the Bible:

In the same way, after the supper he took the cup saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." When we drink a small amount of wine at the Lord's Supper, we remember that Jesus's blood was shed for us, and that his blood signified the new covenant. Just as the old covenant was sealed by the sprinkling of blood, the new covenant was established by Jesus's blood. (Heb. 9:18-28)

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Cor. 11:26).

³³ William Ragsdale Cannon, *History of Christianity in the Middle Ages* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960): 147.

When believers celebrate the Eucharist and receive Holy Communion, they recall and recommit themselves to this new covenant in the Church. As recalled by Der Hayr,

We rededicate ourselves to Christian life as children of God and heirs of eternal life with Him. We renew our oath of baptism. Filled with Christ himself, we say Yes, Lord. I want to follow you and be with you in this life and for all eternity. Through the Eucharist, the Church offers us true inner peace, a real sense of belonging, and the true security that comes from being with God. The Eucharist Prayer is therefore the Church's prayer of life in Christ. It is the unique ministry of the Celebrant to offer this prayer to God on behalf of all the faithful.³⁴

The Preface

Theologians refer to the first part of the Eucharist Prayer as the "Preface." The Preface praised God for sending his son, Jesus Christ, into the world to be born, and to take on the condition of humanity in order to cleanse it and reconcile it with God the Father. This is the mystery of Christ's incarnation. It is the teaching of the Armenian Church that in the incarnation the process of salvation began as Jesus embraced humanity, purifying it and infusing it with his divinity.

Sanctus: The Hymn of the Angels: Holy, Holy, Holy

The Sanctus is founded on the belief that when Jesus became man, he restored humanity to its original state of holiness. Inasmuch so, he effectively promoted man to the level of angels. According to the vision of the Prophet Isaiah

³⁴ Interview: Father Kalayjian (2002)

(Isaiah 6: 1-5), the angels worship God in heaven without ceasing, singing their own hymn of praise: “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isaiah 6: 3). The song of the three holies, known as “Sanctus,” *Soorp, Soorp, Soorp*, is sung in the Eucharist of all orthodox churches:

Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts; Heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Glory in the highest. Blessed is He who did come and who will come in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest . . .

Soorp, Soorp

195

196

197

198

Fig. 46. *Soorp, soorp*

The Congregation kneels after the choir sings “Soorp, Soorp, Soorp Der sorootyant’s” [“Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord’s House”] and stands after the Celebrant says “This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for

many, for the expiation and remission of sins.” According to the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern):

Soorp, soorp [“*Holy, Holy*”] analogous to the Latin *Sanctus*, is sung during the Eucharistic Prayer, providing a climactic counterpoint to the celebrant’s silent supplication. At the conclusion of *Sourp, sourp*, while facing the altar, the celebrant raises high the offered bread and chalice full of wine and intones aloud “the words of institution” as recorded in St. Matthew’s gospel: “*Take, eat; this is my body, which is distributed for you and for many, for the expiation and remission of sins.*” “*Drink ye all of this; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the expiation and remission of sins*” (Mt 26:26-28).³⁵

The Last Supper [Transubstantiation]

After the Sanctus, the Eucharist Prayer describes the “outpouring of Jesus’s love,” recalling God’s repeated attempts, detailed in the Old Testament, to redeem man back from “sinful distractions of this life to the loving security of God.” This culminates in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This action of sacrifice is perpetuated in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. The Eucharist Prayer narrates this event, quoting Christ’s own words: “Take, eat; this is my body . . . Drink, this all of you. This is my blood . . .” The celebration of the *Badarak* rests on the authority of these words. The last supper is repeated in the Divine Liturgy not by any human authority, but because God says to do so (Matthew 26: 26-28; Mark 14: 22-24, Luke 22: 19-20; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26). The Eucharistic Prayer declares “Your only begotten, beneficent Son gave us the commandment that we should always do this in remembrance of him.”

³⁵ Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern).
<http://www.armenianchurch.org/worship/music/notes.html>. Accessed June 2003.

The Epiclesis

“Epiclesis” is the term theologians use to describe the next part of the Eucharistic Prayer. In the Epiclesis, believers call on God’s Holy Spirit to come “upon us and upon these gifts,” so that they may become “truly the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” This is considered the main supplication in the Eucharistic Prayer. The choir chants “Arachi ko Der” (“Let us bow down to God”):

Text to Arachi ko Der

We are before You, Oh Lord. Son of God who was sacrificed for our reconciliation with the Father; You Who are the Bread of Life is distributed among us; we beseech You, through the shedding of your Holy Blood, have mercy upon the flock redeemed by Your Blood

Arachi ko Der. Vorti Asdoodso, vor badaraqyal Hor i hashdootyoun, hat’s genat’s pashkhis i mez Heghmamp Aryan ko soorp, aghachemk, uzkez, voghormya aryamp kov purgyal hodi.

Arachi ko Der (We are Before You)

Voice

A - ra - chi ko De - r Wo - r - ti - A - s - doo - dso

6

vo - r - ba - da - ra - qya - l Ho - r i ha - shdoo - tyoun ha - t's

11

ge - nat's pash - khi - s i mez he - gh - mamp a - ry'a - n ko

Fig. 47. *Arachi ko Der* (Excerpt)

At the end of the “Epiciclesis,” where the Holy Spirit descends and infuses the Bread and Wine, “transposing” them to become the mystical Body and the Blood of the Lord, all the Deacons and Altar Servers assemble at the right side of the Altar.

The Intercessions

At this point, the congregation sits. After the Epiciclesis, prayer is directed towards the “heavenly Father for all daily concerns.” This is begun with the choir:

Text to Hoqi Asdoodso

Spirit of God, You who descending from heaven performed through us the mystery of Him Who is equal in glory with You. By the shedding of His Blood we beseech You, grant rest to the souls of our departed.

Hoqi Asdoodso, vor zparagt'si ko skhorhoort ichyal i herghnit's gadares i tzerun mer, heghmamp Aryan sora, aghachemk uzkez, hanqo zhoqis mer nunchet'selot'sn.

Hoqi Asdoodso

Voice

Ho - qi A-s-doo - - - dso vor spa - ra - g-t'si -

5 ko nkhor - hoo - rt i - ch-yal i he - rg - nit's ga - da - res - i

10 tze - ru - s mer. he - gh - mamp a - r ya - n so - ra

15 a - gha - che - mk u - z - ke - z ha - n - qo zho - - -

19 qis mer ru - n - che - t'se - - - lo - - - t's.

Fig. 48. *Hoqi Asdoodso* (Excerpt)

The prayer lists them one by one. These subsidiary requests of the Divine Liturgy are called “intercessions.” The faithful pray for “peace in the world, for the stability of the Armenian Church, for the Catholicos, Bishops and clergy, for civil leaders, for travelers, prisoners, captives, for the sick and suffering, for temperate weather and sufficient food, for those who help the poor, for all living and all the dead.”

This prayer is never taken lightly in the Armenian Church—“If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven” (Matthew 18: 19).

While the Celebrant silently makes these intercessions in the Eucharistic Prayer, the deacons chant a litany in which they recall the names of the great saints of the Church. In the Armenian faith, the faithful believe “that the saints already live in the presence of God in heaven, and that they also participate invisibly in the Divine Liturgy.”³⁶ Saints are asked to intercede with God—literally, “to put in a good word”—so that He may hear the prayers and answer them. All of this is expressed in the refrain, *Heeshya Der yev voghormya* “Be mindful, Lord, have mercy.” After this chant, the congregation stands.

The Conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayer

The Eucharistic Prayer ends with a final reference to Holy Communion, a closing doxology in praise of the Holy Trinity, and of course, the seal of all prayers: “And having cleansed our thoughts, make us temples fit for the reception of the Body and Blood of your Only-begotten, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, with whom to you, Oh Father almighty, together with the life-giving and liberating Holy Spirit, is befitting glory, dominion and honor, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.”

³⁶ Interview: member of the congregation (2001).

Prayers and Hymns before Holy Communion

Historically, Holy Communion was distributed, the people were dismissed, and the Divine Liturgy ended. However, over the course of the centuries, new hymns and prayers were added between the Eucharistic Prayer and the distribution of the Holy Communion.³⁷ These rites developed as further preparation for receiving Holy Communion. These are called “Pre-Communion Rites.”

The first of these rites is a deacon’s litany for Holy Communion: “By the holy, divine, and immortal sacrifice offered on this holy Altar . . . that the Lord our God, who has accepted it at his holy, heavenly, and intelligible Altar, may in return send down upon us the grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, let us beseech the Lord.” This Litany leads into a prayer in which the Celebrant of Celebrant gives thanks to God for giving us the grace to call him “our Father” in the Lord’s Prayer. Before the Lord’s Prayer “Hayr Mer” the congregation stands. The Lord’s Prayer is then sung by all:

Our Father who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive
Those who trespass against us.
And lead us not unto temptation, but deliver us from evil.

*Hayr mer vor hergins,
soorp yeghit’si anoon ko.
Yegest’she arkayootyoun ko.
Yeghit’sin gamk ko vorbes hergins yev hergi.
Zhat’s mer hanabazort door mez aysor.*

³⁷ For more See Komitas 1998.

*Togh mez uzbardis mer, vorbes yev mek toghoomk merot's
bardabanat's.
Yehv mi danir zmez i portzootyoun, ayl purgya i chareh.*

Hayr Mer

Voice

Hayr me - r vo - rher - gins yes soorp ye - ghi - t'si a - noon ko,
ye ges - t'se ar - ka - yoot - youn ko, ye - ghi - t'singeank ko vo - rbes her - gins yehv he - r -
gri Zhat's mer ha - na - ba - sort door mez a - y - sor, togh mez uz - bar - di - smer
vo - rbes yehv mek toghoomk me - rots bar - da - ba - nat's. Yehv mi da - nir zmez i por - tzoo -

Fig. 49. *Hayr mer* (Excerpt)

According to the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern):

Hayr mer [“Our Father”], also known as *Derounagan aghotk* [“The Lord’s Prayer”], has a central role in Christian devotion. In the Armenian tradition, all liturgical services begin and end with *Hayr mer*, introduced with the phrase “Blessed is our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.” The text of the Lord’s Prayer—from St. Matthew’s gospel (Mt 6:9-13)—is divided into the address and seven petitions, the first three asking for the glorification of God, the latter four being requests for the essential physical and spiritual needs of human beings.³⁸

³⁸ Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern).
<http://www.armenianchurch.org/worship/music/notes.html>. Accessed June 2003.

Two Hymns of Praise

The Celebrant's exclamation, "*Ew surpootyoon surpots* (Holiness for the holy)" is the original invitation for the faithful (the holy) to come forward to receive Holy Communion (holiness). It is a relic from an earlier time when the Holy Communion was distributed at this point in the Divine Liturgy. Eventually, two hymns were added before the distribution of Holy Communion. The first is addressed to Christ: *Meeayn soorp* "The One Holy." It is sung while the Celebrant elevates the Eucharistic bread and the chalice over his head. The hymn is an acclamation that they are the Body and Blood of Christ. The second hymn is sung in praise of the three persons of the holy Trinity: *Amen. Hayr soorp, Voreert soorp, Hokeet soorp*. Following this hymn, the Celebrant turns toward the people with the chalice and proclaims it to contain "the holy, holy, and precious Body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who, having come down from heaven, is distributed among us." The Celebrant continues with an incisive affirmation of the power of the remission of sins. Finally, the Celebrant asks the people to "Sing psalms to the Lord our God . . . our immortal heavenly King."

Before Holy Communion

At one time, the people would come forward for Holy Communion while the choir and people sang the communion hymn *Ornyal eh Asdvadz, Kreesdos badarakyal*.³⁹:

Blessed is the Lord.

³⁹ Interview: Socrates Boyagian (2002).

Christ who is sacrificed is being distributed among us.
 Alleluia, He gives us His Body for Food, and He imbues us with
 His Holy Blood. Alleluia, Draw you near to the Lord and take
 the light.
 Alleluia, O taste and see how sweet is the Lord.
 Alleluia, Praise Him in the heights. Alleluia. Praise you Him,
 All His Angels.
 Alleluia, Praise you Him, all you His Hosts. Alleluia.

Orhnyal ah Asdvads.
Krisdos badaraqyal bashkhi i michi meroom, allelooya.
Zmarmin your da mez geragoor, yehv soorp zaryoun your
t'sogheh i mez, Allelooya.
Jashaget'sek yehv desek zi kaght'sr ed Der, Allelooya.
Ohrnet'sek uzDer hergins, Allelooya.
Ohrnet'sek uzna i partzoons, Allelooya.
Ohrnet'sek uzna amenayn hreshdagk nora, Allelooya.

Orhnyal eh Asdvads: Kristos badaraqyal

Voice

OrtyakhAska - ds. Kris-dos ba - da - raq - yal pashkhi i mi - chi me-room

6 A - le - loo - ya. Zmarmin your da mez ge - ra - goor yehvsoorp zar - youm

11 yourt'sogheh i mez A - le - loo - ya.

Fig. 50. Holy Communion Hymn *Kristos badaraqyal* (Excerpt)

This hymn is based on Psalms 150 and 34. It corresponds with the Celebrant (and deacon's) exhortation to "Sing psalms to the Lord our God . . ." In more recent times, further development has taken place at this point in the Divine Liturgy. The hymn *Der voghormya* "Lord, have mercy" is a stirring prayer that asks God's forgiveness for humanity's failings. The hymn also asks for God's help in the lives of believers both individually and as a Church and nation. At this point the curtain is closed. Behind the curtain the Celebrant offers two personal prayers before he himself receives Holy Communion. It is an ancient custom in all Eastern Orthodox churches that when the Celebrant celebrating the Eucharist receives Holy Communion, this should be done out of the sight of the faithful. According to the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern):

Krisdos badarakyal ["Christ Sacrificed Himself For Us"] is the anthem chanted before the ministration of Holy Communion, a sacrament given to those who have been absolved of sin by confessing. The ancient practice of the church required Christians to confess their sins either openly before the congregation or, later, privately with a priest. Private confession is still practiced by the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, but the Armenian Church joins other traditions in practicing group confession. Some members of the church undertake confession at regular intervals as a discipline, and others as a means of easing a conscience burdened with guilt for some specific offence, whether committed in thought, word or deed; willingly or unwillingly.⁴⁰

One of these two prayers is attributed to the church father St. John Chrysostom. Not only the Celebrant, but anyone receiving Holy Communion may silently offer this prayer while the choir sings *Der voghormya*, in preparation for the

⁴⁰ Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Eastern).
<http://www.armenianchurch.org/worship/music/notes.html>. Accessed June 2003.

sacrament. Especially moving is the last phrase of the prayer. Quoting Jesus' words (John 6: 56) the payer asks the Lord to fulfill the promise he made to his apostles and to us:

Be with me always according to your unfailing promise that 'Whoever eats my Body and drinks my Blood abides in me and I in him. You did say so, you who love mankind. Uphold the words of your divine and irrevocable commandments. For you are the God of mercy and of compassion and of love toward mankind . . .



Fig. 51. Example of Procession. St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church.

Confession and Absolution

In Christianity, “sin” is anything that distracts from the “undivided devotion to the Lord” (1 Corinthians 7:35). Before receiving Holy Communion, the faithful

have opportunities to examine their lives and confess to God whatever they have done that has distracted them from the life of Christ. The Celebrant prays that God will absolve them of their sinfulness and restore their status as children of God. In America, it has become the custom to offer a general confession and absolution immediately before Holy Communion is distributed. Led by the deacons, the people read a prepared examination of conscience that helps each person reflect on whatever sins he or she has committed. Then, the Celebrant, not by his own authority, but by the “very word” of Jesus Christ, absolves the sins of all who have made confession.

Holy Communion

In the Armenian Church, Holy Communion is distributed in the following manner. The congregation kneels before Holy Communion. The communicant stands before the Celebrant, makes the sign of the cross and says *Megha Asdoodzo* “I have sinned against God.” The Celebrant then places a small particle of the Lord’s Body and Blood—the bread having been dipped in wine—directly into the mouth of the communicant. The communicant again makes the sign of the Cross and steps aside for others to approach the blessed sacrament. After all have received Holy Communion, using the chalice to imprint the sign of the Cross over the communicants, the Celebrant imparts the blessing of Psalm 28:9: “Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance; shepherd them and lift them up from henceforth until eternity.”

For further analysis, I have provided a ritual action breakdown of Holy Communion, as it is tied to gesture. Indeed, there is process tied within ritual action and a look at the movements within Holy Communion reflect that process:

Two Thanksgiving Hymns Following Communion

In the early Church, the blessing above marked the end of the Divine Liturgy. There was no need for additional thanksgiving prayers since the Eucharistic Prayer is already the preeminent offering of gratitude to God for all his blessings. Nevertheless, over the course of the centuries, it seemed right for the Church to further elaborate its praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for having given the faithful the great sacrament of Jesus's Body and Blood. This takes the form of two hymns, *Lutsak ee parootyants kots Der* "We have been filled with your good things, Oh Lord" and *Kohanamk uzken Der* "We give thanks to you, Oh Lord."

While the choir and people sing these songs, the Celebrant offers another prayer of thanksgiving on behalf of all the people. The curtain is closed during this period while the Celebrant and deacons clean the chalice and paten, and return all the liturgical vessels to their proper places.

Part IV: The Blessing and Dismissal

Conclusion of the Divine Liturgy: Prayer and Gospel

Yet another prayer of St. John Chrysostom is offered at the end of the Divine Liturgy. It asks God to protect those who have come to worship Him and to build up His holy Church. The *Badarak* concludes with the Word of God in the Gospel

according to St. John (1: 1-14). This custom came to the Armenian Divine Liturgy from the medieval Roman mass, which the Armenians came to know when the Crusaders passed through Cilician Armenia on their way to the 'Holy Land' in the middle ages. The congregation stands throughout until the Celebrant says, "Be you blessed by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Depart in peace; and may Jesus Christ the Lord be with you all. Amen." After the final blessing, the faithful come forward to kiss the Gospel book, saying *Heeshestseh Der zamenayn Badarakus ko* "May the Lord remember all your sacrifices." The congregation either leaves or goes to the reception hall for social interaction.

In the next chapter, I discuss the music and music-making of the Armenian Apostolic Church. In it, I consider the accepted formats for making music and possible reasons why so many choose not to actively participate, in a strict musical sense, within the *Soorp Badarak*.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Armenian Sacred Music, Music-Making, and Cultural Identity

Introduction

In the Armenian liturgy, music is an integral part of the service. The priest, deacons, Altar servers, the choir, and congregation perform music. In Eastern Orthodoxy, the congregation is “expected” to participate in the singing of the Divine Liturgy:

... in the Orthodox Church, where the liturgy has never ceased to be common action performed by Celebrant and people together, the congregation do not come to church to say their private prayers, but to pray the public prayers of the liturgy and to take part in the action of the rite itself¹

¹ Timothy Ware, “The Earthly Heaven,” in *Eastern Orthodox Theology: A Contemporary Reader*, ed. Daniel B. Clendenin (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1995): 19.

In my fieldwork, I have noticed a lack of participation by the congregation in the process of music-making. In spite of encouragement by the Celebrant and Choir Director, the people do not actively participate in music-making. In this chapter, I will assess the reason for this discord. What is the meaning of the music for the congregation and to what extent is music a part of the identity of church-goers and possibly, non-church-goers? To answer this, I first provide an introduction to Armenian sacred music in general. Following this, I discuss issues of performance practice found in my fieldwork.

