

University of Szeged

Doctoral Program of Modern History

The Establishment of the Catholic Churches of the Levant in The Ottoman Empire

Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

Author:

(Samee Hasan)

Supervisor: (Professor, Ferwagner Péter)

Szeged

2025

Contents

Introduction	I
Resources overview	IX
The First Chapter	1
1)The Ottomans and the Classification of the Christians.....	2
2) The Missionary Expedition and the Ottoman Empire	8
The Second Chapter :The Syrian Catholic Church	12
1) The Relation between the Jacobite Church and the Holy See	13
2) The Relationship Between the Syrian Jacobite Church and the Papacy During the Ottoman Domination	14
3) The Syrian Prelate Moses of Mardin	16
4) The Syrian Patriarch Naʿmallāh and the Papacy (1557-1591) AD.....	20
5) The Relationship Between the Syrian Jacobite and the Vatican since the establishment of the Congregation of Propagation of the Faith	27
6) The Syrian Catholic Patriarch Peter Shahbadin Gregory.....	31
7) Recognition of the Syrian Catholic Patriarchate by the Ottoman Empire	38
Third Chapter: The Melkite Catholic Patriarchate	49
1) The Relationship between the Holy See and the Melkite Church during the Ottoman Domination in the 16 th Century	50
2) The Mission of Leonardo Abel	52
3) The Successors of Macarius III – Al-Halabi, their Relationship with the Holy See and Adoption of the Catholic Faith.....	55
4) Euthymos Al-Saifi.....	57
5) Athanasius V and the Catholic Doctrine	58
6) Splitting the Melkite Church into Catholic and Orthodox	65
7) The Catholic Melkite Church since 1724 AD and its Relation with its Sister	66
8) The Struggle Inside the Catholic Melkite Church.....	73

9) The Differentiation between the Eastern Catholic Rituals and the Rituals of the Holy See....	79
10) The Massacre of 1818 AD in Aleppo and the Recognition of the Catholic Melkite Patriarchate in 1840 AD by Ottomans.....	92
The fourth Chapter: The Chaldean Church	104
1) The Relationship between the (Nestorian) Eastern Church and the Holy See before the Ottomans	105
2) The schism of the Nestorian Patriarchate	107
3) The Patriarch's Line of Mar Shimun	108
4) The Mar Elia line	110
5) The Struggle Inside the Chaldean Church	123
The Fifth Chapter: The Catholic Armenian Church	135
The Armenian Church	136
1) The Status of the Armenian Church on the Eve of the 16th Century	136
2) The Process of Spreading Catholicity Among Armenians in the 16th and 17th Centuries.....	137
3) The Struggle between the Latin Missionaries and the Armenian Catholic Hierarchy	142
4) Abraham Ardzivian: The Foundation of Armenian Catholic Patriarchate.....	143
5) The Establishment of the Armenian Catholic Millet.....	152
Conclusion.....	155
Literature.....	158

Declaration of authorship

I, Samee. Hhasan; hereby affirm that the thesis presented here entitled “ The Establishment of the Catholic Churches of the Levant in The Ottoman Empire ” is the result of my own work. All ideas, analyses and conclusions expressed in this document are exclusively mine, unless otherwise cited. I accept full responsibility for any potential errors.

Acknowledgments

This document could not have been written without the guidness and supervision of professor Ferwagner Péter to whome I owe many thaks. Moreover, I am gratfull to professor Papp Sándor for his help and support. Finally, I would like to the thank all the staff of the Modern History department and Univesity of Szeged.

Introduction

Christianity was spread by a small group of Jesus followers who accomplished the task assigned to them in Jerusalem and the adjacent areas, and they were successful in their mission of creating fellowship to the new faith, conducting prayers, services, and Eucharistic celebrations. Such a small nucleus gained more popularity along its way, and the disciples spread in different geographic areas preaching, baptizing, and establishing the hierarchy of Christianity, which would appear in the process of constituting many schools that derived their legitimacy from an episcopal inheritance in the case of the Holy See, Alexandria, and Antioch, which represented the cornerstone of the new faith. The path of Christianity was not covered with a red carpet as the Roman Empire deemed the new religion a danger, which could threaten the community system, so many deaths occurred as a result. However, the striving of Christians and the determination of its followers paid off as emperor Constantine the Great recognized the religion as the official religion of the State at the beginning of the 4th century. As such, it stands to logic that the protection of the state could offer Christianity the environment most suitable for its prosperity and growth, and with no doubt a part of such a theory is true. Christianity, nevertheless, would experience for long centuries other polemics and dilemmas saturated with bloodshed, excommunication, and persecution. The element that was the strength of Christianity turned out to be the seed of its schism. The mystical and symbolic analysis as well as ethics and philosophies adopted by schools, which were established to convert the heathens and defend the new religion, would bring about different interpretations with respect to the nature of Jesus, the holy Spirit, Father, and the relation between them. Debates and arguments appeared, and many doctrines were initiated such as Nestorianism, Arianism, and Monophysitism, which led a series of Ecumenical councils to settle the debate under the supervision of the Byzantium Empire that relied at that time on religion to consolidate its foundation against the opponents of the East and the West. What was feared happened, and what was held to unify the Christian community worsened the situation. The Chalcedon council in 451 AD, devastated the inheritance of Christianity since the normal Church of Constantinople would ascend to an apostolic See, transcending the See of Alexandria and Antioch, and it would also compete with the Holy See regarding temporal authority. On the other hand, many doctrines established their own hierarchy when many followed their leaders who refused the articles of the Council, and suffice it to say that the Antioch Church would know many hierarchies as the Melkite Church, Monophysites, and the Nestorian Church. Henceforward, the

position of the Church of Alexandria as well as the Church of Antioch would decline, emptying the space for the position of the Constantinople Church to be heightened, and with the Islamic invasion, the ties of Alexandria and Antioch would be cut from the Holy See since the Caliphs would guarantee the freedom of worship at the time, but they would also prevent any kind of connection with the West, which would be considered as a betrayal. The last blow forwarded to the shaken relations between the East and the West was in 1054 when the Church of Constantinople refused to admit the papacy supremacy, the papal infallibility, Filioque, unleavened bread and other things. On the part of Constantinople, which succeeded in its expansionist policy toward Syria and Armenia, it dreamed of restoring the dead glory by emphasizing its right to lead the Christian world. If we were to exclude the era of the Crusader states in the East, which worsened the situation between the East and the West, the relations were almost calm between the 13th and 16th centuries. However, the rise of the Ottoman Empire and its expansion westward and eastward put it in a prolonged confrontation with European states, especially the Holy Roman Empire of German nation. On the other hand, the Ottoman Empire included many ethnic and religious groups, of which Christianity constituted a big portion. According to the Ottoman law, society was divided into taxpayers and non-taxpayers secularly, and to Muslims and non-Muslims religiously. Non-Muslims were confined to the Millet system as the classical theories indicated, which consists of Rum Millet, Armenian Millet and Rabbi Millet. According to this classification, churches and their followers should adhere to one of the two churches. Nevertheless, the Ottoman capitulation and concession, which was gained by France since the time of Suleiman I in 1536 AD, gave the king of France the privilege of Catholic protection in the East. The successive treaties with his successors, the protection of France and other European consuls turned the Ottoman land into a place of missionary expeditions, such as the Franciscans, Capuchins, and Jesuits, of which the Levant had the greater portion. Their endeavors reached its peak in the 17th and 18th centuries since many official hierarchies in the Eastern churches adopted the Catholic tenet, and that was followed by the conversion of much of the Christian population to it. Despite the means applied by the Ottoman Empire to prevent such movement among its nationals, the Eastern Catholic churches had been established. However, that led to decades of struggle between the old hierarchies of Eastern churches and the newly constituted ones that relied on the support of the Holy See, and in return, the Eastern Catholics emphasized the Supremacy of the Papacy, their tenet as being Catholic, and the dream of unity under the supervision of Pope. Still, the Eastern Catholic Churches

at that time were of Eastern rites when it comes to their rituals, ceremonies, and language, and that was in some way incompatible with the Latinization policy adopted by the missionary expeditions while exercising proselytism. According to the hypothesis the Ottoman Empire dealt with its Christian subjects according to the so called Millet system and the movement of conversions between its subjects were forbidden. Still the capitulation which endowed by the Ottomans to the kings and queens of the West penetrated those administrative rules and in some way attributed to flourish the Catholics tenets among Ottoman subjects through the missionary expeditions and their behavior of teaching and nursing and other doings. Moreover, the Consuls of the European countries break through the Ottoman government and manipulate the internal policy. On the Other hand, the Christians of the Ottoman Empire were in searching of enlightenment and found their surviving in connecting themselves to the Holy See, who offer all help to the Easterners. Another theory has its place in literature that the administrative rules of the Ottoman Empire did not pertain or divided its subjects according to their religion but according economic interest since the Christians were to pay Harac and cizye otherwise the Muslims were to pay tithe taxation. Moreover, the Patriarch of Constantinople or Other Patriarchs was not pertained to any kind of authority which could let them act according to his interest which means another authority inside the Ottoman Empire and that would not be accepted by Ottomans, but they were responsible before the Kadi and the Sultan. Those hypotheses would be discussed inside the dissertation in order to have as an accurate conclusion as possible regarding the Ottoman Christian subjects' status and the stand of the Ottoman Empire, the interference of European countries and the conversion movement among Christians at the same time. The methods which will be followed in the dissertation, extends from descriptive to narrative methods, since our research describes many events and drive its information from studies examined the topic from different angles and in some way or another enriched by its study and conclusion the fields of the History of Christians in the Ottoman Empire

The dissertation consists of five chapters as follows:

The first chapter presents the theory of the Millet system on which the Ottomans depended to control their Christian subjects, and the capitulations granted by the Ottomans to the European powers, which eased the movement of the missionaries in the Levant. The chapter displayed many studies in order to have the finest conclusion ever done.

The second chapter sheds light on the most important steps taken by the Holy See and the Jacobite Church to bring the opinions closer. Such steps included, for instance, the voyage of Moses of Mardin and Na‘mallāh in the 16th century. The 17th century witnessed the fruitfulness of this relation, which manifested itself in the appearance of the first Catholic Patriarch as a triumph over the Orthodox, and this had continued throughout the era of the Ottoman hegemony. The chapter examines the stance taken by the Jacobite party and the Ottoman Porte, as well as the political intervention of France which would make events progress in a certain manner. For instance: Hayek, Ignatius Anton II in his book (The relationship of Jacobite Syriac Church with the Holy See since 1143-1656) describes the relation which combined the Holy See and the most renowned dignitaries of the Church like the Patriarch Na‘mallāh and Dawood shah in 16th century. the volume depended in great proportion on the correspondences preserved in the library of Vatican and Congregation of Propagation of the Faith using descriptive methods in presenting the documents and displaying the information. Moreover, he omits the facts and interests which derived both of them to such procedures ignoring the political and social approach which is not less important than the religious one. For example, Moses of Mardin and his relation in Europe was not given an important examination by the author neither his relation to the high – official dignitaries in Europe or the case of his conversion. Recently researches addressed the matter, for example, Mércz, András in his article (The Coat of Arms of Moses of Mardin) which published in Journal of Syriac studies, Vol 22.2, 2019 depending on the endowment of the emperor of Hapsburg Empire Ferdinand I on the Syrian prelate Moses addressing important ideas by analyzing the correspondences of Moses to his friend Masius, the author does not confine himself to religious role which assigned to Moses but he shed a light in his political career which bore its fruit in printing 300 copies of Syrian-New Testaments and helped the research in studying the religious and political role of the Easterners in the West. Same mythology adopted by Borbone¹ followed the life of Moses and the Patriarch Na‘mallāh by presenting very important documents placed in Florence, Medicea Laurenziana Library, offering to the research very valuable information to the

¹ Pier Giorgio Borbone, "From Tur 'Abdin to Rome: The Syro-Orthodox presence in Sixteenth-Century Rome" in H.G.B. Teule, E. Keser-Kayaalp, K. Akalın, N. Doru and M. Sait Toprak (eds.), Syriac in its Multi-Cultural Context. First International Syriac Studies Symposium, Mardin Artuklu University, Institute of Living Languages, 20-22 April 2012, (Leuven-Paris-Walpole, MA, Peeters 2017), pp. 279-289

role of Moses of Mardin in Rome and his participation in the movement of reform which unleashed by the Papacy. On the other hand, presenting information to his relation to Syrian Patriarch open the possibilities to other allegedly – positions could be managed by Moses and Na‘mallāh. Another journal by Borbone pertained to Moses’ figure concentrated on the scholarly work by publishing manuscripts allude to his scholarly works in Europe by examining manuscripts, presenting information and breaking it at the same time. Those fragments of studies which adopted different methods and various materials paved the way to establish the main body of the research by presenting that information and comparing to each other in order to conclude the most authentic illation as possible. The case of Syrians in 16th century examined as well by John Clines² confined himself to the Archive of Congregation of Propagation for the Faith (Congregation de Propagande Fidei) using the subjective method in analyzing the documents concentrating his work on behaviors of the figures like the Pope and Na‘mallāh and their interest in obtaining as more privileges as possible in order to serve their cause. He examined the relation of both sides from beneficial point of view which could not be deny it. Moreover, the skeptical approach was apparent in his genre, evaluating the behaviors of figures assuming theories and proving it or vetoing it was the main aspect of the writing. Dionysius in his book (The blessing of the lord in conversions of the Syrians) which published in Beirut, 2010 addressed the History of Syrian Catholics adopting cultural and social History’s approach pointing out that the interaction which occurred between missionary Fathers and Easterners. Moreover, political method appeared in his genre indicating to the role of European ambassadors in the East. The style of writing presents prejudice’s point of view against Syrian Orthodox and some superstition’s stories was attached to some Catholics in 17th and 18th Century. The information’s which offered by the Author are very important in filling some gabs in the history of Syrians but it needs to have second thoughts dealing with it. On the other hand, Philip de, Terazi, in his book (The historical series mentions the bishops of Syriac dioceses, Beirut, 1910) used histo-geografice and subjective methods at the same time; the author studied the life of the Metropolitans of Syrians according to their episcopates chronologically. The author presented valuable information especially in term of their relation to the Holy See and the

²John Clines, Robert. Confessional Politics and Religious Identity in the Early Jesuit Missions to the Ottoman Empire, Syracuse University, 2014.

France using documents preserved in national library of France but in many times the author did not indicate to the sources of the information.

The third chapter discusses the relation between the Melkite dignitaries and the Holy See in the 16th and 17th centuries through the missionaries, and the intervention of France which resulted in establishing the Melkite Catholic Church in 1724 AD. Moreover, the chapter reveals the counter movement waged by the Orthodox Melkite in order to return the Melkite Catholics to the Orthodox Melkite Church again. The role of the Ottomans in this situation will be presented with a view to highlighting their accurate position. In addition, the chapter shows the discords from which the Melkite Catholic suffered. The differences between the Melkite Catholicity and the Latin rituals are thoroughly examined. Many studies examined the Melkite like, Yusuf Almuhalisy the author of the book (The outline of the history of the Melkite Church, 3V, Sidon- Lebanon, 3 volumes, 1949) approach the history of the Melkite Church from social history point of view. Depending on many manuscripts and correspondences preserved in the Melkite Patriarchate, the author concluded that the spreading Catholicity among the Melkites was the consequence to the centuries of history process of connection between East and West but at the same time Catholicity was of Eastern traits while Almuhalisy Constantine in his book (The history of the Melkite Roman Church and Almuhalisya monasticism), depending on the correspondences of the Congregation of Propagation for the Faith to the Melkite dignitaries especially Euthymios al-saifi, following the biographical approach of the life, relation and connection of the Metropolitan did not give the political wing enough examination especially the Ottoman Empire and France were almost ignored but he highlighted the stand of Easterners from their relation to the Holy See. for him the Melkite Church was not in discord with Holy See since they recognized the first four Councils and they took not part in the Constantinople schism, therefore they looked to the Pope as a legitimate hire of Christ but at the same time they represented the Church of Antioch and they desired full recognition of the Papacy while the missionary Fathers demanded absolute submission to the Papacy. Other articles related to the History of the Melkite Church examined some period of times or events. For example, Khater³ in his article. "God Has Called Me to Be Free" adopted gender approach illustrating the role of missionary expedition in attracting women to adopt the Latin

³Khater, Akram. "God Has Called Me to Be Free": Aleppan Nuns and the Transformation of Catholicism in 18th-Century Bilad Al-Sham, International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Aug., 2008).

manifestation in 18th century through their mystic life which led to a discord between the Melkite hierarchy and missionary Fathers. On the hand, some articles adopted economic approach dealing with the relation between Holy See and Melkite Church. For instance: Çolak⁴ argued that the Ottoman invested a Catholic Patriarch due to economic situation of the time and the author alludes to the political factor and the intervention of France in such infestation. Zwierlein⁵, in his article (Interaction and boundary work) attached the missionary expedition in Levant to an economic reason that he transferred the political competition between France and England to the Levant. For him the Catholic movement among Easterners and the support of France for establishing a Catholic hierarchy against the help which England provided to the Orthodox was of economic and political traits. While Abdallah⁶ In his article (Greek Melkite Catholic Patriarchate of Antioch) approach the conversion of the Melkites from social history's point of view. Attributing the conversion, to the work of missionary Fathers among Easterners. For him, submission to the Papacy was a demand in order to survive; the ignorance of the Ottoman governors and their oppression led to such conversion and it came to an end that the Catholicity of the East was of oriental traits despite the Latinization' policy of missionary Father. The author of the book "The Lightning Facts in the History of the Orthodox Church of Antioch" and "The history of Damascus (1720-1782)"⁷ consider the movement of conversion among Easterners an evil conduct. The support of France and the ignorance of the Ottoman Empire provided the appropriate weather to such movement which was led by some deceivers.

The fourth chapter throws light on the movement of Catholicity in the eastern Church and the establishment of the first Catholic or Chaldean Church in the 16th century during the era of the

⁴Çolak, Hasan. When a Catholic is invested as the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch: Serafeim/Kyrillos Tanas and the Ottoman central administration in 1745, *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 20, (2023).

⁵Zwierlein, Cornel: Interaction and Boundary Work. In *Journal of Modern European History / Zeitschrift für moderne europäische Geschichte / Revue d'histoire européenne contemporaine*, May 2020, Vol. 18, No. 2 (May 2020).

⁶Raheb, Abdallah. Greek Melkite Catholic Patriarchate of Antioch: Birth, Eolution, and Current Orientations, In: *Ekklesiastikos Pharos*, 52 (1969) 2-3.

⁷Break, Michael. *The history of Damascus (1720-1782)*, Lebanon, 1930.; Break, Michael. *The Lightning Facts in the History of the Orthodox Church of Antioch*.

Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the chapter studies the Chaldean Patriarchates that had originated in the 17th and 18th century by the support of the Holy See, which led to a bitter struggle inside the Chaldean community especially in the absence of the Ottoman authority. Kristian Girling in his study (*The Chaldean Catholic Church: A study in modern history, ecclesiology and Church-state relations* (2003-2013), University of London, 2015) attributed the movement of connection between Assyrian bishops and the missionaries to the personal ambition which held by the bishops of Church of the East in order to revive the legacy of the Church and that led systematically to connect themselves to missionary Fathers in order to adopt the necessary instruments in such process. while_Ra'uf Abd Alsalam, Imad in his book (*Mosul in the era of Ottoman Empire, the period of local governorate 1726-182, Iraq, 1973*) attributed the conversion movement among the Assyrian Christians to political regime which adopted by the Ottoman in those places like Mosul since political and economic interest of those governors drove them to adopt tolerance policy toward the missionary Fathers and conversions among their subjects. Nasri Pétrós in his book (*Histoire des Églises chaldéenne et Syrienne, Bgdad, 1905*). Examined the conversion movement among Syrians from a social history approach. The conversion was matter of fact and demands should be achieved. The ignorance of the Ottoman governors to the needs of the Church and its population led to such conversion. In searching for power and enlightenment the Church attached herself to missionary Fathers. The author highlighted the internal struggle inside the Chaldean Church which caused by ambiguous policy of the Holy See in supporting one side against another in the Patriarchal hierarchy and finding more than one Patriarchate at the same time. the Latinization policy which refused by some Chaldean-high dignitaries. Same conclusion held by Aziz, Peter in his article (*The Antiquity of the Chaldeans in Aleppo, Al Mashreq Journal, N.14, 15th of July 1903*) emphasizing that the Latinization policy went against the aspiration of the Chaldeans and if they accepted some Latin rituals, they stood firm to the ones which did not go against the straight faith. The fifth chapter attempts to make plain the movement of conversion among the Armenians, and to shed light on the first Catholic Patriarch to the Armenians as well as the circumstances which led to the establishment of the Armenian Millet and the Armenian Catholic Patriarch of Constantinople. Lucca, Paolo. In his article named from Doctrinal Persuasion to economic Threats: paolo piromalli's missionary work among the Armenians and his conversion strategies, *Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries*, Gorgias Press LLC, 954 River

Road, Piscataway, USA, 2022, P. 451-489. Attributed the movement of conversion among the Armenians to the economic status which connected the Armenians to the Western merchants. Moreover, he concentrates on the individual manner of missionary who could affect the Armenian population and attract them to catholicity in modern time. Another article by Miroslav, Šedivý. Austria's Role in the Constantinople Armenian Catholics Affair in 1828–31, Middle Eastern Studies, January 2012, Vol. 48, No. 1 (January 2012) depending on descriptive method attributed the establishment of Armenian Catholic Millet to the political circumstances and to the interfere of the Austria and France at the beginning of the 19th century. Moreover, he focused on the Catholic social and religious movement among the Armenians and their endeavor to win over the Ottoman Porte.

Resources overview

- The Epistle of the Armenian Patriarch of Cilicia, Peter the first to Pope Benedict XIV and the response of his Holiness, Syrian Catholic Archdiocese of Aleppo, Aleppo, Syria, self-mark Ar 7/103. The importance of the following documents lies in the possibility of elaborating some facts related to the Armenian Catholic Church's status and its Patriarch in the first half of the 18th century. The following three documents are just seven pages of a volume consisting of fifteen sheets; unfortunately, pages from number 33 to 64 are missed. The manuscripts were written in Arabic. According to the volume, the documents are a copy of correspondences, and the writer concluded the volume with these words:

"كان الفروغ من هذه الكتاب في مستهل سنة 1793 الف وسبعمائة وثلاثة وتسعين مسيحية وكل من طالع في هذه الكتاب يصلي ابانا والسلام والمجد على نية صاحبة وناسخة. إن كل من رأى فيه حرف زايد أو ناقص يصلحه ما يجب والله تعالى ولي والإرشاد".

The translation of the above Arabic text is as follows: "The book was finished at the beginning of 1793 AD, and everyone reads it, prays to our Father for the peace and glory for the one who wrote and copied it. If anybody finds any additional or lost letters in it, they should fix it as required, and the Mighty God is the guide".

The next text says:

"قد دخلت في مكتبة الحسنى باسيلوس جبرائيل مطران مدينة حمص وما يليها في قرية بيردة وما يليها سنة 1830".

The translation of the above Arabic text is:

"It is entered Bacillus Gabriel's library, the Metropolitan of Homs and the adjacent area in the Bierda in 183".

This marginal information at the last page of the volume indicates that the manuscripts belonged to the Metropolitan of Homs in Syria, who was named Bacillus Gabriel and mentions the place, where the manuscripts were handed to him under the name of *Bierda* (بيرة), which could be the present-day Ain Albardeh village in Homs, Syria. The volume consists of orders, decrees, epistles sent to diverse dignitaries, and they can be classified into two main categories. The first one is epistles forwarded by the Pope to the Patriarch of Aleppo- before his ascendancy to the Patriarchate level in 1740 AD and vice-versa. The other epistles date back to 1743 AD, or to the time after the Patriarch's ordination in Rome under the name, Peter, in 1742 AD. The second category is epistles forwarded to the European civil and political personalities in the Ottoman Porte, who are the Hungarian ambassador and the French ambassador. Moreover, the epistle contained a special section about the prayers, Holy Ceremonies and the rituals which the Armenians must follow which are compatible with the genuine belief of the Holy See.

- Mr. Germanos Adam responded to the composition called the voice of Missionary Fathers", 'Foundation Georges et Mathilde Salem, Syria, Aleppo, Shelf mark Ar 109, 15 manuscripts. <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/501460>. The treatise was written by the most renowned Catholic personality in the East Gernanus Adam who ran the affairs of Alpen episcopate for 32 years. He was born in Aleppo in 1725 AD and grew up inside the walls of the episcopate. In 1736 AD the Metropolitan Maximus Hakim sent him to Rome where he spent 15 years in one of the propaganda schools during the process of his education, he was acquainted with theology, ecclesiastical Canons, Latin, Greek, French and Italian languages. In 1751 he was ordained as a priest in Rome and in the same year he returned to Aleppo and he was hold responsible to run the affairs of an Association which so-called The Brotherhood of defending the Holy Belief.

In 1774 he was elected to run the affairs of the episcopate of Acre and in 1777AD was transferred to the episcopate of Aleppo. During his incumbent as Metropolitan of Aleppo he engaged in many

debates and struggles inside the Catholic community. He composed 13 treatises and dissertations in different topics related to the Christianity. The composition contains Canons which regulate the relationship between the Holy See and the Catholic Eastern Churches, the authority which the Pope may enjoy upon his Easterners subjects and the rights and responsibility of Eastern Patriarch over their subjects. More important the composition shed a light on the Customs and Canons which differentiate both the Holy See and the East from each other's.

- Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Türkei V.Karton 23 (1526-1584). Different documents sent by some dignitaries of the Eastern Christians to the Holy See in the 17th century contain important information about the Catholics of the East, their relation to the Ottoman Empire and the West. The first document written in Syriac with a circular seal of two layers on the low right corner includes in the first layer (ܕܠܚܡܐ ܕܡܠܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ) by the blessing of Mighty God who controls the all. The second layer contains that (ܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ) (The little and weak Josef, the Patriarch of Chaldean).

The main text of the second document written in Arabic with fine spellings but no case marks, and on the top right there are several lines of French font with the signature of the France deputy in Aleppo contains the followings (Nous consul et députés de la nation française à Alep, attestions que l'archevêque de est catholique apostolique romain).

The documents also contain three columns written in Latin in the low part. The best visible is the second that goes as follows:

(Ego infra scriptus fidem facio archiepiscopum Shasilium Ilahacum coadiutorem Patriarchae Surianorum me praesente professionem orthodoxae fidei coegisse, in cuius fidem propria manu subscripsi et sigillum officii mei apposui Aleppi mense Iulii anno 1694. Ferdinandus aa se fiduvina vicarius provincialis missionum Carmelitarum) (That is a certain Shasilius who was the assistant of the Syriac Patriarch made a profession of faith in the presence of a confident Ferdinand who was the head of Carmelite mission in 1694). The other two columns in not clear, nevertheless the third from the right also demonstrates the credentials of a Syrian archbishop was signed by Iosephus, a Latin functionary (custos ?? Capucinus) The first from the left is a similar testimony was issued by a Jesuit and proves the right faith of archbishop Isaac (Isaacus) who is the coadiutor of the Syrian murza?. There are two seals on the document, but unfortunately, the characters were

wiped out and unable to recognize them. The last document, which is an attachment to the previous one, consists of Arabic with no seals. On the Other hand, there are other correspondence between the Holy See and the Syrian Patriarch of Antioch Peter. The documents elaborate on the relationship between the Holy See and Syrians in the second half of the 17th century and depict France's attitude toward Catholic and their intervention in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire.