Introduction to Armenian Sacred Music

Early in the development of the Armenian Divine Liturgy, special church hymns (*sharagans*) were composed for special feast days as well as a means to teach people the significance of various religious holidays. Gradually, the *sharagan* replaced the psalmody. The *Sharagan* (*Sharaknots*) or Hymnal of the Armenian Church comprises hymns (*sharagan*) composed in the fifth through sixteenth centuries. Though some of the composers of the *sharagan* are known, authorship of many *sharagan* remains unknown. It is the tradition and principles of the church that has given continuity to the style of the *sharagan*. *Sharagan* are traditionally exclusively vocal, monophonic, and modal, though in current performance practice, one will find a variety of interpretations of *sharagan*.² In the *Saint Mary's*

² For more on this subject see Robert At'ayan, *Dzernark haykakan dzaynagrout'yan* (Yerevan: Haykakan SSR 1950); "Khazeri sistemi dsagman yehv zargats'man harts'i masin." *Gitakan Nyout'eri Zhoghovatsou* 2 (1950); "Grigor Gapasak'alyana yehv khazabanout'youné," *Banber Matenadarani* 5 (1960); "Grigor Narekats'u 'Sayln ayn Ijaner' taghi Komitasyan jaynagrut'yan masin," *Etchmiadzin* 4 (1960): 35-39; "Nerses Shnorhalu 'Vardanants' Norahrashé Ekmalyani ev Komitasi

Armenian Apostolic Church, the hymns are performed by one choir, which stands in the chancel, located below the Altar area to the left.

Most ancient chants were written in prose though it is thought that there was a gradual correlation of notes to syllables, which changed from syllabic (1:1) to neumatic (1-2-3-4 : 1) and later to melismatic (extended melodic patterns to a single syllable). Unlike Western church music (plainchant) which exploits a variety of large-scale forms, Armenian sacred music is much more laconic and compact in dimension. *Sharagan* are performed antiphonally within the choir and in responsorial style with soloists. The only accompaniment to the *sharagan* is a sustained tone (or drone) (*tzainaroutiun* or *dam*), performed on an organ. In the past, this drone was sung using staggered breathing giving the impression of a continuous tone. There are eight types of *sharagan* and each type may be identified by the contents of its text. These classifications of the *sharagan* deal strictly with the text and not its musical content. Each type of *sharagan* may also be sung in any of the eight modes used in Armenian sacred music. These eight types of *sharagan* are:

*Types of Sharagan*³

The Orhunutiun (Praise the Lord, for He has triumphed . . .)

The Hartz (Blessed art thou, Oh Lord, God of fathers . . .)

The Medzatzoustze (My soul shall magnify the Lord; and my spirit . . .)

The Voghormia (Have mercy on me, Oh Lord, and blot out my transgressions)

The Der Hergnetz (Praise the Lord from the heavens . . .)

The Mangoonk (Praise Oh servants of the Lord . . .)

The Jashoo (I love the Lord, because He has heard my voice . . .)

The Hampartzee (I lifted up my eyes to the mountain . . .)

mshakmamb,” *Patma-Banasirakan Handes* 4 (1972): 87-99; *The Armenian Neume System of Notation*, trans. from the 1959; edited by Vrej. Nersessian (Richmond, England: Curzon 1959).

³ Tiran Nersoyan, *The Book of Hours* (Evanston, Illinois: Ouzoonian House, 1964): ix.

A form of musical notation is mentioned as early as the fifth century.⁴

Armenian scholars were trained in Greece and brought back to Armenia the Greek system of notation, which they called *ergoghakan tarer* ('letters for singing'):

Saint Sahak in the fifth century was "perfectly versed in the singer's letters, by which we understand some form of musical notation. Unfortunately, we no longer know today what these 'singer's letters' were like for no documents written in this musical notation have been preserved from this period (Biwzand quoted in Nersessian 1978: 7).

This notation system used alphabet letters placed above the text to serve as a reminder. Unfortunately, information regarding the earliest notation is insufficient, but given the impact of the church culturally, it seems safe to say that *khaz* notation developed within the confines of the church.⁵ In Ata'yan's masterful work, *The Armenian Neume System of Notation*, he uses Armenian folk music to dispute the existing views on the origins of the Armenian *khaz* system, stating, "the Armenian *khaz* system is not original but borrowed from other traditions."⁶ In attempting to trace the origins of the Armenian *khaz*, Ata'yan extends his argument into the realm of sacred music, saying, "the link that exists between the modal basis of Armenian folk and sacred music is evidence that the church made extensive use of folk music," but whether or not the modal system existed in the same way as today is speculative.⁷ It is my opinion, and this is perhaps problematic given the notion of

⁴ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 72.

⁵ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 73

⁶ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 43.

⁷ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 76.

“nationalism” within Armenian culture, that Ata’yan somewhat misses the mark in attempting to validate Armenian *khaz* as “original.” As previous discussions have indicated, Armenia was at times under Arab, Persian, Ottoman, and Russian rule, which undoubtedly influenced the music and musical culture of Armenia, including their notation systems. Again, this theory is just as speculative as Ata’yan’s. His work remains enthralling in its historical perspective.

In the setting of the some 1200 Armenian hymns (*sharagans*), the Armenian notation—*khaz*—consists of two independent systems: prosodic and musical.⁸ Introduced into the Armenian Church in about the ninth century, the first system of ekphonic signs, called *ar’oganut’yan khazer* meaning “signs of accentuation,” was used for the notation of *sharagans* (hymns) of Armenian church music.⁹ According to Ata’yan, there are ten basic signs in this system divided into four categories called *olorak* (tonos), *amanak* (khronos), *hagag* (neuma), and *kirk’* (pathi) defined as:

⁸ For further information see A. Abgar, *Melodies of the Holy Apostolic Church of Armenia* (Calcutta, 1920). This Appendix is provided for those interested in the historical context of Armenian music and the development of *khaz* notation.

⁹ Ekphonic notation served as a mnemonic aid in the solemn reading of the Prophets, other passages from the Old Testament, and the Epistle and Gospel texts. For more Kenneth Levy and Christian Troelsgard, ‘Byzantine Chant, Ekphonic (lextionary) Notation,’ in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians Online*, 2nd Ed., ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrell, website: <http://www.grovemusic.com/article.asp?section=42078.2.4.>, contact: grovemusic@macmillan.co.uk. For more on the history of Armenian notation see Aram Kerovpyan and Alina Pahlevanian, “Armenia, § II, Church Music, Notation,” in *The New Grover Dictionary of Music and Musicians Online*, 2nd Ed., ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrell, website: <http://www.grovemusic.com/article.asp?section=42078.2.3.>, contact: grovemusic@macmillan.co.uk.

1. *Olorak*—(tonos) signifies the alternating pitch of voice speech or recitation.
2. *Amanak*—(khronos) relates to the extension and shortening of syllables or alternations in the rhythmic duration.
3. *Hagag*—(pneuma) relates to the rough and soft renderings of sounds (consonants), and correspondingly controls breath movement as well as movement of the lips and tongue during pronunciation.
4. *Kirk'*—(pathi) indicates the single or composite pronunciation of adjacent words and the abbreviation of particular vowels for the purpose of harmony.¹⁰

The individual *khaz* signs that make up these four categories of prosody signs are explained as:

1. *Olorak* contains three signs: *shesht*, *bout'*, and *parouyk*.
 - *Shesht* (accent) indicates the rising voice or high sharp voice.
 - *Bout'* (gravis) has the opposite function to the *shesht* and indicates a low and calm voice.
 - *Parouyk* (circumflexus) indicates the combination of the functions of the above two signs: the raising (sharpening) of a voice and the lowering (leveling) of the voice.¹¹

Ata'yan also indicates that normally there is an indication as to which type of words, vowels, or syllables bear the signs *shesht*, *bout'*, or *parouyk*. For example, the vowels *a*, *e*, *i* are considered with the *shesht* sign. The vowels *ae*, *o*, *w* carry *bout'*, and *ee*, *o* are used with the *parouyk* sign. The double sounds *ai*, *eei*, *ei*, *oi* and other diphthongs have raised or lowered *parouyk* sign; the grammars contain no specific intonation.

2. *Amarak* (tense)—Consists of two signs: *sough* and *erkar*.
 - *Sough* (brevis) indicates the short vowel and syllables. The naturally short vowels are *e*, *o*, and *w*; in addition, all those syllables ending in vowels that are not diphthongs and not followed by a consonant.

¹⁰ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 18-19

¹¹ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 18-19.

- *Erkar* (longus) stands for long syllables. The naturally long syllables are *ee* and *o* vowels as well as double sounds, and those syllables in which the vowel follows two or more consonants. The vowels *a*, *ae*, *i* are considered double-*amanak*, since these appear both as short and long vowels.¹²
3. *Hagag*—The signs of the *hagag* are *t'av* and *sosk*.
- The sign *t'av* (spiritus asper) indicates a rich pronunciation of consonants, as for instance the letters *t'*, *p'*, and *k'*. This sign denotes the letter *w* when it should be pronounced separately.
 - *Sosk* (spiritus lenis) denotes the smooth, sleek pronunciation of consonants.¹³
4. *Kirk'* (effect)—This category comprises of three signs: *apat'arts'*, *ent'amna*, and *storat*.
- *Apat'arts'* (apostrophe) is placed on the prefix *i* to disjoin it from the word following and also on the vowel *a* when its pronunciation should be deleted for the purpose of harmony. It is for this reason that the sign is also called *aybat'arts'*.
 - The *ent'amna* (hyphen) indicates that two adjoining words form a single word, and therefore they should be pronounced together.
 - *Storat* (diastole, comma) is used to indicate the reverse, i.e. that the two closely associated words, and therefore, should be pronounced separately.¹⁴

¹² Robert Ata'yan 1959: 18-19

¹³ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 18-19

¹⁴ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 20-21.

Summary of *Khaz*

<i>Shesht</i>	/
<i>Bout'</i>	\
<i>Parouyk</i>	⌈
<i>Sough</i>	°
<i>Erkar</i>	~
<i>Tav</i>	⌈ ⌈
<i>Sosk</i>	⌈
<i>Apat'arts</i>	⋯
<i>Ent'amna</i>	⋯
<i>Storat</i>	⋯

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¹⁵ The following was taken from Robert Ata'yan 1959: 21.



Figs. 52 and 53. Nher Navoyan, “The Komitas Code: Discovery Unlocks the Secrets of Armenian Music” (2002). Used with Permission of Armenian International Magazine.

Knowledge of the early periods of Armenian liturgical music is scarce and derives primarily from events and facts documented in medieval sources (information that was formerly transmitted orally). However, the historical development of the early rite and its music can be reconstructed from liturgical manuscripts, in which the archaic structure is largely preserved. Since no medieval Armenian musical treatise survives, what we know in terms of theoretical history comes from the hymns themselves.¹⁶

In addition to *sharagans*, the development of notation provided a system for new forms of hymns to develop called the *dagh*, *kandz*, *avedis*, and the *megheti*. The *dagh* (verses) are hymns that tell a story of the preachings of Christ. The *dagh*

¹⁶ Archaeological excavations in Armenia have yielded relatively few musical artifacts. For further inquiry see Aram Kerovpyan and Alina Pahlevanian, <http://www.grovemusic.com/article.asp?section=42078.2.3>.

are also a feast day eulogies based on poetry in praise of a person or an event. Later, the *dagh* were used as song forms in folk music. The *kandz* (treasure) is in a florid style hymn sung on feast days. They are also statements that according to Komitas Vartabed, were sung over the dead, as their confession of sins (in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries). The *avedis* (tidings) are sung at Christmas. The subject of the text is usually from the Bible. *Megheti* (melody) are forms of sacred music used as background melodies. They are very slow, melismatic hymns drawn out on each syllable of a word. *Megheti* are sung while the Celebrant (Celebrant) prepares for the Prothesis and the curtain of the Altar is closed. Here, the Celebrant blesses the unleavened wafer and combines the wafer with the wine into the chalice.

Historically speaking, one of the most notable figures of Armenian sacred music is Catholicos Komitas (seventh century) for whom Komitas Vartabed of the twentieth-century was named. Catholicos Komitas was known for his improvements and clarification of the modes used by the church.¹⁷ Beginning in the eighth century, the form of the services was canonized. In the eighth century, an official system of church modes was adapted by which the *sharagan* were grouped into modes.¹⁸

There are eight church modes, each named according to the letters of the Armenian alphabet:

Mode I (aip tza)

Mode II (aip gen)

Mode III (pen tza)

¹⁷ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 73.

¹⁸ See O. Fleischer, *Neumenstudien* (Leipzig, 1895): 77.

Mode IV	(pen gen)
Mode V	(keem tza)
Mode VI	(keem gen)
Mode VII	(ta tza)
Mode VIII	(ta gen)

During the ninth century many of the present day *sharagan* were composed, and the Armenian Liturgy was enhanced with many new melodies. *Sharagan* were edited and standardized, leading to uniformity of *sharagan* melodies throughout the churches. The most outstanding composer of the late tenth century to early eleventh century was Gregory of Narek or Krikor Narekatzi (951-1009), a monk whose musical compositions were performed in the churches of his time, and continue to be used to this day. It was not until the twelfth century that the most important accomplishment in Armenian Sacred music occurred.

In the twelfth century, two luminaries, Nerses Shnorhali (1102-1173) and Khachadour Daronatzi (1165-1240) reformed and further developed the *sharagan* and the *khaz*.¹⁹ The scholar Aristakes Hissarlian says in his book *Badmoutiun Hye Yerajsheshootian*, “this form of notation was only a reminder, and a performer could only use this notation if he already knew the melody.”²⁰

¹⁹ Robert Ata’yan 1959: 68.

²⁰ A. Hissarlian, *Patmout’iwn hay dzaynagrou’t’ean ew kensagrou’t’iwnk’ erazhisht azgaynots, 1768-1909* [A History of Armenian notation and biographies of Armenian musicians, 1768-1909] (Constantinople, 1914): 153.

We can deduct from this statement that neumes were not always used above the words of the text.²¹ The *khaz* system was most likely not completely established during the tenth through the thirteenth centuries. In fact, Ata'yan notes that:

As far as musical notation is concerned, during the tenth through the thirteenth centuries two systems were devised successively. The first of these systems, which in real terms was the result of the perfection of the system used in the eighth and ninth centuries, was formed and applied at the beginning of the tenth century and was in constant use until the end of the thirteenth century . . . [F]rom the sources available, it is apparent that this system was mainly used for notating the *sharakan* and the songs of the Liturgy.²²

Although the development of this system of notation was completed (or in completion) during the first half of the twelfth century, the *sharagans* were written at a much later period (thirteenth century) were notated not in the newer “more perfected” system, but with the earlier system. The earlier system of notation was described by Komitas Vardapet (1869-1935) in *Die armenische Kirchenmusik*, published in *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* (Leipzig, 1899) together with several examples of deciphered melodies.²³ The second system had more signs and a large number of variants and combinations. Though it is thought that these neumes did not approximate a complete melody, their use eventually did help to perpetuate and standardize the *sharagan* melodies.

²¹ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 153.

²² Robert Ata'yan 1959: 85.

²³ Komitas Vardapet, “Die armenische Kirchenmusik,” in *Armenian Sacred and Folk Music*, trans. Edward Gulbekian (Richmond, England: Curson Press, 1998): 143-56.

Nerses Shnorhali, the most prolific composer of the *sharagan*, became a bishop in 1126 and eventually became Catholicos in 1166. Also revered as Armenia's greatest poet, Nerses Shnorhali increased the size of the hymnary by a fifth, enlarging all sections considerably.²⁴

Almost all the *sharakans* consist of three, or three times three, verses. The verses are sung to the same melody. The three-verse composition symbolizes the Holy Trinity, and the singing of all three to the same melody, [the belief] that the three persons comprise one deity. Most of the hymns are in prose, with a smaller number in metrical poetry. The thoughts are more poetic than imagery.²⁵

He composed almost all the important *sharagan* used today, which includes those for major feast days, funerals, and services of the hours, including the entire *Arevakal* service (Sunrise Service), which is presently sung during the Lenten Season.²⁶ Because his *sharagan* are in verse as opposed to prose, they are more syllabic rather than melismatic.

At the end of the sixteenth century and in the beginning of the seventeenth century the Armenian hymnal acquired its present form, containing some 1166 hymns for the various days of the religious calendar.²⁷

The nineteenth century was a period of “enlightenment” in the art of Armenian music. A new era emerged in sacred music wherein harmony was used

²⁴ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 235

²⁵ Komitas Vardapet, “The Church Melodies of the Armenians,” in *Armenian Sacred and Folk Music*, trans. Edward Gulbekian (Richmond, England: Curson Press, 1998): 103.

²⁶ Gregorian Roupén 1953: 80

²⁷ See A. Abgar 1920 (1896) for more information

for the first time, a new system of notation was created, and most importantly, there was a movement to collect and notate the *sharagan*:

Although we know that polyphonic music was not contrary to the spirit of our Church, but rather its perfections and completion, and whilst our ancestors also composed out Church melodies according to the artistic stage of development of each age, in preparing these harmonizations we approached the matter with great caution and piety because it was, of course, necessary to transcribe the mother melodies without alteration, as printed at Holy Etchmiadzin in European notation and measure, and to arrange the harmonizations in such a way that, in accord with the spirit of our church singing it should be simple and decorous.²⁸

Among the nineteenth century cultivators of the *sharagan* are Hampartsoum Lemonjian (1768-1839), Nigoghos Tashjian (1841-1885), Yeshia Dundesian (1834-1881), Christopher Kara-Murza (1853-1902), Levon Chilingirian (1862-1932), Makar Yekmalian (1856-1905), Catholicos Kevork IV (n.d.-1882), and Komitas Vardapet (1869-1935). Hampartsoum Lemonjian, a deacon of the Armenian Church, was the founder of a “reform” movement in Armenian music. His attempts to organize, “cleanse” Armenian music of foreign influences and notate hundreds of *sharagan*, paved the way for others to do so. Lemonjian created a form of notation called Hampartsoum *notakroutiun* (notation), which resembled the ancient church neumes.²⁹ However, these neumes made it possible to notate exact pitch and exact duration of pitch. It is through Lemonjian that *sharagan* have been preserved since the mid-nineteenth century. Unfortunately, Lemonjian died before he could

²⁸ “Forward” of Makar Yekmalian’s *Badarak* as quoted in Komitas Vardapet, “The Singing of the Holy Liturgy,” in *Armenian Sacred and Folk Music*, trans. Edward Gulbekian (Richmond, England: Curson Press, 1998): 123.

²⁹ Robert Ata’yan 1959: 104.

complete the task of notating all the *sharagan*. The task was later completed by Yeghia Dundesian and Nigoghos Tashjian who notated and published works written in Hampartsoum notation.

It was not until April of 1873 that a committee consisting of deacons, clergymen, and scribes assembled in Istanbul to collect, revise, or recompose *sharagan* melodies in order to preserve them for notation.³⁰ For various reasons, all members of this committee resigned except Yeghia Dundesian, Nigoghos Tashjian, and Aristakes Hovannesian (1812-1878). It was also Dundesian and Tashjian who at the same time tried unsuccessfully to introduce the use of the organ into the *Badarak*. It was not until Makar Yekmalian's *Badarak* in 1896 that the organ was officially sanctioned for use in the Armenian Church.

The first complete successful attempt to notate the *sharagan* was in late 1873 with the leadership of the Catholicos Kevork IV. Catholicos Kevork founded the "Kevorkian Jemaron" (college and seminary) at Etchmiadzin. At the request of Catholicos Kevork, Nigoghos Tashjian and other authorities on the *sharagan* were asked to come to Etchmiadzin from Constantinople to assist in the task of notating the *sharagan*. The result of their collaboration was two books, which were published by Nigoghos Tashjian in 1874 entitled *Sharagan Tzainakryal* [*Sharagan with Notation*], and *Tzainakryal Yerketzoghootioon Soorp Badaraki* [*Songs of the Holy Mass with Notation*]. Also published in five volumes is a monumental work by Yeghia Dundesian in 1871 entitled *Sharagan Tzainakryal* [*Sharagan with*

³⁰ For more on the nineteenth century, see Malachia Ormanian 1955: 71-75.