The first manuscript

هو الى جناب السادة الكرام الكاردينالية الفخام الموكلين على انتشار الايمان ومدبري سائر الامصار والاقطار سلمهم الله تعالى وابقاهم في خير وعافية. الى حضرة المقر الكريم العالي الموسوي السيد مجد الامة المسيحية فخر البيعة الكاثوليكية حرس الله انني انا الفقير بين رؤساء الكهنة باسيليوس إسحاق مطران سائر المشرق الذي. نعمهم ووفر من السعادة حظهم وقسمهم امين كنت سابقا الذي كنت سابقا مطرانا على مدينة آمد منذ اثنتي عشر سنه مرسوم من يدي البطريرك بطرس الانطاكي اقر واعترف امام الله تعالى وحضرة قداستكم انني كاثوليكي المذهب على الايمان المستقيم مطيع البيعة الرومانية مؤمن بالابن والابن والروح القدس وان القنوم الثاني الذي هو الابن نزل من السماء وتجسد من مريم البتول وصار انسانا حقيقيا مساويا لنا في كل شيء ما خلا الخطيئة وانه انسان سام واله سام بطبيعتين ومشيتين وقنوم واحد اعني طبيعه الهية وطبيعه إنسانية واني مقر ومعتترف بالسبعة عشر مجمع المقدس وبجميع ما رسمت وثبتت وقبلت هذه المجاميع المقدسة وعلى الخصوص ما رسم في المجمع الخلقيدوني الرابع الذي حرم به ديوسقورس وشيعته المقرين المقرين بطبيعه واحدة واؤمن بكل ما تؤمن به البيعة المقدسة و اردل واحرم كلمات ردله وتحرمه البيعة الرومانية واعتقد ان سيدنا البابا الروماني هو الحبر الأعظم ونايب السيد المسيح ووكيله وانا مطيعه وتحت رياسته وعلى هذه الأمانة الصادقة أعيش وعليها اموت بحسب الايمان الذي قبلته منذ صغري من ابهاتنا الكيوجيين المرسلين الى مدينة الموصل.

ويكون معلوم سيادتكم اننا في هذه البلاد مشغولون في التعليم والكرز وانتشار الايمان الكاثوليكي لكننا محتاجون الى بعض كتب ضرورية لنا وهي كتب التوراة المقدسة لعنيفة والحديث وأربعة كتب التواريخ وابن سينا واکاودوس في علم الهندسة ولا بأس إذا كان عندكم غير كتب لازمة لنا ان ترسلوا منها لنا لاجل تعليم المؤمنين ولكم الاجر والثواب عند الله وأيضا نأمل من الجناب الرشيد ان تنعموا علينا بشقفة من صليب الحي كما ارسلتم لمار يوسف لأنه ما يوجد في طائفتنا شيء من صليب الحي فذلك تهجمنا على قدسكم وطلبنا هذه الذخيرة العظيمة لتكون بركة يسوع وصلبيه وبركة الكرسي الرسولي وبركتكم علينا وعلى طائفتنا وكنايسنا فقط لا شيء آخر ونأمل من قدسكم ان ترسلوا لنا الغفرات (صكوك الغفران) العظيمة لنعطيه في كنايسنا في الأيام المعلومة وكلما احتاج الامر اليه وسابقا كنا ارسلنا لكم مكتوب بمثل هذا بختمي وختم ابهاتنا المرسلين وقد كتب تحريرا في الشهر الثامن من شهر تموز سنة الف وستمئة وأربعة وتسعون مسيحية.

It is to the noble gentlemen, magnificent Cardinals, delegates of spreading faith, directors of the various territories and provinces, the Almighty keep them safe and sound, to the eminence, high office, the glory of the Christian nation, the pride of catholic Church, God surveillance their grace

over and save their happy life. I am Basil Issac, the bishop of the East, the poorest among the bishops that I was previously the bishop Of Amed for twenty years commissioned by Peter, the Patriarch of Antakya. I admit and confess before the almighty and your holiness that I believe in the catholic faith, as well as I, pay homage to the Catholic Church, believe in the Father, son and Holy Spirit. I confess that the other essence is the son who fell out of the sky and embodied in human through the Virgin Mary, and we are equal to him except he has no sin, and he is transcendent human and God at the same time. He has two natures, two volitions and one essence that I do mean a human nature and divine nature.

I confess and avow to the holy seventeen councils and in all the laws and principles, which had been given rise to them, especially what the Chalcedon council brought about that had forbidden the dealing with Discords and his proponents who are confessing to one nature. I believe in the Catholic Church, and I forbid what the Catholic Church has prohibited and I think that our Master the Popp of Vatican is the supreme pontiff and the vice Christ, I obey him and under his presidency. For this trust and to that confidence I live and die according to the belief that I have accepted since I was a child at the hand of our capuchin Father who had been sent to Almousel. To be in your knowledge we are in busy of teaching and spreading the catholic faith so that we are in need of some books, which are necessary for us, which are the New and Old Testament, four books in history, Aben Sina, and, Gladius in engineering science. It is okay if you have other books that could be useful to us in teaching the believers. To get a reward and retribution.

We hope from the guide to the right path to reward us with a piece of the Christ cross like the one, which was sent to Josef Elmar, for we do not have anything of it. So that we dared to your holiness by asking you to give us these high supplies to lay upon us, our Community and our Church the blessing of the Christ and his cross, the blessing of the holy seat and you.

We hope from your holiness to send for us the great indulgences to offer it in our Churches at the holidays and the time of need, previously we sent like this letter with my seal and stamp of sender Father. It had been written on the day of eighth of the July in one thousand six hundred ninety four A.D.

الى جناب عمدة الاجلاء فخر الامايد الاخلاء حضرة الاب المكرم الانا الطاهر المفخم سلمه البار تعالى وابقاه البقاء المجيد. الى انني انا الفقير بين حضرة من حرر اسمه الكريم أعلاه دام عليه نعماه وبلغ في الدارين يومناه بجاه مريم والدة الاله امين يا معين رؤساء الكهنة باسيليوس إسحاق مطران سائر المشرق الذي كنت سابقا الذي كنت سابقا مطرانا على مدينة آمد منذ اثنتي عشر

سنه مرسوم من يدي البطريرك بطرس الانطاكي اقر واعترف امام الله تعالى وحضرة قداستكم انني كاثوليكي المذهب على الايمان المستقيم مطيع البيعة الرومانية مؤمن بالاب والابن والروح القدس وان القنوم الثاني الذي هو الابن نزل من السماء وتجسد من مريم البتول وصار انسانا حقيقيا مساويا لنا في كل شيء ما خلا الخطيئة وانه انسان سام واله سام بطبيعتين ومشيتين وقنوم واحد اعني طبيعه الهية وطبيعه إنسانية واني مقر ومعتز بالسبعة عشر مجمع المقدس وبجميع ما رسمت وثبتت وقبلت هذه المجاميع المقدسة وعلى الخصوص ما رسم في المجمع الخلقيدوني الرابع الذي حرم به ديوسقورس وشيعته المقرين المقرين بطبيعه واحدة واؤمن بكل ما تؤمن به البيعة المقدسة و اردل واحرم كلمات رذله وتحرمه البيعة الرومانية واعتقد ان سيدنا البابا الروماني هو الحبر الأعظم ونايب السيد المسيح ووكيله وانا مطيعه وتحت رياسته وعلى هذه الأمانة الصادقة أعيش وعليها اموت بحسب الايمان الذي قبلته منذ صغري من ابهاتنا الكيوجيين المرسلين الى مدينة الموصل ويكون معلوم سيادتكم اننا في هذه البلاد مشغولون في التعليم والكرز وانتشار الايمان الكاثوليكي لكننا محتاجون الى بعض كتب ضرورية لنا وهي كتب التوراة المقدسة لعتيقة والحديثة وأربعة كتب التواريخ وابن سينا واكلادوس في علم الهندسة ولا بأس إذا كان عندكم غير كتب لازمة لنا ان ترسلوا منها لنا لأجل تعليم المؤمنين ولكم الاجر والثواب عند الله وأيضا نأمل من الجنب الرشيد ان تنعموا علينا بشقة من صليب الحي لان ما عند طائفتنا منه شيء وهو لازم لنا لاجل البركة وكنا سابقا قد ارسلنا مكتوبين على هذا النص للجمع المقدس شهادة ابينا البطريرك بطرس واخيना المطران رزق الله مطران حلب والاباء المرسلين ان نرسل لكم هذه مع سيدنا البطريرك يوسف لأنه عارف بنا من بلادنا خير من الكل وشهادته تجري عن شهادات كثيرة والحوایج التي ذكرنا بعد أن تتصدقوا وتحسنوا بهم سلموهم الى يد امبرسيوس اللباردي وهو يرسلهم لنا ونسأل الله تعالى ان يكثر يخيركم ويزيد من فضلکم ولا يعدمنا احسانکم دتم سالمين برب العالمين وقد كتب تحريرا في الأول من شهر كانون 1695

To the grand Master among them all, the pride of the ancient greats, the honorable Father, the pure luxurious Ego, May God protect him in peace forever. To whom his great name is mentioned above, God's favor has lasted upon him by the name of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. Amen.

I am the poorest among the heads of priests, Basil Isaac, the bishop of the East that I had been previously the bishop Of Amed for twenty years commissioned by Boutros, the Patriarch of Antakya. I admit and confess before the almighty and your holiness that I believe in the catholic faith, as well as I, pay homage to the Catholic Church, believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I confess that the other essence is the son who fell out of the sky and embodied in human through the Virgin Mary and we are equal to him except he has no sin and he is a transcendent human and God at the same time. He has two natures, two volitions and one essence that I do mean a human nature and divine nature.

I confess and avow to the holy seventeen councils and all the laws, especially the Chalcedon council that excommunicated Discords and his proponents who are confessing to one nature.

I believe in the Catholic Church and I forbid what the Catholic Church has prohibited and I think that our Master the Popp of Vatican is the supreme pontiff and the authorized representative of Christ, I obey him and under his presidency. For this trust and to that confidence I live and die according to the belief that I have accepted since I was a child on the hand of our Capuchin Father who had been sent to Mossel.

To be in your knowledge, we are in busy of teaching and spreading the catholic faith so that we are in need of some books, which are necessary for us, which are the New and Old Testament, four books in history, Aben Sina, and, Gladius in engineering science. It is okay if you have other books that could be useful to us in teaching the believers. To have pay and reward by God.

We hope from the guide of the right path to reward us with a piece of Christ cross which we do not have anything of it. I previously had sent two letters regarding these issues to the sacred Community with the testimony of our Father Peter, the Patriarch of Antakya, our brother Rezq-Allah the bishop of Aleppo, and the Capuchin Father. I will send this letter with Patriarch Josef because he knows us well, and his testimony deputizes other testimonies.

After rewarding the supplies, which we mentioned above, please hand it to the hand of Ambrosias Al- Lombardi and he will send it to us, and we ask the God Almighty to enhance your goodness, boost your charity and not deprive us from your help — protected with the care of God. It was written on 1 January in 1695.

The second manuscript⁸.

الى جناب السادة الكرام الكردينالية الفخام الموكلين على انتشار الايمان ومدبري سائر الامصار والاقطار سلمهم الله تعالى وأبقاهم في خير وعافية.

إلى حضرة المقر الكريم العالي الموسوي مجد الأمة المسيحية فخر البيعة الكاثوليكية حرس الله نعمهم ووفر لهم من السعادة حظهم وقسمهم أمين أما بعد فالذي نعرضه على الحضرة الشريفة والبهجة اللطيفة لازالت عن سماع المكروه سليمة ودائما في خير وعافية مقيمه هو أنه نعلم جنابكم الشريف من خصوص (بخصوص) محبينا العظام أي حضرة زمريا جلبي منير وأخوته العزيزين أنهم أناس مشرفون بجميع الفضائل كما ذكرنا لقدسكم العالي سابقا وأنهم قائمون على قدم الهمة والمساعدة في قضاء ما يخصنا بهذه الغيرة الإلهية فجزاهم الله عنا خير الجزاء فما عدا سعيهم الأول فبهذه المرة لما كان مطراننا مطران إسحاق الذي رسمناه الآن مطران وجعلناه نائبنا ومتصرف في جميع أمورنا اذ تضايق هذا المطران المذكور في مدينة القسطنطينية

⁸Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Turki V.K.23 (1526-1584). N89.

على دراهم لأجل مصروف الخط الشريف فزمريا جلبي موسى منير ما عدا سعيه ومعاونته إياه أقرضه مبلغا وافرا من الدراهم حسنه الله لا فائدة ولا عابدة ولما قضى شغله في القسطنطينية واتى اخونا المطران صحبة الخط الشيف إلى حلب فأخوه الثاني باولو جلبي موسى منير سعى السعي الكلي في سجل الخط الشريف وكسر لهراطة وما عدا ذلك فأقرضنا جميع المصروف لذي راح لنا على سجل الخط الشريف من كيسه دين قرض حسنة لله لا فائدة ولا ربح ودائما على طول المدى كلما قصدناهم بأمر من الأمور يبذلون كل مجهودهم وينفقون من مالهم ليقضوا ذلك الشغل كونهم مقبولين عند الحكام وكلمتهم نافذه لا ترد قط والأُن فقصدنا مكافأتهم ببعض من أتعابهم معنا ومساعدتهم لنا فلذلك نرجو من الهمم العالية أنكم تشرفوا محبنا الصادق وحضرة باولو جلبي أخوهم الثاني بصليب وبطنته وكواليريات كما انعمتم على أخيهما الأكبر زمريا جلبي فلا ريب ولا شك أيها السادات الكرام أنهم أهل لذلك ومستحقون لهذه لدرجة وأرقى منها لأنهم أناس ممتازون عن العام بأخلاقهم المرضية بمساعدتهم للإيمان الكاثوليكي وبقدم وشرف نسلهم واوجاقهم كون أربعتهم أي زمريا جلبي وباولو جلبي ويوسف جلبي وكريستوفر مشرفين بكواليريات قبر المقدس ووكالات القدس الشريف وأجدادهم أيضا من قبلهم لأجل ذلك أيها السادات الكرام المرجو من هممكم العلية أن تزيدوا شرفهم وترسلوا إلى حبيبنا بالوا جلبي صليب وبطنته وكواليريات من الكواليريات المعتبرات التي في تصرفكم تكون لائقه بشأنهم حتى يعلموا أننا ليس عارفين بالخير الذي دائما يعملوه معنا ومع جميع طوائف النصارى الكاثوليكين لجل انتشار الايمان الحقيقي وليكون معلوم قدسكم أنه سابقا ارسلنا مكتوب اخر مثل هذا لعله يكون وصل فالمراد من الحضرة الشريفة ألا تردوا سؤالنا فارغ وألا تخيخوا املنا من هذا الرجاء بل تقرنوا الجواب بصليب وبطنته كواليريات من الكواليريات (مرتبة فارس عالاغلب) المعتبرات ليزاد شوقه وتكثر محبته لأجل انتشار الايمان المقدس امامنا وامام سائر طوائف النصارى الكاثوليكين ويا ساداتنا احسبوا هذا الجميل الذي تعملوه معنا هو عائد الينا بسبب التعب الذي يتعبه قدامنا وامام الايمان الكاثوليكي ودمتم سالمين برب العالمين وقد كتب تحرير في اليوم الثامن من تموز في سنة الف وستمائة وأربعة وتسعين. اغناطيوس بطرس بطريرك انطاكية

It is to the honorable masters, the pious cardinals, who are delegated in spreading the faith, the directors of all territories and provinces, may Allah protect and keep their health and wellness. To the high honorable -Moussaoui seat, the pride of the Christian nation, the proud of the Catholic Church, May Allah protect them and safeguard their grace. Amen.

Having said that, what we will display on the noble Esquire and delight face which stay protected from the calamities and in good situation that we confirm your worthy excellence regarding our great lovers who they are Zameria Chalabi Monier and his dearest brothers that they are honorable men spared no effort in helping us regarding our duties as we mentioned to you earlier, may Allah bless them on behalf of us for this divine ardency.

Except for their first endeavors, this time, when our bishop Isaac whom we appointed him as a bishop, deputy, and vicar to our affairs, faced financial distress in Constantinople relating to the

payments of the decree. Zameria Chalabi Mousis Munir, except for his help lent him a considerable amount of money without spoil.

When the bishop has finished his work, he came with the decree to Aleppo, the second brother Paolu Chalabi Musa Monier made every effort to register the order and defeat the heretics, except that he lent us all the expenses regarding the registration of the decree in Aleppo without spoil or interest. All the time when we need their help, they make every effort and spend money for completion our goals for being acceptable by the governors and their authority is adequate.

Now we would like to reward them for some of their efforts and contribution with us, thereby we hope from your excellence to honor our lover, Master Paolu Chalabi the second brother by the Christ Cross and the rank of cavalry as you reward their oldest brother Zameria Chalabi. Since there is no doubt or suspicious of being well deserved and eligible to this degree and more than that because they are extraordinary people through their help to the Catholic faith and also by the oldest and the honor of their offspring as well as their contingent.

The four brothers Zameria Chalabi, paolo Chalabi, Joseph Chalabi, and Kristopher are supervisors on the sacred grave and all agencies in Jerusalem and their ancestors before them. For that, our Gentlemen we hope from your Majesty to increase their honor by sending a Cross of Christ and the rank of cavalry, which is under your authority. To be decent for their situation, to be aware that we are aware of the charity given by them to the Catholic religious communities for spreading the real belief.

To be known for your honor we were sending previously another letter like this and we hope it was delivered to you and what we would like to ask your Esquire is not to disappoint or disillusion us on this request but associate your answer with the Cross and the rank of cavalry to increase his affection and love of spreading the Catholic faith.

Our Masters keep in your mind the kindness which you are going to do; it will return to us because of his significant pains on our path and for the Catholic communities. God bless you. It was written in the eights of July in 1694. Peter Ignatius, the Patriarch of Antakya.

The third manuscript⁹.

الى جناب السادة الكرام الكاردينالية الفخام الموكلين على انتشار الايمان ومديري سائر الأمصار والأقطار سلمهم الله تعالى وأبقاهم في خير وعافيه.

إلى حضرة المقر الكريم العالي المولوي السيدي جد الامة المسيحية فخر البيعة الكاثوليكية حرس الله نعمهم ووَقَّر من السعادة حظهم وقسمهم امين . نعلم سيادتكم من ميل أخينا مطران إسحاق الذي كان مطران مدينة أمد ولم يزل من صغره إلى الآن مجاهد عن الايمان الكاثوليكي الذي تعلمه وقبله من ابهاتنا الكيوجيين المرسلين الى مدينة الموصل مدينته وقد احتل مشقات عظيمة عوضا عنا وانه رجل معلم وقد تعلم اللاهوت والفلسفة على يد أحد الأباء الكيوجيين المرسلين وفسروا الفلسفة واللاهوت من اللغة اللاتينية الى اللغة العربية وهو خبير باللغات السريانية والعربية والتركية وقد ألف كتاب بالسرياني والعربي والأن لما ارسلناه الى القسطنطينية لإرسال الخط الشريف فكابد مشقات عظيمة وحاجج الهراطقة بالشكاوات امام السلطان والوزير وسائر ارباب الدولة واخرج لنا الخط الشريف بحماية ايلجي سلطان فرنسا وبعد عودته إلى عندنا إلى حلب لم يزل كل يوم يوعظ ويكرز في الكنيسة على رؤوس المأ بالإيمان الكاثوليكي أن المسيح طبيعتين وقنوم واحد وثبت رياسة الكرسي الكاثوليكي على المأ أمام ابهاتنا المرسلين فلأجل حسن عقله وتدبيره اتفق الرأي مع ابهاتنا المرسلين واکابر طايفتنا ورسومناه مطرانا وقد سلمناه كل تدبيرنا ومرسومنا ليأمر وينهي كما يشاء ويريد والطائفة واباتنا المرسلين ونحن وكهنتنا راضين عن علمه وعمله وتدبيره وحسن نظامه ولذلك أعلمنكم بهذه الأحوال حتى يكن بإذنكم ودستوركم ويكون اسمه معلوم عند حضرتكم فانه نائبنا ووكيلنا وكل شي يعمله ويرسله الى جنابكم مقبول لنا وأنا اضع ختمي وخطي بديل الكتاب شهادته من بذلك امام الله وأمامكم ودمتم سالمين برب العالمين حرر في 8 تموز سنة 1694 مسيحية

اغناطيوس بطرس بطريك انطاكية

It is to the honorable masters, the pious cardinals, who are delegated in spreading the faith, the directors of all territories and provinces, may Allah protect and keep their health and wellness. To the high honorable- Moussaoui seat, the pride of the Christian nation, the proud of the Catholic Church, May Allah protected them and safeguarded their grace. Amen.

We confirm you regarding our brother the Isaac, the bishop who was previously the bishop of Amed and he has been since he was young as the defender of the catholic faith, which he accepted on the hand of our capuchin Father who sent to his town Mosul. He has endured great hardships on behalf of us and he is an educated man who was learned philosophy and theology on the hand of one of our capuchin Father who have been sent.

⁹Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Türkei V.,Karton 23. (1526-1584). Nr. 93

They interpreted the philosophy and theology from Latin to Arabic language, and he is an expert in Syrian, Arabic and Turkish he wrote a book in Arabic and Syrian, and now, when sent him to the Constantinople to extract the imperial decree, he sustained great hardship and argued the heretics by the charges before the Sultan and minister as well as all the high- ranking official.

He extracted the imperial decree under the protection of the ambassador of France, after his returning to Aleppo, he is still preaching people every day publicly in the Church converting them to the Catholic faith that Christ has two natures and one essence.

He fixed the Holy See publicly in front of our sending Father. For his mental ability and management, we came up with an agreement between our sending Father and highly members of our community, and we appoint him as a bishop, with giving him all our power and authority to do whatever he wants.

Therefore, we inform you about this situation to be in your permission and to be his name known by you as a deputy and representative of us and everything he has done and sent to your Majesty is accepted by us. I put my signature and seal on the custom footer as the testimony of me about that in front of God and you. May Allah save and protect you. Issued in 8th of July 1694.

The fourth manuscript¹⁰.

هو الى جناب عمدة الاجلاء وفخر الأجداد الاخلاء حضرة الاب المكرم الكردينال ادوارد جيبو دام محترماً.

الى حضرة المقر الكريم المقر العالي الموسوي مجد الامة المسيحية فخر البيعة الكاثوليكية حرس الله نعمه ووفر من السعادة حظه وقسمة امين. اما بعده فالذي نعرضه على الحضرة الشريفة والبهجة اللطيفة لا زالت عن سماع المكروه سليمة ودايماً في خير وعافيه مقيمة هو أنه كنا قد ارسلنا سابقاً لحضرتكم الشريفة عدة مكاتيب وما جانا جوابها لعل المانع الى خير وهي تتضمن شرح حالنا كف انّ ايلجي سلطان فرنسا سعى واجتهد وطالع لنا خط شريف من باب الدولة العلية ورجعنا الى كرسينا بخير وسلامة وسائر البلدان وعلى منع مقاومة الهراطقة نشكر الله تعالى على انعامه التي جاد بها علينا بهمتكم وبركة دعاكم وأيضا قد كان تجمد علينا ديون كثيرة في عزلتنا لان البطريرك الهرطوقي في كل مدة كان يشتكي علينا وعلى مطارنتنا بدعوات زور وبهتان حتى يخسرنا دراهم وكان صحبة المكاتيب عرض محضر لحضرتكم الشريفة يتضمن شرح الخير الذي عملة معنا ايلجي سلطان فرنسا المظفر بإخراج الخط الشريف ادام الله بقاكم وبقاه اجمعين وحرسكم واياه الى يوم الدين ثم نعلم سيادتكم من ميل أخينا اتناسيوس اسقف سفر انا كنا قد رسمناه مطرانا على ماردين وارسلناه الى حضرتكم الشريفة لاقضاء مصالحنا ليساعدنا في لم الحسنات لاجل انتشار الايمان الكاثوليكي كونه رجل مستقيم خائف الله ومجاهد عن الايمان الكاثوليكي ولما جاء الى

¹⁰ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Turki V.K.23 (1526-1584).N 23.

حضرتمكم ساعدتموه بالبركة والمكاتيب والصدقات كثر الله خيركم وبارك في هممكم ومن هناك توجه إلى اسبانيا ثم إلى بلاد الهند وجمع شيئا من حسان المؤمنين وصدقاتهم لأجل انتشار الايمان الكاثوليكي في هذه البلاد لان معلومكم الشريف لا يصير شي هنا بلا دراهم والآن لما عاد من الهند إلى اسبانيا ثلثه (اتهمه) بعض أناس امام الحكام والمطارين والرؤساء أنه رومي وهرطوقي وجاسوس مضاد الايمان لهذا السبب مسكه امير قانس وضبط منه بدستور ملك اسبانيا كل المال الذي جمعه من الهند بقي الاسقف حيران بروحه وسمعنا أنه أعلمكم بحاله لتساعدوه امام بالمكاتيب إلى حضرة سلطان اسبانيا المومى اليه حتى يخلص هذه الدراهم ونحن نعلم أن مروتكم كاملة ولا يحتاج لكم حشيمة ونحن مصدقون ومحققون بأنكم سعيتم إلى تخلص هذه الدراهم فالمراد من الحضر الشريفة ان كان للان ما جاءت هذه الدراهم على مدينة رومية ليدكم (استخدم اليد للكتابة) تكلفوا خاطر وتكتبوا إلى سلطان اسبانيا المشار اليه ولكل من يحتاج الامر اليه وتخبروهم بأحوالنا إنني بطريرك كاثوليكي مطيع الكرسي الروماني منذ سبعة عشر عام ثبتت من سيدنا البابا وان الاسقف المذكور هو مطراني ومن طرفي ووكيلي بتسلم التصدقات وأنه كاثوليكي وانا ارسلته على تلك الأماكن لأجل مساعدة المؤمنين إيانا لانتشار الايمان في هذه البلاد حتى يتبين عرضه وعرضنا وبيان غش وبعد ما تجيبون المال المذكور إلى رومية تجيبون منه سبعة الاف قرش على يد البادرة امبروسيوس الكيوجي لنوفي. الذين ثلثوه ديونا ونحامي منصوبنا في باب الدولة العلية حتى لا يصير علينا عزلة أخرى والباقي حطوه عن رجل مستقيم بالمعاملة(تشغيل رأس المال) وكل سنة ارسلوا لنا محصوله ودبروه بمعرفتكم لأن معقولكم يغني عن الجميع وما يراه الحاضر لا يراه الغائب ويبقى المال هنالك عندكم إلى وقت الحاجة ومتى اردنا شيء من رأس المال نخبر جنابكم وإن كانت كنيسةنا مطيعة لكم وتحت تدبيركم ولا بأس إن كانت أموالها أيضا تحت تدبيركم فبجاه رأسكم أن تتقيدوا التقيد لكلي على تميم هذا الشغل تخلصونا من الديون وأرباحها وقد جعلنا وكيلنا مونسينو كاردينال جيبو وكيل على هذا المال وكل شيء تعملوه يكون بأمره ودستوره وهو أيضا وكيلنا على سائر مصالحنا امام الجمع المقدس ولكثرة انشغاله قد نصبنا البادرة امبروسيوس نائب رئيس الكيوجيين او الكبوشيين حتى ياخذ جواب يعطي جواب ويسلم لحضرتكم السديدة مكاتيبنا ويتسلم البادرة من يد مونسينيور كاردينال جيبو وكل مكتوب يعطيكم إياه من طرفنا اقبلوه وامسكوه واعملوا ما به فإنه مقبول لنا ويكون معلوم سيادتكم أن بارنت(لا اعلم ما هذا يمكن اعانة مالية) السنة وعام اول ما جاءنا ما نعلم انتم ما ارسلتموها ام ارسلتموها وما وصلت والمرو تفتشوا عليها وان ترسلوها ودمتم سالمين بجاه رب العالمين. اغناطوس بطريرك انطاكية

It is to the Mayer of Noblemen the proud of ancestors, the honorable Father, Edward Gebo the cardinal whom respect is still to continue forever, To the high reputable- Moussaoui seat, the pride of Christian nation, the proud of the Catholic Church, may Allah protect them and safeguarded their grace. Amen.

Having said that, what we would display on the noble Esquire and delight face which stays protected from the calamities and in good situation that we have sent previously many letters to your Majesty, but we did not get any response, whatever was the cause we hope it is all right.

Those letters include our situation that how is the ambassador of France endeavored and spared no effort to extract our imperial decree, and we returned to our chair safety and sound. We thank Allah for his graces, which lay upon us by your prayers and efforts.

We have got tremendous debt during our isolation because the heretics Pope was every once in a while accusing us and our bishops of fake charges of making us lose money so that we accompanied the letters with court transcript for your majesty includes the charity of the ambassador of the victorious king of France which he had done to us by extracting the imperial decree. May Allah protect you and him to the judgment day?

After that, we confirm you regarding our brother Atnasious the bishop of Safer that we had appointed him as a bishop in Mardin and we sent him to your Majesty for looking after our interests and helping in collecting charities for spreading the catholic faith for being a straight man, fears Allah and a defender of catholic belief.

When he came to your Majesty you helped him with the ponds, letters, and charities, may Allah bless you, and then he went to Spain completed his way to India, and he collected some alms and handout of the people for spreading the Catholic faith in this country because as far as you know, there is nothing occurs here without paying money. Now when he returned from India to Spain, some people charged him in front of the governors, cardinals, and leaders with heresy, Rumi, and spay against the faith. Thereby the prince of Cadiz arrested him according to the authority of the king of Spain and confiscated all the collected money from India. The bishop was confused and we heard that he informed you to help him with letters to the king of Spain to get the money back. We know your's magnanimous is full and we do not need to ask you. We believe that you strived and sought to get the money back.

What we need from your Esquire since the money did not come until now to Rom, please bother yourself and write to the king of Spain whom mentioned and to whom it concerns that I am a catholic Patriarch obedient to papacy for seventeen years appointed by our Pope and the said bishop is my bishop and a deputy of mine for receiving charities, he is a catholic and I sent him there to help in spreading the faith in this country until the truth appeared. After taking the money to Rome, give seven thousand pennies to the hand of Capuchin leader Improsious to pay our debts and protect our chair in the Ottoman Empire for avoiding isolation again. The rest of the capital is to put in the hand of a straight man for running and every year send us the income and manages

it by your knowledge because your reason is unquestionable. The money stays with you until the time of need and when we need anything of capital us we will inform your holiness. If our Church was faithful to you and under your supervision, it is okay to be its money under your control. In God's name commit yourself to this will and finish our debts and its benefits

We make our representative Monsignor cardinal Jibo our deputy of that money and everything you do should be by permission and his well and he is also our deputy for our interests before the sacred community but for being busy we appointed AL-badra Amprosious the deputy of capuchin sect to take and give answers as well as deliver our letters to your holiness and power of Monsignor cardinal Jibo is passed on him and every note is given by him accept it and do what it contains because it is approved for us.

For your information, the aid of this year and the last one did not come, and we did not know if you did not send it or not. Therefore, we ask your holiness to search about it and send it. May Allah save you. The Patriarch of Antioch Peter.

The fifth manuscript¹¹.

هو الى جناب اب الإباء رئيس الرؤساء الحبر الأعظم الجالس على الكرسي الرسولي سيدنا الباب اينشنسيوس الثاني عشر نائب السيد المسيح دام محترما

نقبل الأرض ونجتو راكمين امام الحضرة الابوية والطلعة الرسولية المتقلدة المفاتيح الملكوتية نائب ربنا ومخلصنا يسوع المسيح الجالس على الكرسي الرسولي الصحيح المؤتمن على رئاسة الكهنوت الخاضع لرئاسته نبي الملك والملوك ادام الله قدسه وعلى بالسعد والاقبال انسه امين يا معين والمعروض من بعد الدعاء المفروض سبب تسطيره كثرة الاشواق الى تقبيل الانامل المقدسات ولثم الاقدام الطاهرات واستنشاق الروائح الطيبة لا زالت دائمة البقاء وان تموج بحر قدسكم وعن حقارتنا سألتكم فله الحمد واننا واياكم على بروج الصحة مقيمين ولحياتكم داعين والذي نعرف به قدسكم هو انه كنا سابقا قد ارسلنا لحضرتكم عبودية تتضمن طاعتنا لقدسكم وللكرسي الرسولي واعترفنا بانكم انتم الحبر الأعظم نائب سيدنا المسيح لذلك أرسلت اقدم طاعة مثل العادة الواجبة علي وأيضا تتضمن شرح كيف أن ايلجي سلطان فرنسا الأمير دوشنطوف سعى واجتهد حتى طالع لنا خط شريف من باب الدولة العلية ورجعنا الى كرسينا بعد عزلتنا عنه ثلاثة سنوات ونشكر الله تعالى على انعامه التي جاد بها علينا بهمتكم ودعائكم بواسطة هذا الأمير المبارك ونعلم سيادتكم الشريفة انه قد تزايدت الديون علينا بسبب استخراج الخط لشريف من باب الدولة العلية وعلى في حلب وسائر البلدان وعلى منع اضطهاد الهرطقة وأيضا كان قد تجمد علينا ديون كثيرة في عزلتنا لان البطريرك سجله

¹¹ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Turki V.K.23 (1526-1584). N18.

الهرطوقي كان يدعي علينا وعلى مطاريننا دعاوى زور وبهتان وكان صحبة العبودية عرض محضر للجمع المقدس شرح الخير الذي عمله معنا ايلجي سلطان فرنسا المظفر ثم نعلم قداسكم من ميل أخينا اتناسيوس اسقف سفر اننا كنا قد رسمناه مطران على ماردين وارسلناه الى الكرسي الرسولي ليقدم طاعة بدلا عنا ويقضى اشغالنا امام الجمع المقدس وبعد ان أدى دستور الكرسي الرسولي والمجمع المقدس توجه الى اسبانيا م الى الهند ليجمع شيئا من تصدقات المؤمنين لننفقها في بلادنا لاجل انتشار الايمان لان معلوم قدسكم هنا لا يصير شيء بلا دراهم والأُن لما عاد من الهند إلى اسبانيا ثلّبه (اتهمه) بعض أناس امام الحكام والمطارين والرؤساء أنّه رومي وهرطوقي وجاسوس مضاد الايمان لهذا السبب مسكه امير قادس وضبط منه بدستور ملك اسبانيا كل المال الذي جمعه من الهند بقي الاسقف حيران بروحه وسمعنا أنه أعلم الجمع المقدس بحاله ليساعده بالمكاتيب إلى حضرة سلطان اسبانيا المومى اليه حتى يخلص هذه الدراهم وايضا اعلم قدسكم بهذه القضية ونحن نعلم أن مروتكم كاملة ولا يحتاج لكم حشيمة ونحن مصدقون ومحققون بأنكم سعيتم إلى تخلص هذه لدراهم فالمراد من الحضر الشريفة ان كان للان ما جاءت هذه الدراهم على مدينة رومية ليدكم (استخدم اليد للكتابة) تكلفوا الخاطر وتكتبوا إلى سلطان اسبانيا المشار اليه وكل من يحتاج الامر اليه وتعرفوه بأحوالنا بأننا بطرك كاثوليكي مطيع الكرسي الرسولي ومثبت منذ سبعة عشر سنة وإنّ الاسقف وكيلى ومطراني ومن طرفي وكلفته بلم التصدقات وانا ارسلته الى تلك الأماكن لأجل مساعدة المؤمنين لنا في انتشار الايمان الكاثوليكي في هذه البلاد حتى يتبين عرضه وعرضنا وبيان غش الذين ثلبوه ويكون معلوم قدسكم ان اخانا اتناسيوس رجل مؤمن كاثوليكي ولم يزل ساعيا في انتشار الايمان الكاثوليكي وإقامة الأمانة الارثوذكسية وقد احتمل بلايات ومشقات في هذه البلاد لأجل الايمان الأرثوذكسي ولذلك ارسلناه الى تلك البلاد ليجاهد لإقامة الايمان المستقيم ويا سيدنا قد اعلمنا الجمع المقدس بعد مجيء المال الى روميه ان يرسلوا لنا منه سبعة الاف غرش على يد البادرة امبروسيوس المبجل نائب رئيس الكبوشيين والباقي يضعوه عند رجل مستقيم بالمعاملة وكل سنة يرسلوا لنا محصوله لقضاء مصالحنا والباقي يبقى وقت الحاجة اليه ولمطلوب من الجناح الرشيد ان تقبلوا سؤالنا وتكملوا مرادنا بما اعلمنا قدسكم املين سيدنا يسوع المسيح أن يطيل بقائكم ويعمر الكنيسة في زمانكم ويجعل الرعاية واحد لراع واحد الذي انتم وكيله ونائبه ونأمل من قدسكم ان ترفوا يمينكم وتباركوا علينا. تحريراً سنة 1694 مسيحية. بطرس اغناطيوس بطريرك انطاكية.

It is to the Father of Father, the chairman of presidents, to the supreme pontiff, who is set on the Holy See, our lord the Pope Innocent XII, the Deputy of Christ his respect is still to continue. We kiss the land and bend the knee before his papal Majesty, the apostolic countenance who has the keys of the realm. The vice God and redeemer Messiah, who is setting on the apostolic chair, who is entrusted with the presidency of priesthood, which is exposed to his will, the prophet of God and the realm, God is giving him long lifetime and happiness. What we will present after the eligible prayer caused by the immense yearnings to kiss the holy hands and touch the pure feet as well as inhale the great scents which is still standing. If your sea ripples and about our insignificance asked, we praise to Allah. We and you are in good health and for your life we pray.

We would love to inform you that we have sent earlier to your holiness a transcript contains our obedience to your devotion and to the Holy See and we admit that you are our supreme pontiff, the vice Christ. Therefore, I have sent this as usual to submit my obedience to you including an explanation about how the ambassador of Franc Doshentov endeavored and spared no efforts for extracting our imperial decree from the Topkabi palace and we returned back to our chair after three years of isolation. We thank God for his graces which lay upon us by your prayers and your effort of being sent this blessed prince. We inform your holiness that our debt increased for extracting the imperial decree from Topkabi palace and for its registration in Aleppo and other countries as well as for stopping our persecution by the heretics. We have also got tremendous debt during our isolation for being accused of our bishops of forged charges by the heretic Pope. There was with our confession a transcript of the sacred community including an explanation of the goodness which made by the ambassador of France. We inform you regarding our brother Atnasious the bishop of Safer that we had appointed him as a bishop in Mardin and we sent him to your Majesty to submit our obedience on behalf of us and to manage our work before the sacred community. After his oath to the Holy See and to the holy community, he went to Spain completed his way to India, and he collected some ponds and charities of the people for spreading the Catholic faith in this country because as far as you know, there is nothing occurs here without paying money. Now when he returned from India to Spain, some people charged him in front of the governors, cardinals, and leaders with heresy, Rumi, and spay against the faith. Thereby the prince of Cadiz arrested him according to the authority of the king of Spain and confiscated all the collected money from India. The bishop was confused and we heard that he informed the sacred community to help him with letters to the king of Spain to get the money back and he told your holiness. We know your magnanimous is full and we do not need to ask you. We believe that you strived and sought to get the money back . What we need from your Esquire, since the money did not come until now to Rome, please bother yourself and write to the king of Spain whom mentioned and to whom it concerns that I am a catholic Patriarch obedient to the papacy since seventeen years appointed by our Pope and the said bishop is my bishop and a deputy of mine for receiving charities, he is a catholic and I sent him there to help in spreading the faith in this country until the truth appeared. **For your knowledge, he is a catholic believer spared no effort in spreading the catholic faith and establishing Orthodox integrity, and he sustained the greatest scourges and toil in this country for Orthodox belief.** Thereby, we sent him to that

country to establish the strait belief. Our Master, we informed the sacred community of that, after arriving the money to the Rome is to send seven thousand to AL-badra Amprosious, the noble deputy of capuchin sect and the rest of the money to be placed with a straight man for running and send us the profits every year to manage our works.

What is required from the Holiness is to accept our demands and complete our objectives of what we informed you earlier? May Jesus give you long life and build the Church up in your time and render the congregations one for one God whom you are Deputy. It was written in 1694AD. Peter Ignatius, the Patriarch of Antakya.

The First Chapter

1)The Ottomans and the Classification of the Christians.

the fall of Constantinople doomed the Byzantium Empire once and for all. The new conqueror Mehmet II was seemingly aware of the efforts exerted by the Western part of Europe, represented by the Popes and the Byzantine emperor, to form a religious union, which could form a political coalition that may revive the exhausted Empire or at least stop the Turks' expansion westward. On such a ground, the Sultan summoned Gennadius from his prison in Adrianople and elevated him to the Patriarchate throne of Constantinople in 1454 AD. The election of the new Patriarch was due to his aversion to Latinism, and at the same time to being the leader of the anti-union movement. On the other hand, the Ottomans viewed themselves as the heir of the Byzantine Empire in every aspect, and that demanded them to exercise imperial power commensurate with the Ottoman-Byzantine Empire. In 1461, however, Mehmet II invited the Armenian bishop of Bursa and granted him the title of Armenian Patriarch over all Armenian citizens residing within the Ottoman borders. Both Patriarchs enjoyed communal self-autonomy in religious and civil affairs as long as they did not violate the Ottoman authority. For instance, the second Patriarch of the Grecian Church, Jeremiah II, secured his position as the Patriarch of Constantinople after paying 2000 florins to Sultan Salim II in 1572 AD as a gift. In return, he got undisputed sovereignty over all religious and secular Christians of his community¹². Those Patriarchs and the Jewish Rabbis constituted institutional hierarchies of the so-called Millet system according to classical point of view.

The system, which divided Christians into two genuine entities, included all the Christians who came under the Ottoman domination after the establishment of the system which was ascribed to Mehmet the Conqueror. It was believed that after the expansionist policy of the Ottoman Empire in the first quarter of the 16th Century, which was led by Sultan Selim I, many Christians were subjugated to the Ottoman domination. Those Chalcedonian Christians were attached to the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople. On the other hand, all non-Chalcedonian groups, such as the Copts, Jacobites, and Armenians, were liable to the jurisdiction of the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople¹³, and they had the right to preserve their hierarchies. According to scholars of the

¹²Arnakis, Georgiades. The Greek Church of Constantinople and the Ottoman Empire, The Journal of Modern History, Vol. 24, No.3,1952, p. 235-241.

¹³Sanjian. The Armenian Communities in Syria under Ottoman Dominion, Harvard University, 1956, p. 33

Orthodox Church, the Patriarch of Constantinople during the Ottoman rule was no less than the Deputy of the Sultan. Others assured that the religious and secular verdict of the Patriarch was not negotiable. Those accounts are not entirely accurate, and to give more plausible ideas, it is necessary to understand the dimensions of the Ottoman administration and Ottoman law¹⁴.

The law of securing souls and property was familiar in the Islamic countries. Like its Muslim peers, the Ottoman Empire adopted the Islamic jurisprudence in managing the affairs of non-Muslims. The Islamic law was based on Islam's holy book and the Prophet's treatment of Christians and Jews. The expansion of Islam in the early years brought Muslims to encounter other Christian tribes and sects. For instance, in Najran in northern Yemen, an agreement was reached between the two parties; Christians agreed to pay Muslims a sum of money twice a year and to provide them with the necessary supplies during wartime. On the other hand, Muslims preserved the rights of Christians¹⁵. The primitive form of the system dealing with non-Muslims, which is mentioned in the Qur'an as (أهل الكتاب), was complicated and needs more examination¹⁶. It is worthy to mention that the Islamic government at the time was just namely Islamic and its legislation and canons were not in agreement with the Islamic point of view. For instance, Hans Küng noted that "Conversions were not wanted; Christians' children were not to read the Qur'an. Conversion meant a loss of taxation"¹⁷.

Moreover, the Islamic governments which inherited the canons and practices of their predecessors adopted an Islamic form of ruling and dealing with Christians, but they did not pay attention to the fact that those practices were attributed to the interests of the Caliph and his undisputed theocratic regime, and we may mention Mu'awiya as an example. For instance, Hitti, in his composition,

¹⁴Kursar, Vjerran. Non-Muslim Communal Divisions and Identities in the Early Modern Ottoman Balkans and the Millet system theory, P. 99-108.

¹⁵Papp, Sándor. The System of Autonomous Muslim and Christian Communities, Churches and States in the Ottoman Empire, Leiden. Boston, 2013, P. 391-392.

¹⁶Chaliph Ali Bn Abi Talib might be excluded due to his reputation among Christians which still stand until now in the East. For more information, see: Jerdack, Gorge. AL- Imam Ali- The Voice of Humman Rights, Beirut, 5 Volumes, 2000.

¹⁷Küng, Hans. Islam: Past, Present and Future, translated by John Bowden. Oxford: One world Publications, 2007, P. 174.

mentioned the regime of Mu'awiya in these words; "In securing his throne and extending the limits of Islamic dominion, Mu'awiya relied mainly upon Syrians, who were still chiefly Christian, and upon the Syro-Arabs, who were mainly Yemenites, to the exclusion of the new Muslim immigrants from al-Hijaz. Arabic chronicles dwell upon the sense of loyalty which the people of Syria cherished towards their new chief"¹⁸.

Qur'an addressed the People of the Book. If we are to reconsider the verses which mentioned those people, we need to reestablish new methods to re-comprehend the most fundamental rules upon which the Islamic states had relied to deal with its Christian nationals, which is our concern here. At first, many verses invoked the Christians under the name (Nasara) (النصارى) addressing them as believers in many Verses like:

(ولتجدن اقربهم مودة للذين امنوا الذين قالوا انا نصارى, ذلك بأن منهم قسيسين ورهبان لا يستكبرون)¹⁹

(And you find that the most affectionate to the believers, the people who said we are Nasara Christians, that you can find among them, friars and prelates). Other mentioned examples in the Qur'an (وإن من اهل الكتاب لمن يؤمن بالله وما انزل اليكم وما أنزل إليهم خاشعين لله) (Among the people of the Book there are devout believers who believe in Allah and what was revealed to you and what was sent down to them)²⁰. The second category in the Holy Book of Islam mentioned the People of the Book in a compromising way,

(ولو أنهم اقاموا التوراة و الإنجيل وما أنزل إليهم من ربهم لأكلوا من فوقهم ومن تحت أرجلهم منهم أمة مقتتصة وكثير منهم ساء ما يعملون)

(Had they observed the Torah and the Gospel and what was revealed to them from their lord they would have consumed amply from above them and from beneath their feet. Among them is a moderate community but evil is what many of them are doing)²¹. Third category mentioned in Repentance Surah in the verse twenty-nine:

¹⁸Hitti, Philip. History of the Arabs: From Earliest Times to the Present, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, P. 194.

¹⁹Qur'an, Surah Al-Maaida, verse 82.

²⁰Qur'an, Surah Ali'Imran, Verses 199.

²¹Qur'an, Surah Al-Maaida, verse 66.

(قاتلوا الذين لا يؤمنون بالله ولا باليوم الآخر من الذين اوتوا الكتاب ولا يحرمون ما حرم الله ورسوله ولا يدينون دين الحق من الذين اوتوا الكتاب حتى يعطوا الجزية عن يد وهم صاغرون)

(Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in last day, nor forbid what Allah and his Messenger have forbidden, nor abide by the religion of truth- from among those who received the Scripture until they pay the due tax, willingly or unwillingly). Analyzing the Verse reveals that fighting the People of the Book is determined by preconditions and pertains to one community of unbelievers within the People of the Book. Therefore, the People of the Book who are previously described as believers are not included among the unbelievers. From a linguistic point of view, the word (قتال) which is mentioned in the Holy Book of Islam indicates a physical conflict between two sides, persons, or entities over a matter that was not settled peacefully. In contrast, the word (الجهاد) (Jihad) encompasses many areas of life, such as abhorrence in live hood, learning, suffering menstruation and childbirth, standing up to temptations, and matters that have nothing to do with fighting. On the other hand, the interpretation of the word (Cizya) is derived from the Arabic verb (جزى), which means precisely the dire or beneficial consequences of your bad or good deeds, and it has nothing to do with any payments²². Qur'an forbids Muslims to conduct any war offensively. On the other hand, the Qur'an emphasizes that the fight should only be started for the purpose of self-defense. Qur'an came as an endorsement of the Prophecy of Mohamed, and we have two categories; one which is suitable for the people for longevity, which includes various sectors like the ineffableness of Allah, praying practice and modalities to follow, and the second category is related to verses of definite time that came to reject or endorse some matters.

Furthermore, since the Qur'an expounded in many verses the infallibility pertained only to Allah and his Prophet who was allowed to apply what was revealed to him by Allah, no one among Muslims had the right to act as a judge for people or impose upon them laws or Canons. For instance, the Second caliph Umar, applied a fanatic system upon the People of the Book regarding the garments, compulsory three days of entertainment, and the manner of speech, which did not derive its legitimacy from an Islamic point of view. Seven treaties were ascribed to the Prophet of Islam, Mohamed; one of them is related to the Christians of Nagra. The Christians paid a sum of money and gave a form of supplement. However, those treaties are still in the spot of question and

²²Shahrur, Muhammad. The Qur'an, Morality and Critical Reason, Translated, Edited, and with an Introduction by Andreas Christmann, LEIDEN • Boston, 2009, P. 194-204.

suspicion and need more micro examination, for how is it possible for the Prophet, who was, according to the Holy Book of Islam, the Voice of Allah on earth, to contradict the Holy Book which emphasizes that the Prophet was the messenger of Allah! In other words, he was not a tax collector according to the Qur'an (ام تسألهم خرّجا فخرّاج ربك خير وهو خير الرازقين) (are you asking them for payments (Harac), the Revenue from your lord is better and he is the best of providers)²³. As such, the Prophet of Islam had never been a tax collector, nor had he been a discriminating perpetrator against the People of the Book.

An astonishing amount of evidence in the Holy Book of Islam and the Prophet's actions is utterly incompatible with the system of the People of the Book. Allah possesses the right to judge all the people around the world regardless of their religions. The verses regarding fighting are clear on confining wars only and solely to self-defense, and any assault is forbidden completely. The system, which gave the People of the Book many official names, unfortunately, was developed in the dimension of religious jurisprudence. In such a case, many governors and dignities, since the early years of Islam, had permitted themselves to interpret the Qur'an according to their interests. However, the system of the People of the Book differentiates between the people who live in the Islamic state (Dara – l-Islam), the none-Muslims who are the nationals of enemy states (Dara l-harb), and the non-Muslim groups who came to the lands of the Islamic State as merchants and pilgrims (Dara l-ʿAhd). According to the first category, the Christians of the Ottoman Empire guaranteed the safety of their souls and properties in exchange of the tax poll (cizya) and the land tax (harac)²⁴. However, did the Ottoman categorize the Christians into two entities under the name of the Millet System during the classical age as the classical theory mention?

However, the classical point of view towards Christians is not one hundred percent acceptable since the Ottoman Empire had its law and canons which do not go in conformity with the Islamic legislation or at least it was independent from the Islamic Canons. Those canons and codifications were enacted according to the needs of the Empire. There were three categories of the Ottoman

²³Qur'an, Surah Mu'minun, Verse 72.

²⁴Kursar. Non-Muslim Communal Divisions and Identities in the early Modern Ottoman Balkans and the Millet system theory, P. 99-108. For more information, see: Ceylan, Ebubakir. The Millet System in the Ottoman Empire, New Millennium Perspectives in the Humanities, Global Humanities Press, SBN 0-9724918-0-5, 2002, p. 246-260.

canons. First there were decrees in which the sultans issued in specific topics, the second was the decrees which pertained to particular region and groups, the third was the canons applicable to the whole Ottoman Empire. The main impulse of such canons were the neediness of regulating the new territories which the Ottomans occupied. Tax and populations surveys give rise to the new canons. In their practice the Ottomans in many newly conquered lands preserved the old canons in order to keep calm and avoid the unrest which could a new law introduce to the government and the population on the same scale. For instance, the Akkoyunlu laws were preserved by the Ottomans in Eastern Anatolia and Iraq in 1517- 1518 and 1534 respectively. When the Ottomans rule settled, they abolished the old ones and enforced the Ottoman laws. In other the territories like Georgia and Cyprus the Ottoman laws immediately put into practice. For sure, the Ottoman regulations were dependent on municipality or what so called Sanjak that the commissioner of such Sanjak according to his Survey may suggest revision or change to any law does not serve the regulation of the Ottomans due to reasonable cause. Those canons of the Sanjak were necessary to show revenues and the paradigm of collecting the taxes. Moreover, those cannons were connected to subjects and their status inside the Ottoman Empire. On the Other hand, the second category is the fundamental basis which we would like to discuss in order to know the regulation which pertained to the Ottoman subjects. The first to introduce a comprehensive law was Mehmet the Conqueror which customized the body of law for the first time. The first section contains the code of criminal law applicable to all subjects, the second section pertained to Muslims and Christians separately classified them to their costumes and taxation²⁵. The Muslims and Christians of the Ottoman Empire constituted two different entities according to the taxation needs. On the other hand, the Ottoman Porte did not regulate Christians according to their religion and what so- called Millet system according to the classical point of view which did not appear until the era of Reform in the 19th century. According to the Braude in his illustration to the Millet System, he did not find any trace or evidence not in capitation tax records, cadastral records, nor in chancery records or other material etc., that Ottomans useed the term Millet as independent entity since such sign carry very dangerous indication that the Ottoman rulers would not accept. For example, in their correspondence with the high dignitaries of the West like the King of France, the Dog of Venice and the queen of England, the Ottoman addressed them “the illustrious among the Christian

²⁵Inalcik, Halil. *The Ottoman Empire the Classical Age 1300-1600*, London, 1973, p. 70-72.

Millet,” “the pride of the Christian Millet,” “exemplar of the women of the Christian Millet,” and “the elect of the honored among the Christian Millet.”. at the same time the Ottoman did not use the term Millet to their subjects since it would indicate to the union between the Western sovereigns and the Christians of the Ottoman Empire entailing political risk. On the other hand, the Christians subjects would be addressed by less exalted titles like Rumi (Greek), Ermeni (Armenian), and Latin (Roman Catholic). For instance, In Arabic speaking lands the Ottomans titled the Christians Gebran or Zimmi “the Turkish pronunciation of the Arabic dhimmi” or Taife “group, people, cemaat (congregation, religious community). For instance, Küçük Kaynarca (1774), the article seven used the term “diyanet” (ritual and worship) and did not use Millet for Grecian Christians²⁶. However, in upcoming chapters, examining the Catholic Churches of the Levant would give us more understanding of the Ottoman Christians in the Ottoman Empire.