Notation]. The works of both Tashjian and Dundesian are written in Hampartsoum notation.

The late nineteenth century saw a sudden change of direction in Armenian music. This change of direction was caused by the fact that young Armenian musicians were being trained in the leading conservatories of Europe and Russia.³¹ Christopher Kara-Murza, who received his musical education in Italy, where he was trained in choral conducting and music literature, first successfully introduced the introduction of harmony into Armenian sacred music and secular music. After receiving his musical education, he returned to Tiflis (Tblisis), Georgia, where he organized choruses and gave concerts in that city. He also gave concerts in Baku, Azerbaijan.

However, opposition was building to the addition of harmony to Armenian sacred music asking the question is “the Church a Holy place or a theatre?”³² Catholicos Kevork the IV, who was one of the leaders of the reform movement of sacred Armenian music, died in 1882 and shortly thereafter Macar I (1885) became the next Catholicos. He stated, “God is one, therefore the singing of *sharagan* should be in one voice.”³³ Kara-Murza quickly responded, “Why do you forget God

³¹ Andy Nercessian, “A Look at the Emergence of the Concept of National Culture in Armenia: The Former Soviet Folk Ensemble,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* vol. 31, no. 1, June 2000: 79-94; and “Marxism-Leninism, National Identity and the Perception of Armenian Music.” PhD dissertation. University of Cambridge (2001).

³² Aristakis Hisarliyan 1914: 154

³³ Hagop Couyoumjian. *Grigor M. Suni* (Philadelphia: Efficient Printing Company, 1943): 69.

is a trinity, namely the union of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?”³⁴
Eventually, Kara-Murza resigned from his post at Etchmiadzin.

In 1877 (a few years prior to Kara-Murza), the Mekhitarist Monks of St. Lazarus in Venice made an unsuccessful attempt to introduce Western notation to the *Soorp Badarak*. An Italian, Pietro Bianchini, composed the work. It was published by the press of the Mekhitarist Congregation in Venice, under the title *Chants Liturgiques de L'Eglise Armenienne*. Bianchini prepared a careful work, but he failed to capture the true Armenian spirit; and not knowing the language, was unable to use the text properly.³⁵

In 1896, two separate versions of the *Badarak* were published. The first by Amy Apgar was published in three volumes entitled *Melody of the Holy Apostolic Church of Armenia* and was published in an enlarged version in 1920.³⁶ To my knowledge, the Armenian Church has never officially used this version. The second attempt, which is the most widely accepted version, is that of Makar Yekmalian. Makar Yekmalian's talent was discovered at a young age and consequently was invited by the Catholicos Kevork IV to study at Kevorian Jemaron. Yekmalian became very useful to Nigoghos Tashjian in notating and compiling the many *sharagan*.³⁷ Because Yekmalian's abilities attracted the Catholicos's attention, he

³⁴ Hagop Couyoumjian 1943: 69

³⁵ See Komitas Vardapet, *Azgagrakan Zhughovadsou [Ethnographic Collection]*, Vol. 1-2. (Yerevan, 1931, 1950).

³⁶ A. Apgar, *Melodies of the Holy Apostolic Church of Armenia* (Calcutta, [1896] 1920).

³⁷ Makar Yekmalian, *Music of the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church* (Leipzig and Vienna, 1896): 12

immediately decided to send Yekmalian to study music at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. While studying in St. Petersburg, Yekmalian soon attracted the attention of his instructors as well as the famous Tchaikowsky.³⁸ He graduated with honors in 1887 and returned to Tiflis, Georgia, where he became director of the Imperial Conservatory of Music. His *Badarak* was harmonized in two versions: three-part for male chorus and four-part for mixed chorus.³⁹ Yekmalian's *Badarak* was completed in 1893 and used for two years at the Cathedral of Tiflis before the Church officially accepted it. On June 7, 1895, Catholicos Mگردich I gave his holy consent to accept this version of the *Badarak*, with an encyclical letter of approval.⁴⁰ Yekmalian's *Badarak* was published in 1896 in Leipzig, Deutschland by Breitkopf and Härtell entitled, *Chants of the Sacred Liturgy of the Armenian Church*.

Levon M. Chilingirian was a dedicated student of Armenian sacred music and is probably one of the last surviving students of the old nineteenth-century cultivator of the *sharagan*, such as Nichoghos Tashjian and Dicran Chookhajian (1813-1898), who was known for his composition of the first Armenian operettas. In 1906, Chilingirian was appointed choir director and instructor of deacons at the St. Krikor Lousavoreech Cathedral of Ghalatia, in Constantinople (Istanbul), Turkey. In that same year, in the spirit of Western style performances, he premiered his

³⁸ Makar Yekmalian 1896: 16.

³⁹ Makar Yekmalian 1896: 9.

⁴⁰ Makar Yekmalian 1896: 10.

version of the *Soorp Badarak* (Holy Mass), which was written for a three-part male chorus with organ accompaniment.⁴¹

Komitas Vardapet wrote the last official version of the *Badarak*. He arranged and harmonized the mass in a four-voiced contrapuntal style for male voices. It was published in 1933 in Paris, by the Komitas Committee under the title *Chants of the Sacred Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church*. Komitas Vardapet's (Soghomon Soghomonian's) greatest contribution to Armenian music was as a collector of secular and sacred music as well as being its first musicologist.⁴² In 1950, a student of Komitas, Vartan Sarkissian arranged the Komitasian Mass for a three-part mixed chorus. Sarkissian has faithfully adhered to the original rendering and harmonization of Komitas Vardapet.

Problems of Performance Practice and the Complexity of Polyphony

Robert At'ayan speaks of the early use of polyphony among professional vocal music, which “found its fullest development under the auspicious of the Christian church, and it therefore appears, at least initially, in the form of a sacred song.”⁴³ He does not offer a specific date for the beginnings of polyphony in Armenia, but does say, “Christianity is documented as the official religion of Armenia since the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century.”⁴⁴ One

⁴¹ Levon M. Chilingirian, *Arevakalee Yerker* [*Sunrise Service*] (Antelias, Lebanon: Seminary Press, 1937): 2.

⁴² For more information see Komitas Vardapet 1950

⁴³ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 230.

⁴⁴ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 230.

may assume At'ayan is speaking of that time period, though written evidence of musical practice is scarce.⁴⁵ If Ata'yan is correct in saying that polyphonic folk music came from the church, there is the implied assumption that either church music too was polyphonic, or rather, polyphonic folk music was based on monophonic church music. In analysis and comparison of *khaz* notations and newer Limonjian transcriptions, At'ayan came to the conclusion:

The Medieval Armenian art of song writing is monophonic (music when the melodic principle is the only factor in its development). Those sung were monophonic (performed by soloists or choir), usually accompanied however, by a soft note or double note sustained by members of the choir.⁴⁶

Ata'yan's chief argument is that while medieval sacred songs may have originated in the church, their melodies were highly affected by folk music "and the medieval music of gousans."⁴⁷ He goes on to say that folk music was:

. . . resolutely monodichomophonic in character despite its highly developed melodic structure . . . As far as polyphonic music is concerned, Armenian folk music has apparently been satisfied from earliest times with the use of purely individual elements of polyphony.⁴⁸

Even Komitas Vardapet saw the presence of polyphonic elements in Armenian folksongs and incorporated these, most likely, into his own *Soorp Badarak*.

⁴⁵ There are at least 1000 manuscripts housed in Matenadaran (the Institute of Ancient Manuscripts in Yeerevan, Armenia).

⁴⁶ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 232.

⁴⁷ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 239.

⁴⁸ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 254.

Ata'yan goes further in saying that Armenian sacred music has been preserved, true to its original form:

But can it be said that the melodies which have been handed down to us are sung exactly as they were in the fifth century? Our studies justify an answer in the affirmative. The facts that these melodies were constantly sung during the Middle Ages and transmitted directly from one generation to the next, and that the melodies, justify the assumption that there have been no significant changes in these melodies in the last one, two or even three centuries, when the *khazes* were being slowly forgotten and the songs chiefly transmitted orally. Even more convincing is the fact that some of the genres at least have been preserved unchanged.⁴⁹

It is not likely that the sacred melodies were preserved unchanged; and the church melodies used in the present day Armenian liturgy are likely different from those performed centuries ago.

Typically, each *sharagan* comprises three to nine verses, all sung to the same melodic line. Komitas Vardapet says, “the three-verse composition symbolizes the Holy Trinity, and singing all three to the same melody, (the belief) that the three persons comprise one deity.”⁵⁰ Their structure is viewed as a symbol of theology. However, in my fieldwork, save for the clergy, I did not meet a single congregant who was aware of this symbolism.

Despite some minor differences between churches, the church leaders and choir directors agree on the aesthetic principles that govern a proper musical

⁴⁹ Robert Ata'yan 1959: 239

⁵⁰ Komitas Vardapet 1998: 103.

performance.⁵¹ Firstly, liturgical chant should maintain the symbolic relationship between the music and the text, without letting the music overwhelm the text:

The relationship between musical intonation and speech naturally also affects the sphere of their fixation. This is expressed through that link that originated through the system of notation and intonation—and then through centuries of constant development, social attitudes toward music and declamatory speech have also changed. As a result, each individual new approach to recitation or singing of the same text imparts different meanings at different periods.⁵²

Indeed, all of the elements of music—the melodic contour, phrasing, rhythm, form, reflect the language patterns inherent in the text. In order to maintain the intelligibility of the text, everyone attempts to sing the same syllables at the same time.

Despite relative agreement of overall aesthetic principles, there are differences in performance practice in the diaspora. These differences rest primarily on two factors: 1) relative musical training of the choir and 2) participation of the congregation. These two problems are in fact tied to polyphony.

In the introduction to his *Soorp Badarak*, Yekmalian speaks to the idea of polyphony:

Although we knew that polyphonic music is not alien to the spirit of our church, but is its perfect consummation, and that our forebears created our sacred music according to the art of their times, we exercised great care and acted with profound reverence in harmonizing this liturgy because, of course, it was necessary to transcribe unchanged (except for The Lord's Prayer) . . . the main melodies as they were published at Holy Etchmiadzin, into European notation, and to harmonize them in such a way that our sacred music would sound simple and euphonious, and according

⁵¹ Interview: Socrates Boyajian (2002)

⁵² Robert Ata'yan 1959: 17.

to the spirit of our church. Thus we avoided using chromatics and modulation outside of the scale, but attempted to stay within the diatonic scale of the melody, keeping the harmonization as simple as possible, because the idiom of Persian-Arabic music demands it, ours being a part thereof.⁵³

It is clear that Yekmalian's composition is polyphonic; however, there is some disagreement in this statement. His comparison of Arabic music to the sacred music of the Armenian Apostolic Church is also somewhat misleading, for quarter tones are not "officially" used in the Armenian Church, though one cannot ignore the commonalities between many of the maqams and some of the modes. In addition, one will notice that in chanting the Divine Liturgy, quarter tones are used, though this is an unofficial performance practice and may be unintentional. Yekmalian's composition is rather difficult for the musically untrained. This, I believe is one of the very reasons why so many of the congregants choose not to participate, at least in terms of singing. I am not saying that the community does not participate at all musically. I am rather saying that the music proves a bit unsettling to members of the community. In my interviews with members of the choir, I found that they too, had difficulty singing the Yekmalian *Badarak*. How is it that a liturgical music, which many find difficult to sing, has maintained itself as being the "chosen" music?

⁵³ Makar Yekmalian, *Music of the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church* (Leipzig and Vienna, 1896): Introduction.

Consider *Khorhoort Khorin* (*The Hymn of Vesting*):

խորհուրդ խորին

խոր-հուրդ խո-րին ա-ն-եսս ա-ն-ըս-կիզմն որ գար-դա-րե-ցեր
 զվե-րին պե-տու-թիւնդ ի յա-նա-գաստ ա-ն-մա-տոյց լու-սոյն
 զե-րա-պան իա-ննիս զգա-սըս կրե-կի-նաց
 Թա-գա-ւոր եր-կա-ւոր զե-կե-ղե-ցի քո ա-ն-արժ
 պահ - ես. եւ զեր - կըր - պա - գուս
 ա-ն-ու-նըդ քու՛ պահ - ես ի յա-նա-նու - թեան

Khorhoort Khoreen

Khor-hoort kho-reen an-has a-nus-geerpn vor zar-ta-re-tser
 uzve-reen be-doo-tyoont, ee ha-ra-kasd an-ma-dooys loo-sooyrn;
 ke-ra-bandz pa-rok zta-sus hre-ghee-nats.
 Ta-ka-vor yer-gna-vor zE-ge-ghe-tsee ko an-sharzh
 bah - ya; yev zer - gur - ba - koos
 an - va - nut koom bah - ya ee kha-gha-ghoo - tyan.

Figs. 54 and 55. Romanization and Armenian version of *Khorhoort khorin*. See <http://www.sograd.com/acca/> for complete version.

The example above comes from the Soprano part. The musical range is ideal for a soprano. Yekmalian’s soprano line is the primary melodic line, though, as Komitas Vardapet observed, there are some questions concerning prosody “In ‘Khorhoort Khorin’ pages 1-7, the rhythm has been quickened on the following words: Zverin, ara (radzk), Vor he(ghar), I Sourb, etc” and “this is tiresome to the singer.”⁵⁴ One may also see problems with the tenor part, where the high range and rhythmic complexity becomes a difficulty. An example is the chant *Hamenayni*, which comes before the Epiclesis:

Յամենայնի

Յամենայնի գրհնեալ ետ Տէրն Օրհնեմք ըզբեզ
 գրհնեմք ըզբեզ գրհնեմք ըզբեզ անհանեմք
 ըզբեզ Տէրն Աստուած մերն

Fig. 56. *Hamenayni*. See <http://www.sograd.com/aacca/> for complete version.

Text of *Hamenayni*

*In all things blessed are You, O Lord.
 We, too, glorify You, we give thanks to You, we implore You [for
 forgiveness] Oh Lord, our God.*

⁵⁴ Komitas Vardapet, *On the Music of the Divine Liturgy by Makar Ekmalian*, trans. By Arra Avakian (St. Vartan Press, 1979): 8.

The high E-Flat is difficult, to say the least, for the average singer, especially one who is untrained. Also, the rhythm in this example, especially as it is overlaid with the other parts prove challenging.

In speaking with the members of the Armenian congregation in the Washington, DC area, I found a great disparity in the answers as to *why* people chose not to sing. It is common for many to simply not understand the text nor have the musical ability to sing along:

While I understand the translation of what is being sung, I am not sure what it means. We don't get much instruction on what exactly everything means.⁵⁵

At least fifty percent of those whom I interviewed (age twenty to fifty) did not sing along with the choir. Indeed, some had no idea this was even expected of them. This is a source of great frustration for choir directors, so much so that the choir director of *Saint Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church* has endeavored to revise Yekmalian's edition:

The publication of the Sacred Music Books, Vols. I and II are one of the finest achievements of the AACCA. This endeavor is a culmination of over 50 years of working to maintain a uniformity and quality of liturgical music in the Armenian Church. This has been the foremost purpose of the AACCA—to publish music and to train choir members. Many of our choirs use the new Sacred Music Books, published in 1995; however, many more do not use them, sadly enough.

We commend all of those church pastors, Altar servers, choir directors and choir members who have participated in the annual assemblies of the AACCA, as well as in the regional workshops and national committees which have worked to preserve, maintain and

⁵⁵ Interview: member of the Soorp Khatch congregation (2002)

develop the sacred music of our church. It may seem to be a contradiction in terms to use “preserve” and “develop” in the same sentence. However, we all know that the Armenian Church is a living, breathing body and its music is a part of that body. We must preserve it and develop it and improve it at the same time, just as we do our own bodies.

Our liturgical music has evolved over the centuries from the earliest chants written in the ancient form of writing music known as “khaz” to the music of the great Armenian liturgical composers of the 19th century and 20th centuries: Magar Yekmalian, Gomidas Vartabed and Vardan Sarxian. Through the efforts of the AACCA, we have refined and modified the works of these composers, both known and unknown, for practical use for our choirs now and in the 21st century and beyond.

The liturgical music of the Armenian Church is a precious treasure, which we have inherited after many years of musical evolution. The current structures of the Divine Liturgy and other religious services are not what they were centuries ago. Our church today is a universal, world-wide church in which we have an ever greater need for uniformity and consistency. New parishes are being created all over the world and each one will have a choir. One should be able to go anywhere in the world, enter an Armenian church and instantly connect with our centuries-old worship services.

Early publications of the Divine Liturgy from the 19th and early 20th centuries have served as models from which the AACCA has developed new and completely modern and updated hymn books for our choirs to use. The finest trained professional musicians have used modern technology in the form of composing on computers, resulting in perfectly accurate renditions of ancient music which are easy to read musically as well as verbally—even for the non-trained singer and those unfamiliar with the Armenian language.

Those choirs using the new *Sacred Music Books* Vols. I and II are the choirs which set the standards for excellence. It is immediately apparent, even to a musically untrained person attending the Divine Liturgy, if a choir uses the proper texts and rehearses. The results are sureness of sound and meaning, smooth blending and transitions and a feeling of emotion and spirituality. The AACCA can only suggest that choirs adopt certain proposed techniques and practices. Each choir that succeeds has done so by a desire to achieve excellence and to provide the most harmonious, beautiful rendition of the Holy Badarak that they can. The tools have been provided. We must use them!

The AACCA has given us the means to be the best choirs—to sing for the glory of God. Yet many choirs still choose to use the antiquated, out-dated and inaccurate hymn books printed in the 1930's and 1940's, filled with many musical and verbal errors.

In 1965 the AACCA published the first volumes of the Sacred Music Books. In 1995 we improved on these volumes in organization, text, and accuracy of musical notation. It is always a challenge to use something that appears to be new. When our choirs become courageous enough to meet this challenge we will be able to glorify Christ in song. Congregations will become more transformed and uplifted during the Badarak, greater desire will evolve in wanting to learn the hymns of the liturgy and even an increase in choir membership might occur.⁵⁶

A question remains why, in the ritual process, music has become so isolated from the congregation. Those musically untrained have a difficult time understanding how the music progresses, do not understand it structurally, and have no concept of *how* to succeed musically. Still, there are others who do not understand the words, which are written in Classical Armenian or *Grabar*. This is true even amongst those who are fluent in Armenian (Eastern or Western),

It is clear that performance practice is somewhat inhibited by level of musical ability. In various meetings with Socrates Boyajian, he complained about the lack of professionalism in Armenian choirs in general. I also noticed that in much of the new music publications of Armenian Church music, such as the *Revised Sacred Music of the Armenian Church, Volumes I and II*—bar lines are not used. I asked one of the members of the congregation about this:

⁵⁶ Armenian Association of Church Choirs of America. Socrates Boyajian, Website: <http://www.sograd.com/aacca/Voice/VOICE-SUMMER-1998.htm>

I am used to seeing them being used. I am used to reading music with time signatures and bar lines.⁵⁷

I asked Socrates why are they not being used. Could this be a clue to why people are having problems; or rather was this an effort to make the congregation more at ease with singing?