2) The Missionary Expedition and the Ottoman Empire

The actions of the missionaries of the Catholic orders coincided with the capitulation that the Ottoman Empire gave to the French king in the first quarter of the 16th century. Those covenants were unlike the treaties held for economic purposes by the Ottomans in the 14th and 15th centuries with European powers like that of Venice. These new forms of capitulation encompassed not only economic but also political and religious horizons. The shared enmity that united the Ottomans and the French against the Habsburgs resulted in the treaty of 1536 AD between Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and King Francis I of France. The treaty guaranteed unilateral concessions to France to foster friendship between them. However, the treaty draft, which is preserved in the Renaissance Museum at Écouen, indicated in Article 6 that all subjects of the French King should not be harassed by the Ottoman authority, and that the freedom of worship was guaranteed. Article 11, paragraph 2, gives the Pope and the English King the authority to amend the treaty. This article is critical because it assures us that the French King needed a religious custodian in Europe. On the other hand, the Pope would be interested in using such a treaty to his favor to foster the place of Catholicity not just in Europe but also in the East. It is not apparent why the Ottomans signed such a treaty since they gained nothing, and their authority was undermined. However, the death of the Ottoman signatory would abolish the treaty, but it was renewed every time a new Sultan

²⁶Braude, Benjamin. *Christians & Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, London, 2014, p. 67-68.

was enthroned. In the era of Selim II, the same privileges were granted to England and Venice. In comparing the treaty, which was signed with France in 1604 AD in the reign of Ahmed III, to the treaties signed with other European countries previously, it is evident that France concentrated its efforts on eliciting an important Ottoman concession, ensuring that France had the only right to protect the Catholics of the East. In 1604 AD, France gained the right to protect all the pilgrims coming to the sacred and ancient places in the Holy Land, who were the subjects of the King and other Christian rulers allying with him. All religious men who served in the holy places and other parts of the Ottoman lands, on the other hand, were granted security in travel and the right of residence. In 1673 AD, the King of France, by the right given to him by Murad IV, became the Protector of the Catholics in the Ottoman Empire. Those covenants were valid just during the life of the Sultan, and in case of his death, the newly crowned Sultan had the choice to decline or renew them. However, in 1740, those covenants became permanent²⁷.

Catholic Missionary activities were not a new method adopted by the Holy See in the 16th and 17th centuries. The idea itself goes back to the era of Crusades in the East. Many religious orders accompanied the Crusaders and aimed at conducting the religious ceremonies and services of the European civil and militant communities. On such a basis, a Crusader monk established the Order of Carmelites in 1156 on the Holy Land, and his members spread throughout Syria and Lebanon. This was followed by the emergence of the Franciscans and Dominicans in the early 13th century. The failure of the Crusades in achieving their goals led the European countries to explore another path to win as many supporters as possible among Muslims in a peaceful and friendly manner. In 1270, one of the Dominican bishops, William Tarabulsi, wrote: "To retrieve the Holy Land, we need messengers, not soldiers"²⁸. The European community enthusiastically accepted the idea, and they even started to introduce Arabic in their educational programs. The Pope and the European countries also tried to intercede with the Mameluke authorities, so that the missionary communities could be able to enter and settle in the Holy Land through establishing friendly relations, and that European nationals could also be able to work, trade and exercise the right of Christian pilgrimage

²⁷Buğra, Poyraz. The Definition and the Development of the religious protectorate of France in Ottoman land, *Journal of Eskişehir Osmangazi University Faculty of Theology*, Vol 8, No 1, 2021, p. 285-290.

²⁸Al- Sabbagh, Laila. *European Communities in the Levant in the 16th and 17th centuries*, Beirut, 1989, V.2, p.771.

in those areas. Brother Roger of the Franciscan province of Aquitaine managed to conduct negotiations on behalf of the king of Sicily and his wife and succeeded in obtaining from An-Naser Muhammed (1310-1341) some privileges, such as the right of residence for Franciscans in the Holy Land and their supervision of some Holy Sites²⁹. Their work during the days of the Mameluke state manifested itself in religious activity among the Christian communities with all their Churches all over Syria, taking care of pilgrims, and offering hospitality and charity to them³⁰, in addition to some activities serving the European political interests in the East, as they had been given the task of conducting communications between the Pope and the king of France on one part, and the King of Ethiopia on the other. That was done through the Ethiopian monks that were residing in Jerusalem.

New circumstances in the 16th century witnessed the release of missionary expeditions in the lands of the Ottomans. The Holy See, in his attempt to restore his domination which was affected practically by Protestantism, endorsed a package of reforms in the Council of Trent (1545–1563) whose agenda included the Program of Proselytizing. Missionary activities were directed against the Protestants and infidels of the newly discovered world. The reformation, which the Holy See conducted, contributed to the elites of zealots ascending decision-making positions. Those enthusiasts directed their efforts toward many places, including the lands of the Ottoman Empire. The Holy See considered the adopted Ottoman policy of encouraging the propagation of Protestantism among the Ottoman Christians as a dangerous tendency that may threaten the domination of the Holy See. On the other hand, the Holy See was concerned about the contact between the leaders of Protestantism and the primates of the Constantinople Patriarchate. On this basis, apostolic agents were dispatched to the Ottoman lands to gather information about Catholicism in the provinces under Ottoman control. The bishop of Nona in Dalmatia, Pietro Cedulini, was the first emissary appointed by the Papacy in Constantinople in 1580 AD to visit the Catholic Churches in the Balkans and Anatolia. His report was of great importance in organizing the work of missionary expeditions and setting the objectives that the Roman Curia aspired to achieve. Those objectives varied from the support of the Local-Latin rite communities to the conversion of new people to Catholicism among schismatic and heretics and to win over the

²⁹Duweih, Marastan, History of the Maronite Community, Beirut, 1890, p.378.

³⁰Al-Sabbagh. European Communities in the Levant in the 16th and 17th centuries, p.772-773.

Orthodox Church for the cause of union. Capuchins and Jesuits were among the missionary orders that took up residence in the lands of the Ottoman Empire; the increased activity of missionary expeditions convinced the Papacy to establish a new body responsible for the administration of Catholic missions, dealing with all problems and perils encountered by missionaries, whether financial or administrative, and organizing their work on a cooperative basis. Therefore, the Congregation of Propagation of the Faith was established according to the resolution of Pope Gregory XV (1621-1623). Finally, missionary expeditions in the 16th century embodied the natural result of coalitions between the political elite of Europe and the Papacy in their endeavors to have a solid community in Europe internally and to catholicize the newly discovered communities as well as revive perished communities of the East for the cause of union. It was an imperial scheme that combined the religious and political elite accompanied by the movement of colonialism³¹.

³¹Arnakis. The Greek Church of Constantinople and the Ottoman Empire, p. 289-293.

The Second Chapter :The Syrian Catholic Church

1) The Relation between the Jacobite Church and the Holy See

After seven centuries of separation, the Crusaders played a decisive role in the resumption of the dead relationship between the Papacy and the Jacobite Church since the Pope in 1130-1143 AD took upon himself the mission of regulating the Latin Church in the East regarding the separation news he had heard at the time. The Pope appointed for this mission the Metropolitan of Ostia. The task did not pertain to the Latin Christians in the East alone. Still, the synod's work showed the Pope's desire to push the Eastern Christians to participate in the regulation, which was supposed to reestablish the dead relationship between the two sides or at least entice the heretics to join the global Church. For this mission, information still needs to be more sufficient, and available details are not conclusive. The available sources, nevertheless, assert the attendance of the Armenian Catholicos Gregor and the Metropolitan of Syrians in Jerusalem Ignatius. At the same time, the Melkite Rumî Church refrained from attending because of the emperor's absence³². Once more, because of the struggle inside the Latin Church in the last quarter of the 12th century, Pope Alexander III (1159-1181) summoned the bishops into the Eleventh Lateran Council, and the Latin Archbishops of the East were among the invited. On this ground, the Latin Patriarch of Antioch invited the Syrian Patriarch Michael the Great who answered the call. We do not know precisely if the Syrian Patriarch was among the participants in the Council, but we know that the Patriarch met king Baldwin in Acre. In the 13th century, one of the Dominican heads mentioned in his epistle to the Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241) that the Jacobite Patriarch, during his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, adopted the Catholic faith abandoning all the heretics. Even though the epistle did not allude to the Patriarch's name, the contemporary sources confirm that the Patriarch was Ignatius Dawud the head of all Syrians in Kildo, Syria, Parthia (the Persian land). Still, at the same time, those sources did not refer to any union between the Catholic Church and the Jacobite Patriarch. The convergence of views during this time was attributed to the political interest which combined both contingents against Muslims in the East. Aragon, the king of Parthia, knew at the time that capturing Palestine and Syria was not achievable without the help of the European power. On this ground, king Aragon sent in 1288AD a delegation presided by a priest called Rabban Soma to the European kings carrying presents and letters of cooperation. In addition to the political letters, the

³²Hayek, Ignatius Anton II. The relationship of Jacobite Syriac Church with the Holy See since 1143-1656, p. 28.

Nestorian Catholicos Mar Yapalaha and the Syrian Jacobite Metropolitan of Tabriz Dionysius sent epistles and gifts to the Pope³³.

The priest left the Parthian lands in 1287AD accompanied by a group of dignitaries. In April, he was in the court of Andronicus II, and in June, he arrived in Naples, then came to Rome in July. During this time, the chair of the Holy See was vacant. In Rome, Cardinal Dascoli welcomed the priest and asked about the reason beyond his visit. In September, he moved to Paris and met Philip IV (1285-1314) AD, and in October, he met Edward I, the king of England (1272-1307) AD. He spent the winter in Genoa, where he was invited to meet the newly elected Pope Nicholas IV (1227-1292). The priest presented the letters of Mar Yapalaha and Dionysius. In the reply of the Pope to the letter of the Syrian Metropolitan, it could be understood that the latter sent a confession of embracing the Catholic faith to the Pope. The reason for such a profession is still ambiguous, but it could be explained that his work was by the pressure exerted upon him by king Aragon. Other encyclicals sent by Pope Nicholas IV and carried by one of the Franciscan priests to Ignatius Nimrod (1283-1292), the Syrian Patriarch, emphasized the necessity of the union between both sides. Those attempts were but the convergence of views and an end to the estrangement which had continued for seven centuries; nothing more as the encyclical, issued in the last session in the Lateran council 1438AD by Pope Eugene IV, indicates the necessity of union among the Catholic, Coptic, Jacobite, and Armenian Churches. Those attempts did not ever develop into a complete union, and its results could have been of better importance for both sides³⁴.

2) The Relationship Between the Syrian Jacobite Church and the Papacy During the Ottoman Domination

The relationship between the Vatican and the Syrian Jacobite Church in the 16th century was represented by the commission sent by the Syrian Patriarch Ignatius Abdullah to Pope Paul III (1468-1549). The mission which was assigned to Moses of Mardin was an answer to the call of the Pope to the Eastern Christian dignitaries to participate in the Council of Trent (1545-1563). The mission of Moses was to arrive at Rome upon the election of Pope Julius III in 1550 AD. Unfortunately, the epistle, which was carried with the Syrian priest from the Syrian Patriarch, is

³³Ibn Al'bri. The Ecclesiastical History of Ibn Al'bri, 2 volumes, Al Mashreq, Duhok, 2012, vol 2, p. 446.

³⁴Hayek. The relationship of Jacobite Syriac Church with the Holy See since 1143-1656, p. 57-58.

missing. Still, the answer of the Pope to the Patriarch illustrates that the Jacobite Patriarch assured the presidency of the Roman Catholic Church and severely defended the Catholic tenet. During the stay of Moses in Rome, he was informed about the release of the new edition of the Bible in the Abyssinian language. Moses of Mardin mentioned the latest edition before his Patriarch, which inflamed the Patriarch's zeal to have the Syrian Bible printed. For those reasons, Moses of Mardin set out into Rome for the second time. At this time, the information in the Patriarch's encyclical was about the tenets of the Syrian Jacobite Church, which conform exactly to the Catholic doctrine except for two things. The first one is that the Holy Spirit springs from the Father, extends to the Son, and takes from Him. On the other hand, the Patriarch explains the nature of Christ by saying that "we admit one spirit in Christ; one character consists of two natures united and became one like fire and iron as well as soul and body"³⁵.

The answer of the Pope was full of joy and gratitude as he stated in the epistle carried by Moses of Mardin to the Patriarch that the Pope is ready to join all the Jacobite Syrians to the Catholic communion and he sent a book explaining the dogma of the Catholic beliefs which is necessary to the process of union. Other documents (according to the epistle sent by the Syrian bishop to Andreas Masius, one of his friends) brought up the meeting between the Syrian bishop and the archduke of Austria, Ferdinand I, in 1554 AD. In the session, the bishop presented a Bible written by his hand with golden water to the archduke. The bishop referred to the archduke as the protector of Syrian Christians against Muslims and Nestorians. Did that imply a kind of coalition between the Christians of the East and the archduke? During this time, the relationship between France and the Ottoman Empire arrived at its peak, and according to the concession endowed by the Ottomans to the French government, the king of France was the only protector of the Christian nation in the world. As such, Ferdinand I worked to minimize France's position in the Christian world and strengthen his position before the Ottomans. Consequently, he honored Moses, the bishop of Mardin, with the Coat of Arms, and he ordered the printing of 300 copies of the New Testament written in Syriac language. Other pieces of information stress that Moses was not just a religious envoy to the Pope, since he had a high-ranked position among the political elite of the sacred Roman Empire.

³⁵Hayek. The relationship of Jacobite Syriac Church with the Holy See since 1143-1656, p. 83-84.

3) The Syrian Prelate Moses of Mardin

The importance of displaying the relation of Moses of Mardin to the dignitaries in Europe goes back to the names of these dignitaries, as the archduke of Austria and the king of Bohemia, Hungary, and Croatia who granted Moses the coat of arms which was an elegant royal privilege to its carrier. In the coat of arms, the king enumerated Moses's merits with the following words: “Since you the aforementioned Syriac priest Moses of Mardin is thoroughly known to us on account of the excellent talents of your intellect, your piety, your conscientiousness, and the sanctity of your life, thanks to trustworthy and distinguished testimonies of many people, and we have understood to what great praise you have cared for Christian republic by setting to type the new testaments and other very holy books in the Syriac language and finally what labor and diligence you have invested in this effort, we must not only acknowledge all these things with a generous heart but also remunerate them with exceptional decoration and indeed with the favor of our munificence”³⁶ In such words, the coat of arms described Moses of Mardin, and we can understand that the archduke of Austria had previous knowledge about Moses and his project. Moreover, the words reveal that the Archduke supported Moses in his endeavors. In a piece of Moses's correspondence to Andreas Masius, a Flemish humanist who learned Syriac from Moses, he spoke about his meeting with Ferdinand I as follows “I would like to you to know, oh my brother, I wrote the Gospels on parchment. It is nice script with gold and silver. I offered it to the king. He was delighted and shook hands with me as a customary in German”³⁷. We do not know precisely how the bishop was acquainted with the king. Still, the best solution to this matter was the role played by the Chancellor of Lower Austria, Johann Albrecht Widmanstetter, who recommended Moses for the king after their coincidental encounter. However, rethinking about the mission for which the priest was responsible casts light on his connection to Europe. Moses of Mardin asserted the reason of his visit to Europe in a Latin dedication to Ferdinand written on the gospel by stating that “most dear homeland, Syria... entangled by the darkness of ignorance due to the scarcity of holy books”³⁸. The project of printing the New-Testament introduced Moses to

³⁶Mércz, András. The Coat of Arms of Moses of Mardin, *Journal of Syriac studies*, Vol 22.2, 2019, p. 351.

³⁷Mércz. The Coat of Arms OF Moses of Mardin, p. 352.

³⁸Borbone, Pier. Monsignore Vescovo di Soria”, also Known as Moses of Mardin, Scribe and Book Collector, *Journal of studies in the Christian Culture of Asia and Africa*, volume 8 (XIV), 2007, p. 81.

the scholars of that time³⁹ which his friend Masius might attributed to his acquaintance with other European dignitaries. Andreas Masius was born in St. Martens Lennik near Brussels and studied Arts at the university of Leuven and was acquainted with Latin, Greek and Hebrew. In 1550 he obtained a doctoral degree in law. His fame and knowledge presented him to the European elite of that time and by the intervention of Gotschalk Erishson, the imperial chancellor, Masius entered the service of Jan Van Weze as his secretary. Weze served as a secretary to Christian II, the king of Denmark, and later on he was appointed as an archbishop to the Church of Sweden and after the revolution which dethroned the king of Denmark in 1523; Weze assumed a post in the diplomatic department under king Charles V. However, Weze had gone on with his ascendance and obtained a position in the court of king Ferdinand, and in 1540 AD, he was appointed in the diocese of Merseburg, and all pieces of evidence confirm that Masius was his right hand. The circle of his friends consisted of very famous scholars like Vulmar Bernaerts, Leuven, the professor of Canon law who was sent to the Council of Trent in 1550, and Jan Visbroeck, the secretary to the Cardinal Giovanni Morone in Rome. Masius and Visbroeck met in Trent in the summer of 1543AD during the preparation of the Council as Visbroeck accompanied Morone, and Masius was part of the cortege of Weze. However, Masius was not really satisfied with administrative work, and much evidence shows that he was searching for an opportunity to establish himself as one of the renowned orientalist at the time. His interest in Hebrew literature and Syriac appears in his correspondence with Servite Father Octavius Pantagathus whom he met during his visit to Rome in 1545 AD to look after some issues related to his master. Moreover, the position of Masius guaranteed him the acquaintance with the Hebarist Sebasrian Munster and the old Syriac expert Johann Albrecht Widmanstetter when he was still in the service of Louis X, Duke of Bavaria. When Weze died in 1548 AD, he managed to posit himself as a representative of the interest of some German dignitaries like William V, the Duke of Cleves, before the Holy See in 1550AD, and there, he freed himself in order to cultivate his Syriac knowledge. When Moses arrived in Rome, he encountered Masius and helped him with some Syriac and Arabic Lessons⁴⁰.

³⁹Kessel, G. "Moses of Mardin (d. 1592)." *Manuscript Cultures* 9, Hamburg, Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (2016): p. 146–151.

⁴⁰Francois, Wim. Andreas Masius (1514-1573) Humanist, Exegete, and Syriac Scholar, *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 2009, p. 201-219.

The friendship which combined them benefited Moses and eased his mission. In a letter sent by Moses to Masius dated on the 15th of July 1553, it is evident that the Syrian priest was one of the retinues of the Cardinal Pole, and, after crossing the Alps, he met Widmanstetter in Dillingen near Augsburg and asked Masius to write a recommendation letter to the governor who believed to be Ottheinrich of Wittelsbach. The letter did not mention that the meeting with Widmanstetter was arranged by Masius, but at best we can supposedly conclude that Masius presented his friend to Widmanstetter, since Moses and Masius had a project of importing Eastern books rather than the New-Testament and printing them⁴¹. For such a project, they need sponsorship that could cover the expenses.

Moses enjoyed Widmanstetter's hospitality; they spent two and a half years together between 1553- 1556 AD in the Habsburg capital. Moreover, the project of printing the Syriac New Testaments had political intentions in the eyes of the king. We should remember that the siege of Vienna in 1529 AD and the threat of Turks were the axes of King Ferdinand's policy. Therefore, the printing of the New Testaments could be understood as a political and diplomatic effort to find a Christian front in the East, or at least Christian proponents could serve the goals of the king in the land of the Ottoman Empire. Such a sort of projects may have crossed the mind of the emperor that in 1527AD, for instance, the Maronite Patriarch and Syrians appealed to emperor Charles V to send fifty thousand infantries, one hundred cavalries, and four hundred ships as a supplement to their military which consisted of 50 thousand soldiers who were ready to engage with the Ottoman forces. Moses of Mardin was aware of that at the time as he indicated in one of his manuscripts to King Ferdinand, "May God Almighty grant to Ferdinand king of the Romans, the defeat of the Turks and Happy government of the peoples subject to him"⁴². Such a kind of assumption could be proper, and finding allies in the near East could be one of the king's policies at the time as the coalition combined the Habsburg and Persian until 1555AD when Sultan Suliman the Magnificent and Shah Tahmasp put an end to the Ottoman and Safavid war and signed the Peace of Amasya. The project carried out the printing of 1000 copies of the New Testament in Vienna, and we can understand from the letter sent by Moses to Masius after leaving Vienna that the king took 500 books for himself and sent 300 copies to the Syrian Patriarch and the Maronite Patriarch.

⁴¹Borbone. Monsignore Vescovo di Soria, also Known as Moses of Mardin, p. 86.

⁴²Mércz. The Coat of Arms of Moses of Mardin, p. 355.

Furthermore, the letter pointed out that Moses was not satisfied with his payments as the letter illustrates: “And he did not give me any dinars but only 20 thalers. God knows that I am telling the truth in front of him and you. From Vienna to Venice, I spent the money on the books”. In the letter, Masius added a marginal hint, stating that Moses received 700 florins for two years. It is unknown if the information is accurate, and we cannot be sure how Masius was informed. However, if the information is correct, the Syrian bishop was well-paid compared to his peers. Widmanstetter, for instance, had a yearly wage of 500 florins as a chancellor of lower Austria, and he obtained 200 florins additionally as a commission, probably for his work as a supervisor in the University. Another example of the salary of educated people in Vienna at that time was Guillaume Postel’s salary; he earned 200 florins as a university teacher. Widmanstetter invited him to help with the edition of the New Testaments. According to the expenses of that time, which were swinging between 50 and 60 florins per year for one person, the bishop was well paid. On the other hand, 20 thalers, as mentioned by Moses, could not be his wage for three years in Vienna, and it was just a subsidy for his journey to the East. The conversion of the priest to Catholicism and assuming the bishop rank is still ambiguous and in place of discussion.

One of the documents written in Latin by Masius indicates that Moses made a Catholic confession to the Pope and the Cardinals during his second stay in Rome in 1552 AD⁴³. However, in May of 1553AD, the Cardinals wanted to baptize Moses in a proper Catholic way, but he firmly rejected. In one of his letters to his friend Masius, he accused the Roman bishops of “lacking love and desiring vain glory”⁴⁴. On this ground, Moses of Mardin did not convert to Catholicism during his stay in Rome, but he had gone farther and looked upon the proposal with resentment. Nevertheless, according to other documents⁴⁵, the bishop appears to be a Catholic priest in Vienna. The first evidence is to be found in the grant of arms in which the Syrian bishop was mentioned as (a Syrian Catholic priest). The Syrian word should indicate his origin and Catholic his faith. Moreover, Widmanstetter called Moses a Catholic priest in the edition of the Syriac New Testament. Finally, the same title appears in a Latin hint in a Manuscript which Moses copied in

⁴³Francois, Wim. Andreas Masius (1514-1573) Humanist, Exegete, and Syriac Scholar, *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, p.220.

⁴⁴Mércz. *The Coat of Arms of Moses of Mardin*, p.367.

⁴⁵Mércz. *The Coat of Arms of Moses of Mardin*, p.367

Vienna in January 1556AD⁴⁶. It could be said that Moses accepted the proposal of ordination afterward. Still, we cannot be sure of such a conclusion since all the ordination records in the Diocese of Vienna are preserved only from 1574 AD. On the other hand, if we are to consider that the Syrian priest lived among the Jesuit pupils at the time, the ordination events should be documented in the Jesuit sources, and, most probably, the Syrian bishop's name should be mentioned, but unfortunately it was not. While there is no direct evidence to confirm that the Syrian bishop converted to Catholicism, there is an opposite piece of evidence. In the Syriac colophon of the New Testament, offered to Ferdinand, the Syrian bishop indicates himself as a Jacobite priest. Moreover, in his letters and correspondence, he always refers to the Jacobite Church as his Church. In another occasion, instructing Masius in liturgical matters, Moses wrote: "I would like you to know, oh my brother, that there is a custom in our Church, at the Jacobite Syrians, when we commemorate the saints and ask for their intercession"⁴⁷. This double appellation may be solved with new discoveries related to the life of the Syrian bishop in Europe in the Future.

4) The Syrian Patriarch Naʿmallāh and the Papacy (1557-1591) AD.

During the incumbent of the Syrian Patriarch Naʿmallāh, the relationship between the Vatican and Jacobite Church was asserted in 1562 AD that bishop Ibrahim, the Metropolitan of Haditha, met Pope Pius IV. There is no information about any mission dispatched to Rome then, but the bishop probably was an informal companion to the Chaldean Patriarch Abd- Yashu'. The meeting happened, and the bishop carried in his way back an encyclical to the Syrian Patriarch containing an invitation to the Patriarch for the cause of union according to the articles of the Florentine Council. The Syrian patriarch answered the call emphasizing the superiority of the Catholic Church, considering it as the mother of all Churches, and the Pope was deemed the vicar of Christ and Peter himself. On the other hand, he emphasized the Monophysite's tenets and excommunicated all Nestorians and Maronite. The excommunication of the Maronite community negatively affected the openness between the Syrian Church and the Papacy since the Maronite community was, religiously, one of the closest communities to the Catholic Church, and it is not far-fetched to say that if the Catholic Church was the mother Church of all, the Maronite Church was its lovely daughter. The Syrian Patriarch also indicated the domination of his Church over the

⁴⁶Kessel. "Moses of Mardin (d. 1592)", Manuscript Cultures 9. p.149.

⁴⁷Mércz. The Coat of Arms OF Moses of Mardin, p.345-393.

Abyssinian nation, and he asked for an attorney and deputy for the Syrian Church in Rome as well as a monastery for his community⁴⁸. On 7 February 1564, Father Yohanna the Ethiopian or the so-called Giovanni Battista Abissino, was appointed as papal envoy to the East for the purpose of conducting negotiations on behalf of the Papacy. Moreover, to ease his mission, he was appointed to the Ethiopian bishopric of Cyprus. The appointment of the Catholic bishop came because of many factors like the lingual proficiency in Arabic, Coptic, and Latin, as well as the vast knowledge of the Orthodox and Catholic tenets. Furthermore, the appointment did not come only as a result of his skills which were fascinating at the time, but there was an imperialism project which grew in the shadow of the Papacy and European countries. The Venetian ambassador in Rome recommended Giovanni to the position. It was not obvious whether the Papacy was informed by the ambassador about the reason behind such recommendation. It is worthy to mention that Venice dreamed of capturing Egypt at the time and found in the figure of the Catholic Ethiopian bishop a means to convert the king of Ethiopia into Catholicism and convince him of a common interest which opposed that of the Ottomans as far as capturing Egypt. However, in 7 February 1565AD, the papal emissary carried seven epistles by Pius IV(1499-1566) to the presbyters of Eastern Churches to strengthen the ties with Rome and communicate to the resolutions of Trent's Council⁴⁹.

Between 1565 and 1571, the Patriarch sent four delegations, but none arrived in Rome. The Patriarch attributed such incapability to compelling circumstances. The first delegation represented by Yohanna (John), the chief of Mar Jacob Monastery in Tur Abdin, was swallowed by a crocodile in the Nile River. The second delegation, which consisted of Yohanna and a companion, died in the plague of Constantinople in 1569AD, and later, the war between Venice and the Ottomans hindered any possible connection⁵⁰. The last commission, sent in 1571 with the Patriarch's letter of submission and adoption of the Catholic tenants, was captured by the Turks in Tripoli. The commission, nevertheless, did not betray the Patriarch, and his name was kept secret despite all

⁴⁸Hayek. The relationship of Jacobite Syriac Church with the Holy See since 1143-1656, p.111.

⁴⁹Salvadori, Matteo. African Cosmopolitanism in the early Modern Mediterranean: the diasporic life of Yohannes, the Ethobian pilgrim who became a counter reformation Bishop, *The Journal of African History*, 2017, p.75-80.

⁵⁰Hayek. The relationship of Jacobite Syriac Church with the Holy See since 1143-1656, p.116.

the turmoil and hardships inflicted upon the mission by the Turks. But news of spreading Catholic tenet among Syrians, at a time when the Syrian Church consisted of 21 episcopates, reached the Turks. It seems that not all Syrians adopted the view of the Patriarch, and they accused him before the Ottoman authorities of infidelity ⁵¹.

Death was the expected outcome of such an accusation, but the governor of Diyarbakir, who admired the Patriarch for his knowledge, removed his fez and placed it on the Patriarch's head, declaring that the Patriarch had become a Muslim. Despite his failure, the Patriarch's desire for unity was undeterred, and in 1578, he settled in Rome. The Patriarch's life in Rome provides valuable insights into the Syrian Church. In 1576 AD, the Patriarch arrived in Venice, where the Patriarch of Aquileia described him in a letter to Cardinal Guglielmo Sirleto in Rome as a revered prelate of great importance. The Patriarch carried no letters of recommendation or documents from missionary expeditions or European consuls in the East. In one of his letters, the Patriarch indicated that he could resolve his challenges with the help of the "high king," Christ, without mentioning any assistance from others. A report describing the meeting between the Pope and the Patriarch referred to him as an eighty-year-old man of venerable appearance, devoid of pomp or decoration, and accompanied only by an interpreter. In a letter to his relatives and friends in Syria, the Patriarch discussed the salaries and economic conditions of clergymen in Rome. He noted the Pope's income as 24,000 pieces of gold per day and mentioned the consecration of nine Cardinals, each receiving 200,000 pieces of gold for their services.

The information might be distorted, as the Patriarch mentioned in the same letter seeing an infant with five heads, seven hands, and two feet resembling those of a horse. Another case involved someone with a hand on their head and three horns. Such accounts could be either true or false. He also described the harsh weather in Rome, noting that the climate was both frigid and very hot. Moreover, he mentioned that the city had all kinds of diseases, the inhabitants were very wild, and prices were extremely high. Another document provides valuable information about the Patriarch's comrades during his journey in Europe, but it is unclear whether these individuals accompanied the Patriarch from Syria. The Patriarch mentioned three people. The first was Kaspar, who stayed in Venice at the Patriarch's request to supervise goods sent by Safar, the deacon of Aleppo. The

⁵¹Dionysius, Ephram. The blessing of the lord in conversions of the Syrians, Beirut, 1910, p. 14.

third companion was Abd Alih, son of Amir Aziz, who was sentenced to death by the ruler of Venice for the crime of killing a Muslim merchant from Persia. The Patriarch also mentioned three servants who accompanied him. One was enlisted as an Acem Oglan in the Ottoman army but escaped to join the Patriarch. The second was the deacon Abd Alnnur, who was appointed by the Pope as the administrator for all Syrians in Europe.

Another letter attributed to the Patriarch, published by Borbone, states; “A slanderer, excommunicated and persecuted from Egypt and from every place, arrived in Venice and showed us kindness and humility. In our innocence, we welcomed him joyfully. He asked us for a document of acquittal, so we wrote to you, begging Your Brotherhood to accede to his request. He left with us from Venice to Rome as if it were to our service. Along the way, he revealed his wickedness, to the point that they saw he carried a dagger in secret. Then we broke off any relationship with him, and consequently, he began to spread falsehoods about us. He became a Muslim of his own will, made Christians into Muslims by force, and fled here because his wickedness had been discovered. He also presented written documents supporting his slander, saying to the locals: ‘That’s why the Franks of Aleppo and Jerusalem did not give him letters of introduction.’ For this reason, we felt the need to ask Your Brotherhood, our son Metropolitan John of Jerusalem, and our children, the believers of Aleppo, to send us documents from the nations represented in your region [i.e., the European consuls]. I pray Your Holiness to send documents certifying the deposition and excommunication of the slanderer, his abominable and impure lifestyle, and his physical flaws: he is missing two fingers and is, therefore, unsuitable for any degree of priesthood. He has deceived the Franks, the Egyptians, and the Armenians, claiming to be a prelate. When he was found, excommunicated, and expelled, he fled here. According to our desire, he should never return to the East but should end his days of excommunication in Italy.”⁵².

According to Borbone, the individual mentioned by the Patriarch was the former Syrian prelate Moses of Mardin. He notes that Moses was explicitly identified as "Moses, the one with the fingers cut off, of Şawro of Qaluq (Mardin). The hostility moved him, the calumniator." Borbone corroborated his conclusion with two pieces of evidence: the first was that Moses of Mardin

⁵²Borbone. From Tur 'Abdin to Rome: The Syro-Orthodox presence in Sixteenth-Century Rome, p.286.

reappeared in Rome in 1578, coinciding with the Patriarch's arrival in Rome. The second was that Moses was in Egypt in 1577, as indicated by a note of purchase on a manuscript he owned. How could someone be abruptly transformed from a famous prelate of significant relations in the West and East to a slanderer?

This question is not certain because the letter clearly states that this prelate of his own free will converted to Islam and forcibly turned some Christians to Islam. The Patriarch remembered that he met Moses on the way from Venice to Rome and that Moses tried to convince him that he repented. Moses then asked for a document of acquittal. When the Patriarch learned Moses's plan to kill him and his comrades, their acquaintance ended, and they cut all ties with him. In the letter, the Patriarch asked Metropolitan John of Jerusalem and the believers of Aleppo to procure from European councils documents attesting to Moses' deposition and excommunication. Moses of Mardin, who represented in the Ottoman Empire the Syrian nation in Rome and Europe once, became 30 years later a slanderer who allegedly deceived the Franks according to the Patriarch's letter.

I will try to refute this claim by showing evidence that this theory is either wrong or misunderstood. First, the Patriarch referred to Moses as the one with cut-off fingers but did not mention his name or place of birth. This could be because he did not want people to confuse Moses of Mardin with another Moses who was healthy. The latter, being a deformed person, would have been unfit for priesthood while the former, in case he was not already ordained as a Catholic bishop, was at least worthy for such a position. Records show that Moses was ordained since he later appeared in Vienna as a Catholic bishop. Rome's hierarchy is known to be fastidious, which would hardly miss a deformity in such a key appointment. Further, in another article, Borbone reported that a Syrian priest named Moses served in the Neophytes College, teaching Arabic and Syriac under the name Monsignore Vescovo Moyse di Soria from April 15, 1581, to December 10, 1585. This is confirmed by the reports of Cardinal Santoro to the Pope, which place Moses of Mardin in Rome between 1578 and 1592, enjoying provisions from the Roman court⁵³.

The most probable scenario, however, is that the Ottomans had discovered Moses's letters to Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, or at least, the interchange of letters between the former Patriarch,

⁵³Borbone. Monsignore Vescovo di Soria, also Known as Moses of Mardin, p. 79.

the Pope, and the emperor. In order not to be executed, Moses might have embraced Islam. This conclusion might be supported by Moses' employment of the Persian *tawamān*, (or *toamān*), that is "twins" or "mirror pair," a typological approach by which he aimed at hiding specific information, known only to the addressee. The conflicting reports on Moses are indicative that the Patriarch, in his letter-diplomacy with the East, used secret terminology in order not to stir up suspicions and thus avoid the Ottoman's notice. Moses of Mardin, the Syrian prelate, may have been a clandestine agent of the Papacy. His mission being sensitive, he could camouflage as an informer or an excommunicated bishop.

While in Rome, the Patriarch was quite busy with his duties. He was an accomplished astronomer and mathematician who collaborated to establish the Gregorian calendar and prepared the Syrian liturgy of Mar Jacob, the first Metropolitan of Jerusalem. The same Syrian liturgy rendered yeoman service in defending the Mass from Protestant attacks for being a sacrifice. The Pope deemed Naʿmallāh a cornerstone for any project at the Jacobite submission to Rome. In his 1579 AD letter to the Syrian Patriarch Dawud, the Pope pressed Dawud to recognize the importance of the submission to Rome and greeted his efforts towards the unification of the Churches. The Pope spoke of Naʿmallāh as Dawud's predecessor, confirming his position as Patriarch. To the Holy See, both Dawud and Naʿmallāh played an instrumental role in attaining unity.

It has to be underlined that Pope Gregory considered union with the Eastern Churches as one of the key means of protecting the Church from its enemies and, subsequently, cementing his reputation as one of the most effective promoters of the faith ever to sit on Peter's throne. Was it a real attempt of the Easterners to get united with the Holy See according to its requirements, or their motivation was based on their own interests of the Jacobite Church? Answering such a question requires scrutinizing the actions and desires of both sides. For instance, in 1581 AD, the Syrian Patriarch Naʿmallāh sent an epistle to the Pope written in Latin, requesting the Pope to ratify the appointment of his nephew as his successor. He asserted that the Orthodox Greek Patriarch had no rights to appoint Syrian counterparts. In his letter, he emphasized the antiquity of the Syrian Church, demanding that the Pope remove the term "Jacobite" and instead refer to the Syrian Patriarch as the Patriarch of Antioch.

Although the Syrians had not always conformed to Rome, they also did not recognize the authority of the Greek Patriarch, even during the Ottoman era, which divided Christians into communities under the Millet system. Moreover, Dawud Shah explained that the Jacobite community was in a sorrowful state due to ridicule from various groups in Syria, especially the Turks and Greeks. For the Jacobite community, their relationship with the Holy See would legitimize their status, or at the very least, secure undeniable recognition by the Holy See as the rightful heirs to the Patriarch of Antioch. Such recognition would attract the interest of the Ottoman Empire and lead to equal treatment with their counterparts. On the other hand, the Holy See was cautious not to alienate the Greek Patriarch, as his submission to Rome could potentially bring all communities under his jurisdiction into union. Nonetheless, the Holy See altered the formal title "Patriarch of Antioch" and referred to Dawud Shah as the Antiochian Patriarch. The Pope sent an episcopal envoy, Leonard Abel, accompanied by two Jesuit priests. The papal envoy secured an imperial decree from the Ottoman court, granting permission to visit Churches in Jerusalem and other locations in the Near East.

The papal commission met the deputy of the Patriarch in Aleppo and continued to Edessa, where they encountered the Patriarch's delegation, which included Metropolitan Toma and the brother of the newly appointed Syrian Patriarch. The Syrian delegation was cautious in dealing with the papal commission, accusing the papal deputy of intending to tamper with the Syrian doctrine and excommunicate their saints—actions unacceptable to the Syrians. The Patriarch's delegation attributed the Patriarch's absence to security concerns linked to the Ottoman Empire. This raises the question: Was the Ottoman decree granted to the papal delegation limited? According to the concession, the Ottomans guaranteed the safety of the religious delegations' members and property. However, in practice, they imposed restrictions on their nationals. While the missionary expedition enjoyed some freedom in preaching and movement, Ottoman Christians were prohibited from engaging in foreign relations. Although the meeting was accomplished, and many obstacles were overcome, divergent views on the Chalcedonian Council and the excommunication of Discords led to its failure⁵⁴.

⁵⁴Ezzo. The Letter of the Patriarch Ignatius N'met Allah, AL Mashreq, no.8, 1933, p. 613-624.

The old Patriarch's endeavors were not in vain. The Jacobite episcopate of Aleppo and its hierarchy accepted the Catholic doctrine, and the head of the episcopate, Mansor Ibn Qure', sent an epistle confirming the decision. The letter arrived during the reign of Pope Sixtus V (1585–1590). In return, the Pope honored the Metropolitan of the episcopate with the rank of Count of the Apostolic Palace and a golden chain as a reward for his faithfulness and efforts to spread the Catholic faith. A report submitted to Pope Sixtus V by the papal envoy highlighted that the mission extended beyond negotiations with the newly appointed Syrian Patriarch. It included efforts to connect with the Armenian Patriarch, the Melkite Patriarch, and the Patriarch of Jerusalem. The envoy indicated that Catholic persecution in Amed was extreme, impeding connections with the Syrian Patriarch. Furthermore, the Syrian Patriarch's deputy, Toma, warned that accepting the Chalcedonian Council would provoke strong emotions among Syrians, and the excommunication of Discords could ignite a revolution in the Syrian community⁵⁵.

A letter sent by Syrian Patriarch Dawud to Deacon John in Egypt revealed his desire for union with the Catholic Church. However, he retreated due to unrest and trouble instigated by his enemies. Na'mallāh also pointed out to Cardinal Santa Severina that union without the Copts and Ethiopians would be futile, stating that "Jacobites and the Copts are friends together and are like brothers, and particularly with the [Jacobite] Patriarch, who says insomuch that his nation must wait for the result of the mission and the resolution of the Copts"⁵⁶.

5) The Relationship Between the Syrian Jacobite and the Vatican since the establishment of the Congregation of Propagation of the Faith

The relationship between the two Churches during this phase was represented by Atallah Ibn Issa Al-Halabi, the Metropolitan of Damascus and Homs, who embraced the Catholic doctrine under the guidance of the head of a monastery in Aleppo and attorney of the Friars Minor in Syria and Armenia, Fermodi Bergamo. Upon Fermodi's recommendation, the Metropolitan traveled to Rome, accompanied by the chief of the Carmelite mission, Father Toma, John Stefano, and Rizkallah, the Maronite prelate. Father Fermodi wrote two letters of recommendation about the

⁵⁵Hayek. The relationship of Jacobite Syriac Church with the Holy See since 1143-1656, p.155-160.

⁵⁶John. Confessional Politics and Religious Identity in the Early Jesuit Missions to the Ottoman Empire, Syracuse University, 2014, p.221.

Metropolitan to Monseigneur Ingli, the secretary of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. One session between the secretary of the Congregation and Metropolitan Atallah Ibn Issa unveiled that the Syrian community was spread across Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, Egypt, and Armenia and was presided over by a Patriarch residing in Mardin, named Hadit Allah at the time. The Patriarch had authority over seventy-two bishops, including twenty-four Metropolitans.

During deliberations, the Metropolitan of Damascus requested that the Congregation allow the Syrians to continue the practice of sanctification on bread with oil and salt, as adhering to the blessing on unleavened bread would cause significant disharmony within the Syrian community. This request demonstrates that the Eastern community, despite the missionary efforts to Latinize and spread Catholicism, remained firmly rooted in their traditions and were unwilling to compromise on fundamental aspects of their faith. Despite these differences, the meeting brought about several resolutions that were sent as epistles to the Syrian Patriarch. These included an explicit invitation to union with the Holy See, delivered through the chief Franciscan in Jerusalem. Additionally, letters of recommendation were sent to support the Metropolitan in his mission.

Upon returning to Aleppo, the Metropolitan faced persecution and hardship, which prompted him to seek refuge in his episcopate in Damascus. However, his relatives rejected him. Consequently, he turned to the Syrian Patriarch in Aleppo for support. At that time, the Syrian people viewed Catholics with suspicion and disdain, considering them heretics who had strayed from the true faith. Furthermore, the Ottoman authorities regarded any association with the West as betrayal punishable by death. Due to these circumstances, the Syrian Patriarch refrained from writing directly to the Pope but authorized his Metropolitan to provide obedience on his behalf.

The Patriarch did not abandon his dismissed Metropolitan; on the contrary, he appointed him to the episcopate of Hasankeyf in Northern Syria and Southeastern Turkey. During this time, the Metropolitan maintained a rigid relationship with the Jesuit Fathers, who sought his permission to preach in the region. However, the Metropolitan's endorsement of their mission led to an uprising against him. Amidst the insurrection, the Turks imprisoned the Metropolitan. The Patriarch's death in 1652 caused a schism within the Syrian community, resulting in a struggle for the Patriarchal seat among Gregory Shukr Allah Ibn Na' mallāh , Shimon Al-Tur Abdinie, and Yesu' bin Qamsha

Al-Amdi. Taking advantage of the situation, Yeshu' collaborated with Aleppo's governor, Ibrahim Bey, to evict Shimon from his residence in Aleppo, forcing him to relocate to Cyprus⁵⁷.

During this time, the French consul François Pique in Aleppo was the primary protector of Catholicism in the East. He reinstated the Patriarch Shimon to the Syrian Patriarchate in 1652 AD. There is no doubt that the submission of the Patriarch in 1641 AD to the Pope increased the support of the French consul, who always tried to win over the Patriarch and convert him to Catholicism. However, the consul took advantage of the death of the Archbishop of Aleppo and nominated Andrew Akhigan, who graduated from one of the papal schools in Rome to occupy the position. Since the priest declared his adoption of Catholicism, he sought refuge in Mount Lebanon at the Maronite Patriarchate⁵⁸. The French consul alluded to the Syrian Patriarch that the priest should be appointed to the episcopate of Aleppo, and since the Patriarch needed the help of the consul, he accepted the proposal with gratitude. The consul wrote to the Maronite Patriarch, requesting that Akhigan be consecrated as Archbishop according to Latin customs. When the Archbishop arrived in Aleppo to assume his position, the Syrian Patriarch changed his mind and opposed the appointment.

In response, the French consul appealed to the French ambassador in Constantinople, who secured a decree installing Akhigan as Archbishop. This decision provoked opposition within the Syrian community, leading to heated tensions. The hostility forced Akhigan to retreat to Mount Lebanon in 1657, despite the consul's intervention. The French consul later exploited internal conflicts within the Syrian community in Aleppo, which consisted of 5,000 members, to reinstate Akhigan as Archbishop in 1658. Despite French support, the Archbishop faced severe opposition. He was accused of inciting the Syrian community against the Ottoman Empire, resulting in widespread unrest among the Christian population of Aleppo. To mitigate the situation, the governor of Aleppo imprisoned Akhigan. He was later released due to the consul's intervention.

The consul and the governor of Aleppo were bound in a friendship and in their endeavors to protect the archbishop, they secured an order stating that "If the heretics harassed the archbishop and

⁵⁷Hayek. The relationship of Jacobite Syriac Church with the Holy See since 1143-1656, p. 185.

⁵⁸Fr Giuseppe di S. Maria O.C.D Sebastiani, the Journey of Sebastiani to Iraq in 1666, translated from Italian by Peter Hadad, Beirut, 2016, p.75.

forced him to leave Aleppo, the responsibility lies on their clergymen and for that they have to pay a fine of 2000 pieces of silver to the governor and 500 to the Judge". It was said that because of the Archbishop and the consul, three quarters of the Christian people of Aleppo converted to Catholicism, and when the Patriarch Shimon died, the archbishop was appointed in his place with the help and support of the new French consul Monsieur Baron who succeeded the consul François Pique in Aleppo⁵⁹. However, the death of the Syrian Patriarch Shimon in 1662 AD opened the door to the conflict on the Patriarch's chair. The Catholic Archbishop of Aleppo, Andrew Akhigan, was elected as the Catholic Patriarch in Aleppo. In a letter sent by the Catholic Patriarch of Aleppo, on that occasion, to the king of France, it could be understood that the Syrian Catholics at that time had nine priests serving a congregation of 800 Catholic converts.

Meanwhile, the second struggle emerged for the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchal seat in Diyarbakir, a See of Abd Al-Messieh, rivalled by Shukr Allah. The governor of Diyarbakir took Shukr Allah's claim into consideration and managed to get an iradah from the Ottoman Porte confirming him as the Patriarch. However, Abd Al-Messieh, backed by the Syrian Orthodox clergy in Diyarbakir, got another iradah from the Porte, deposing his rival. Then again, thanks to the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, Abd Al-Messieh had even been able to isolate the Syrian Catholic Patriarch in Aleppo. A letter containing highly useful information from this period is that which was sent by Patriarch Andrew to the French ambassador in Constantinople. Patriarch Andrew stated that his rivals for the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate were actually prelates of his sect. In return, the French ambassador secured affirmance from the Ottoman Porte confirming Andrew as Catholic Patriarch in Aleppo.

Encouraged by this, Patriarch Andrew made a tour to see for himself the state of Catholicism within his patriarchate. He toured Diyarbakir, Mardin, and Edessa, finding that most Catholic clergy were afraid, saying that they dared not even mention that they were Catholics. When the Patriarch tried to consecrate a Catholic bishop in one of these cities, the people present objected so strongly to the act as possibly bringing about persecution against the Catholics that he had to

⁵⁹Sarah, Peter. The biography of François Pique, AL Mashreq journal, No 3, 1925, p. 179-194.

back down. In 1677, Patriarch Andrew died after naming as the successor to the Patriarchate Metropolitan of Jerusalem Peter Shahbadin Gregory⁶⁰.

6) The Syrian Catholic Patriarch Peter Shahbadin Gregory

Upon the death of Patriarch Andrew, the Orthodox Syrian Patriarch Abd Al-Messieh took the episcopal chair of Aleppo and promised to walk in the footsteps of the late Catholic Patriarch. Soon, his adherence to Catholicism, however, brought about his removal from his position in Mardin, so he returned to Mardin and publicly abjured the Catholic doctrine. In turn, the Catholics of Aleppo called upon the Metropolitan of Jerusalem and installed him as Catholic Patriarch. On that occasion, the Syrian Catholic Patriarch sent a letter with the Capuchin and Jesuit missionaries to the King of France in 1687 AD, asking for his protection and the intercession of the French ambassador in Constantinople. The Patriarch underlined in the letter that his jurisdiction extended from Babylon to Egypt.

Meanwhile, the Jesuit head in Syria went to Rome for a pallium for the Patriarch and some official recognition, while the head of the Capuchins, Justinian, went to Constantinople to obtain a decree which recognizes the election of the Patriarch. In Rome, the Pope and the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith were cautious in confirming the new Patriarch since the letters arriving from adversaries expressed doubts concerning his aptitude and, moreover, his conversion was too fresh. But finally, under pressure from the Capuchins and Jesuits in Syria, the Holy See gave its promise of support.

The progress of the Catholic party alarmed Abd Al-Messieh who headed to Constantinople with a strong intention of deposing the Syrian Catholic Patriarch. Enormous bribes were needed; one is said to have been given to the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople. Abd Al-Messieh even denounced his adversary as a "Frank" - i.e., a Latin. He thus succeeded in obtaining from the Ottoman Porte a decree deposing the Catholic Patriarch. By this edict, Abd Al-Messieh went to Aleppo and bribed the Ottoman governor into executing the Catholic Patriarch. The Church was taken from him, and he, with his adherents, was obligated to flee Aleppo for Constantinople, where

⁶⁰Dionysius. The blessing of the lord in conversions of the Syrians, p. 95-97.

the Orthodox Patriarch and his party followed him in continued persecution against the Catholic converts.

The French ambassador at Constantinople, Monsieur de Querac, promised to support him with the Grand Vizier. The Catholic Patriarch appealed to the Grand Vizier, detailing his persecution. Convinced that the Catholic Patriarch was a traitor and in league with the Latin by the Orthodox party, the Grand Vizier condemned him to death. Nevertheless, through the intervention of the friars of Mar Francis, this was not carried out, and the Grand Vizier issued an edict confirming the Catholic Patriarch as general Patriarch of the Syrians. A similar situation in 1685 AD found the Orthodox Patriarch acquiring a firman for his stand and against Catholic Patriarch. However, through the intervention of Father Urban de Paris, the head of Capuchins and Monsieur Fabre, the French ambassador the matter was settled in his favor.

In 1685 AD, Abd Al-Messieh, the Orthodox Syrian Patriarch, died and was succeeded by Corkes, who became the Orthodox Patriarch in Mardin in 1687 AD. Corkes proved to be more radical than his predecessor and initiated a new persecution against the Catholic party. With the mediation of the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, Corkes petitioned Sultan Mustafa with accusations that the Arabic-speaking Christians had turned Catholic and were plotting to deliver the Sultanate to its enemies. Thereafter, he issued a firman against the Catholic Patriarch forbidding conversions to Catholicism. It was officially registered in the Court of Diyarbakir in 1689 AD and a copy was sent to Aleppo in 1690 AD. The Catholic Patriarch, upon learning of this, went into hiding. Meanwhile, the Orthodox Patriarch took over the Church of Aleppo and persecuted the Catholic community⁶¹.

In two letters sent by the Catholic Patriarch on July 8, 1694 AD to the Holy See, it was revealed that the Patriarch's deputy, Basil Isaac, had successfully obtained a decree from the Ottoman Porte reinstating the Patriarch after three years of isolation. The Patriarch mentioned two significant points in his letters. First, the decree would not have been issued without the assistance of the King of France, who served as the primary patron of Catholicism in the East. Second, securing the decree required a significant financial expenditure. Since neither the Patriarch nor the Church in the Levant could afford the cost, they borrowed funds from a Catholic Palestinian family of four

⁶¹Dionysius. The blessing of the lord in conversions of the Syrians, p.100-101.

brothers: Zameria Chalabi, Paolo Chalabi, Joseph Chalabi, and Kristopher, and they provided a good deal of support to the Patriarch in Constantinople. In recognition of their generosity and efforts, the Patriarch requested that the Pope honor them with knighthood.⁶²

Another source of funding came from charitable donations collected for the benefit of the Catholic Church. In two epistles addressed to Pope Innocent XII (1615–1700) and Cardinal Edward Gebo, the secretary of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, in 1694 AD, the Patriarch acknowledged the support of the King of France and detailed the journey of Athanasius, the prelate of Safar. The Patriarch had consecrated Athanasius as the metropolitan of Mardin and sent him to the Holy See to offer obedience and loyalty. Athanasius was also tasked with collecting charitable funds to give a hand to the Catholic Church's efforts. According to the documents, the Metropolitan traveled to Spain and then continued to India. However, on his return, the unfortunate Metropolitan was detained by the Prince of Cadiz in Spain, who confiscated the funds after accusing Athanasius of being a "Rumi" (Byzantine) heretic. The Patriarch stressed in his epistles that Athanasius was a devout Catholic and appealed to the Pope and the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to assist in recovering the seized funds, which were meant to advance the Catholic faith in the Levant⁶³.

Meanwhile, the Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo, Isaac, traveled to Constantinople and lodged a complaint with the Grand Vizier. In his petition, Isaac accused the Catholic Patriarch of being a "Latin" and collaborating with European powers. As such, the Grand Vizier deposed the Catholic Patriarch. In an unprecedented act, the Orthodox Patriarch attempted to desecrate the tomb of the late Catholic Patriarch Andrew Akhigan. To prevent this, the Catholic Patriarch Peter exhumed the remains of his predecessor and transported them to Cyprus in 1695 AD. During this time, Catholic clergymen faced severe persecution, ranging from fines to imprisonment. As a result, they dispersed to various locations, while the Catholic Patriarch headed to Rome, where he resided for three years. In 1697 AD, the war between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs ended, with the Ottoman Empire's defeat officially recognized. The Pope of the Vatican urged Habsburg King

⁶²Österreichisches Staatsarchive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Türkei V. Karton 23 (1526-1584). N 18, p. 93

⁶³ÖStA HHSTA Türkei V. Karton 23 (1526-1584). N 23, p. 89.

Leopold I to include in the Peace Treaty of Karlowitz (1699 AD) an additional provision which allows the Syrian Catholic Patriarch to reassume his office.

By the order of Sultan Mustafa II, the Patriarch reassumed the office for the fourth and final time in his life. The new decree granted him authority over all Jacobite and Catholic Syrians, with his jurisdiction extending to the provinces of Diyarbakir, Aleppo, Damascus, Mardin, and Mosul. However, the Patriarch's victory and that of his supporters were short-lived. Following the departure of the Habsburg ambassador, the leading advocate for the Patriarch in the Ottoman court, the opposition exploited the situation. They accused the Patriarch before Sheikh al-Islam Fadl-Allah, and the judge of Aleppo arrested the Catholic Patriarch and his clergy, branding them as Latin. The intervention of the King of Habsburg inadvertently harmed the Catholics in the Levant, as the Ottoman Porte viewed the Catholic Patriarch, who had accompanied the Habsburg ambassador in Constantinople, as a traitor. On August 14, 1701 AD, the Patriarch and his clergy were imprisoned in Aleppo. The judge declared that any Ottoman Christian subject who had helped the Latin would also face arrest. Efforts by the French consul in Aleppo and the French ambassador in Constantinople to secure their release were in vain.

On the 15th of November, the Catholic Patriarch, his Metropolitan Rizk-Allah, and nine priests were transferred to the prison of Adana⁶⁴. The harsh conditions endured by the Catholic group led to the death of Metropolitan Rizk-Allah. On September 9, new orders arrived from Constantinople prohibiting Ottoman Christians from converting to other sects or associating with the Latin, under penalty of life imprisonment. The persecution inflicted on the Catholic community by the Orthodox faction and Ottoman authorities drove many Catholic converts to emigrate from Aleppo to places like Egypt, while others reverted to their previous doctrines. The vacancy of the Catholic Patriarchate led the Holy See to seek a new candidate for the position. The choice fell on the Metropolitan of Amed, Basil Isaac.