The question should be why were they used in the first place in the Armenian Church music you are already familiar with. The use of time signatures and bar lines of two or three or four (the most common) beat groupings is a Western Music inheritance that some Armenian (and non-Armenian) composers, arrangers, and music editors have used to “Westernize” or “modernize” Armenian music. But Armenian Church music has its own music history, and plugging in time signatures and bar lines is not part of it.

In Armenian church music the music grouping is based on melodic patterns (the Armenian Church musical modes - *tsayn*). These melodic patterns support the meaning of the text—the text is in *Grabar*. As for you, if you want to sing or play this music: it is these elements that have to be prepared for, that have to be understood, and then sung and played fluently. Putting in time signatures and bar lines confuses and distorts this path.⁵⁸

I asked him what could be done about choir members that do not know how to read music? It seems that lately the number of choir members who do not read music is significant, and these members do not seem to want to learn how to read music.

This is a common issue among our choirs. We should note that this issue is not limited to just the choir but to all participants of the Armenian Church services. Many children learn how to read music before reaching the age of ten. But usually this is the result of structured music education classes, either from a private music teacher or through school music programs. The formula is the same in adulthood, people can take private lessons, or they can sign up at a local college for a music reading class. Within

⁵⁷ Interview: member of St. Mary’s Congregation (2001).

⁵⁸ Interview: Socrates Boyajian (2002)

four to six months, they will have learned the basic building blocks of reading music. Then they can continue to build on these skills on their own as they participate in music related functions, such as singing in an Armenian Church choir. But in adulthood priorities change, and the dedicated time needed for music education may not be available. The individual with the need will need to make the decision to either create the dedicated time needed or give up something else that they are doing.⁵⁹

What does this say about identity? For many, participating in the Divine Liturgy by singing is not important—they are more concerned with other issues, such as faith, communal action, or other gestural components. Despite the lack of musical participation by much the community, I have discovered a keen sense of “belonging” and “loyalty” to the Yekmalian *Divine Liturgy*. In conversations with older members of St. Mary’s Armenian Church, despite the fact that many of them do not sing along with the liturgy, they are, overall, against changing the liturgy. When I asked why, most said because they are “used to it,” understand it, and find a sense of belonging to it. So, despite the fact that many of them cannot or at least are unwilling to, join in with the choir, there is the sense that the liturgy is “theirs.”

In asking a “professional” Choir Director, one gets a different answer. For example, I asked Socrates Boyajian, “Is the congregation there to experience the Divine Liturgy passively or actively, as participants or simply listeners?” He complained that many people do not participate, “they even stay in the pews during the Kiss of Peace.”⁶⁰ He then gave a personal statement:

I am one of those people that have to do and experience something in order to appreciate it. I began participating in the

⁵⁹ Interview: Socrates Boyajian (2002)

⁶⁰ Interview: Socrates Boyajian (2002).

Divine Liturgy when I was nineteen, even though I had attended church well before then. At nineteen, I decided to read the pew book, practiced singing the choir parts and attempted to understand the language of the Divine Liturgy—*Graber*. I would even sing it at home, to gain a more complete understanding of it. It took me more than a year! Since then, I have come to a better understanding of the Liturgy, which has urged me to participate even further as choir director.⁶¹

I asked him if he thought everyone should participate to that level? I wanted to get a sense of the reality that he, as a church leader, expected from the congregation:

I have heard some people say that there is too much singing in the service and that the service is too long. In fact, in many parishes, parts of the Divine Liturgy are cut out.

Lisa Natcharian commented on the notion of community and participation in an article published in the magazine for the Armenian diocese, entitled “Congregations Take Different Approaches to Participation in Badarak”:

Imagine your church. You walk in the doors. Are you early or late? You sit in a pew. Do you choose the front or the back? Is there plenty of room, or do you need to search for a place? Do you reach for a liturgy book, or do you sit quietly and think? Do you sing along with the choir, or do you prefer to listen? . . . There are many spots in the service where the habits of parishioners have developed over the years into “the thing to do.”⁶²

She quotes Papken Maksoudian, former parish council chair of St. Gregory of Narek Church in Cleveland, Ohio as saying:

⁶¹ Interview: Socrates Boyajian (2002).

⁶² Lisa Natcharian, “Congregations Take a Different Approach to Participation in Badarak,” *The Armenian Church*, website: <http://www.armenianchurch.org/diocese/magazine/winter2000/feature4.html>, accessed May 24, 2003.

We have a large Bakutsi group, and even though we have the new pew books that include Russian translations, I don't see a lot of people following them . . . Their idea of coming to church is to walk in, light twenty candles, then walk out and smoke a cigarette in the hall until coffee hour. We've had quite a challenge to get them involved in a more religious way . . . The majority of our community are parents between thirty and forty-five years old, married to non-Armenians.⁶³

She then asks whether the non-Armenian parishioners were able to participate in the service, noting that:

. . . anyone who puts in the time necessary to learn about the Badarak is able to participate in the service, regardless of language, religious history, or age. Many of the non-Armenians he has seen grew up in a relatively non-religious setting. They have come to church as an act of commitment to their spouse, and a good number have tried hard to learn about the Armenian service and follow along as best they can . . . Participation in the service doesn't only mean singing along with the choir. At St. Peter church, in Watervliet, New York, the older children of the Sunday School have become apprentice church helpers, performing such tasks as making the *Soorp Hahtz* and cleaning the alter linens, along with an adult mentor.⁶⁴

Socrates Boyajian also indicated the practical approach to participation:

Sing along with the choir! The choir is there to lead the congregation's singing. They are not there to replace the congregation. At the same time, please do not sing with the Celebrant or the deacons during the service. Their part is to communicate messages to the congregation. And the congregation (lead by the choir) responds. Don't sit through the

⁶³ Lisa Natcharian, "Congregations Take a Different Approach to Participation in Badarak," *The Armenian Church*, website: <http://www.armenianchurch.org/diocese/magazine/winter2000/feature4.html>, accessed May 24, 2003.

⁶⁴ Lisa Natcharian, "Congregations Take a Different Approach to Participation in Badarak," *The Armenian Church*, website: <http://www.armenianchurch.org/diocese/magazine/winter2000/feature4.html>, accessed May 24, 2003.

service that lasts over an hour and avoid participation. You are cheating yourself of the benefits. Sing all the choir parts . . . Get a feel for what is being offered to the congregants in the Divine Liturgy. The combined effects of all the singing prayers, responses, and songs—will lift your spirit and put you in a plane where you can see the light.⁶⁵

Another aspect of the musical/ritual performance, and perhaps the most important part is Holy Communion. In my conversations with members of the congregations, one woman said to me:

I am most fulfilled when I receive Holy Communion. I feel like I am so blessed to be receiving this sacrament and I never, ever miss—when I attend church, that is. I sometimes come late, because this occurs during the second part of the *Badarak*.⁶⁶

I went on to ask her how she prepares for communion, spiritually.

Of course, before communion (receiving the body and blood of Jesus Christ), one must strive to prepare themselves in many, many ways. I personally fast the entire morning, however I do drink water. I just think it is the most beautiful moment; I feel clean—like my sin is washed away.

She asked me if I were Catholic, and I told her “no.”

Well, in the Armenian Church, we don’t confess to our Celebrants independently. Do you think this is odd? I mean, it seems as though we should confess, right. I believe, though, that the true confession comes between you, the Celebrant, and God, as you participate within the Divine Liturgy.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Interview: Socrates Boyajian (2002).

⁶⁶ Interview: member of the congregation (2002).

⁶⁷ Interview: member of the congregation (2002).

The Symbolic Role of Music and Identity

Within this ritual, the focus of the liturgical performance centers on the worship event. The worship event comprises the use of ritual symbols. These include space (the place where the event occurs), objects used in the ritual, sounds (musical and otherwise), language, and identity. The symbolism tied in liturgical performance is important because there is a general communal agreement on what the symbols mean. This ties the people together. When Armenians come together on Sunday and perform the Divine Liturgy, they are then able to express their “Armenianness,” which otherwise become lost during their weekly lives. Victor Turner viewed this coming together in communal performance *communitas*—being bound together with a shared sense of history and ethnicity.

Victor Turner’s three-prong approach to ritual:

- 1) separated people from their original status
 - 2) involved a period apart from normal status
 - 3) conferred a new status upon the individual
- ▶ *Communitas*

Victor Turner points to the importance of the *communitas*, or a feeling of belonging, which binds the participants to their cultural heritage. One can look at the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church in this three-part structure, especially if one considers all the events that precede the formal ritual itself.

Consider the following chart:

Victor Turner's <i>Communitas</i> Model for Liturgical Ritual Spatial Performance		
<i>Separation</i> (<i>Pre-Liminal</i>)	<i>Liminal</i>	<i>Incorporation</i> (<i>Post-Liminal</i>)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Away from workplace • Away from everyday, which comprises relationships that extend the Armenian construct • Begins on Sunday at home, but culminates within the officially designated ritual space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Armenianness” performed in allocated area. • Church becomes the arena for worship. • In addition to perceived belief, there is also a group consensus of <i>how</i> faith is performed within the prescribed form of Liturgy <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Communitas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering of Individuals bind them together historically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to “normalcy” • “Armenianness” fulfilled • Incorporated back into society

Fig. 57. Rite of Intensification Model for Liturgical Ritual Spatial Performance (Ritual Conception of Faith)

Turner’s idea of *communitas* is essential here. In my fieldwork, I have found a general frustration of the members of the Armenian community with performing “Armenianness” outside of Armenian events. These members complain that the plight of the Armenians is not well-known and that there is no outlet for discussion of some of the issues facing the Armenian community in the diaspora, such as loss of language, cultural history, family lineages, etc. The Divine Liturgy is, of course, a religious event. However, the actions conveyed in the Liturgy extend to the Armenians a sense of history and culture, which is not necessarily explored in other

venues. One will even find that Armenians who do not attend church are often proud of their Christian heritage.

Music-making is a form of communication and includes such sounds as recitative, chant, and calling.⁶⁸ In addition to being an aural event, music is a kinetic experience. An aspect to unlocking the importance of this mode is the “conception of faith.” As ritual action occurs, an obvious intensification builds, climaxing at communion. The “greater fulfillment” is, according to Christian theology, and in this case, tradition, marked by gaining a connection to God. Ritual action as performed in the *Soorp Badarak* is organic, it grows. Ritual worship, which includes music, ritual actions, and individual and group conceptions of faith, bind the community together.

The linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, who fostered the movement of *structuralism*, believed that certain culturally determined objects and sounds are *signs* of the culture itself. Liturgical music is symbolic in the sense that there is no necessary correlation between the sounds and what they “appear” to symbolize. Victor Turner’s processual-symbolic approach to ritual illuminates this point—“the interpretation of the meaning of symbols considered as dynamic systems of signifiers, signifieds, and changing modes of signification in temporal sociocultural processes.”⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Anthony Seeger, *Why Suyu Sing: A Musical Anthropology of an Amazonian People* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987): 47.

⁶⁹ Victor Turner, “Symbols and Social Experience in Religious Ritual,” in *Worship and Ritual: In Christianity and Other Religions*, *Studia Missionalia* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1974): 1, 7.

In liturgical ritual, the Celebrant and choir members purposefully stress certain terms, which become symbolic in the sense described above. For example, in the Armenian Divine Liturgy, the choir proclaims, *Aseh Asdvadz* [God is speaking] right before the deacon chants the Gospel. In singing, the words, “*Aseh Asdvadz*” are purposefully illuminated, thus symbolic. This certainly makes sense considering their linguistic meaning as tied to Christian theology—“God is speaking.”

Jean-Jacques Nattiez says music is a “a play of forms and structures, but as products functionally related to the social, and most often ritual contexts in which they appear.”⁷⁰ If we look at ritual music in this way, we see the “interpretant” as the foundation of the ritual symbolic event:

An object . . . takes on a meaning for an individual who perceives it when he relates the object to his *experience-domain*, or the set of all other objects, concepts, or data of the world which make-up all or part of his experience.⁷¹

The symbolic form of liturgical music comes from the ritual event itself—Nattiez called this the poietic process. The poietic process comprises both the structure of the event as well as what the event is comprised of:

⁷⁰ Jean-Jacques Nattiez, “Reflections on the Development of Semiology in Music,” trans. Katherine Ellis, *Music Analysis* 8 (1989): 22.

⁷¹ Jean-Jacques Nattiez 1989: 126.

Poietic Process

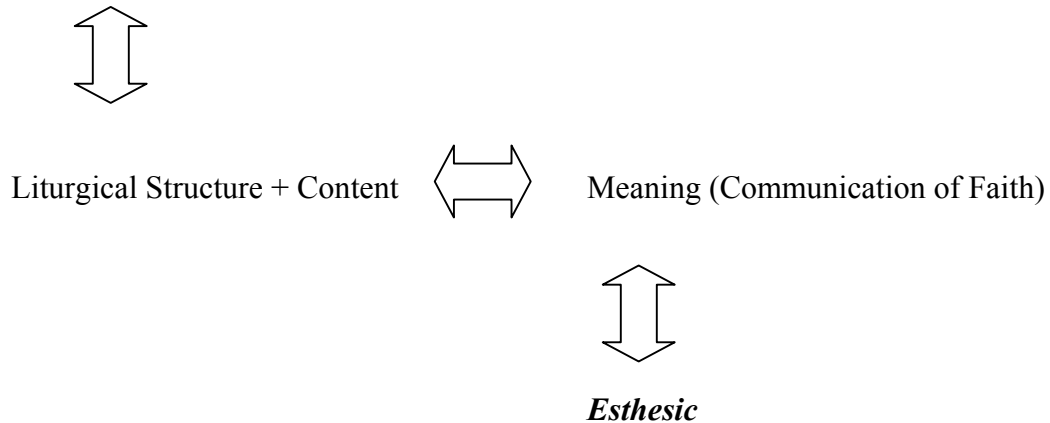


Fig. 58. Liturgical Structure and Meaning

The esthetic process in linguistics centers on the cultural meaning of the content of language. When tied to ritual process, the esthetic process connects with the meaning of the contents of the ritual. Meaning is then a product of both the form and the content. Therefore, the interpretation or hermeneutic paradigm is reflexive of the structure.

Conclusion

The act of participating in the performance of the Divine Liturgy is multi-functional. If one were to think of the overall functions of liturgical action, we could consider praise, worship, communion, entertainment, and perhaps, performance of group identity. The people see the performance of the Divine Liturgy as integral to their identity, regardless of whether or not they actually participate in the corporate singing of the liturgy. Many were resistant to change, even though musically, the liturgy is difficult:

While I don't feel comfortable participating by singing, I am adamant that this is a beautiful ceremony. I love the music. It provides a way for me to escape everyday life. It would be odd to have another liturgy to learn.⁷²

Despite the fact that many do not actually participate (musically), members of the congregation feel that the Divine Liturgy is an important part of their cultural heritage. Even though not necessarily sung by everyone, the music is a symbol of his or her imagined identity of "Armenianness." What of the Armenians who do not regularly attend the *Soorp Badarak*? Even more problematic, what about the identities of those Armenians who do not consider themselves Christian? The following chapter will address these issues and consider to what extent the Armenian sense of identity is linked to Armenian Christianity.

⁷² Interview: member of the congregation (November 2002).

CHAPTER NINE

Rethinking Official Ideologies: Christian Heritage, Faith, or Both?

Questioning the Status Quo

So far in this dissertation, I have made the argument that Armenian identity or Armenianness is chiefly explored through the performance of the Armenian Divine Liturgy and thus Armenian Christianity. Indeed, whenever one reads anything about Armenian culture, the term “Christian” is almost always there, seemingly inseparable from the former term. This “official” Christian cultural reality is important to the construct of “Armenianness,” for without it, Armenia’s classification as the first Christian nation would not hold such a high place amongst the community. However, in this chapter, I shall challenge the status quo by considering the viewpoint that perhaps, “to be Armenian” is not necessarily “to be Christian.” In any empirical scholarship, it is important to look at the culture.

Much of my research has centered on a segment of approximately 1000 individuals out of a total of 7,000 total individuals in the Washington DC/Baltimore area. What implications does this have to my thesis that Armenian identity is strongly tied to Armenian Christianity? If Christianity pervades so much of Armenian culture, why then do so many choose not to attend church?

In Chapter Seven: “Official Ideological Expression: Liturgy as a Performance of Faith,” I looked at the liturgical performance as an “official” expression of culture to perpetuate Christian identity in the Armenian community in the diaspora. I interviewed members of the active Armenian Christian community. In searching for the answer to my central question, this was necessary. Indeed, as is apparent throughout this dissertation, the notion of Christianness is tied to history, literature, and indeed, artistic and musical experiences. However, if my argument is to reflect the attitudes of the entire community, I needed to consider non-Christian Armenians. Does the Armenian liturgy and Armenian Christianness remain an integral part of their historical identity as well?

In asking members of the Christian community questions concerning Armenianness and *faith*, there is often a presumption that all Armenians are Christian. Statements from Catholicos Karekin II himself verify this:

The Message Of His Holiness Karekin II
Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians
On the Occasion of the Feast of the Holy Resurrection
(*Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, April 20, 2003*)

“By faith to know Him and the power of His Resurrection” (Phil. 3:10)

Dearly beloved Armenian people in Armenia, Arts’akh and the Dispersion, The joy of the Glorious Resurrection of Christ fills Armenian Churches this morning, and from the 1,700 year-old

Main Altar of the Mother Cathedral of the Armenians, We proclaim to you with Pontifical love, the Easter greeting “Christ is Risen from the dead!”

It was a Sunday morning such as this, when in Jerusalem, the Mother of Christ accompanied by pious women, according to custom, went to the sepulcher to anoint with oil the body of Christ placed there three days before. Arriving at the rock-hewn tomb, they observed with wonder that the large stone closing the entrance had been rolled away. The voice of the angel resounded to the bewildered souls of the oil-bearing women, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, for He has risen.” On that day which bore the good news, grace and blessing renewed the universe and the hope of salvation became the path. From that day, everyone who hears the angelic-voiced tiding of “Christ is Risen from the dead”, who acknowledges Christ with faith, knows that the tomb is only the end of earthly life but the beginning of resurrected eternal life.

Eternal life begins in this world, when the progress of man on earth is led with faith and love toward God; toward the Savior Lord Who became flesh out of His Divine Love, and came to the world for the sake of our salvation, destroyed death on the cross, and granted us life through His Resurrection.

“By faith to know Him” the Apostle of the Lord exhorts us, because it is faith that makes the presence of the Resurrected Christ recognizable in our lives, transfigures our souls, and fortifies our journeys towards goodness. From faith is born the love, which ties us to God, and the love, which establishes brotherhood between men, so that resurrection and life will prevail in our labors, and we will have peace and reconciliation among ourselves and with God.

Through Apostolic preaching, our forefathers came to know and love the Savior. They believed that the hope and strength of the Resurrection is a promise to our “small flower bed” of people as well, that the Savior addressed His promise to us, when He said to His Disciples, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32). We lived in the confidence of the word of the Lord, we withstood the countless afflictions, which befell us, and through life we conquered the pathways of death. Our soul, bearing the reflection of the Resurrection, was sealed upon our soil, stones and monasteries, our manuscripts and music; and the hymns glorifying our Lord never ceased emanating from our lips. Indeed, glory and thanksgiving to the Heavenly One, Who through His redeeming Cross, granted us

our victorious spiritual armament the Holy Faith of the Illuminator; and through the new awakening of the same power, ties us to our promised land, and that which stands in her heart, the Holy of Holies, the Only- Begotten Descended Cathedral.