In 1704 AD, Pope Clement XI sent an epistle elevating Basil Isaac to the rank of Patriarch of Antioch and instructing the French ambassador to obtain an Ottoman decree supporting his appointment. However, the Metropolitan, a man of deep wisdom and understanding, declined the offer. He believed it would reignite continuous and fruitless conflicts within the community.

⁶⁴Philip de. The Historical Series in Mentioning the Bishops of Syriac Dioceses, p. 202.

Despite his refusal, he agreed to oversee the affairs of the Catholic community. In 1706 AD, Basil Isaac traveled to Rome, where he devoted his time to studying, interpretation, and writing until his death in 1731 AD.

During this period, other clergymen sought refuge in Mount Lebanon, where they successfully converted segments of the Syrian population in Damascus. In response, the Orthodox Patriarch ordered the Orthodox Metropolitan of Damascus to persecute all Catholic priests who had escaped from Aleppo and sought refuge in territories under his dominion. With the assistance of the Ottoman government, the persecution extended beyond the priests to include all Catholic subjects. In 1711 AD, this persecution culminated in the killing of a young Syrian for his conversion to Catholicism. Following the death of the last Catholic Metropolitan of the Levant, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith decided to elevate the Catholic priest Na'mallāh to the Metropolitan rank. This priest, who had accompanied Patriarch Peter during his imprisonment in 1702 and was released in 1704 through French ambassadorial intervention, was consecrated in 1731 AD in Damascus by the Melkite Catholic Patriarch. The Holy See granted him authority over all Syrian inhabitants of Aleppo, Egypt, and the Near East. For safety, he established his residence at Saint Ephraim Monastery in Lebanon.

Despite ongoing persecution, Catholicism reached its peak in the first half of the 18th century in cities like Diyarbakir, Mosul, Mardin, and Damascus, largely due to the efforts of missionary expeditions. These missionaries endured tremendous hardship in their work. Meanwhile, peculiar circumstances in Iraq facilitated the spread of Catholicism. Latin monks entered Mosul in 1750 AD and established care centers providing humanitarian aid, particularly in medicine and education. European influence, represented by the French presence in the 18th century, also played an important role. Latin monks often enjoyed immunity and occasionally held diplomatic positions. For instance, the Latin Metropolitan of Baghdad, Emmanuel, served as the French consul and was titled "The King's Special Emissary." These foreign officials used their positions to expand the Catholic Church's reach, often securing decrees to include more Churches and dioceses under Catholic jurisdiction.

European diplomats also leveraged economic pressure to gain converts. Governors were encouraged to raise taxes on Eastern Christians, and those unable to pay sought protection and financial aid from French consuls. This aid came with the condition of conversion to Catholicism

and obedience to the Holy See. The conversion of the population in Qaraqosh exemplifies this dynamic⁶⁵. While European political intervention was significant, the missionary efforts themselves were diligent and impactful. For example, in 1680 AD, three Capuchin Fathers (Gabriel de Paris, Pacifique de Provence, and Juste de Blacevais) arrived at Baghdad en route to Isfahan. They obtained permission to open a chapel and celebrated Catholic services, attracting numerous Eastern Christians. One of the Fathers, Juste, remained in Baghdad to preach the Catholic doctrine, while the others continued to Iran. They later secured a decree from Shah Abbas to establish centers, including one in Baghdad.

In 1631 AD, the Capuchins built a Church in Baghdad dedicated to Saint Joseph, the first of its kind. During that time, another Capuchin Father arrived in Bagdad, and he described their work as follows: “the head of Church was responsible for preaching and repentance. The second Father taught Italian and Latin and Catholic hymns, and the third healed people as he was a doctor”⁶⁶. The Italian intellectual (Urbano Cerri) described the Capuchin Fathers in Bagdad with these words: “the Capuchin have a Church and diocese in Bagdad, they are successful, and they were respected by Muslims since they were skillful in medicine and mathematics. The Syrians and Armenians who converted to Catholicism came to their Church, and their children went to the school of Capuchins in order to acquire knowledge”⁶⁷. However, when Sultan Murad the Fourth took over Bagdad once again and expelled the Persian troops, a group of opponents petitioned the Sultan to seize the Church and chapel of the Capuchins because they were next to the tomb Mohmed Al-Azhari (a mystic Sheikh from the era of Abbasids). The Sultan confiscated the Church and drove the monks out. It was just a while until the monks returned to their Church, as the Italian administrator of the Ottoman artillery Michael Bey interceded with the Sultan to let the monks in their Church. On such a ground, the Sultan issued a high command in 1639 AD, highlighting the privileges of the monks. In 1655 AD, the Sultan Mehmet the fourth reconfirmed the privilege once again. In 1658 AD, the governor of Bagdad, Mohmed AL Khaski, demolished the Church and the chapel and established in their place a Mosque. However, one month later, the governor regretted

⁶⁵Shamun, Saliba. *The History of Mosul's Diocese*, Bagdad, 1984, p. 28-29.

⁶⁶Issac, Rafeal. *The Church of Christians of Bagdad during the Ottoman Era*, Arabic House, Beirut, 2010, p. 15-16-17.

⁶⁷Nerses Sayghian AL- Baghdadi. *The History of Catholic Armenians in Iraq*, Beirut, 1944, p. 7-8.

his decision because he got sick, and he had not recovered until one of the Capuchin Fathers took care of him. The governor, in his endeavors to repay the Capuchin Father for his benevolent deed, he granted the monks a building next to the Mosque. The building included also the Aleppine post office and later became the residence place of the English ambassador who was the director of the East India Trading Company⁶⁸. The aforementioned information illustrated that the missionary expedition did not have the sponsor of European high-ranking officials all the time, and most of this success was by virtue of their diligence. For instance, the French traveler, Paul Lukas, who was in Iraq in 1701AD, said in his diary that “on 8th of September, the birthday of virgin Marry, I was astonished that I have seen more than 200 hundred persons come to hear the service which the Capuchin Fathers were celebrating”⁶⁹. Another example elaborates the intensity of hardships and turmoil endured by the missionary Fathers during their mission. In 1721 AD, the Carmelite Father, Josef, entered Bagdad in order to establish a center for his community. The Christians of Bagdad refused to have any kind of relation with him since that would jeopardize them. He spent 8 years moving around Busra, Diyarbakir and Bagdad. Finally, he sought asylum in Aleppo after failing with his mission. In 1728 AD he was replaced with the Father Imanuel Baillet as an apostolic emissary. However, over his residency in a home of one of the Catholics, he got arrested by soldiers of the governor and thrown in jail. It is crystal-clear that the missionary Fathers started their work without permission or recommendation from either the Ottoman Empire or the European consuls. When the French ambassador heard of him, he named him a French consul to provide him with protection. Later, the French King’s deputy in India recommended him before the governor of Bagdad. The Father used the recommendation to establish a small Chapel and school.

Later, in 1750 AD, Dominican Fathers Turriani and Codoleoncini arrived in Mosul and established both a Syrian Catholic Church and a Chaldean Catholic Church despite significant perils. By 1747 AD, after over a century of missionary work, the Catholic population in the eastern Ottoman Empire reflected their success. For example, Mosul had 20 Catholic families, evenly split between Syrians and Chaldeans, while Tal Kayf hosted 150 Catholic families. When Metropolitan N'met Allah became too old to keep on leading the Catholic community, the Congregation for the

⁶⁸Issac. The Church of Christians of Bagdad during the Ottoman Era, p.16.

⁶⁹Nerses Sayghian AL-Baghdadi. The History of Catholic Armenians in Iraq, p. 12.

Propagation of the Faith appointed Gabriel Faison as his successor. Consecrated as the Catholic Metropolitan of Jerusalem and Deputy to the Catholic Patriarchate, Faison ordained numerous priests in Aleppo and Damascus and established a Catholic school near Saint Ephrem in Damascus. After his death in 1760 AD, Gregory Shukr-Allah Jarweh succeeded him⁷⁰.

7) Recognition of the Syrian Catholic Patriarchate by the Ottoman Empire

The Catholic Church during this period failed in appointing a Patriarch until 1781 AD, when Michael Jarweh was elected as the Syrian Catholic Patriarch. Patriarch Jarweh is considered the founder of the Catholic Church in the Levant up to the moment. Born in 1731 AD to a Jacobite family, his father was a deacon named N'met Allah, the brother of the aforesaid Catholic Metropolitan Gregory Shukr-Allah. As a well-educated youth, Michael Jarweh attracted the attention of the Church hierarchy. In 1744 AD, he was consecrated as a deacon by the Jacobite Metropolitan of Edessa, Corkis. Later, he was recognized by Jacobite Patriarch George III (1768–1781 AD). In 1751 AD, the Metropolitan sent the deacon to Edessa to oversee the priests there, indicating that the trust placed in him as a potential substitute for the Metropolitan's position.

During this time, the Jacobite Patriarch Gregory summoned the Metropolitan to preside over Deir al- Za'faran and the episcopate of Mardin. In 1760 AD, Michael Jarweh was named as Eastern Maphrian following the death of his predecessor. By 1768 AD, he was nominated to run the See of Jacobite Patriarchate under the name of Gregory (1768-1781 AD). It is worth mentioning that the writer of the book (The History of Mosul's Diocese) states that the Metropolitan of Edessa, Corkis, assumed the affairs of the Jacobite Patriarchate in 1768 AD under the name of Gregory IV, naming his predecessor Gregory III⁷¹. In examining other sources, the writer seems to have made a mistake in title arrangement; since Le P. Aphram Barson, the writer of the book (Historie Du Couvent De S. Hanania Appele Deir-Uz-Zapharan), mentioned that Corkis assumed the chair of the Jacobite Patriarchate in 1768 AD under the name Georgy II⁷². Furthermore, The Patriarch

⁷⁰Dionysius. The Blessing of the Lord in Conversions of the Syrians, p. 194.

⁷¹Shamun. The History of Mosul's Diocese, p. 130-131.

⁷²Le P. Aphram, Barson. Historie Du Couvent De S Hanania Appele Deir-uz-Zapharan, Syriac Press, Mardin, 1917, p.87.

Michael Jarweh mentioned in his diary that Gregory II appointed him to the episcopate of Aleppo in 1758 AD and noted that Gregory III died in 1781 AD⁷³.

After returning to Aleppo, Michael Jarweh was ordained as a priest in 1757 AD by the Jacobite Metropolitan of Jerusalem, Gregory. Seven years later, in 1766 AD, the Jacobite Patriarch summoned him to his residence at Deir Uz-Zapharan and appointed him to the episcopate of Aleppo upon the request of both Catholic and Jacobite Christians of Aleppo. His jurisdiction included Tripoli, Homs, Aleppo, Hama, Nabk, Sadad, and Al-Qaryatain. Patriarch Michael Jarweh documented the history of his life between 1757 and 1785 AD, describing the turmoil and hardships endured by himself and his clergy in Aleppo, Mosul, and Baghdad. According to his manuscript, Jarweh began his Catholic journey on the first day of his priesthood in 1757 AD, introducing minor Catholic traditions and abolishing Jacobite ones. Despite his enthusiasm, he did not initially dare to declare his Catholic faith openly. In an effort to gain the Jacobite Patriarch's favor, Michael Jarweh traveled to the Patriarch's residence in Diyarbakir to persuade him to accept the Catholic doctrine. However, the Patriarch rejected Catholicism and sent Michael back to Aleppo, elevating him to the rank of Metropolitan and forcing him to abandon the Catholic practices he had introduced into the Church.

Patriarch Michael mentioned that the Jacobite Patriarch died shortly after his arrival in Aleppo, and his successor, Gregory III, began suppressing him. Consequently, the Metropolitan traveled to Deir Uz-Zapharan to persuade Gregory III to embrace the Catholic faith by offering him a substantial sum of money. However, the Patriarch refused the bribe and kept the Metropolitan under close watch in Deir Uz-Zapharan. Four years later, the Metropolitan escaped to Aleppo, where he publicly proclaimed his Catholic faith and sent a profession of faith to the Pope. Six months later, the Jacobite Patriarch arrived in Aleppo with his priests, confiscating the Church. However, the Patriarch's victory was short-lived, as the Catholic faction forcibly regained control of the Church. In retaliation, the Jacobite Patriarch excommunicated Metropolitan Michael. During this time, a group of Armenian Orthodox accused the Metropolitan before the governor of Aleppo, but the exact charges are not mentioned. The governor responded by confiscating the Church, arresting the Metropolitan and his companions, and ordering that the group be hanged.

⁷³Jarweh, Michael. Biography, Beth Mardutho Library, 2000. p.6. The Original manuscript (Short history of Michael Jarweh from 1757 to 1781 AD, placed in Deir El Sherfet in Lebanon under the N. 25/6.

Nonetheless, the intervention of the French consul and his dragoman, Moses, secured the release of the Catholic faction.

The Jacobite Patriarch, with the help of the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, managed to obtain a decree exiling the Metropolitan. Upon hearing this, the Metropolitan fled to Alexandria, Egypt. Since the decree could not be enacted without his presence, the Jacobite faction concealed the order, awaiting his return. The Metropolitan, falling for the ruse, dismissed the decree as mere rumor. Seven months later, he set sail for Latakia en route to Aleppo. Upon his arrival in Aleppo, the Jacobite Patriarch informed the governor of the decree and accused the Metropolitan of stealing gold instruments from the Church. The Patriarch demanded the governor implement the order and force the Metropolitan to pay compensation. The governor arrested the Metropolitan and detained him outside Aleppo for 13 days. Rather than carrying out the decree, the governor used the situation to extort as much money as possible. Through threats and coercion, he succeeded in extracting ten thousand Roman gold coins from the Metropolitan. Shortly afterward, the Jacobite Patriarch passed away.

Patriarch Michael noted that following the death of the Jacobite Patriarch, Jacobites and Syrians from across the Levant (Syria and Mesopotamia) sent petitions informing him of the Patriarch's death. In addition, leaders of the Orthodox episcopate accepted Catholic doctrine and abandoned incompatible traditions, such as the acquittal of the seven individuals excommunicated by the Orthodox Church and the phrase "who was crucified for us." Furthermore, they expressed their desire to enthrone the Metropolitan as their Patriarch. Under the persistent demands and insistence of the Syrian hierarchy, Patriarch Michael accepted their invitation to assume the Patriarchate. In 1781 AD, Metropolitan Michael Jarweh arrived in Mardin with his Catholic followers. However, the unanimous decision regarding the Patriarch's consecration faced opposition from Metropolitans Matay and his brother Abd al-Ahad, who had formerly served the deceased Patriarch. These two Metropolitans formed the opposing faction and began inciting the populace against Metropolitan Michael. Michael Jarweh mentioned that he offered them the Patriarchal chair under the condition of accepting communion with the Catholic Church, but the Jacobite faction rejected the proposal.

During this time, as Metropolitan Michael indicated, both Catholics and Jacobites resorted to bribing Ottoman authorities to secure political support for their claim to the Syrian Patriarchate's

chair. Since Mardin was under the authority of the governor of Baghdad, the Catholic faction paid a substantial sum to obtain permission to consecrate their Patriarch at Deir Uz-Zapharan. They also provided 3,000 pieces of Roman gold to obtain an Ottoman decree endorsing Michael Jarweh's appointment. In January 1782 AD, four Metropolitans consecrated Michael Jarweh as Patriarch. The celebration was extraordinary, with thousands of Catholics reportedly attending. After his consecration, the Patriarch summoned the dissenting Metropolitans, though he did not specify the reason. It is likely he sought their full submission to his authority. However, the two Metropolitans escaped to Mount Tur-Abdin.

Patriarch Michael described the inhabitants of Mount Tur-Abdin as rebellious, savage, and bloodthirsty heretics, living alongside the Kurds. Fearing for his safety, the Patriarch noted that these inhabitants disregarded the authority of the governors of Mardin and Baghdad, as well as the Sultan himself. As a result, he spent his time moving cautiously around Mardin. The Patriarch also alleged a coalition between the Christians of the Mount and the Kurds. During that period, the Kurds besieged Mardin, stemming from a feud with its authorities. The governor fled the city, and the Kurds seized control, looting and destroying many places. They imposed heavy taxes on the city's residents. The Patriarch himself paid a significant sum to protect his life and even employed Kurdish militants for his personal protection and to guard the Church. The Patriarch claimed that heretical factions in Mardin attempted to assassinate him, conspiring with the Kurds to put the plan into action. When these efforts failed, they sought assistance from their allies in Mount Tur-Abdin. Further failing in their schemes, they approached the Armenian Patriarch in Constantinople, seeking his intervention to prevent the Ottoman Porte from ratifying Michael Jarweh's consecration.

According to Patriarch Michael, one of the opposing Metropolitans ordained four priests as Metropolitans, who then consecrated him as a rival Patriarch. The Jacobite Patriarch also sent his brother to pledge allegiance to the Armenian Patriarch in Constantinople, offering substantial bribes. The Armenian Patriarch forwarded instructions to the Armenian Metropolitan of Diyarbakir, inciting him to support the Jacobite Patriarch before the Ottoman authorities. The Armenian Patriarch succeeded in his mission. The governor of Mardin, Abdy Bey, sided with the Jacobite Patriarch, summoning him to the city and presenting him with the Ottoman coat of arms. With this endorsement, the Jacobite faction began persecuting the Catholic community. The

governor confiscated the Catholic Church and handed it over to the Jacobite Patriarch. Furthermore, he forced the city's inhabitants and surrounding villages under his jurisdiction to worship in accordance with the Jacobite traditions. The Catholic Patriarch lamented the heavy oppression endured by his followers. One priest, Jacob, who had converted to Catholicism under Patriarch Michael, refused to pledge loyalty to the Jacobite Patriarch and was consequently hanged by the governor's order. Neither the governor of Baghdad nor the French ambassador could secure an Ottoman decree endorsing the Catholic Patriarch. Meanwhile, the Armenian and Greek Patriarchs of Constantinople successfully obtained decrees which support the Jacobite Patriarch, labeling the Catholic Patriarch as an intruder and oppressor. All churches were transferred to the Jacobite faction, and the Catholic community was imprisoned for 40 days.

Subsequently, the Jacobite Patriarch bribed the governor to detain Patriarch Michael and his followers for an additional 13 days. According to Michael, the Jacobite Patriarch plotted to have them killed discreetly. When the governor uncovered this plan, he transferred the Catholic Patriarch and his companions to the city prison, where they were held for five months. When a new governor was appointed in Mardin, the Jacobite Patriarch bribed him to exile the Catholic Patriarch to the island of Rhodes and force Catholic clergymen to renounce their faith. However, the Catholic Patriarch was informed by some supporters that the governor intended to have him killed on his way to the island, in accordance with the Jacobite Patriarch's wishes. Consequently, the Catholic Patriarch bribed the governor to change his place of exile to Mosul, where the Catholic community was flourishing. The Patriarch remained in the custody of the governor of Mosul for 60 days before he was transferred to Baghdad.

In Baghdad, the governor extorted the Catholic Patriarch, seeking to extract as much money as possible. During this time, a new decree was issued by the Ottoman Porte ordering the exile of the Catholic Patriarch as well as 28 of his clergy. The papal emissary in Constantinople advised the Patriarch to flee immediately, as the French ambassador had informed him that the situation was beyond his control, and he could no longer aid. Disguised as a Bedouin, the Patriarch fled the city with three companions, heading for Mount Lebanon. Outside the city, the Patriarch hired a group of Bedouins to escort them to Mount Lebanon. He described the suffering and hardships they

endured during their two-month journey⁷⁴. The information presented by Patriarch Michael Jarweh about his life, as of his youth to his consecration as Patriarch in 1782 AD, could be organized differently. After returning to Aleppo, the deacon Michael actively engaged with his community. Due to his wealth and knowledge, he gained respect among all Christians, both Catholic and Orthodox. In his efforts to unite the Christians of Aleppo, he introduced Catholic traditions that did not conflict with Orthodox practices. At this time, it cannot be said definitively that Michael was Catholic, as the Jacobite Patriarch supported his endeavors.

Driven by his zeal for knowledge, Michael engaged with many missionaries, including Brother Francis, the Carmelite superior in Aleppo. The people of Aleppo deemed Deacon Michael a defender of Christianity and the Orthodox doctrine. However, his debates with Brother Francis marked a turning point in his life. He subsequently spent seven years in pursuit of knowledge and became convinced that the Catholic doctrine was the best path to salvation. Consequently, he allowed the Carmelite Fathers to lead the Church in Aleppo. When news of these developments reached the Jacobite Patriarch _ whether Gregory I or Gregory II is debated among scholars _ he wrote to his priests in 1764 AD, expressing concerns about Michael's alignment with Catholicism. The letter indicated that the Jacobite hierarchy was turning against Michael, with his nephew Corkis, the Maphrian of the East, threatening him. The letter also suggested that the Jacobite Patriarch had endorsed certain Catholic traditions as early as 1760 AD, albeit reluctantly.

Another instance involves Michael's journey to Mardin, where he debated the Jacobite Patriarch about converting to Catholicism. Michael's manuscript claimed that the Patriarch rejected his arguments and forced him to abandon Catholic practices. However, this account seems to be inconsistent, as the Patriarch later elevated Michael to the rank of bishop, fully aware of his inclinations. Some sources suggest that the Jacobite Patriarch privately supported Michael's Catholic sympathies. When Michael initially refused ordination as a Metropolitan, the Patriarch reportedly advised him to accept the position to prevent the Jacobite hierarchy from appointing another Metropolitan, which would nullify his efforts. The Patriarch allegedly told Michael, "We will do as you wish in the future," signaling his covert support for union with the Holy See⁷⁵. The manuscript by Patriarch Michael Jarweh did not discuss the public announcement of Catholicism

⁷⁴Jarweh. Biography, p. 7-25.

⁷⁵Dionysius. The Blessing of the Lord in Conversions of the Syrians, p. 194-197.

in Aleppo or the reactions it stirred. It also failed to clarify the timeline of Michael's escape from Mardin or the epistle of Pope Clement XIV, which reportedly arrived in Aleppo around that time, leaving the matter ambiguous.

In 1773 AD, a letter bearing the seal of the President of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith reached Aleppo. The letter praised Metropolitan Michael Jarweh's efforts and detailed Catholic doctrine, emphasizing the righteousness and supremacy of the Holy See. In January 1774 AD, upon his arrival in Aleppo, Metropolitan Michael officially accepted Catholicism and documented his confession in the presence of the Catholic Rumi Metropolitan and Father Anton, the superior of the Capuchins. This confession, along with testimonies from the Fathers, was sent directly to the Holy See. However, the Holy See either did not respond or the letters did not reach their destination. In January 1775 AD, Michael rewrote his confession and forwarded it again. By May of the same year, an epistle from Pope Pius VI arrived in Aleppo, formally acknowledging Michael's confession and supporting him. The epistle was accompanied by symbolic items, including a cross, papal coat of arms, a ring, and a crown⁷⁶.

The news of the Metropolitan of Aleppo's submission to the Holy See had significant implications for the Catholic community in the East. Gregory Joseph, the Catholic Metropolitan of Jerusalem who succeeded Gregory Shukr-Allah Jarweh in overseeing the affairs of the Catholic community, refused to endorse the Holy See's decision and did not recognize Michael Jarweh as the Catholic Metropolitan of the Syrians in Aleppo. Gregory Joseph viewed himself as the sole legitimate authority over Catholic Syrians, regardless of their location, and considered Michael Jarweh a competitor who might diminish his authority. To assert his position, Gregory Joseph went to Aleppo, supported by the Maronite Metropolitan of Aleppo, the renowned Syrian intellectual John, and Franciscan friars. Conversely, Michael Jarweh garnered the support of the Capuchins, Carmelites, Maronite priests, the deputy of the Catholic Armenian Patriarch, and Michael Jarbu', the Metropolitan of the Catholic Rumi. Despite this division, Gregory Joseph challenged the legality of Michael's position and turned against him. He went so far as to ordain his brother John as the Metropolitan of Aleppo and excommunicated six priests who had recently converted to Catholicism. In 1778 AD, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith examined the case

⁷⁶Dionysius. *The Blessing of the Lord in Conversions of the Syrians*, p. 205-206.

and ultimately endorsed Michael Jarweh's incumbency over the episcopate of Aleppo and its inhabitants. Nevertheless, the Metropolitan of Jerusalem retained authority over all Syrian Catholics outside of Aleppo⁷⁷.

Another interesting issue is Patriarch Michael Jarweh's depiction of the Syrians in the Mount of Tur Abdin, which warrants closer examination. The Patriarch suggested that a coalition existed between the Kurds and the Jacobite Syrians. Historically, the Kurdish Amirs ruled the Jazira region from 1300 to 1855 AD, when the last governor was captured and executed in Constantinople. When the Ottoman Empire extended its control to regions west of Iran, including Asia Minor, Syria, and Iraq, the Sultan endorsed the privileges of Kurdish Amir Badr Khan (1514–1568) over Jazira and its districts. However, this arrangement excluded the Mount of Tur Abdin and the district of the fortress of Haytham, both of which were inhabited entirely by Christians. The Mount of Tur Abdin and the fortress of Haytham were agriculturally rich areas, vital to the Kurdish Amirs, who sought to control them. Nasir Bey was the first to exert domination over the Mount in 1569 AD, and this situation persisted over time. However, the Kurdish Amirs did not treat the Christian inhabitants as equals. Instead, they imposed havoc and destruction on their subjects.

For example, a Syriac metrical poem by Priest Yuhana of Basibrina, from Qardsh, described the events in Tur Abdin in a vivid manner in 1714 AD:

‘Savage rulers and governors attacked and destroyed Tur Abdin. They slaughtered priests and Church officers and spilled the blood of believers like rivers. They spread fright among people and instigated some of them to kill, loot, and destroy Churches. The most wicked of them all was an Amir called Bidayn, who destroyed the Church of Mar Ephraim in the village of Bati and killed many of its citizens. At Zaz, he slaughtered five men and, with his men, demolished the Church of Mar Dimet. He destroyed many other Churches and killed thousands. He set fire to the villages of Ba Sigle and Karboran and in the entire region extending from Medon to Aine. He annihilated men, women, and children in these regions’⁷⁸.

⁷⁷Philip de. The historical series in mentioning the bishops of Syriac dioceses, p. 90-91.

⁷⁸Barsoum, Ignatius Aphram. The History of Tur Abdin, Translated by Matti Moosa, Gorgias Press, USA, 2008, p. 133.

Other Kurdish Amirs, such as Shams al-Din (1711–1714), Badr Khan (1833–1846), and Izz al-Din Scher and his brother Mas'ud (1854–1855), left nothing but devastation in their wake. Although the Mount and its inhabitants occasionally experienced periods of relative peace, the historical evidence suggests that the Christians of the Mount were merely subjects under the rule of Kurdish Amirs. Therefore, contrary to Patriarch Michael Jarweh's depiction, there is no evidence of a coalition between the Christians of the Mount and the Kurds. Instead, the relationship between the two groups was marked by subjugation and persecution⁷⁹. The Patriarch controversially spoke of the inhabitants of Mount Tur Abdin as "savage people living with the Kurds." The biased and radical view expressed above is original to Syrian literature, most of all, as far as it involves the region's entire Christian population. Both Jacobites and Catholics would commonly receive the term "heretic" in chronicles and other records, religious judgment without the sense of moral condemnations. It was the current catch-all expression at that time. The Patriarch appeared to disregard his own Syrian origins and the historical peculiarity of Mount Tur Abdin, which had been a pilgrimage site since the early years of Christianity.

An Assyrian cuneiform tablet discovered in the ruins of a village on Mount Tur Abdin asserts that the Assyrian King Adad-Nirari II (911–889 BC) fought the Arameans of that region several times. The first appearance of Christianity in the Mount Tur Abdin took place as early as AD 120, with one bishop, Mizra from Beth Zabdai, which is an area naturally connected to the Mount. However, only more reliable sources confirm that a large expansion of Christianity across the region took place from the 4th to the 6th century. Jacob of Nisibis (309–338 AD), bishop of Nisibis, a famous Christian center at the time, preached the Gospel in the area and converted a lot of its inhabitants to Christianity. One of his most renowned disciples was Saint Ephraim, who was Syrian or Aramean, terms that express the same ethnic origin. In the region, the Christian evangelization went on and made Mount Tur Abdin a center for ascetic life. Famous persons, such as Saint Awgen the Copt, of the Monastery of Pachomius, came to the Mount in the mid-4th century to spread the Gospel. Many of his disciples built some of the famous monasteries such as Mar Malke of Suez and Mar Isaiah of Aleppo. Other famous personalities include the Mar Samuel and his disciple Mar Simon who founded the Monastery of Qartmin. The Mount also produced respected clergymen and martyrs like the Metropolitan of Amid, Mar Yuhana (John) Sa'uro, who founded

⁷⁹Barsoum. *The History of Tur Abdin*, p. 127.

the Temple of Forty Martyrs and a crossing over the Tigris in 384 AD. A few such examples demonstrate real Christian heritage from the time on Mount Tur Abdin⁸⁰. The hardships that gave reason for him to be at harsh variance with the region's Christians probably marred the Patriarch's heart.

Finally, the Patriarch settled in Keserwan, Mount Lebanon, where he lived in a deserted Chapel in a village called Beit Chabeb. He had to depend on the charity of the people. At this time, Mount Lebanon was in political unrest. The Sidon governor, Ahmad al-Jazzar, asked Prince Yusuf al-Shihabi to pay 300 packs of money and deliver the Mount's weapons. When the prince refused, al-Jazzar sent his soldiers to besiege Beirut, Sidon, and the Mount. This war lasted two years, finally ending in reconciliation. During these events, the Patriarch sought refuge with a poor peasant, his financial burdens increasing as he fell into debt. In 1784 AD, the Patriarch shifted to Deir Bzommar, where he was received by Basil IV, the Catholic Armenian Patriarch. Arrangements were made for him to stay in Daraoun, Lebanon, where he hired a school and a residence. In 1786 AD, subsidies from the Holy See and the Queen of Spain freed the Patriarch from his debts. He continued to take care of his community's affairs until his death in 1800 AD⁸¹. After the schism, the Syriac Jacobites styled their Church "Syriac Ancient" (Suryoye Kadmoye), to mark themselves off against the Syrian Catholics and to argue that they had the more ancient heritage. In 1835, the Syriac Jacobites petitioned for a statute that prohibited the Syrian Catholics from interfering with their community. The Syrian Catholic plenipotentiary counter-petitioned this statute and petitioned the state for recognition as a separate community from the Jacobites. Confronted with these demands, the Ottoman Porte promulgated a ferman that officially acknowledged the division of the Syriac community into two branches. The following were the terms of the decree;

"The Syriac Millet from the people of my exalted State, living in Diyarbakir, Jebel-i Tur, Mardin, Mosul, Baghdad, Aleppo, and Damascus, are separated into two groups. The first is called Syriac Jacobite, and the other is called simply Syriac." According to the decree, Syriac Jacobites came directly within the jurisdiction of the Gregorian Armenian Patriarchate, while Syriac Catholics were assigned to the Catholic plenipotentiary, dependent upon the recently established Armenian Catholic Patriarchate. Although, on paper, this marked the formal division between the two

⁸⁰Barsoum. The History of Tur Abdin, p.29-46.

⁸¹Armeleh. The Smart Flower in the Syriac Patriarchate of Antioch, Beirut, 1909, p.97.

communities, frictions continued into further state intervention that these two communities remained separate and forbidden from interfering in affairs concerning the other⁸².

⁸²Ozcosar, Ibrahim. Separation and conflict. Syriac Jacobites and Syriac Catholics in Mardin in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* Vol. 38 No. 2 (2014), P. 201-217.

Third Chapter: The Melkite Catholic Patriarchate

1) The Relationship between the Holy See and the Melkite Church during the Ottoman Domination in the 16th Century

The Melkite Church of the Levant did not distinguish in its administration from the Jacobite Church. Since the Ottomans conquered the East, the Patriarch of Constantinople ran the Melkite Church, making its entire clergymen belong to the Greek elements and neglecting the indigenous party. An Ottoman decree appointed the Melkite Patriarch issued by the Porte or the Sultan, and the relationship of the Melkite with the Holy See was ancient, as we mentioned in the first chapter. Metropolitan Yuwakim of Bethlehem was the first to inaugurate a relationship with European powers in the 16th century after visiting the Danubian Principalities, Ukraine, and Russia⁸³. Moreover, the Patriarch issued a publication that prevented all scandals against the Pope and illustrated the Pope's supremacy over all patriarchs, supporting his argument with the councils and laws of the Fathers⁸⁴.

The last quarter of the 16th century was a period of active contact between the Roman Catholic Church and Eastern Christian communities after many centuries of rupture, and the Melkite Church found a chance to restore its place among its counterparts in the new transformation. In the 16th century, the Melkite Patriarchate was revived due to many political and religious factors that contributed to its elevation during this time, like the establishment of the relatively stable and tolerant Ottoman rule, the relationship between the Constantinople Patriarchate and its sister, the Melkite, and the activities of the Catholic missionary expeditions in the East.

The missionary expeditions exploited the struggle among the Melkite community after the death of Patriarch Yuwakim Ibn Jum'a in 1576 AD; the Metropolitan of Tripoli, Dorotheus, and later the Patriarch of Antioch under the name of Yuwakim Daw, who was born in the village of Safita in Al-Husn region, was nominated as a candidate to Patriarchate's seat. On the other hand, another competitor, Mikhail al-Hamawi, overcame his opponent and became the Patriarch. Notwithstanding, Yuwakim Daw, continued to be one of the most influential figures of the Church. In 1581 AD, the Christians of Damascus forced Mikhail Al-Hamawi to resign and leave the city.

⁸³Panchenko, Constantin. A " Melkite Protorenaissance" A Forgotten Cultural Revival of The Melkites in The Late 16th Century, *Parole de l'Orient* 39, 2014, p. 133-151.

⁸⁴Anonymous Author. A brief history of the Roman Catholic Melkites, Beirut, 1884, p. 18.

However, the Metropolitan of Aleppo supported Mikhail and convinced the ex-Patriarch to deny his resignation and anathematize his opponents. At the same time, the Christians of Damascus invited Yuwakim Daw and appointed him as a Patriarch. On this ground, the Melkite Church was divided into Northern provinces that supported Mikhail and Southern areas which stood up for Yuwakim.

The struggle in the Melkite Patriarchate coincided with the missionary expedition activities in the Levant during the reign of Pope Gregory XIII (1503-1585 AD). The Jesuit emissary Giovanni Batista Eliano, who served in Syria at the time between 1580 and 1582 AD, connected with the rival Patriarch; exerting an effort to win over them to adhere to the cause of union proved futile. Patriarch Yuwakim was friendly with the missionaries but avoided any obligations. In his turn, Patriarch Mikhail, realizing the weakness of his position since the synod of Constantinople had not supported him anymore, promised the papal legate to take further steps to consolidate the relationship with the Holy See. However, there is no evidence that actual movements were taken, especially since the schism inside the Melkite Church was not settled yet. In 1582 AD, all the dignitaries of the Eastern Churches, Patriarch Silvestrus of Alexandria, Sophronius of Jerusalem, Yuwakim Daw, and Mikhail al-Hamawi met in Tripoli to seek a compromise. However, two years and a half later, the Ottoman Porte, under the recommendation of the Eastern Patriarch, delivered the throne of Antioch Yuwakim Daw, while Mikhail was deprived of all authorities until he died in 1592 AD⁸⁵.

⁸⁵Panchenko. A " Melkite Protorenaissance" A Forgotten Cultural Revival of The Melkites in The Late 16th Century, p.139.

2) The Mission of Leonardo Abel⁸⁶

Once more, the relationship between the missionary expedition and the Patriarch renewed since the newly appointed papal legate, Leonardo Abel, after an unsuccessful meeting with Yuwakim Daw, turned in 1585 AD to the ex-Patriarch Mikhail. As Mikhail had nothing to lose, and his heart was full of hatred toward his people, he accepted the papal offer and wrote an epistle admitting his adoption of the Catholic faith.

However, since the Patriarch had no authority over the Melkite Church or its population, his admission was not valuable. On the other hand, Patriarch Yuwakim Daw entrusted one of his trusts, named Anastasius Ibn Mujalla Al-Marmanity, with writing a response to the papal invitation. The apprentice started the letter by recalling the Pope's proposal concerning adopting Catholic doctrine and rituals, such as including filioque and using unleavened bread. The argument brought forward by Anastasius was not original, but it borrowed from the Byzantine anti-Catholic literature. This controversy started in the 9th century at the time of Patriarch Photius and later became highly active during the Age of Great Schism and the First Crusade. The arguments of Anastasius coincided word by word with the points made by Byzantine canonists of Nikon of the Black Mountain or Patriarch Simon of Jerusalem, the leading anti-Latin controversialist of the 11th century; therefore, Anastasius can be considered the founder of the Genre of Anti-Catholic polemics in Christian Arabic literature.

However, another question that imposes itself now is the calendar and the matter of its adoption. The problem immediately became political; Anastasius proved that the new calendar contradicted

⁸⁶ Leonard Abel was born in Malta in 1541 AD, he obtained a doctoral degree in civil and ecclesiastical law and was acquainted with Syriac, Arabic, Latin, Italian, Hebrew and Coptic. In 1578 AD, Pope Gregory XIII confirmed Leonard over the episcopate of Malta as deputy without having the bishopric rank. In the same year, he was known as a translator for the Arabic Language in Rome. The Syrian Patriarch N'met Allah insisted on having Leonard sent to the East to engage in the negotiation with the Easterners about the union. Pope Gregory XIII raised him to the episcopal rank, appointed him to the Latin episcopate of Sidon in 1582, and authorized him to celebrate services in all the lands of heretics and unbelievers. On the 30th of October, the Pope appointed Leonard as a papal emissary in Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt and all the East and was dispatched to the East on the 12th of March in 1583. Hayek. The relationship of Jacobite Syriac Church with the Holy See since 1143-1656, p.148-150.

the Council of Nicaea concerning the time of the Easter holiday. Other compositions appeared in the 16th century against the invitation of the Holy See, like the treatise of Yuhanna ibn Musallam from Damascus, who composed a controversial accusation against the Latin attitude to some nutritional restrictions. In the late 16th century, the Melkite Church returned to its natural place as one of the oldest Churches emphasizing that its tradition and customs do not belong to some heretics but, quite the contrary, it derived its legality from God himself⁸⁷. However, the relationship between the Holy See and the Melkite Church was gradually renewed by the missionary expedition that the Metropolitan of Aleppo, Malatius⁸⁸, connected with the Jesuits who came to Aleppo in 1623 AD from Izmir. The chief of Jesuit Fathers, Jerome Querot, became the writer of Malatius, and on this ground, the idea of union with the Holy See started, and the Metropolitan sent many epistles to Pope Urban VIII (1568-1644), including his profession of faith. Unfortunately, his death prevented further steps. His successor (Meletios of Chois), Malatius Al-Saqzi, who was a friar from the Greek Island of Chios, and belonged to the monks of St. Saba in Jerusalem, continued on the path of his predecessor by supporting Jesuit monks who dwelled in Damascus in 1643 AD. Moreover, he appointed Father Queyrot Jerome, the Jesuit chief, as a clerk for him and an instructor to his nephew Navitus, who was a deacon.

However, the Patriarch did not publicly profess his relation with the Holy See and his adoption of the Catholic faith, despite all the attempts carried out by the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith⁸⁹. The epistles were sent by missionary Fathers, assured that the Patriarch feared the Turks and the Patriarch of Constantinople. For instance, Capuchin Father Michel de Rennes reported the status to the Congregation over a meeting which was held with the Patriarch in 1640 AD, saying: "I confess, and I know, that the Roman Pontiff is the head of the Catholic Church, and I hold all his beliefs as true. If I did not fear the other Greeks, I would myself extol before all

⁸⁷Panchenko. A " Melkite Protorenaissance" A Forgotten Cultural Revival of the Melkites in The Late 16th Century, p. 133-151.

⁸⁸Idlibi, Naupitos. The Melkite bishops of Aleppo in the Modern Era, Aleppo, 1983, p. 27.

⁸⁹Almuhalisy, Constantine. The history of the Melkite Roman Church and Almuhalisy Monasticism, Sidon- Lebanon, 1938, Part 1, p. 70-72.

that I am subject of the aforesaid Roman Church, but ten thousand écus would not be sufficient to pay the evils which Constantinople would give out”⁹⁰.

However, his successor, Macarius III–Al-Halabi, had a good relationship with the Eastern European dignitaries and Russia. In 1653 AD, he started his journey with his son to Bulgaria, Wallachia, Kyiv, and Moscow to collect charity since he, the Melkite Patriarchate, was in debt. The Catholic community at the time numbered seven thousand souls in Syria; the Patriarch himself was one of them and secretly sent his profession of faith to the Holy See in 1661 AD, thanks to Father Ironimus Cero, the head of the Jesuits, and his brothers in their endeavor to spread the Catholic faith. However, the Patriarch did not profess his faith publicly, according to Almuhalisy, Yusuf, to keep relations with the Orthodox dignitaries and Tsar of Russia⁹¹.

Examining the case and displaying the evidence bring more facts and correct understandings. First of all, Patriarch Macarius participated in the consecration of the Syrian Catholic Patriarch, Andrew Akhigan, in the Jacobite Church of Aleppo in 1662 AD. Moreover, he defended the missionary expeditions against the Maronite Patriarch, George Bseb'eli, urging him to solve the matter by addressing: “Since you have been one with the Franks for a long time, may Your Paternity with your faithfulness, follow the Franks in their feasts; since the aforesaid Frankish monks have always had ‘open eyes’ to assist and do good to Maronites, especially in Aleppo. I can truly say that all the other nations respect you because the Frankish monks are considered by all these nations as disciples of Jesus Christ. Since Your Paternity, I say, forms a single entity with them, how is it possible that you have believed (some) ignorant words, separated yourself from them, and that you are now the cause of trouble among the Christians of Aleppo...!”.

In addition, the Patriarch sent his Catholic profession to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in 1665 AD. Moreover, during his stay in Moscow, he tried to convince the king of Poland, John Casimir, to mediate between Rome and the Eastern Church to conclude the union. Later on, he engaged in some liturgical work supporting the perpetuity of the Catholic faith against

⁹⁰Raheb, Abdallah. Conception of the Union in the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch (1622 - 1672), Beirut 1981, p.71.

⁹¹Almuhalisy, Yusuf. The outline of the history of the Melkite Church,3V, Sidon- Lebanon, 1949, Volume 2, p. 173.

Calvinists at the request of French Ambassador De Nointel. Due to the affection of the Patriarch with the Catholic faith, he was poisoned and later died in Damascus in 1672 AD⁹². This evidence indicates that the doings of the Patriarch were publicly in couple with Catholic faith in the East while the opposite evidence does not exist.

3) The Successors of Macarius III – Al-Halabi, their Relationship with the Holy See and Adoption of the Catholic Faith

After III-Al-Halabi's death, a dissent inside the Melkite Church happened when the bishop of Hama, Navicos Saqazi, and the grandson of the perished Patriarch Constantine started a struggle on the Patriarchate chair. Constantine bribed the Judge and the governor of Damascus to gain the Patriarchate chair and he was enthroned as Cyril V. The civil and political authority of the Damascus governorate had the power to the extent that appointing patriarchs and dethroning others were applicable without sending petitions to the Ottoman Porte.

The contradiction and overlapping between legislative and executive authorities were a matter of fact in the Ottoman Empire in the 17th century. However, the opposite party disapproved of the coronation of the new Patriarch and raised the case to the court of Constantinople Patriarch, Dionysius, who held a conference that included all the East's bishops.

In the meeting, the new Patriarch was deposed for his age and for bribing the civil rulers in Damascus. On the other hand, they nominated the bishop of Hama instead of him, which was supported by a decree from the Ottoman Porte. Between 1673 and 1682 AD, the dispute intensified, and the Patriarch was in debt. Moreover, his elderly age did not help him continue this matter; therefore, he agreed to concede the Patriarchate chair to Cyril on one condition: his name should keep the Patriarch title.

On the other hand, the debt imposed on the Navicos should be paid off by Patriarch Cyril. No sooner had Cyril gotten rid of that dispute than another dispute appeared. Procopius Al-Dabas, one of Saint Saba's monks in Palestine, appeared in Damascus. Patriarch Cyril tried to seduce his competitor by offering him the episcopate of Aleppo, but his endeavors were in vain. The new competitor procured a decree from the Ottoman court supporting his coronation in the Patriarchate

⁹²Raheb. Conception of the Union in the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch (1622 - 1672), p.84-91.

of Antioch. The new Patriarch returned to Damascus and registered the decree in the civil and religious authority records. Moreover, in 1685 AD, the Metropolitan of Sidon, Laundius, the Metropolitan of Nablus, and the Metropolitan of Bosra and Houran support his consecration under the name Athanasius V. Since Athanasius V feared his opponents, he started searching for supporters; therefore, he sent to Rome his profession of the Catholic faith, describing his childhood in the school of Jesuit monks. Since then, he has been a follower of the Holy See and under the Authority of the Pope.

On this ground, he obtained the Support of Franciscan Fathers and the consuls of European countries in Damascus, Aleppo, Tripoli, and Constantinople. Moreover, he received complete support from the Congregation for Propagation of the Faith. The struggle between Cyril and Athanasius continued between 1685 and 1694 AD. Finally, Patriarch Cyril won over his opponent, who was given the Church of Aleppo in return and kept the Patriarch's title.

During the 17th century and the first quarter of the 18th century, Catholicism in the Levant flourished, and suffice it to say that in 1724 AD, the followers of dioceses: Homs, Beirut, Tripoli, and Latakia were mostly Catholics. In Damascus (the place of Melkite chair of Antioch), Sidon, Baalbek, Jabal Qalamoun, and Hauran, the majority of Catholics was overwhelming, and the majority of Christian dignitaries belonged to the Catholic faith at the time and episcopates of Melkite Church were occupied by Catholics like:

- Gregory, the Archbishop of Aleppo, sent an epistle of his adoption of the Catholic faith in 1698.
- Makarios, the Bishop of Tripoli, sent an epistle of his adoption of the Catholic faith in 1698 AD.
- Silvester, the Metropolitan of Beirut, sent an epistle of his adoption of the Catholic faith in 1701 AD
- Gerasimus, Bishop of Saidnaya, sent an epistle of his adoption of the Catholic faith in 1716 AD.
- Athanasius, the Metropolitan of Diyarbakir, sent an epistle of adoption of the Catholic faith in 1717 AD.

- Afthimos, the Metropolitan of Sidon and Tyra, sent an epistle of his adoption of the Catholic faith in 1683 AD⁹³, and he would be the one who carried the nourishment of the Catholic faith further.

4) Euthymos Al-Saifi

He was one of the most renowned priests in the Melkite Church in the 17th and 18th centuries, and who endorsed the union with the Holy See. In 1701 AD, he was appointed by the Holy See as an Episcopal coordinator to all Melkite Catholics who were prevented from having Catholic bishops in their areas. The Metropolitan was born in the city of Baalbek, and in another story, he was born in Damascus in 1643 AD. In a letter written to the French minister in 1724 AD, the consul of France, De Martial, assured that the Metropolitan died at the age of 80, which makes the last opinion more acceptable. The Metropolitan was one of the pupils of Queyrot Jerome who was in the service of the Eastern sects for 40 years (1614-1653 AD) in Aleppo and Damascus. The Metropolitan had a deep knowledge of the Greek language and religious and civil books. Moreover, the French consul in Sidon Sieur de Bellis mentioned that Euthymos also studied in Rome for a while. However, the Melkite Patriarch, Cyril V, appointed him in 1683 AD, as the Metropolitan of Sidon and Tyra. In addition to his religious position, he enjoyed good political relationships with Mount Lebanon dignitaries, like Al M'n and Shihab. At the time, Sidon was one of the most famous coastal cities in the East. Since the late 16th century, the Frank merchants built mercantile centers and started their economic relationship with Marseille⁹⁴. The massive scale of trade led the French government to appoint French consuls in Sidon. Religiously, the existence of Frank Merchants in Sidon brought Western missionaries.

For instance, Fr. Rigorlli, the Capuchin Father's chief, instructed Sidon's children and taught them Arabic, Turkish, French, and Greek languages. The flourishing of Sidon coincided with the rise of this Metropolitan's fame and authority. For instance, he reconstructed a Church without the authentication of the Ottoman Porte. Everyone there witnessed his zeal to spread the Catholic religion. For instance, the French consul of Sidon wrote to his Minister, describing the

⁹³Almuhalisy, Yusuf. The outline of the history of the Melkite Church, V2, p. 194-198.

⁹⁴Sirriyeh, Elizabeth. The Memoires of a French Gentleman in Syria: Chevalier Laurent d'Arvieux (1635-1702), Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies), 1984, Vol. 11, No. 2 (1984), p.126-127.

Metropolitan: "His Excellency the bishop of Sidon, one of the greatest bishops, and he is old in the Catholic sect. His community revered and venerated him, and many times, his community wanted to consecrate him as a Patriarch, but he did not accept. He defended the Catholic faith with ardent zeal and suffered turmoil and persecution for the faith"⁹⁵.

Moreover, Pope Benedict IV, for example, recognized the benevolent activities of this Metropolitan in his speech before the Cardinal complex, considering him the center of unification between the East and West. Suffice it to say that his activities led him to a confrontation with the dissentient party, the Constantinople Patriarch, Jeremiah, and the Melkite Patriarch Athanasius, who succeeded Cyril V once more in 1720 AD, in the Melkite Church, accused him of heresy and issued a decree to have him expelled in 1722 AD; however, the interference of the French consul stopped the verdict.

Moreover, the governor of Damascus, Osman Bey, included the Metropolitan in his protection and wrote to the governor of Sidon to investigate the case. The investigation proved the guiltlessness of the Metropolitan. Nevertheless, it was confusing that the decree of expulsion was issued under the sponsorship of the Melkite Patriarch, Athanasius, who was in a good relationship with the Holy See and had its support, as we mentioned before. The struggle between Cyril V and Athanasius took little examination, and now the Catholicity of Patriarch Athanasius should be examined more carefully.

5) Athanasius V and the Catholic Doctrine

The Syrian historian Farah Al-Dimashqi mentioned in his preface that "Athanasius, in his struggle with Cyril, recognized his weakness and incapability of fighting; therefore, he sought the help of the West- European monks living in Damascus and converted to their doctrine; he addressed the Pope and asked to join the Catholic doctrine.

Moreover, the Metropolitan of Sidon, Euthyimos, was imprisoned over the struggle with the Patriarch of Antioch. After he was set free, he got close to Athanasius; they both allied against Cyril and approached the western monks. When the news reached Cyril, he also approached the

⁹⁵Chaque, Louis. Afthimos Al-Siafi the Metropolitan of Sidon, Originator of the Almuhalysis Monasticism historical overview, Al Mashreq, N 9, 1911, p. 641-651.

Latins "⁹⁶. It was understood that both parties sought the Franks' support because they were searching for power and not because of their inclination to the Catholic cause.

Another telling from Albiroti was as follows: "The Metropolitan of Aleppo died, and they wanted to have him (Athanasius) as their Metropolitan. They came with him to Damascus and asked Patriarch Cyril to consecrate him, and for such request, he asked for 2,500 pieces of silver. They left Damascus to Aleppo, where they sent him to Constantinople with recommendation letters from the Catholic dignitaries of Aleppo and European consuls".

According to the text, Athanasius appeared to be a Catholic priest. In a letter written by Athanasius to the French ambassador in Constantinople, he said, "If I thought I was unknown by you, and you have doubts regarding my faith which is known to all the Frank priests in our country. Since I was a child, I was raised according to the Catholic faith at the hands of Jesuit fathers, and all people consider me very straight and conservative in all matters related to the dogma. A few months ago, I sent to Rome my adoption of the Catholic faith to be presented to the Pope, and now again, I am sending to you that I am known by God and people that I am Catholic, who lives and dies according to the instructions of the Holy See. I hope from Your Excellency that I will be included in the protection of the king of France, which I can use when it is needed since you are his high minister and ambassador. What I want from you is that you watch my opponents who are the opponents of the Catholic Church and prevent them from harming me before Ottoman courts where you have the high place for being the Deputy of the king"⁹⁷.

The letter showed that the Metropolitan was Catholic and that he was asking for the protection of the king against the opponents of the Catholic Church in the East. Moreover, he admitted that he was Catholic publicly and secretly, and was chosen by the Catholic Christians of Aleppo as their Metropolitan according to the recommendation of Franciscan friars who had known that he was Catholic since his childhood; therefore, they helped him with the consuls of European countries.

Other documents showed that the Patriarch was supported by the Catholic party in all Levantine cities; Sliptruss, the Metropolitan of Beirut; Gregory, the Archbishop of Baalbek; Ignatius, the

⁹⁶Break, Michael. The history of the Father Antioch Patriarch, Egypt, p. 61-62.

⁹⁷Almuhalisya, Constantine. The History of the Melkite Roman Church and Almuhalisya monasticism, p.133-144

Metropolitan of Latakia; and Makarios, the Metropolitan of Tripoli, stood up for him because he was Catholic at that time⁹⁸.

Another hypothesis contradicts the previous information since the Patriarch of Constantinople, Jeremiah III, was a prominent supporter of Athanasius, and the Patriarch of Constantinople dictated orders that all the subjects of the Antioch Church should submit to Athanasius. Moreover, in 1718 AD, he joined the Orthodox Patriarch in prohibiting a Catholic book by Euthyimos, which defended the Catholics and their practices.

In 1721 AD, Athanasius published the Book of Doubt in Aleppo, which was classified among the Anti-Catholic books printed in England and Russia. In 1722 AD, he signed a petition with Chrysathus, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, against the practices of Catholic doctrine⁹⁹. To assess the many conflicting behaviors of the Patriarch, the best explanation is that he was neither Catholic nor Orthodox, but an ambitious man who exploited all sides for his self-interest.

Moreover, another side of the story could be more convincing and more reasonable, since the Easterners might understand their relation to the Papacy in different ways that the Latin missionaries looked for. Recognizing the supremacy of the Pope and submission to him did not mean exactly that the Easterners would relinquish their liturgy and the dogma of their ancestors, while the Papacy desired full submission to its authority, forgetting the consequences of such behavior would create an alien entity inside the East.

Moreover, Athanasius at the time understood the hegemony which the Holy See, France, and other European powers had in the Ottoman Porte. It is the history of the East and Antioch at that time which cast a light on the relation with the Papacy, their need to have their existence back as the cradle of Christianity, raising their voices to the world which was bound in some way by Muslim domination. They were not just living on the marginal side of history, but they were peers to the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Holy See. These demands and feelings that were carried by Athanasius represented all Easterners, and he, in an attempt to reach his goal, travelled to Bucharest in Wallachia to seek help for several projects, which would be beneficial to the Antiochian

⁹⁸Almuhalisy, Constantine. The history of the Melkite Roman Church and Almuhalisya monasticism, p. 132-147.