Dearly Beloved Armenian People, the long paths of our crucifixion have ended with the morning of the Resurrection, and it is the new dawn of the hope of the Resurrection in our free Motherland and our national life. Gazing to heaven on this Easter morning, we see the gates of God's compassion open before us, a new invitation for resurrected life calls to us to strengthen our individual lives with faith and to renovate and rebuild our collective life. We have difficulties, and we will have the strength and power to overcome them as well. Let us look upon our rocks which have become stone-crosses, the domes of our Armenian churches which soar to the skies, and they will speak to us through the lips of our fathers, telling and directing us to be unified for the love of a free homeland and under the all-powerful arms of the Holy Cross; and our solidarity will be our strength. Today, independent Armenia and Arts'akh, more than anything else, need peace; they need our dedication and devoted efforts. Let us build our home, our village, our city, and our churches on our soil; not only with stones brought from the mountains of our homeland, but also with the love of God which dwells in our hearts, with the legacy of our fathers and the inspiration of our history. Our homeland will grow stronger with our own hands, and will become the land of the realization of our hopes. With every good morning, let us bless the day which is beginning in our free lives, let us bless with faith and loyalty, and with the confidence of our awakened soul, let us build the prosperous present-day of the Armenians and the vision of the future, which get their light from the inextinguishable Lantern of the Illuminator.

Dear Son and Daughter of the Armenian Nation, who has migrated from the homeland and was born in distant lands, it is our Pontifical prayer and wish before the Holy Altar of Descent, that the light of the Glorious Resurrection of the Savior bring rebirth to your Christian faith and renew your oath to remain Armenian. Remain loyal to our Apostolic Holy Church, sacredly preserve your legacy and transmit it to your children, and do not forget that in one corner of your homeland the graves of your forefathers await your return.

Wherever we may live, dear Armenian people, whether in the Motherland or far from her, let our soul flourish with the patriotism of being the Children of Ararat, with the strength of the Savior's triumphant love, and the God of our Fathers will lead us to new

victories. Let us vow to remain steadfast children of the Chrism of Holy Etchmiadzin, the Resurrection seal of which is upon our foreheads and we are the adopted of Christ, and our path is “By faith to know Him and the power of His Resurrection”.

With the wondrous tidings of the Holy Resurrection, We convey brotherly greetings from the Mother See of All Armenians to the Incumbents of the Hierarchal Sees of our Church: to His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia; to His Beatitude Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem; and to His Beatitude Archbishop Mesrob Moutafian, Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople. We raise our prayers to the Risen Lord to keep unshaken our Apostolic Holy Church with Her Hierarchal Sees, and to protect within His Divine Grace the entire vow-abiding clerical order and all of our beloved faithful people. We bring Our Pontifical greeting and blessing to the state leaders of Armenia, headed by President of the Republic of Armenia Mr. Robert Kocharian; and with the hope of the recognition of the right of self-determination for Artsakh, to the President of the Republic of Nagorno Karabagh, Mr. Arkady Ghukasian; and to all those who strive for the victory of the just cause of Artsakh.

With the joy of the good tidings of this morning, We greet and bless the Representatives of the Diplomatic Missions registered in Armenia.

Dear faithful, before the luminous mystery of the Glorious Resurrection of Christ, let us pray together and ask: Lord, You Who are the Sun of Justice and the Prince of Peace, enter into the hearts of men through the all-sustaining power of Your Resurrection, grant solace to the bereaved, happiness to the sorrowful, consolation to the mourning, love and reunion to those separated from one another, and encouragement and bravery to those fearful of tribulations. May Your greeting of Peace spread throughout the whole of the world, especially to those regions of our common home, planet earth where peaceful and stable life is threatened, and man’s faith in tomorrow is shaken.

May the hope, grace and blessing of the Resurrection be with us and the world, today and forever. Amen.

Christ is Risen from the dead!
Blessed is the Resurrection of Christ.
Karekin II
Catholicos of All Armenians⁷³

⁷³ The Message Of His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, On the Occasion of the Feast of the Holy Resurrection (Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, April 20, 2003.

This long statement is important because it displays the power that Armenian Christianity has in constructing Armenian identity. One of the most poignant facts is that he signs his letter and is universally considered, in the Armenian community, “Catholicos of All Armenians.” This led me to consider what comprises the centrality of Armenian faith. To discover an answer to this, I began asking questions concerning the notion of *faith* among those representatives of “official” culture.

Father Habesian, of *Soorp Khatch* provided a rather “to the point” perspective to my first question “What is religion,” saying “Religion is a sacred and mysterious bond that unites a man with his Creator.” When I asked Der Hayr of *Saint Mary’s* the same question, he said that “Religion is the spiritual means by which people are able to congregate together and worship.”⁷⁴ My curiosity extended into members of the congregation. One anonymous member of the congregation of *Saint Mary’s* told said to me:

My parents taught me religion and made me go to Church every Sunday and often during the week. When I was a kid I hated it. I couldn’t understand the language, must less participate with any authority. As I got older, I wasn’t made to go, but most of the time I did what I was told. In the end, I found that going to Church allowed me to better understand my culture (Armenian). I even went to Armenia a couple of years ago to help in the hospitals.⁷⁵

I then asked him what he felt religious practice taught him:

⁷⁴ Interview: Father Habesian and Father Kalayjian (2002).

⁷⁵ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

Wow, that's a difficult question. I always thought I would know the answer to that question but a single answer is hard. I suppose to know God, to love Him, to worship Him and to obey Him. If we listen to what the Apostles told us and the Doctrine, we are worthy of Jesus's love.⁷⁶

Having overheard me talk to this anonymous member, his wife interrupted saying,

The Doctrine of Jesus Christ is divided into three headings, namely; Faith, Sacraments, and Duty. The orthodox Faith is that there is but one person in Christ, that of God, and that this Divine person took the form of man the Virgin Mary. I feel a sense of pride going to Divine Liturgy. We Armenians in America are part of the dispersion. We are fragmented in terms of language and location. I can't even understand some of my Armenian brothers and sisters in this church (when they speak their dialect of Armenian). However, despite our diverse culture, we share a common history and background. We have the same religion—we are all Christian.⁷⁷

I asked if this were entirely true. Were there no Armenians whom she knew that were not Christian?

No. We only know Armenian Christians. We do know some Protestant Christians, though. In fact, before we moved to Washington, DC, we lived in a small town in Florida where there was no Armenian Church. We attended a Protestant Church and actually enjoyed it. We did miss our own church though.⁷⁸

I went on to ask another member of the congregation if he knew any non-Christian Armenians and he responded in a similar fashion:

Well, I am not sure. I don't know if any would admit to not being a true believer, especially around my family and me. I do know a

⁷⁶ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

⁷⁷ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

⁷⁸ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

few Armenians who don't go to Church regularly. I wouldn't say that they are not Christian though.⁷⁹

These answers, while not completely surprising, made me wonder about the true meaning of Christianity in the Armenian community. Was it purely an aspect of *faith* or was it more a matter of cultural heritage? It seems that the religious/ethnic concentration in the Armenian diaspora reflect the religious and ethnic composition of present-day Armenia. According to the "International Religious Freedom Report" of Armenia, from the U.S. Department of State:

The country is ethnically homogenous, with approximately ninety-five percent of the population classified as ethnic Armenian. About ninety percent of the citizens belong nominally to the Armenian Apostolic Church, an Eastern Christian denomination whose spiritual center is located at the cathedral and monastery of Etchmiadzin. Religious observance was discouraged strongly during the Soviet era, leading to a sharp decline in the number of active churches and Celebrants, the closure of virtually all monasteries, and the nearly complete absence of religious education. As a result, the level of religious practice is relatively low, although many former atheists now identify themselves with the national Church.

For many citizens, Christian identity is an ethnic trait, with only a loose connection to religious belief. This identification was accentuated by the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh in 1988-94, during which Armenia and Azerbaijan expelled their respective Azeri Muslim and Armenian Christian minorities, creating huge refugee populations in both countries . . . There are comparatively small, but in many cases growing communities of the following faiths: Yezidi (a Kurdish religious/ethnic group which includes elements derived from Zoroastrianism, Islam, and animism, with some 50-60,000 nominal adherents); Catholic, both Roman and Mekhitarist (Armenian Uniate) (Approximately 180,000 adherents); Pentecostal (approximately 25,000); Armenian Evangelical Church (approximately 5,000); Greek Orthodox (approximately 6,000); Baptist (approximately 2,000); Jehovah's Witnesses (approximately 6,000); unspecified "charismatic"

⁷⁹ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

Christian (about 3,000); Seventh-Day Adventist; Mormon; Jewish (500-1000); Muslim; Baha'i; Hare Krishna; and pagan. Yezidis are concentrated primarily in agricultural areas around Mount Ararat, northwest of Yerevan. Armenian Catholic and Greek Orthodox Christians are concentrated in the northern region, while most Jews, Mormons and Baha'is are located in Yerevan. There is a remnant Muslim Kurdish community of a few hundred persons, many of which live in the Abovian region; a small group of Muslims of Azeri descent live primarily along the eastern or northern borders. In Yerevan, there are approximately 1,000 Muslims, including Kurds, Iranians, and temporary residents from the Middle East.⁸⁰

If this is the present situation in Armenia, what then, does this say about the Armenian communities in the diaspora? Do Armenians in the diaspora also see “Christian identity” as “an ethnic trait, with only a loose connection to religious belief”?

In conducting interviews with non-Christian members of the Armenian community, I found that most of them wanted to remain anonymous. My first interviewee actually attends church and lives in Europe. I asked him whether considered himself Armenian or a member of some other ethnic group?

I generally do consider myself Armenian, although when people ask me where I am from, Armenia comes into the conversation relatively late on, and only if I am inclined to give a full explanation of my origins. This is because if I tell people that I am Armenian, they assume that I was born/lived/grew up in Armenia. As I have not, it seems misleading to associate me with the culture of what is now officially Armenia. In fact, I feel that British culture is much closer to my heart than the culture of Armenia. At the same time, the culture of Armenians in Europe is what I am very much inclined to call “my own.”⁸¹

⁸⁰ “Armenia” U.S. Department of State “International Religious Freedom Report.” <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2001/5539.htm>.

⁸¹ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

I found this answer particularly thought provoking because many Armenian Americans I spoke with were quick to say, “I am Armenian, without a doubt.” However, another informant from America said he actually never thinks about the notion of being Armenian. He stated that despite being Armenian and growing up in an Armenian household, he never had a chance to explore his identity.

Interested in his cultural background, I asked my European Armenian informant about his own personal and cultural history?

I was born in Jordan, but moved to Greece by the age of two, and grew up there. I went to a British school and as soon as I completed that, left to come to England where I have been living ever since. I don't spend much time with the Armenians here, especially since I am quite far from the nearest Armenian community. So culturally I am a mixed bag, though I think this is what most émigré Armenians would call quite normal or usual.⁸²

The notion of “a mixed bag” struck home with me. Interestingly, I found many Armenians who did not attend church or other cultural organizations with other Armenians to be at a loss, with a strict notion of Armenianness. I asked him if he practiced a religion? My European informant said to me:

If I practice anything it would be agnosticism. But I don't think it would be fair to say I practice it since I don't actively do anything about it or with it. I do belong to our Armenian Evangelical Church in Athens (when I'm there for holidays, etc.) but this is much more from a cultural point of view than anything else. I am not terribly keen to go to church, but it does have a certain appeal and I like many of the other church goers. At the same time, my parents' social life is very much built around the church. Many of their friends are people they have met at church, and most important events seem somehow or other related to it.⁸³

⁸² Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

⁸³ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

I found this answer intriguing, considering his answer to previous questions concerning his own associations with Armenians. I went on to ask “What do you feel about Armenia’s distinction as the “first” Christian nation? Is it a source of pride or does it matter?”:

It certainly is to many Armenians (my mother, for example) a source of pride. This very much came out in the 1700 year celebrations a couple of years ago, and of course the religious identity has a lot to do with the survival of the Armenian nation in the first place. But I rather suspect members of the Armenian Orthodox church have a stronger sense of this distinction of the Armenian Christian faith.⁸⁴

In my search for Armenians that do not practice Christianity, I found one Armenian American and I asked what he felt about the Armenian Apostolic Church:

First of all, the Armenian Church is not a church in its strictest sense. It is a monoethnic institution, an exclusive club. The Armenian Church is even narrower than being mono-ethnic, it makes no secret of this when it sometimes describes itself as Hayastanyats Azgayin Arackelakan Yekeghetsi (Armenian National Apostolic Church). Not only is it a national church it is at times, as at the present strictly parochial one. Not only parishioners may look with a jaundiced eye at a stranger, I have heard them question the presence of other Armenian worshippers who may be from another parish. As a rule, Armenians are a suspicious lot. Of course there are reasons for this, our history has taught us to be suspicious and extremely parochial. One may consider this phenomenon to be harmful to the church and the nation, at times it may be blamed for our negative growth. Official and unofficial definition of an Armenian is very narrow. However, one thing has been revolving in my head for quite sometime. I think I know the secret to Armenian longevity as a nation and cultural heritage. It is common knowledge that there were once mighty empires known as Assyrian, Babylonian, etc. They at times conquered half of the known world each in their own turn. Not only did they conquer military but culturally as well.

⁸⁴ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

Armenians used to use the Assyrian script until Mashtots. Where are they now? Why is there no country or state known as Assyria or Babylonia? Yet there is an Armenia, as small as it may be. How? Why . . . especially after thousands of years of persecutions and massacres. What is her secret?⁸⁵

As you might realize, I am particularly against established organizations as representations of an entire culture. My answer to Armenia's "secret" is very difficult for me to say, since I have been known to be anti-religion, anti-church, anti-everything. Don't get me wrong, I do believe that church and religion are personal affairs and people should be able to do what they please. My answer to my question is that the Armenian Church has been our sole redeemer and conservator. Most of this may have been by default rather than by design, most of it may have happened by stupidity rather than wisdom, yet the simple fact that the Armenian Church separated from the Catholic Church and has been fiercely independent. Had the Armenians stayed with the Catholic Church, where would we be now? Would there be an Armenia today? Is there an Assyria? Yet, again, the only thing that keeps a self-professed Assyrian and Babylonian is the religion of Catholicism. If it were not for that, given that most of them speak Arabic now, would they be distinguishable from an Iraqi or a Syrian? Similarly, throughout our (Armenian) history, most memorably during the nineteenth century, when we had lost every cultural trait, we spoke Turkish, we sang Turkish songs, we ate Turkish food, the only factor that identified us as Armenians was that we went to church on Sundays and the others went to a mosque. Could we grow and enlarge, assimilate and absorb other non-Christian culture and remain "Armenian?" I don't know.⁸⁶

This conversation seemed to prove my point that despite being anti-Christian or rather non-Christian, this Armenian still saw the Armenian Apostolic Church as an integral part of his cultural identity. Considering this, I went back to my European informant and asked him a question. "Since Christianity is undoubtedly tied to Armenian culture, do you feel Christianity is part of your faith, heritage, both, or neither?"

⁸⁵ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

Christianity is in many ways part of my heritage. I have grown-up entirely with Christian values and was a strong believer until my teens. Although the faith is not there anymore, Christianity as a whole is deeply entrenched and although I do think certain things about Christianity are detrimental to a happy and rich or fulfilling life, I also think there is something very special about Jesus's strong sense of sympathy for sufferers of all kinds, something with which Christianity is closely associated. It's hard to give any concrete examples since I am from the heritage point of view very much a part of the Christian heritage.⁸⁷

Having indicated to me in previous conversations that his family was indeed, religious, I asked him "Is there anyone in your family or close to you that is directly associated with Armenian Christianity or the Armenian Apostolic Church? If so, who? How are they related to you?"

Both my parents are religious – my mother extremely so. She was Armenian orthodox before marrying my father who was protestant. I also have many friends who belong to the Apostolic church as well as a handful of relations.⁸⁸

I continued, "Do your parents go to church? What about the rest of your family?"

My brother and I have always gone to church because we were forced to. This is so despite the fact that as I said earlier, the church has a certain appeal because I like many of the church goers. Virtually every relative I know is a great church go-er, and my parents and only living grandmother are no exception.⁸⁹

Since Christianity was an important part of his early life. I asked him "Are you knowledgeable about the Armenian Divine Liturgy? Have you ever celebrated it or

⁸⁶ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

⁸⁷ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

⁸⁸ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

⁸⁹ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

observed it? Do you celebrate it often or seldom? If so, in what contexts did this occur?”

I wouldn't really say knowledgeable. I have certainly been present at numerous events at the orthodox church, for all kinds of reasons – from specific celebrations such as commemorations, national holidays, etc. to weddings, funerals, etc. but in the evangelical church, there is no liturgy so I am only rather loosely acquainted with it.⁹⁰

Clearly, he did not consider himself extremely knowledgeable about the liturgy, but, as seen in the previous chapter, there are many Armenians who frequently go to church and yet, do not have what I would consider much knowledge about the actual performance of the Divine Liturgy. I asked him “Do you consider the Armenian Divine Liturgy to be a significant part of Armenian identity? If you are non-Christian, do you feel it is still an integral part of Armenian identity? Why?”

It is (the Armenian Divine Liturgy), because it's more a cultural thing than one that is related to faith (though I am the last to deny that faith plays an important part in it). Again, it's hard for me to say because that part of Armenian culture has always been a part which I associate with certain specific types of events that are not all that frequent, and whose memories provoke a feeling of dire boredom. I could never stand waiting all the way until the bitter end.⁹¹

This was an important find. Even to a self-proclaimed agnostic, who formally belonged to the Armenian Evangelical Church, finds the Armenian Divine Liturgy and Armenian Christianity to be, at least, an important aspect of his cultural heritage. I asked “Do you know Armenians who fit into the same ideological position as

⁹⁰ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

⁹¹ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

yourself? To your knowledge, what do they think or feel about the notion of identity in the performance of the Armenian *Soorp Badarak*”:

The *Soorp Badarak* is very special, so much so that even in our evangelical church we sometimes perform it (I recently played some transcribed version on the organ, and it sounded terrible, but people were full of reverence anyway). I don't think anyone genuinely loves it as one would love or cherish, say, late romantic music. But I do think they often feel its power, perhaps because it represents a distant and romanticized Armenian world, perhaps because it seems to them the epitome of holiness and a great symbol of our reverence to God.

As for the first question, I have met very few Armenians who are not religious in some sense. Or perhaps they do not say so in public. Because Armenian culture is so centered on the church, it's difficult to go out there and say something like “I do not believe.”⁹²

This confirmed my suspicions as to why many of my non-Christian Armenian informants wished to remain anonymous. Christianity is so tied to Armenian cultural heritage that even suggesting you are otherwise is difficult. My European Armenian informant confirmed this when I asked him “If you are not Christian, do you ever feel “out of place’ or “in conflict” as an Armenian? Why or why not?”:

Not ‘in conflict’ partly because it is not in my nature to revolt or to prefer honesty and openness over strained relations and tension. I generally do not declare my views over the loudspeaker when around religious people, and prefer to avoid the subject. Some do feel they are in conflict, as, on occasion my brother is with my parents.

I feel pretty much out of place at church, but only when I am listening to the sermon. It's ok once that is over and I can socialize with the other church goers. So, yes, there is something of that out of place-ness, but having gone to church my whole life, I cannot

⁹² Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

say that I am unable to cope with my differences of opinion with the majority of fellow church goers.⁹³

I asked my informant if he knew Armenians who did not attend church?:

Yes, I have some friends who do not attend because they can't stand its kind of gossip culture. I think the main reasons are that it's boring and not really the best way of spending their Sunday mornings. Especially for the younger generation, there are always more appealing things to do. If you are a family person you are much more likely to enjoy the family experience of going to church.⁹⁴

In speaking with yet another non-Christian Armenian informant, I was led to a website that discusses the notion of what he called "Armenism." I thought, at first, this was a similar term to my "Armenianness," but I soon learned it was different.

On the website "Armenist, The National Strategy" "Armenism" is defined as:

Armenism is a way of thinking, a worldview, an ideology, and a belief. Armenism has existed since the emergence of the Armenian identity. It is a collective understanding of Armenians about themselves and their role in life and the world at large. This concept had no tangible status in the past, because there was no need for its material existence, however, Armenism had brought forth the Armenian civilization of Aratta or Ararat back in 6,000-5,000 BC, giving birth to Armenian nation, Armenian language, folklore, customs, music, literature, science, national cuisine, traditions and cultural heritage in general.

Through out the millennia Armenism was rather spiritual embodiment of Armenian people, collective vision about their national identity and unique belief about their collective role in the world, their national mission in life. Armenism is the concept of being Armenian, the "Armenianness", the Armenosphere".

⁹³ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

⁹⁴ Interview: anonymous member of the Armenian community (2003).

This collective understanding of Armenian people about themselves received its shattering blow with the fall of the last Armenian kingdom, the kingdom of Cilicia in the late 1200s, due to the massive invasion of Seljuk Turks into the region of Anatolia and Mesopotamia, followed by the Armenian Genocides of 1875-1885 and 1915-1923, when more than half of the Armenian nation was brutally massacred in Western Armenia by the hands of the Turkish government and its loyal gangs.

Today, as a result of our devastating past not so far back ago, with the great loss of our historical homeland in Western Armenia and Eastern Armenia, with the quantitative loss of Armenian people, several centuries long Turkish oppression and collective suffering for many centuries, Armenism felt the urge to take shape and embody itself in the sacred pages of our history, to show its true potential and ability to empower Armenian people and the Armenian state with a resurrected collective psyche to ensure and secure our place in the world and live on as a nation and state through out history into the eternity.⁹⁵

Armenism began to take form when Christianity failed to protect Armenians from the ruthless Genocide back on April 24, 1915. When the Armenian people had realized the blunder that they were living for millennia at the expense of their millions innocently dead ancestors in the Genocide while the rest of the world just watched at a distance and pity them, moreover making plots with the aggressor behind their backs.

Tseghakronutium in the mountains of Syunig until the existence of the Armenian people and their republic was guaranteed. Communism came and suppressed the great Armenian spirit but not for long. Back in 1965, Armenism began to recover itself through a new national reawakening on the streets of Yerevan and throughout the Armenian Diaspora resulting in the world recognition of the Armenian Genocide and setting forth the precedent toward the 1991 independence of the Republic of Armenia and the triumphant struggle for the liberation of Artsakh and the freedom for the Armenian people from the communist oppression and obscured insignificance in the dynamics of the world at large.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ “Amenist, The National Strategy,”
<http://www.angelfire.com/theforce/armenist/armbrief.html>

⁹⁶ “Amenist, The National Strategy,”
<http://www.angelfire.com/theforce/armenist/armbrief.html>

We oppose Christian ideology because we know that Christianity has nothing to do with nationalism. By its nature, Christianity is anti-national idea with a corrupt mythology stolen from the ancient Sumerians, Egyptians, Babylonians and Iranians. As a religion, Christianity does not recognize the existence of national cultures and ethno-linguistic groups. Christianity does not recognize the importance of nation-states and national borders, it does not recognize the idea of Fatherland as such.

Some nations tried to use the Old Testament or New Testament for their own good to strengthen their own nations and countries, yet the Armenian Apostolic Church has failed to do so, therefore, we find Christianity as irrelevant to the efforts of strengthening Armenia and the Armenian people, because it does not correspond to our national character and does not encourage the creation of a stronger Armenia.⁹⁷

Despite their opinion of Christianity, however, they resolutely support the Armenian Church as a part of their cultural heritage and a conserver of national culture:

We support Armenian Apostolic church as a national institution, which did its best to preserve the Armenian identity, Armenian cultural heritage and the Armenian language for so many years. There are very few institutions like that in the world that would have such a long history of existence and continues work. However, the Armenian Church has one weakness, which is the religion that the church advocates, the Christianity per se. We find Christianity to be a cosmopolitan ideology that contradicts our national character, and as such, does not protect Armenian identity from assimilation. Christianity itself has brought so many divisions to our nation, particularly in Diaspora in terms of different denominations and neo-Christian cults that many Armenians went astray from their culture and gradually lost their Armenian identity. An ideology that preaches of a foreign land to be a “Holy Land” and foreign nation to be “the chosen people” just contradicts to our own views about Armenia and the Armenian people, and this is where the main difference between the ideologies of Armenists and the Armenian Apostolic Church arises. We are willing to

⁹⁷ “Amenist, The National Strategy,”
<http://www.angelfire.com/theforce/armenist/armbrief.html>

cooperate with the Armenian Apostolic Church on the national issues that may strengthen the Armenian people and Armenia. However, we cannot compromise our beliefs.⁹⁸

Armenian Christianity and the Manifold Construction of Identity

Despite the fact that many Armenians are not Christian, Armenian Christianity and Armenian identity are directly linked. They are linked not only amongst those strong believers who readily call themselves Christian but also among those Armenians who might fight the common saying “to be Armenian is to be Christian.” Despite one’s faith a mark of Armenianness is its Christian heritage. Promoting a re-orientation of faith and ethics, even Catholicos Aram I, Forty-Fifth Catholicos of Cilicia⁹⁹ has said:

In a world where technological culture and globalization foster dehumanization, in a world where new ideologies of secularization

⁹⁸ “Amenist, The National Strategy,”
<http://www.angelfire.com/theforce/armenist/armbrief.html>

⁹⁹ Catholicos Aram I was born in 1947, in Beirut (Lebanon). He has studied at the Armenian Seminary in Antelias (Lebanon), the Near East School of Theology (Lebanon), the American University of Beirut, the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey (Switzerland) and Fordham University (New York, USA). His major areas of specialization have been philosophy, systematic theology and Near Eastern Church history. He holds M. Div., S.T.M. and Ph.D. Catholicos Aram I was ordained celibate priest in 1968. Two years later he obtained the title of Vartabed (i.e. Doctor of the Armenian Church). Late in 1978, while studying at Fordham University, Catholicos Aram I was elected Locum Tenens for the Diocese of Lebanon, and a year later the Primate of Lebanon. In 1980, he received the episcopal ordination. Called to serve as Primate of the Armenian Orthodox Community in Lebanon at the most critical period of Lebanese history, His Holiness Aram I has made the following priorities the basic objectives of his pastoral work: the re-organization of churches and schools, the re-activation of social and church organization, the renewal of community leadership, and the strengthening of relationship with Christian and Moslem communities. On 28th June, 1995 he was elected Catholicos of Cilicia by the Electoral Assembly of the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia. The consecration took place on 1st July, 1995.

deny the presence of the ultimate reality and promote materialistic and consumerist values, the church (Armenian Apostolic Church), in collaboration with other faiths, is called to reshape, renew, and reorient society by strengthening its sacred foundation . . . The church, together with other faiths, should seek global ethics based on shared ethical values that transcend religious beliefs and narrow definitions of national interests . . . religions must work together to identify areas and modes of cooperation in human rights advocacy.¹⁰⁰

As is revealed in these interviews, the liturgy and Armenian “Christianness” remains an integral aspect of Armenian heritage. Through all the invasions and tragedies of the past, the Armenian people have preserved their national and cultural identity. Armenians are proud of their cultural and Christian traditions. Since its conversion, a long and proud Christian tradition has survived to modern day. Many of the country’s ancient churches and religious icons survived through long periods of religious persecution. Thus, Armenian Christianity and the Divine Liturgy are essential to the historical character of identity that makes of the Armenian people.

¹⁰⁰ Stephen Brown, “Church Leader Tells Religions to Seek Common Ethics for a Troubled World,” *Ecumenical News International* (<http://www.eni.ch/assembly/0550.html>)

CHAPTER TEN

Conclusion

Overview

In this dissertation, I have considered the role of religious ritual/music of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the Armenian community of the Diaspora. Using the methodology of descriptive and performative/ethnographic analysis, I have shown that the use of music within the ritual identifies the Armenian people as distinctly “Armenian,” therefore cementing their identities as both Christian and Armenian. “Armenianness” is evoked by a people who draw historic ties to Armenian—even those who may have never been there. Within the *Soorp Badarak* ritual celebration, these people create ritual/musical performances that allow for their identities to be expressed. Music-making in the liturgical event also gives integrity and draws historic ties to the event theologically.

By describing the ritual site of the Armenian Apostolic Church and its components, I have introduced the reader to the important domains of ritual performance. At the same time, I have considered the theoretical perspectives of structuralism, hermeneutics, and ethnography to look at the Divine Liturgy as an event that perpetuates “official culture” through the ritual action. I have found that despite minimal musical participation, the Divine Liturgy remains an essential component to Armenian identity in the diaspora. In addition to looking at members of the community who actively participate in the Divine Liturgy, I have extended my search to those Armenians who do not attend the Armenian Apostolic Church. The data reveals that while some Armenians are not Christian, the liturgy and Armenian Christianness remains an integral part of their heritage.

This work is also an attempt to assist in filling the relatively empty void of studies on Armenian music—especially those that are deemed ethnomusicological. How might the study of Armenian music be beneficial to ethnomusicological research in general, specifically when dealing with chant cultures? In a previous paper, “Armenian *Khaz* Notation: Issues of Interpretation and Analysis in the Cross-Cultural Study of Chant,”¹⁰¹ I proposed that by making critical analyses of scholarship relating to other chant cultures—even non-Christian chant traditions—the study of chant may be broadened “out of its present niche within music history, and move toward becoming a field that is as much ethnomusicological as music-historical, one that studies liturgical chant holistically as a human activity,

¹⁰¹ Jonathan McCollum, “Armenian *Khaz* Notation: Issues of Interpretation and Analysis in the Cross-Cultural Study of Chant,” University of Maryland, College Park. n.p., 1999.

common—with many differences but also with important similarities—to much of the world.”¹⁰² Of course, such a task is daunting for many different chant cultures will have to be studied, analyzed, and reported on before solid cross-cultural conclusions may be established.

Another point I have found particularly interesting in studying Armenian music is the modal system of Armenian sacred music. In a study of Yekmalian’s *Soorp Badarak*, I have found problems with its use of the traditional modal system. As it is currently used, modal analysis is difficult and frustrating. There is certainly room for future work in this area, especially for cross-cultural or comparative work with other modal systems. Work in this area would perhaps provide an interesting foundation for new compositions in Armenian sacred music. Despite some resistance amongst church members who have grown-up with this music, the trend among choir directors is for newer, more “Western” compositions.

Final Thoughts

Speaking of the celebration of the Thirty-Fifth Anniversary of *St. Vartan’s Cathedral* in New York, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) said, “This enduring symbol of faith and courage is the most precious legacy we can leave future generations. It is a symbol of our determination to preserve our faith.”¹⁰³ While this statement speaks directly

¹⁰² Peter Jeffery 1992: 58.

¹⁰³ Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America (Eastern), “Worship, Music, Fellowship Highlight of the 35th Anniversary Celebration,” *The Armenian Church Magazine* (Winter 2004): 4-5.

to architectural design, it also highlights the importance of the Christian faith of Armenians in the diaspora. Aidan Kavanagh has suggested, liturgy is a *theological* act, situated at the heart of the theological activity and, more importantly, liturgical actions described as both *about* God as well as *of* God.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, as a critical source for both identity and worship, the gathering of these people for Christian worship is not simply an expression of faith revealed and/or articulated in theological discourse, but rather, it is viewed as a “living encounter.”¹⁰⁵ By gathering for liturgy, the performance becomes an active expression of communal identity, expressing how this particular social body or community reflects their worldview as well as their religious belief system. At its core, this dissertation has dealt with meaning and how that meaning is manifested in one particular cultural group. Considering music in ritual contexts, then, we can look at music as an integral part of the liturgical performance. Through the dynamic nature of music, Armenian liturgical music acts as a device for the conception of faith as well as maintaining cultural identity. If music is a sign of a people, then certainly Armenian liturgical music may be looked at as a referential idiom—embodying meaning that extends the purely musical to that of music in and as culture.

¹⁰⁴ Aidan Kavanagh, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroads, 1992): 75, 96-121.

¹⁰⁵ Interview: Father Oshagon Minassian (1999).

APPENDIX ONE

Armenian Apostolic Church Timeline of Important Historical/Musical Events¹

<u>Time/Year</u>	<u>Event</u>
2 nd -1 st Millennium	Earliest instruments found. Archeologists have unearthed a number of musical instruments including clappers and small bronze ball

¹ Much of the information for this section comes from Movses Khorenatsi. *History of the Armenians*, ed. and trans. Robert W. Thomson, with introduction and commentary. (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1978). Khorenatsi's *History of the Armenians* is unique in scope and methodology. It comprises three books. Book One traces the origins of the Armenian people, from Hayk, the founder and forefather of the Armenians, through the early princes and kings, to the conquests of Alexander the Great in the fourth century B.C. Book Two begins with the establishment of the Parthian kingdom in Persia and the rule of King Vagharshak in Armenia, and carries the story to the conversion of Armenia into Christianity by King Trdat III in A.D. 301. Book Three covers the period from the death of King Trdat III in 330 to the fall of the Arshakuni dynasty and the partitioning of Armenia in 428. I also made use of Malachia Ormanian, *The Church of Armenia*, trans. G. Marcar Gregory (London: A.R. Mowbray and Company Limited, 1955). This work is particularly useful for its thorough description of the Armenian Church's history, doctrine, rule, discipline, liturgy, and literature. See also Andy Nercessian 2001.

		idiophones, and trumpet-like aerophones. Bronze cymbals discovered near present day Yerevan date from this period and are evidence of a thriving musical culture.
7 th -4 th Centuries B.C.		Bronze cymbals discovered near Yerevan; Pipes of birdbone found in present-day Garni and Dvin.
1 A.D. (?)		Birth Jesus Christ in Bethlehem
30-35 A.D. (?)		Pentecost—The Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ.
43 A.D. (?)	Establishes apostolic nature of the Armenian Church	{
66-68 A.D. (?)		
286 A.D		The Apostle Bartholomew missions to Armenia.
		Gregory the Illuminator imprisoned by King Tirdat(Dertad) III. Gregory's father assassinated of Tirdat III's father, King Khosrov I.
301 (314) A.D.		Christians are persecuted in Armenia. King Tirdat becomes ill and is healed by Gregory. Gregory is released and restores King Tirdat declares Christianity the national religion. Armenia becomes the first Christian state, according to many Armenian scholars. Later, St. Gregory is called "the Illuminator" and is venerated as the patron saint of the Armenian Church.
365 A.D.		Catholicos Nerses I (353-73) calls the first Armenian Church Council at Ashtishat .to establish order and consistency in the churches.
387 A.D.		Sahak Barteve, the son of St. Nerses the Great, becomes Catholicos Sahak I.
406 A.D.		St. Mesrop Mashtots completes the Armenian alphabet. Mesrop Mashtots and Sahak Partev compose some of the earliest examples of Armenian sacred music
433 A.D.		Bible translated into Armenian.

- 444 A.D. The Council of Shahabivan is held. The earliest Armenian canons are established.
- 449 A.D. The Armenian Church holds a Council at Ashtishat in response to the edict of Yazdegird II, Emperor of Sassanid Persia, ordering the Armenians to convert to Zoroastrianism.
- 451 A.D. Because of war, the Armenian Church does not attend the Council of Chalcedon, which declares that Jesus Christ has two distinct natures, divine and human, that exist inseparably in one person. The Armenian Church rejects this, along with the other *Oriental Orthodox* Churches, saying instead that “One is the nature of the Incarnate Word.”
- 7th Century A.D. Many Armenian churches and monasteries in Jerusalem destroyed by Persians. Justinian II, the Byzantine Emperor, attempts to force the Armenian Apostolic Church to join the Byzantine Church. Barsegh Chon compiles the first collection of *sharakans*.
- 8th-10th Centuries A.D. According to Robert At’ayan, Armenian *khaz* notation devised by Stepanos Siunetsi. Throughout the next few centuries, there are new developments in *khaz* notation to cater for greater complexity in the music.
- 900-1000 A.D. By this time, there are over 1000 churches in Armenia.
- 1097 A.D. Armenians aid the First Crusade to capture the Holy Land from Islam. For nearly the next three centuries, the Armenians are active at all levels of the Crusade
- 1166 A.D. Nerses Shnorhali, the brother of Catholicos Grigor III, becomes Catholicos Nerses IV. A poet of renown, his works are among the foremost in the Church’s “Book of Hours” and *Sharaknots* or *Sharagan*.
- 1170 A.D. (?) Nerses Lampronatzi is ordained Archbishop of Tarsus and attempts to unify the Eastern Churches.

1311 A.D.	Patriarchate of Jerusalem founded.
1441 A.D.	A council is held at Vagharshapat. The seat of the Catholicos is moved from Sis back to its original seat at Etchmiadzin. The Council of Vagharshapat elects the monk Kirakos Khor Virapetsi as Catholicos of All Armenians..
1517 A.D.	On October 31 Martin Luther posts the Ninety-five theses on the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church. He becomes the leader of the Protestant Reformation.
14 th -15 th Centuries	According to Nicholas Tahmizian, the church takes on the task of “purifying” Armenian church music from foreign influences.
1651 A.D.	At the Council of Jerusalem, Philipos I Aghbaketsi Catholicos of All Armenians, and Nerses Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, meet and set canons.
1666 A.D.	Armenian printed in Amsterdam.
1717 A.D.	The Armenian Ashugh, Sayat Nova is born. He died 1795 A.D.
1813 A.D.	Hampartsoum Limonjian (1768-1839) creates a simple and accessible modern Armenian notation, which N. Tashchian uses to transcribe three volumes of medieval sacred music.
1820s A.D.	American Protestant missionaries, having failed in their attempt to convert the Turks, seek to convert the Armenians to Protestantism.
1830s A.D.	The Russian authorities regulate the Armenian Church through a series of laws, which allow some internal autonomy for the Church. Ultimately, the church remains under Russian control.
1868 A.D.	Komitas Vardapet, the most important Armenian ethnographer and musicologist, is born. He died in 1935.

1880s A.D.	The Russians close Armenian schools. In response, the Armenian clergy include Russian curriculum in Armenian schools.
1903 A.D.	Russians attempt to confiscate property of the Armenian Church.
1915 A.D.	Turkish Empire enacts genocide on the Armenian. Armenians disperse throughout the world.
1900s A.D.	Various Catholicos elected.
1955 A.D.	Catholicos Vazken I is elected and attempts to bridge ties between Armenia and the Diaspora.
1950s-80s.	Armenian Church suffers under communist rule of the Soviet Union.
1988 A.D.	Earthquake in Armenia, kills tens of thousands of people. Catholicos of All Armenians Vazken I and Catholicos Karekin II of the Great House of Cilicia work together to rally Armenia and the Diaspora to assist.
1994 A.D.	Catholicos of All Armenians Vazken I passes on.
1995 A.D.	Karekin II of the Great House of Cilicia is elected Karekin I Catholicos of All Armenians at Etchmiadzin.
1996 A.D.	Aram I is elected Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia.
1999 A.D.	Karekin I dies. Karekin Abp. Nersessian, Primate of the Araratian Diocese, is elected Karekin II Catholicos of All Armenians.
2001 A.D.	The 1700 th anniversary of Christianity as Armenia's State Religion.

APPENDIX TWO

Aspects of Armenian Christology

Catholicos of All Armenians

His Holiness Karekin I was born in 1951 in the village of Voskehat, near Etchmiadzin, and baptized Ktrij Nersissian. He was elected the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians on October 27, 1999.

Armenian Church Hierarchy

The Hierarchy has four leaders. The Catholicos of All Armenians and Supreme Patriarch, who resides in Holy Etchmiadzin, is the leader of the Armenian Church. Below him is the Catholicos of Cilicia, who resides in Antelias, Lebanon. Next is the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who resides in Jerusalem, Israel and the Patriarch of Constantinople, who resides in Istanbul, Turkey.

Seven Sacraments

Baptism (Soorp Mrgrdootiun)
Chrismation (Troshm)
Divine Liturgy (Soorp Badarak)
Marriage (Soorp Busag)
Ordination (Tsernatrootiun)
Penance (Khosdovanank)

Last Anointing (Verchin Odzoom)

Major Orders

(Arch)Bishop ((Ark)Yebiscopos)
Celebrant (Kahana)
Celibate (Goosagron/Hayr Soorp)
Married (Amoosnatsadz/Der Hayr)
Deacon (Sargavak)

Patriarchates and Dioceses Under the Jurisdiction of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin

The Brotherhood of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin
The Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Brotherhood of St. James
The Patriarchate of Constantinople

Diocese of Ararat
Diocese of Shirak
Diocese of Gugark
Diocese of Siwnik
Diocese of Georgia
Diocese of Azerbaijan
Diocese of Arts'akh
Diocese of Nor Nakhichevan and Russia
Diocese of Atrpatakan Tabriz
Diocese of Teheran
Diocese of Isfahan
Diocese of Egypt
Diocese of Paris
Diocese of Marseille
Diocese of Lyon
Diocese of America, Eastern
Diocese of America, Western
Diocese of Argentina
Diocese of Brazil
Diocese of Uruguay
Diocese of Canada
Diocese of Iraq
Diocese of Australia and New Zealand
Diocese of England
Diocese of Romania
Diocese of Bulgaria
Diocese of Greece
Office of the Pontifical Legate of Central Europe (Vienna)

Spiritual Ministry of Sweden
Diocese of Germany
Diocese of Switzerland
Pastorate of India
Pastorate of Italy (Milano)
Pastorate of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa)
Pastorate of Sudan (Khartum)

APPENDIX THREE

Ritual Actions of the Clergy and Participants

Celebrant, Deacons, Altar Servers, and Choir

Chronological of Significant Kinesic Movement of The Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church

Part I: Preparation for the Divine Liturgy

Celebrant Vesting

Celebrant, Deacons, Altar Servers: Enters in a procession.

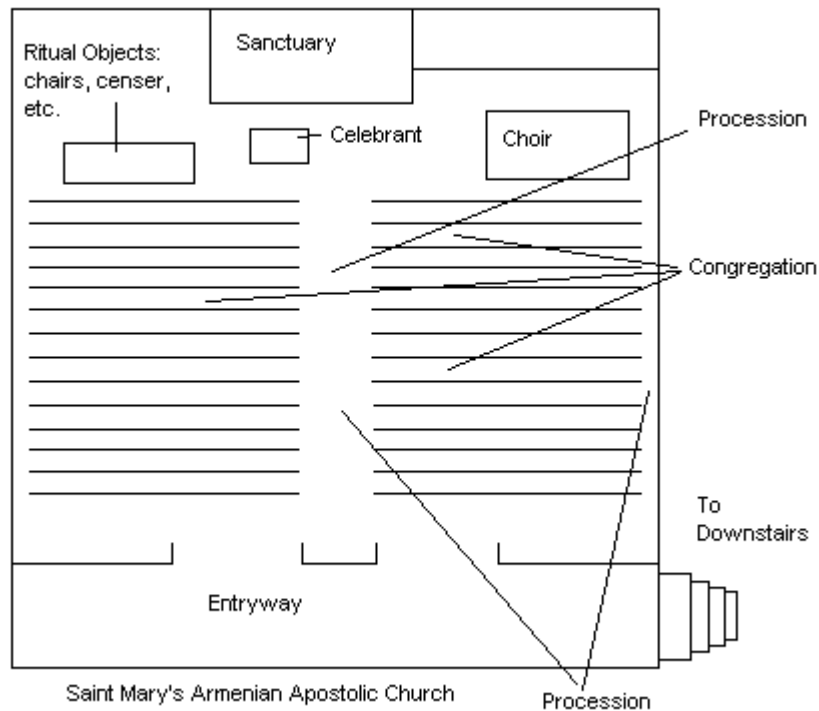


Figure 59. Diagram of St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church with Procession

Accession is symbolic of the Celebrants entering into the divine presence. While the choir sings the "Hymn of Vesting, the Celebrant enters the main hall and standing in front of the pulpit, washes his hands.

Turns to the congregation and says, "I have sinned against God, I confess . . ."

Celebrant gives the absolution "Prayer of Forgiveness."

Altar servers recite Psalm 100

Celebrant proceeds to the Altar, reciting Psalm 43 with the deacon.

Celebrant prays in the Sanctuary

Curtain is drawn and the choir sings *Donemk* (melody of the day). The Celebrant behind the curtain offers the prayer of St. Gregory of Nareg and then prepares his Offering. He receives the wafer and the wine from the deacon, blesses them and places them in the chalice.

Part II: The Synaxis

Choir begins singing the “Hymn of Censing”

The choir, forming a procession and singing the hymn of censing or another processional Hymn appropriate to the feast of the day, proceeds from the right or North aisle of the church to encircle the church.

The Celebrant, censing, passes through the congregation. Dialogue between the Celebrant and members of the congregation.

Choir sings the Introit of the day.

Choir sings the Psalm and the Hymn appropriate to the day. Usually a Jashoo Psalm or Jashoo Hymn

The lector reads the Biblical lessons from the Old Testament and the Epistles, after which the Psalm before the Gospel lesson is sung by the choir.

Celebrant gives Bible lesson.

Chanted dialogue between Celebrant and deacons.

All recite the Nicene Creed, hands joined in prayer.

Chanted dialogue between Celebrant and deacons.

Celebrant and Deacon say “The Prayer After the Lections.”

Directly preceding Part III: The Holy Sacrifice, the Celebrant takes off his crown and slippers, to present himself as a plain servant ready to serve at the Altar of his Lord.

Part III: The Holy Sacrifice

Choir kneels while the soloist sings the Hagiody appropriate to the day.

Dialogue between the Celebrant and the deacons.

The “Laying of Gifts” symbolizes the laying of Christ on the cross and in the tomb, as upon the Altar of sacrifice. After laying the “Gifts” on the Altar, the Celebrant censes them, in remembrance of the incense that women brought to the sepulcher of the Lord.

“The Kiss of Peace”—The deacon says, “Greet one another, Oh you faithful people, with the holy kiss; and let those who are not worthy to partake of his divine sacrament go outside the doors and pray there.” While the Choir is singing “Arachi ko Der” “Christ has been revealed,” all greet each other by bowing and saying “Christ has been revealed among us” and “Blessed be the revelation of Christ.”

The Eucharist—The Act of Communion. Congregation kneels after the choir sings “Soorp, Soorp, Soorp Der sorootyant’s” “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord’s House” and stands after the Celebrant. Says, “This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many, for the expiation and remission of sins.”

At the end of the “Epiclesis,” where the Holy Spirit descends and infuses the Bread and Wine, “transposing” them to become the mystical Body and The Blood of the Lord, all the Deacons and Altar Servers assemble at the right side of the Altar.

Chanted dialogue between the deacon, choir, and Celebrant

Choir sings *Hoqi Asdoodso* “The Intercession”

Chanted dialogue between deacon, choir, and Celebrant.

The deacons and Altar Servers assemble at the right side of the Altar.

Chanted dialogue between Celebrant and choir.

Choir sings “Lord’s Prayer.”

Celebrant “The Inclination and Elevation.”

Chanted dialogue between the choir and Celebrant “The Doxology.”

Choir sings *Orhnyal ed Asdvads* “Blessed be the Lord . . .”

When the deacon says “In awe and in Faith” the Celebrant comes to the edge of the Bema. Those receiving communion step in to the Chancel, and approach the Celebrant. They open their mouth and the Celebrant places a small particle of “sacred bread,” which was dipped in the “precious Blood.” Before receiving the Holy Communion the communicant crosses himself and says, “I believe in the Holy Father, the true God; I believe in the Holy Son, the true God; I believe in the Holy Spirit, the true God. I confess and believe that this is true, living and life-giving precious Body and Blood of

our Lord, and Savior Jesus Christ, which saves and purifies me from all my sins.”

Part IV: The Blessing and Dismissal

Celebrant says, “Be you blessed by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Depart in peace; and may Jesus Christ the Lord be with you all. Amen.

Chanted dialogue between the choir, Celebrant, deacons.

The congregation comes forward, kisses the Holy Bible and says to the Celebrant “May God be mindful of your sacrifice and accept your offering” and he responds “May the Lord grant to you according to your heart and may He fulfill all your good wishes.”

Congregation Action

On the surface, action taken by the congregation is significantly less than that of the Celebrant, Deacons, Altar Servers, and Choir. However, by carefully looking at each section of the Divine Liturgy and notating congregational action, it is clear that this is a well structured performance, combining both those responsible for performing the ritual (Celebrant, Deacons, Altar Servers, and Choir) and those acting as the audience (Congregation):

Chronological of Significant Kinesic Movement of The Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church

Part I: Preparation for the Divine Liturgy

Congregation stands when the Celebrant enters. Likewise, the people of the church should be mindful of God's presence. This accession is symbolic of the Celebrant entering into the divine presence. Likewise, the people of the church should be mindful of God's presence:

Orthodox unity . . . is realized in the world in a different manner, not by unity of power over the entire universal Church, but by the unity of faith, and, growing out of this, unity of life and of tradition, hence also the apostolic succession of hierarchy. This internal unity exists in the solidarity of the entire Christian world, in its different communities, independent but by no means isolated from one another. These communities recognize reciprocally the active force of their life of grace and of their hierarchy; they are in communion by means of the sacraments (intercommunion).¹

Whenever anyone walks on one side of the Chancel to the other side of the Altar, he should on reaching the middle, turn to the Altar, cross himself, and then continue.

The significance of making the sign of the cross: The beginning of the sign is from forehead to the breast that signifies the lord Jesus Christ who came from the heights of heaven to earth. The fingers at the left shoulder typify the redemption of our earthly bodies from the paths of darkness. The paths of truth and light are at the right shoulder. Finally, the cleansing of our sins and the acceptance of us as children of Christ is indicated by the hand at the heart.

Congregation sits following the prayer in the Sanctuary.

¹ Sergius Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church*, translation revised by Lydia Kesich (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1988): 90.

Part II: The Synaxis

The congregation stands as the choir begins singing the “Hymn of Censing”

Members of the congregation silently make the sign of the cross and ask the Celebrant . . .

Congregation sits right before the choir sings the Psalm and the Hymn appropriate to the day. Usually a Jashoo Psalm or Jashoo Hymn

Following this, the congregation stands right before “The Lesser Entrance.” The Celebrant says “Oh Lord, You are the might and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Congregation sits right before “The Lections” and right after the Celebrant says “For You, Oh Lord, being God, are merciful and man loving, and glory, dominion and honor are Your due, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.”

Following a Jashoo Psalm the congregation stands.

All recite the Nicene Creed, hands joined in prayer. The congregation is encouraged to join in.

Directly preceding Part III: The Holy Sacrifice, the Celebrant takes off his crown and slippers, to present himself as a plain servant ready to serve at the Altar of his Lord.

Part III: The Holy Sacrifice

Preceding “The Laying of Gifts,” the congregation stands. The “Laying of Gifts” symbolizes the laying of Christ on the cross and in the tomb, as upon the Altar of sacrifice. After laying the “Gifts” on the Altar, the Celebrant censes them, in remembrance of the incense that women brought to the sepulcher of the Lord.

“The Kiss of Peace”—The deacon says, “Greet one another, Oh you faithful people, with the holy kiss; and let those who are not worthy to partake of his divine sacrament go outside the doors and pray there.” While the Choir is singing “Arachi ko Der” “Christ has been revealed,” all greet each other by bowing and saying “Christ has been revealed among us” and “Blessed be the revelation of Christ.”

The Eucharist—The Act of Communion. Congregation kneels after the choir sings “Soorp, Soorp, Soorp Der sorootyant’s” “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord’s House” and stands after the Celebrant. Says, “This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many, for the expiation and remission of sins.”

“The Intercession”—the congregation sits.

The congregation stands after the choir sings, “Be mindful of them, Oh Lord, and have mercy.”

The congregation sits after the Celebrant says “And may the mercy of God Almighty and of our Savior Jesus Christ be with you all.”

Following the sermon and before the Lord’s Prayer “Hayr Mer” the congregation stands.

After the choir sings “Arachi ko Der” the congregation kneels.

Before “The Doxology” the congregation sits.

The congregation kneels before Holy Communion. When the deacon says “In awe and in Faith” the Celebrant comes to the edge of the Bema. Those receiving communion step in to the Chancel, and approach the Celebrant. They open their mouth and the Celebrant places a small particle of “sacred bread,” which was dipped in the “precious Blood.” Before receiving the Holy Communion the communicant crosses himself and says, “I believe in the Holy Father, the true God; I believe in the Holy Son, the true God; I believe in the Holy Spirit, the true God. I confess and believe that this is true, living and life-giving precious Body and Blood of our Lord, and Savior Jesus Christ, which saves and purifies me from all my sins.”

Part IV: The Blessing and Dismissal

The congregation stands throughout until the Celebrant says, “Be you blessed by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Depart in peace; and may Jesus Christ the Lord be with you all. Amen.

The congregation comes forward, kisses the Holy Bible and says to the Celebrant “May God be mindful of your sacrifice and accept your offering” and he responds “May the Lord grant to you according to your heart and may He fulfill all your good wishes.”

The congregation either leaves or goes to the reception hall for social interaction.

APPENDIX FOUR

Glossary

<u>Armenian</u>	<u>English</u>
Aip-gen	Mode Two
Aip-tza	Mode I
Arrachnortootiun	Diocese
Arrakyal	Apostle
Arrekelagan	Apostolic
Asdvadsahaydnootiun	Epiphany
Asdvadz	God
Asdvadzashoonch or Soorp Kirk	Bible
Ashagerd	Discipline
Avedaran	Gospel

Avedoom	Annunciation
Badrastootiun	Preparation
Bahk	Fast
Bashdon Jashou	Synaxis
Dajar	Temple
Der	Lord
Dzookh	Parish
Dzookhagan Khorhoort	Parish Council
Hagjortootiun	Communion
Hahtz	Bread
Hampartsoom	Ascension
Hay	Armenian
Hisoos	Jesus
Hokekaloosd	Pentecost
Jhoghov	Meeting
Keem-gen	Mode VI
Keem-tza	Mode V
Khach	Cross
Khorhoort	Mystery
Kini	Holy Wine
Kirk	Book
Khoran	Altar
Krisdos	Messiah

Medz Bahk	Great Lent
Mohm	Candle
Neshkhar	Transubstantiated Bread
Ooghapar	Orthodox
Orhnutiun yehv Artsagoomun	Last Blessing and Dismissal
Pen-tza	Mode III
Pen-gen	Mode IV
Seghan	Table
Sgih	Chalice
<u>sharagan</u>	hymn
<u>Sharagan</u>	Hymnal
Soorp Badarak	Sacrifice
Soorp Badarak	Divine Liturgy
Soorp Dzunoont	Christmas
Soorp Harootiuni Zadig	Easter
Soorp Hahtz	Holy Bread
Soorp	Holy
T'bratstass	Choir
Ta-gen	Mode VIII
Ta-tza	Mode VII
Tbir	Acolyte
Temagan Khorhoort	Diocesan Council
The Der Hergneetz	Laudate Chant

The Hampartzee	Levavi Chant
The Hartz	Patrum Chant
The Jashou	Midday Chant
The Medzatzoustze	Magnificent Chant
The Orhunutiun	Cantemus Chant
The Voghormia	Miserere Chant
Yegeghetsi	Church
Zadig	Passover

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Armenian Sacred and Folk Music. Louise Huddleston, piano; Dicran Jamgochian, conductor, Golden Age Recording 153101, 1975.

Armenian Sacred Music of the 5th-13th cc., Armianskaia dukhovnaia muzyka V-XIII VV. Armenian Ancient Music Ensemble, Soloists: Greta Antonyan, Vardeni

Davtyan, sopranos; Ovsanna Nalbandyan, mezzo-soprano; Grachya Niksalyan, tenor; Ruben Telunts, bass ; Ervand Arkanyan, conductor, arrangements Ervand Erkanyan. SUCD 10-00265 Melodiia, 1990.

Armenian-Americans, 1956. Collected by Donn Borchardt, Calif.. 13 sound tape reels. Tapes originally numbered 8124-8137.

Armenie: Chants Liturgiques Du Moyen-Age. Ocora Disques OCR 66. Compatible stereo. Choral and solo work of Armenian church music. Unaccompanied chorus and soloist drone. Recorded in France.

Boulton, Laura. *Armenian Church Music.* Archive of World Music. Four sound tape reels.

———. *Eastern Orthodox Liturgy.* Archive of World Music. One sound tape reel.

Chants Liturgiques De l'Eglise Arménienne Apostolique. Directed by Ara Bartevean. Contrepoint Records MC 20-114. Compatible stereo. Recorded and released in France.

Cosmopolitan Chorale. *The Armenian Mass.* Directed by Florence Mardirosian. Westminster Records XWN 18726. Stereo. The divine liturgy with choir, deacon, and organ. Text enclosed. Recorded in the United States.

Devotion: Music and Chants from Great Religions. München: New Earth Records. CD NE 9511-2.

Dicran Jamgochian Chorale. *Armenian Sacred and Folk Songs.* GAR records 15301. Stereo. Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number 75-750621. Chorale with organ accompaniment.

Die Weihnachtsliturgie im armenischen Ritus: feierliche Liturgie der Mitternachtsmesse. Freiburg im Breisgau: Christophorus. CD CGLP 73705.

Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church. St. John's Armenian Apostolic Church, Southfield, Michigan. Compatible Stereo. Two-record album of the complete liturgy excluding the sermon and the lections. Choir and organ with deacon and Celebrant of the liturgy. Recorded in the United States.

Gomidas Choir. *Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church.* New York: Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, 1981. 2 CDs ADLP-1001 Armenian Church.

Haissmavourk Choir. *The Music of Armenia, Volume 1: Sacred Choral Music.* Tucson, Arizona: Celestial Harmonies. CD 13115-2.

- Hayastan: Tradition of Armenia*. 1998. MW Ethnic. MW Records MWCD 5003. Recorded by Hubert Boone. Annotated by Margarit Brutian. One compact disc, 26 tracks (74:54).
- Komitas Vardapet. *La messe: chants de la liturgie armenienne*. Saint-Michel de Provence: Harmonia Mundi. Sound Cassette HM 40.5120.
- Komitas Vardapet. *The Divine Liturgy*. San Francisco, Calif.: New Albion Records. NA 033 CD.
- Komitas Vardapet. *The Music of Komitas*. Library of Congress Catalogue Number 70-751347. A two-record album with notes of the sacred and secular music of Komitas Vardapet.
- Komitas Chamber Choir of America. *The Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church*. Diocesan Records DR632-3. New York: Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern).
- Musiques et chants rituels*. France: Auvidis/UNESCO. CD D 8103.
- The Cosmopolitan Chorale. *The Armenian Mass*. One sound cassette. Cassette copy made from disk: Westminster Hi-Fi (XWN-18726).
- The Nativity Collection*. 1999. Jerusalem : Holyland Records. Chants from the Holy Land—CD-12.
- The Voice Antilias*. Choir with organ accompaniment. Selection of sacred music directed by Armen Babamian. Derian Records CM LP101. Monoaural. New York.
- Treasures of Light: The Spirit of Armenian Sharakans*. 2002. CCn'C Records. Vocals: Anna Mailian (messo-soprano). Accompanied: Music Masters of Armenia. LC 00963.
- Tresors de La Liturgie Arménienne*. Choir, soloist, and organ accompaniment directed by Ara Bartevean. Disques Vogue record CLVLX 454. Stereo.
- Zakaryan, Lucineh. *The Nightingale of Armenia*. Tekeyan Cultural Association. Watertown, Massachusetts. Record number TCA100-XTV211594. Compatible stereo. Soprano soloist singing sacred and secular selections.
- Zamkochian, Berj. *Armenian Organ Mass*. CD GIA Records M/S-135. Recorded in Chicago, Illinois.

OTHER PRIMARY RESOURCES (1999-2003)

People

Abraham Terian

Andy Nercessian

ArchCelebrant Father Khorin Habesian, Soorp Khatch Armenian Apostolic Church

Arman J. Kirakossian, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia in the United States of America

Father Oshagon Minassian, choir director of the director of the Erevan Choral Society, a 60-voice choir dedicated to the performance of Armenian vocal music affiliated with the Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Gary Lind-Sinanian, Curator, Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc.

George Nazarian

Harry Nazarian

Kevork Bardakjian

Lucy Der Manuelian

Lucy Nazarian

Members of the Congregation (Soorp Khatch Armenian Apostolic Church)

Members of the Congregation (St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church)

Nora Kasparian

Reverend Father Vertanes Kalayjian, St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church

Sara Terian

Socrates Boyajian, Choir Director, St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church

Susan Lind-Sinanian, Textile Curator, Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc.

Sylva Der Stepanian, Director, Diocesan ALLARC

V. Adrian Parsegian, Armenian Educational Foundation and Chief of Laboratory of Physical and Structural Biology, NICHD, National Institutes of Health

V. Rev. Dr. Nareg Berberian

Vrej Nersessian

Yeretzgin Anahit Kalayjian

Places

Armenian Church at Hye Point in Lawrence, Massachusetts

Armenian Church of Cape Cod in Mashpee, Massachusetts

Armenian Church of Metro West

Armenian Church of Our Savior in Worcester, Massachusetts

Boston University Music Library

British Library, London, England

Dumbarton Oaks Research Library

Harvard University Library

Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts

Library of Congress

MIT Libraries

St. James Armenian Church in Watertown, Massachusetts

St. Mark Armenian Church in Springfield, Massachusetts

St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church, Washington, DC

St. Vartanantz Armenian Church in Chelmsford, Massachusetts

St. Vartans's Cathedral in New York, New York

Soorp Khatch Armenian Apostolic Church, Bethesda, Maryland

Tufts University Library

University of Maryland Libraries

CURRICULUM VITAE

JONATHAN RAY MCCOLLUM

PERSONAL DATA

Place of Birth: Aiken, South Carolina, United States of America

Date of Birth: August 19, 1975

EDUCATION

- 2004 *PhD in Ethnomusicology*, University of Maryland, College Park
(completed; awaiting graduation)
- 2000 MA in Ethnomusicology and World Music, Minor in Museum
Studies, Tufts University
- 1997 *BA in Music with Honors, Magna Cum Laude* (Western Music
History, World Music, and Music Performance), *Minor in Political
Science*, Florida State University

RESEARCH INTERESTS

East Asian Music and Art, Armenian Music (Central Asian Music and Art), Russo-Soviet Ideology, Ethnographic Museology, Applied Ethnography, Ethnomusicology, Historical Musicology, Aesthetics, Religious Belief Systems, Chant Cultures

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- 2002-Present *Lecturer in Ethnomusicology*, School of Music, Department of
Musicology and Ethnomusicology, University of Maryland, College
Park, Maryland
- 2002-Present *Adjunct Professor of Music*, Department of Music, Anne Arundel
Community College, Arnold, Maryland
- 2000-2001 *Teaching Assistant and Section Discussion Leader*
(Ethnomusicology), School of Music, Department of Musicology and
Ethnomusicology, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland
- 1998-2000 *Teaching Assistant* (Ethnomusicology and Historical Musicology),
Department of Music, Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts
- 1995-1997 *Advanced German Language Tutorial Leader*, Florida State
University, Tallahassee, Florida

PROFESSIONAL FOLKLIFE EXPERIENCE (Museums, Research Centers, and Archives)

- 2001-Present *Museum Consultant*

- 2000-2001 *Archival Assistant*, Special Collections in Performing Arts,
Performing Arts Library, University of Maryland
- 1999-2000 *Assistant Curator of Collections*, Armenian Library and Museum of
America, Inc. Watertown, MA
- 1999 *Director and Curatorial Assistant Program Intern*, Smithsonian
Institution, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, Center for Folklife
and Cultural Heritage
- 1998 *Curatorial Intern*, Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc.
Watertown, MA

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2003 *Review Reader*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan
- 1990-Present *Private Trombone Instructor*, Aiken, SC; Tallahassee, FL; Boston,
MA; Columbia, MD
- 1993-1994 *German Instructor*, Aiken Elementary School, Aiken, SC
- 1993-1994 *Teaching Cadet*, North Aiken Elementary, Schofield Middle School,
and Aiken High School, Aiken, SC

FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE

- 2004 Research on the Japanese *Ainu* culture (Hokkaido, Japan)
- 2004 Research on traditional Chinese culture (Beijing, Xi'an, Hangzhou,
Tunxi, and Shanghai, China)
- 2003-Present Research on Japanese traditional music (*koto*), Tokyo and Kyoto,
Japan
- 2000-2003 Research on the music, liturgy, and culture of the Armenian
Apostolic Church, Washington, DC, Boston, MA, and New York
City, NY
- 2002 Research on Armenian illuminated manuscripts, Walters Art Gallery,
Baltimore, MD
- 2002 Research on Armenian music and historiography, British Library,
London, England
- 2001-2002 Research on Armenian wedding songs and laments, Watertown, MA
- 1999 Research on Intellectual Property Rights in conjunction with the
United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
(UNESCO), Washington, DC
- 1999 Research on ethnographic museology, Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, DC
- 1998-1999 Research on ethnographic museology, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,
MA
- 1998-1999 Research on ethnographic museology, Armenian Library and
Museum of America, Watertown, MA
- 1996-1997 Research on Japanese traditional music (*shakuhachi*), Japan
(Nagoya, Tokyo, Kyoto, Takamatsu, Osaka, and Toyokawa)

PROFESSIONAL ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

PUBLICATIONS/RESEARCH (chronological)

Books/Thesis/Dissertation

- Forthcoming: PhD Dissertation: *Music, Ritual, and Diasporic Identity: A Case Study of the Armenian Apostolic Church*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park. University Microfilms International, Anne Arbor, Michigan. 2004. 392 pgs.
- 2004 Book: “Performing ‘Non-Collective’ Group Identity: The Role of Religion and Ritual Performance in the Former Soviet Union.” In *Pluralism, Ideology, and Soviet Music*. Edited by Andy Nercessian. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2005. 79 pgs.
- 2004 Book: *Armenian Music: A Comprehensive Bibliography and Discography*. With Andy Nercessian. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press. 252 pgs.
- 2001 Book (assist. Ed.): Assisting in the initial editing process of Peter Seitel’s (Ed.) *Safeguarding Traditional Cultures: A Global Assessment*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. Compiled papers and contributed to the editing process under Peter Seitel. See Acknowledgments.
- 2000 Master’s Thesis: *‘A Song is no Song Until You Sing it’: Ethnographic Museology and its Application to the Music Exhibition*. Master’s Thesis. Tufts University, 2000. 161 pgs.

Articles/Reviews/Archival Finding Aids

- Forthcoming: Article: “Armenian Wedding Laments: Performance of Scripts in Gender Construction and Power Hierarchy Revealed in Armenian Betrothal and Marriage Festivities.”
- 2004: Article: “Armenian Genocide and Music.” In *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*. Edited by Dinah L. Shelton. New York: Macmillan Reference.
- 2004 Article: “Review of *Treasures of Light: The Spirit of Armenian Sharakans*.” Vocals: Anna Mailian. Instrumental: Music Masters of Armenia. Eslohe, Germany: CCn’C Records, CCn’C 02122 (2002). One compact disc, 57’13”. Recording and mixing by Ardzagank studio, Yerevan, Armenia. Commentary by Anna Mailian (22 pages in German and English, including liner notes, song titles, and photos. Song texts not included, but available from the CCn’C website: http://www.ccn.de/media_service.html. *The World of Music Journal* (2004).
- 2003 Article: “Review of *Hayastan: Tradition of Armenia*. 1998. MW Ethnic. MW Records MWCD 5003. Recorded by Hubert Boone. Annotated by Margarit Brutian. 14 pages of notes in English

- and French. 2 illustrations, 9 line drawings. One compact disc, 26 tracks (74:54)." *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 35 (2003): 27.
- 2003 Publisher Review: "Review of Andy Nercessian. *Armenian Music and Globalization*" for Wayne State University Press.
- 2001 Finding Aid: *Ginn and Company Publishers Inventory: A Finding Aid*. College Park, MD: University of Maryland Libraries, Special Collections in Performing Arts. (Archival finding aid)
- 2001 Finding Aid: *Frances Elliott Clark Papers: A Finding Aid*. College Park, MD: University of Maryland Libraries, Special Collections in Performing Arts. (Archival finding aid)
- 1999 Article: "The Art of Dr. Jack Kevorkian." *Armenian Library and Museum of America Newsletter* 38.
- 1999 Pamphlet: "The Armenian Library and Museum of America Presents the Art of Dr. Jack Kevorkian." *Armenian Library and Museum of America Museum Bulletin*.
- 1999 Article: "The Virginia Goolkasian Collection." *Armenian Library and Museum of America Newsletter* 39.

AUDIO CURATION

- 1999 *Every Tone A Testimony: A Smithsonian/Folkways Aural History of African American Life and Culture*. Assisted Dr. Anthony Seeger, former Curator and Director of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, in multiple facets of industry activities including museological, archival of sound, non-profit business orientation, and production. Specifically researched African-American music and helped curate and promote the CD.

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION, SEMINARS, AND GUEST LECTURES

- 2004 "Armenian Sacred Music: New Perspectives in Music Scholarship." Guest Lectures. Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA.
- 2004 "The Baroque Period: Fugue and Opera." Guest Lecture. Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA.
- 2004 Panelist. "Aesthetics of Authenticity." 37th World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music in Fuzhou and Quanzhou, China.
- 2004 "Performing National Consciousness: Syncretism and Authenticity in Traditional Japanese Performing Cultures." Research paper presented at the 37th World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music in Fuzhou and Quanzhou, China. Funded by the Jacob K. Goldhaber Travel Grant.
- 2003 "Japanese Aesthetics and the *Koto*." Lecture given as part of Cultural Heritage Week, April 22, 2003. Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, Maryland.

- 2002 Seminar on “Music as Culture.” St. Mary’s Armenian Apostolic Church, Washington, DC.
- 2002 Seminar on “Armenian Folk Music.” St. Mary’s Armenian Apostolic Church, Washington, DC.
- 2002 “The Ritual Function of Armenian Music in the Armenian Apostolic Church.” Presentation given at conference on the Armenian Apostolic Church. Included a variety of topics including music, liturgy, and archaeology. St. Mary’s Armenian Apostolic Church, Washington, DC.
- 2001 “Museums and Ethnographic Museology: The Emerging Role of the Museum.” Research paper. Armenian Library and Museum of America.
- 2001 “Dilemmas of Observation, Representation, and Interpretation: The Armenian Library and Museum of America.” Research paper given at graduate student symposium, Tufts University.
- 2000 “Destined Grievance: Betrothal to Lament in the Traditional Armenian Marriage.” Paper given at Armenian Studies Conference, Watertown, Massachusetts.
- 2000 “Armenian Music in Context.” Lecture accompanying the exhibit “Hye Sounding Phrases: The Sound Legacy of the Armenian Music Tradition.” Armenian Library and Museum of America.
- 1999 Coordinator. Organized and administered conference activities for International Participants and Observers for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization Conference – “A Global Assessment of the UNESCO 1989 Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore: Local Empowerment and International Cooperation, June 27-30, 1999.” Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.
- 1999 “Post-Conference Evaluation.” Presented a post-conference evaluation to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization Conference – “A Global Assessment of the UNESCO 1989 Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore: Local Empowerment and International Cooperation, June 27-30, 1999.” Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.
- 1999 “Preserving the Armenian Legacy through Song.” Presentation of my work with a preservation project in conjunction with the Armenian Educational Council in Washington, DC and the Linguistics department at Columbia University—the goal of which was to transfer previously unheard Armenian genocide songs and interviews onto CDs from aging reel-to-reel, conserving a very fragile source of information. Armenian Library and Museum of America.
- 1998 Coordinator (assistant to Elizabeth Seitz). American Musicological Conference. Boston, Massachusetts.
- 1997 “The Japanese *Shakuhachi*: Aesthetics, Meditation, and Cultural Significance.” Lecture given as part of Honor’s research at Florida State University.

MAJOR MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS CURATED

- 2000 *Hye Sounding Phrases: The Sound Legacy of the Armenian Music Tradition.* Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc. Permanent ethnographic exhibition promoted as one of the most extensive exhibits on music ever mounted in New England.
- 2000 *Armenian Memorial Art.* Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc. Temporary Ethnographic art exhibition of the Armenian Library and Museum of America's extensive collection of objects created as memorials to other people and/or events.
- 2000 *Armenian Masters: Late Twentieth Century.* A temporary exhibit which featured the works of such artists as Martin Petrosyan, Valadimir Aivazyan, Artoshes Abraamyan, Merugan Arutjunian, Alexander Gergorian, Viken Tatevosian, Garo Mgrditchian, Anatoli Gregorian, Anatoli Papia, Roupén Apvoian, Ludwick Berberian, Perge Aknuni, and more.
- 1999 *Works by the Master: The Art of Sergei Parajanov.* Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc. Exhibit created in conjunction with the Paradjonov Museum in Yerevan, Armenia. Accompanied by a Paradjonov Film Festival at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- 1999 *The Doctor is In: The Art of Dr. Jack Kevorkian.* Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc. Exhibit explores the artistic side of the noted social critic and includes his paintings, music, published works, and others.
- 1999 *To Hide and To Hold: Armenian Covers and Bundlecloths.* Textile exhibition with the Textile Curator and Conservator, Susan Lind-Sinanian. Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc. Exhibit highlight a sampling of bundlecloths owned by the museum.

PERFORMANCE

PRIVATE TEACHERS/RECITALS/SOLO PERFORMANCES

- 2003 *Solo Koto, "Rokudan,"* Solo with Orchestra, Washington DC Youth Orchestra
- 2003 *Koto Recital,* Washington Toho Koto Society, Lincoln Theatre, Washington, DC
- 2003 *Koto Recital,* Washington Toho Koto Society, UMCP
- 2002 *Koto Recital,* Washington Toho Koto Society, UMCP
- 2001 *Koto Recital,* Washington Toho Koto Society, UMCP
- 2000-Present *Ikuta-Ryu Koto* lessons taught by Kyoko Okamoto, University of Maryland, College Park

- 1990-Present Perform in Professional Orchestras, University Symphonic Orchestras, Wind Ensembles, Chamber Music, and World Music Ensembles
- 1990-Present Frequent performer of *shakuhachi*, *koto*, *Balinese and Javanese Gamelan*, *tsuling*, *dizi*, world flutes, Baroque recorder, trombone, sackbut, world music, and early music
- 1998-2000 *Kinko-Ryu Honkyoku Shakuhachi* Lessons taught by Dr. Tomie Hahn, Tufts University
- 1997 *Shakuhachi* Lecture Recital, FSU
- 1997 Senior Solo Trombone Recital, FSU
- 1996 Junior Solo Trombone Recital, FSU
- 1996 Honor's Chamber Music Recital (Brass Quintet and Trombone Quartet)
- 1995-1997 *Kinko-Ryu Honkyoku Shakuhachi* Lessons taught by Dr. Dale Olsen, FSU
- 1994-1998 Trombone Lessons (Studio of Dr. John Drew), FSU
- 1990-1994 Trombone Lessons (Studio of Chris Banks), Charleston Symphony and Jacksonville Symphony

UNIVERSITY ENSEMBLES

- 2000-Present University of Maryland: Koto Ensemble (*koto* and *shakuhachi*)
- 1998-2000 Tufts University: Javanese Gamelan Ensemble, Early Music Ensemble (sakbut and recorder)
- 1994-1998 Florida State University: Early Music Ensemble--sakbut, Balinese Gamelan Ensemble, Chinese Music Ensemble--*dizi*, Japanese Music—*shakuhachi*, Symphony Orchestra—trombone, Chamber Orchestra—trombone, Opera Orchestra—trombone, Wind Ensemble, FSU Symphonic Band, Harmonie Chamber Ensemble.

PROFESSIONAL ENSEMBLES

- 2000-Present Washington Toho Koto Society Ensemble, Washington, DC (*koto* and *shakuhachi*)

MUSIC SCHOOLS

- 1992 *Graduate*, South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts, Greenville, SC

MUSIC FESTIVALS

- 1992-1994 University of South Carolina Honor's Music Orchestra, Columbia, SC
- 1991-1992 Furman University Music Camp, Greenville, SC

- 1991 Brevard Music Center Festival (Repertoire Training Program
Orchestra, Transylvania Symphony Orchestra), Brevard, NC
1989 Gateway Music Camp, Aiken, SC

AFFILIATIONS/OFFICES

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES/ORGANIZATIONS

American Association of Museums
American Musicological Society
Applied Ethnomusicology Listserve
College Music Society (CMS)
International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM)
National Association for Museum Exhibition (NAME)
Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM)/Member of listserv
Washington Toho Koto Society

UNIVERSITY

- 1998-1999 Tufts University Graduate Student Council/ *Music Representative*
1994-1997 Phi Gamma Delta/ *Scholarship Chair*

ACADEMIC HONOR SOCIETIES

- 2004-Present The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi
1996-Present Pi Kappa Lambda National Honorary Music Society
1995-Present Golden Key National Honor Society
1995-Present Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society
1994-Present National German Honorary Society

AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND GRANTS

- 2003 Jacob K. Goldhaber Travel Fellowship, University of Maryland
2000-Present University of Maryland at College Park Tuition Scholarship
2000-Present University of Maryland at College Park Music Assistantship Stipend
2000 Exhibition grant from the Frederick Margosian Memorial Fund (see
exhibits)
1999-2000 Received grant for oral history conservation of Armenian Genocide
interviews and songs in conjunction with the Armenian Educational
Council, Washington, DC and Columbia University
1998-2000 Tufts University Tuition Scholarship
1998-2000 Tufts University Music Teaching Assistantship Stipend
1994-1997 Florida State University Music Scholarship
1994-1997 Florida State University Out-of-State Waiver
1994-1997 Florida State University Academic Scholarship
1994-1997 Florida State University Academic Grant

1994-1997 Dean's List every semester
1995 Phi Gamma Delta Memorial Scholarship
1994 William T. Slaughter Music Scholarship
1993-1994 Rotary Club Scholar
1993 National Congressional Leadership Award
1994 United States Marine's Award for Musical Excellence
1992 South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts Tuition Scholarship
1993 National AP Scholar Award
1992-1994 National School Orchestra Award
1991 Brevard Music Center Music Scholarship
1990-1994 South Carolina All-State Band (Principle Trombonist)
1990-1994 South Carolina All-State Orchestra (Principle Trombonist)
Member of several honor societies (see above)