⁹⁹Almuhalisy, Yusuf. The Outline of the History of the Melkite Church, V2, p. 200-203.

Christians¹⁰⁰. There, he had a good relationship with Prince Brâncoveanu and presented the situation of Atiochian subjects in these words: “Priests in Syria are needy and poor, in many places; they hardly have what they need for their subsistence. They cannot properly serve the Divine Liturgy for Arabic books, available only in manuscript, are very expensive”¹⁰¹.

The man who carried the concerns of his community could not be described as a man of self-interest. By the order of the prince, the renowned Bishop Antim the Iberian printed punches of Arabic books with parallel Greek. In 1705 AD, Athanasius received matrices and printing tools, while Antim manufactured the Arabic types.

The printing press was installed at the Metropolitan's place of residence in Aleppo, and many books were printed in favor of the Church's service and education. The Orthodox of the East were aware of the circumstances which endangered their existence, and they tried to revive their tradition as a sign of reaction to the policy of Latinization. Thanks to the Holy See and the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, their works awakened the sense of Easterner's self-existence and presented to the Levant the importance of printings.

Solidarity was the most beneficial instrument that could revive the Church of the East. For instance: four Gospels were printed at the expense of the Noble Ivan Mazepa, the Hetman of the Cossacks. The old competitor of Athanasius, Cyril V, supported the project and the prince of Wallachia, and the protector and financial supporters of Athanasius had good connections in the Ottoman court. Moreover, in 1711 AD, the Metropolitan could not finance the project since Hetam died in 1709 AD, the prince of Wallachia was beheaded in Constantinople together with four of his sons, and the Russian Tsar refused the invitation of the Metropolitan since he did not want to anger the Ottoman Empire¹⁰².

¹⁰⁰Wakim, Fr. Rami. The Commentary in the Melkite Lectionary the Case of Patriarch Athanasios III Dabbās's Lectionary of 1706, *Scrinium* 19 (2023), p.79.

¹⁰¹Feodorov, Loana. Christian Arabic Printing in Aleppo in 1706-1711: an Audacious Project Tolerated by the Ottoman Authorities, *World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies*, Sevilla, 16-20/07/2018, p.2-8.

Losing diplomatic assistance would put the life of the Metropolitan in danger, and printing books in the Ottoman Empire was a dangerous action. In addition, such behavior encouraged the Holy See to use books to disseminate Catholicism; that was one of the best means at the time. For instance, the Greek printing press was established in 1627 AD by Nikodemos Metaxes, an Orthodox priest and Venetian subject, in cooperation with the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople, Cyril Loukaris, who enjoyed the friendship of Sir Thomas Roe, the English ambassador, and with Cornelius Haga, the envoy of the Dutch Republic who agreed to publish his work and other Orthodox tracts in the European presses in exchange with old Greek manuscripts.

Moreover, the Patriarch had close ties with the Anglican and Protestant theologians, which did not appeal to France or the Holy See¹⁰³. The Protector of the East and the Chief of the Congregation for Propagation of the Faith, Cardinal Bandini, was determined to dethrone Patriarch Lukaris and place another Patriarch who might be interested in submission to Rome. For this mission, he dispatched Father Kanakios Rossi to Constantinople. Cardinal Bandini accused the Patriarch of sending young people to study theology in England and Germany to disseminate false doctrines through preaching and printing.

Examining each case separately would be beneficial to understand the case. In 1617 AD, the Patriarch sent Metrophanes Critopoulos -who would later become the Patriarch of Alexandria- to Balliol College, Oxford at the expense of King James I.

In London, Metrophanes met Metaxes and helped him edit George Scholarios's first treatise on the procession of the Holy Spirit, a piece that heavily drew from Cyril of Alexandria's writings. Metrophanes provided Metaxes with manuscripts sent by the Patriarch which were necessary. The Latin Church added the Phrase "and the son, the Latin term filioque" in the Council of Toledo in 589 AD, that they admitted the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son, while the Eastern Church considers this a heresy and a term that goes against the Nicene creed.

Until now, there is no inclination toward suggesting that the Patriarch indulged in machination against Catholics. However, probably England played a role in such an encounter which happened between Metrophanes and Metaxes since that would serve its ambition in the Levant. Suffice it to

¹⁰³Pektaş, Nil. The Beginnings of Printing in the Ottoman Capital: Book Production and Circulation in Early Modern Istanbul, *Osmanlı Bilimi Araştırmaları*, XVI/2 (2015): p.19-22.

say that protecting Christians was the most influential means to interfere in Ottoman policy. Surely, there was some kind of coalition among the Patriarch, the ambassador of England, and the ambassador of Germany since the France ambassador De Harlay deposed the Patriarch twice in 1619 and 1621 AD, but Cornelius Haga and Sir Thomas Roe reinstated him again.

Moreover, the printing press was transmitted to Constantinople on board a vessel which belonged to the English Levant Company¹⁰⁴. Venice was inclined to share in the events to strengthen its position in the Ottoman Porte and minimize the influence of France. Moreover, Venice at the time had a conflict with the Holy See over the supremacy of the Papacy and its teaching. For instance, in 1605 AD, the members of the Jesuit society were expelled from Venice since they were looked at as spies who constituted a danger to the interest of the republic and its stability.

In 1607 AD, Pope Paul V (1550-1621 AD) placed Venice under interdict. Moreover, the attempt to assassinate the Italian theologian, Paolo Sarpi (1552–1623 AD) at the time by the Jesuits intensified the situation; for Sarpi: “The Spanish and Roman monarchies rest on nothing more than religious superstition and Jesuit operations” or again: “There is no more worthy endeavor than discrediting the Jesuits; with them beaten, Rome is lost, and religion will reform itself”¹⁰⁵. On the other hand, the Holy See and France constituted one body that Jesuits were its hand according to Venice and England. For example, the Jesuit expedition which arrived at Constantinople in the late 1609 AD, represented by Charles Gobin, Guillaume Levesque, and Charles Colomb, led by François de Canillac met the French King Henry IV¹⁰⁶; For England and Venice, Jesuits were agents serving both France and the Holy See¹⁰⁷.

¹⁰⁴Palabıyık, Nil. A Public Debate on Cyril of Alexandria’s Views on the Procession of the Holy Spirit in Seventeenth-Century Constantinople: The Jesuit Reaction to Nicodemos Metaxas’s Greek Editions, *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* (2020) 27(3): p.427–448.

¹⁰⁵Pavone, Sabina. The Deceivers Deceived: How a Seventeenth Century Venetian Anti-Jesuit Circle Duped a Jesuit Rector, *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 10 (2023), p.56-59.

¹⁰⁶Dursteler, Eric. Education and identity in Constantinople’s Latin Rite community, c. 1600, *Renaissance Studies* Vol. 18 No. 2, p. 77.

¹⁰⁷W. Puchner, ‘Jesuit theatre on the islands of the Aegean Sea’, *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 21 (2003), 207-222, p. 212-213.

On the other hand, printing was the most influential means in the hand of the Holy See for disseminating its instructions¹⁰⁸. For the Patriarch, such action needed a counter-offensive, as he stated that "but to these books, they [were] inserting their ungodly opinions, thereby distorting the writings of the Holy and God-bearing Father... Many Christians get appalled when they read the heretics. They believe that these were written by the Holy Father and are therefore directed to and consumed by them"¹⁰⁹.

However, the Jesuits charged Nikodemos with spying for England, the passages of his printed books carried anti-Islamic writings, especially against the Prophet, and he, with the Patriarch, betrayed the Ottomans and planned for a rebellion among the Cossacks and Orthodox people. The Patriarch took shelter at the English ambassador, while Nikodemos was arrested and the printing press was confiscated. When the charges proved to be false, Nikodemos was released on the 17th of March 1628 AD, and the Patriarch assumed his office again¹¹⁰. Later on, in 1638 AD, the Patriarch was assassinated by the order of Murad IV after he had been accused of delivering dangerous books to the Eastern Christians.

The same story was repeated in Jerusalem in the 17th century when the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem accused Jesuits of preventing him from printing some books with the help of the French ambassador in Constantinople.

In 1628 AD, the French ambassador stated: "I decided to do more than defending; I will do everything to provide them with proof that printing is a dangerous innovation for this State"¹¹¹. Printings meant knowledge, which neither France nor the Holy See desired at the time as it was

¹⁰⁸Pektaş. The Beginnings of Printing in the Ottoman Capital: Book Production and Circulation in Early Modern Istanbul, p.19-22.

¹⁰⁹Palabıyık. A Public Debate on Cyril of Alexandria's Views on the Procession of the Holy Spirit in Seventeenth-Century Constantinople: The Jesuit Reaction to Nicodemos Metaxas's Greek Editions, p. 427-448.

¹¹⁰Pektaş. The Beginnings of Printing in the Ottoman Capital: Book Production and Circulation in Early Modern Istanbul, p.19-22.

¹¹¹Feodorov. Christian Arabic Printing in Aleppo in 1706-1711: An Audacious Project Tolerated by the Ottoman Authorities, p.5.

apparent, and fair to mention, that such important tools were presented to Easterners by the Holy See in some way or another.

6) Splitting the Melkite Church into Catholic and Orthodox

The schism happened when the Metropolitan of Sidon and Tyra, Euthyimos Al-Saifi, died, and Mount Lebanon's clergy wanted a new Metropolitan. After a long deliberation, they agreed to have the Father, Gabriel Finan, the Metropolitan of Banyas in Syria, as their leader. However, The Melkite Patriarch Athanasius refused to consecrate him; therefore, the Catholic of Mount Lebanon petitioned Prince Haider Al-Shihab (1707-1732 AD), the general ruler of Lebanon, for help. The prince assigned three Metropolitans from three different Churches, the Melkite Metropolitan of Beirut Nauvitos, the Maronite Bishop Elias, and an Armenian named Abraham to consecrate him. Together, they ordained the new Metropolitan to run the affairs of the Catholics of Lebanon. This consecration, which Prince Haider sponsored, indicated that religious self-autonomy is associated with political independence.

The new Metropolitan was named Basileus, and the Catholic communions of Mount Lebanon informed the Holy See about the regulation. The Sidon inhabitants were encouraged by the doings of their relatives in Mount Lebanon, and they wanted to have Seraphim Tanas as their Metropolitan. He was the nephew of the perished Euthymios, one of the friars of the St. Savior Monastery, and a graduate of the school of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. The priest Seraphim headed to the Patriarch of Melkite Church, Athanasius, with letters of recommendation from the consul of France, the chief of missionary expeditions in Sidon, and the dignitaries of the community for the case of his ordination. The Patriarch did not consecrate him, but on the contrary, he intended to exile him. The priest escaped while the Patriarch consecrated a new Metropolitan who had no connection with Euthymios' Pupils.

However, in 1724 AD, under the pressure of the Catholic subjects of Mount Lebanon, the Patriarch was obliged to appoint one of the Euthymios' Pupils (Ignatius al-Beirut) to the episcopate of Sidon. In the meantime, the Patriarch died, and the Roman Catholic subjects desired to consecrate a Catholic Patriarch. They agreed to have the priest Seraphim for this position, as mentioned earlier.

The Rumi Catholics of Damascus, Sidon, Baalbek, Beirut, Homs, Latakia, and the missionary Fathers supported the candidate. Notwithstanding, the Christians of Aleppo, who were predominantly Rumi Catholics -according to a report sent by Jesuits, between 5000 and 6000 were taking communion with Rome¹¹²- insisted on having Sylvester of Cyprus as their Patriarch. However, the Catholics of Damascus, who feared the intervention of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, consecrated Seraphim as the Patriarch of Antioch under the name of Cyril VI¹¹³. The news of the Patriarch's death reached Constantinople. The complaint of the people of Aleppo, who were not satisfied with the procedure, about what the Catholics of Damascus had taken, exacerbated the situation. On this ground, Sylvester of Cyprus was summoned to Constantinople and consecrated as the Patriarch of Antioch in 1724 AD. Patriarch Cyril VI secretly sought refuge in Mount Lebanon. At the same time, Sylvester came to Syria and arrested Gerasimus, the Metropolitan of Aleppo, who was inclined to the cause of union and held sympathy to the missionary expedition and exiled him. Then he headed to Hama, Homs, and Damascus, persecuting the Catholics and confiscating the Churches and their endowments. Since then, the Roman Melkite Church has been divided into the Catholic branch, which joined the Holy See and kept the title of Melkite, and the Orthodox branch which followed the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

7) The Catholic Melkite Church since 1724 AD and its Relation with its Sister

During this time, the Catholic Church associated with the region's political history that Sheikh Daher Al-Omar's independence in the north of Palestine between (1750 and 1775 AD) secured the area to become a sanctuary to all persecuted Catholics. He allowed them to build a Church named after Saint Andrew without the permission of the Ottoman Porte and repaired one of the oldest Churches in Nazareth. Moreover, Mount Lebanon would become under the dominance of Shihabi

¹¹²Khater, Akram. "God Has Called Me to Be Free": Aleppan Nuns and the Transformation of Catholicism in 18th-Century Bilad Al-Sham, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Aug., 2008), p.425.

¹¹³Almuhalisy, Yusuf. *The Outline of the History of the Melkite Church*, V2, p. 216.

princes between (1697 and 1788 AD) the castle of Catholicity. In the 18th century, the Melkite Patriarchs were:

Cyril VI Tanas 1724-1759 AD.

Athanasius IV Goher 1759-1760 AD.

Maximus II the Wise 1760-1761 AD.

Theodosius V Al-Dhan 1761-1788 AD.

In 1725 AD, the Catholic Patriarch and the Metropolitans fled Damascus before the Orthodox Patriarch Sylvester, and they took the Savior Monastery in Mount Lebanon as a place for their residence. In 1729 AD, the Holy See issued a rescript confirming the legitimacy of Patriarch Cyril Tanas. Moreover, there were many decrees related to fasting, customs, and Eastern traditions which were prohibited in favor of the Latin one; in addition, the Holy See prevented the Eastern Catholics from attending or sharing in the ceremonies or services of the other sects (Orthodox)¹¹⁴. Those procedures led to dismay among the Catholic Easterners themselves. Still, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith did not find that satisfactory, and even Patriarch Cyril, for example, complained about the missionary expeditions' behaviors and their ignorance of his rights as a patriarch¹¹⁵. Is that what Cyril striving to gain? The Holy See examined the status wrongly and did not perceive the project which the Easterners were looking for. The Patriarchate of Antioch was living in the shadow of Constantinople since the Chalcedon Council and the local hierarchy were sick of attaching themselves to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the clearest evidence of that is the attempts to print liturgical books in the Arabic language.

The theological differentiation between East and West was a matter of fact, and it was in some way the most influential condition attributed to the spreading of Christianity in the Roman world and beyond. The Pope was the Father and the Eastern Churches were just weak sons thriving to have their souls revived again. For instance, from Tripoli on March 6, 1641 AD, Brice of Rennes, the British Capuchin, wrote "Regarding what we do for the Greeks (Melkite), most of them believe

¹¹⁴Almuhalisy, Yusuf. The outline of the history of the Melkite Church, V3, p. 6-7.

¹¹⁵Raheb, Abdallah. Greek Melkite Catholic Patriarchate of Antioch: Birth, Evolution, and current Orientation, In Ekklesiastikos Pharos, Vol. LII. II-III, 20 December 1969, p. 11.

in the Roman Catholic Church and recognize His Holiness (the Pope) as their pastor and true successor of Saint Peter. I have often preached in their Church, and they listened to me and respected my words as if they were Roman Catholics. We preached on the procession of the Holy Spirit and demonstrated that he proceeds from the Father and the Son, as one single principle; everyone believed my words and none said anything against me. Every time we discussed with them the preeminence of the great pontiff, the Pope, they remained confused and did not know how to respond; convinced, they recognized him as the vicar of Christ and true successor of Saint Peter”¹¹⁶.

In 1732 AD, the Orthodox Patriarch Sylvester started a new wave of persecution against the Catholics of Homs. During that time, Maximus the Wise was elected the Metropolitan of Aleppo. The Orthodox Patriarch took umbrage since the new Metropolitan was of Catholic tendencies. Moreover, by the endeavors of the Catholic Metropolitan, the Orthodox Patriarch was forced to stay in Constantinople, and Syria was no longer under his hand. Therefore, he headed to his friend, Prince Scarlat Oglu (Constantin Mavtrocordato, Pince of Moldavia and Wallachia) with the help of whom the Patriarch obtained a Firman from Sultan Mahmud I.

In the Firman, all the procedures against the Orthodox Patriarch were cancelled. Moreover, his dominance included Syria over again and the right to appoint the Metropolitan of Aleppo and collect the alms. At the beginning of 1733 AD, the Orthodox Patriarch set off to Tripoli, then went to Homs, where he persecuted the Catholics. Afterward, he headed to Damascus, spending over fifty bags of gold in his war with the Catholics of Damascus¹¹⁷.

In 1743 AD, Pope Benedict XIV (1675-1758 AD) recognized the Catholic Church of the Levant as a weak and persecuted Church that should be protected. In the same year, the Patriarch obtained the pallium from the Pope. However, on 24 February 1745 AD, the Ottoman Porte issued a rescript confirming the Catholic Patriarch on the Patriarchate of Damascus, and that was by the endeavors of the Holy See, France, and the Habsburg Empire¹¹⁸.

¹¹⁶Raheb. *The Beginnings of Printing in the Ottoman Capital: Book Production and Circulation in Early Modern Istanbul (1622 - 1672)*, p.78.

¹¹⁷Idlibi, Naupitos. *The Melkite Bishops of Aleppo in the Modern Era*, Aleppo, 1983, p. 127.

¹¹⁸Almuhalisy, Yusuf. *The Outline of the history of the Melkite Church*, v3, p. 12-13.

Analyzing the berat gives us precious information. First of all, the new candidate Cyril promised to increase the payments of pishkesh (pîşkeş = obligatory annual gift) to obtain the Patriarchal position as the Firman mentioned: “[He also stated that] all the subjects are content and happy with him and he is worthy for the Patriarchate of the Rûm community in Antioch and its dependencies in all matters. Because the aforementioned Patriarchate is not under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Istanbul and other places, and it is a separate Patriarchate, he requested my benevolence in giving the Patriarchate of Antioch to him independently as maktû‘ (determined, fixed amount) like the Patriarchate of Ohrid and Peć on the condition that his old pîşkeş be increased for 3,000 akçes and that he gives a yearly amount of 100 guruş to the side of the state as maktû‘ every year. When the Piskopos *Mukâta‘ası Defterleri* (Register of the collected incomes) preserved in my Imperial Treasury were consulted, it was written on the margin that the abovementioned Patriarchate belonged to the priest named Sylvester with a state pîşkeş of 10,000 akçes since that year. [It was also written that] it is not under the jurisdiction of the Rûm Patriarchate of Istanbul that it is invested with the petition of the kadis of Antioch and Damascus, that the Patriarchate of Cilicia and Damascus do not have any other registers, and that it belongs to the Patriarchate of Antioch. Granting the Patriarchate without a petition [by the kadi] has been caused by the said one’s request to have the [throne] of the abovementioned Patriarchate depends on the state as it is a separate Patriarchate. Hence, the honour of the governors and the grandees, my başdefterdâr Yusuf -may his grandeur continue-, has sent a petition and report personally that the abovementioned Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and its dependencies be granted from the priest Sylvester (Patriarch Sylvester) to the said Priest, Kyrillos, that he be given a berat on the conditions that the old pîşkeş of 10,000 akçes be increased by 5,000 akçes, that the yearly mâl-i maktû‘ of 150 guruş be assigned, and that he present to my Imperial Treasury the pîşkeş of 15,000 akçes and the said mâl-i maktû‘ for the year 1158 in case”¹¹⁹.

Interestingly, the first information collapses all the Millet System theories in the Ottoman Empire which emphasized that the Empire recognized just two entities, the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople and the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople. The Firman indicates that the Patriarchate of Antioch was independent and was not attached to the Patriarch of Greece or the

¹¹⁹Çolak, Hasan. When a Catholic is invested as the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch: Serafeim/Kyrillos Tanas and the Ottoman central administration in 1745, *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 20, (2023) : p. 50.

Armenian Patriarch. Moreover, the Firman shows without doubt the authority which Kadi occupied in the Ottoman Empire and his power to appoint high dignitaries.

The Firman also points out the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Antioch “The said Priest Kyrillos - may his end be auspicious- shall be regarded as the Patriarch by the bishops of Adana, Tarsus, Payas, Alexandretta, Diyarbakir, Çemişkezek, Çıldır, Ahışa, Erzurum and their dependencies which were under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Antioch since olden times and by the old and young of the Orthodox community living in places dependent on his Patriarchate. They shall not go against his legitimate word in matters related to their rite”.

The Firman of the Ottoman Sultan pointed out the rights and duties of the Patriarch as follows: “The Patriarch or his Metropolitans shall hold whatever the dead priests, monks, and nuns under his jurisdiction have in accordance with ancient customs. The beytü’l-mâl and kassâm officials, voivodes, subaşı and mütevellîs shall not oppose in contravention of ancient customs. Nobody shall take their olden Churches and monasteries under his jurisdiction from their hands in contravention of the imperial order, and no one shall interfere when they repair them according to their ancient layout with the approval of Sharia and my imperial order. Their legal disputes whose resolution requires the application of Sharia rules shall be handled in my Imperial Chancery, and if someone from the Orthodox community wants to marry or divorce a woman according to their rite, no one apart from the Patriarch or his deputies shall intervene. Everything the dead clergymen and the Orthodox community will do for the poor of their Churches and the said Patriarch according to their rite shall be accepted and dealt with according to Sharia rules through the testimony of Orthodox witnesses. When, by their rite, the said Patriarch disciplines and shaves the hair of those bishops, priors, and priests in places dependent on his Patriarchate who commit offences against their rites, dismiss them, and give their posts to others he shall not be interfered with. When the aforementioned Patriarch appoints and dismisses the priests, Metropolitans, priests, monks and priors who deserve to be dismissed or appointed by their rite and sends petitions to appoint Metropolitans and bishops, they shall be given my imperial berats and orders with their conditions to obtain [these posts] after the required customary pîşkeş is paid to my Imperial Treasury. Without the sealed petition of the Patriarch, no one shall be allowed to have a Metropolitanate and bishopric. The said Patriarch’s petition shall be observed, and if there is a petition regarding their rite, it shall be allowed. The ascetic monks under his jurisdiction shall not

wander wherever they like in contravention of their rite but shall be sent back to the monastery to which they customarily belong. The Patriarch and his men shall be given guides in places where they journey. When they change clothes to pass safely from dangerous places and carry weapons to avert danger and to protect their souls from bandits, they shall not be interfered with and harassed by the bâcdars, tamgacıs and the other [members of the] ehl-i ‘örf on the bridges, passages and similar places in contravention of Sharia and ancient customs. The said Patriarch shall not be harassed by the subaşı and the [members of the] ehl-i ‘örf with the pretext of asking for favours and presents in contravention of Sharia. In places where they journey, no zimmi shall be harassed to be converted into Islam by force against his/her consent by [the members of] the ehl-i ‘örf and others. Some powerful people, zâ‘ims, timar holders, and others shall not object them from performing their ceremonies on the allegation that the zimmi living in their farms, winter quarters, and houses are their labourers and servants [and thus are exempt from taxation]. In matters of solemnization or annulment of marriage, or a dispute [to be resolved] between two zimmi on their consent, when they take an oath in Church and excommunication in by their rite, no one shall interfere. Some powerful people shall not force them to marry a woman to a zimmi against their rite or harass them to dismiss a priest and give his office to another one. Their disciplinary papers of excommunication, which they dispatch by their rite to discipline zimmi, shall not be intervened without any reason. When the priests and monks need to be detained with the permission of Sharia, they shall be detained with the mediation of the said Patriarch. The said Patriarch shall hold the Churches that customarily belong to the Orthodox community and whatever [property] they have inside [the Churches], and the other communities shall in no way interfere with this. Nobody shall interfere with the sceptre that the said Patriarch holds in his hand or with the packhorses and mules that he rides. If under the jurisdiction of the abovementioned Patriarch, some clergymen who do not have a Church or a monastery wander neighbourhood by neighbourhood, and foment mischief, they shall be disciplined and prevented by the Patriarch. The monasteries where the aforementioned Patriarch resides shall not send anyone from the ‘askerî and others. The aforementioned Patriarch shall not be harassed by my kapıkulları under the pretext of urging their service as yasakçıs against his consent. The Patriarch shall not be harassed from outside when he customarily settles the accounts of those deputies of Churches and monasteries that embezzle the related taxes according to their baseless rite. When they customarily perform their ceremonies on certain days, they shall not be harassed by [the members of] the ehl-i ‘örf in contravention of Sharia

and law purely for their interests without any reason. The Patriarch shall not be harassed without the proof of his debt or guarantee, alleging [falsely] that ‘we have given you forty akçes’ or that ‘you became a guarantor’ purely for their interest, without any reason and in contravention of Sharia. The said priest named Kyrillos shall hold the vineyards, gardens, farms, mills, pastures, fields, houses, shops, trees with or without fruits, holy springs, monasteries, and any other items relating to their Churches and their sheep as wakf in the way the preceding Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and its dependencies have done customarily and according to their rite. In this regard, the mîr-i mîrâns, mîrlivâs, voivodes, subaşıs, the other [members of the] ehl-i ‘örf and the dismissed Patriarch Silvester and anyone from outside shall not interfere with, and trouble him in any way or for any reason. An imperial berat has been written so that they know as such”¹²⁰.

Despite the Firman had been issued by the name of Cyril, it did not recognize the Catholic community since he was designated as a Patriarch over the Orthodox community of Antioch. Moreover, the Ottoman Porte issued the Firman despite knowing that the Patriarch was recognized as a subject of the Papacy and professed Catholicity publicly.

The interference of France was behind such a declaration but we have to bear in mind that deposing Patriarchs and reinstating others would supply and refund the Ottoman treasury. To obtain this Firman, Patriarch Cyril sent envoys to Europe to collect the capital. Moreover, his envoy Abdallah Fahd travelled to Vienna to gain political and financial support in all the lands which belonged to the Habsburg Empire. When the Patriarch suffered from a shortage of money, the French chancery in Constantinople completed the mission. It was obvious that such an amount was not easily collected and the Ottoman took advantage of that situation and extracted as much money as he could. Moreover, French intervention was obvious economically and politically to strengthen the Catholics in the Levant.

On the other hand, the other European powers recognized that the Catholics' affinity to France in the Levant would serve their interests well. Therefore, supporting the Orthodox party would have minimized such an influence. For instance, the missionary letters assigned to English Levant merchants indicated unleashing the project “conciliabulum” without further details. Apparent

¹²⁰Çolak. When a Catholic is invested as the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch: Serafeim/Kyrillos Tanas and the Ottoman central administration in 1745, p. 51.

evidence could be relied on that Patriarch Sylvester obtained the Firman of his installation by a debit borrowed by English merchants. Moreover, the English merchant, Rowland Sherman, invested in the Church affairs and served as a creditor of the Orthodox Easterners, and from among the renowned debtors were Sylvester and the Armenian bishop, Michail of Aleppo¹²¹. It is quite obvious that the competition between England and France had moved a long time ago to the Levant and took from the Near East a place to settle accounts¹²². Those competitors took the Christians of the East as a scapegoat to increase their influence in the Ottoman Empire and gain more privileges and capitulation. However, the Patriarch took over the Patriarchate for two months. In the meantime, Patriarch Sylvester travelled to Constantinople, where he renewed his diploma, and then returned to Damascus, where he started a new persecution against Catholics¹²³.

8) The Struggle Inside the Catholic Melkite Church

Before Patriarch Cyril died, he had recommended the Patriarchate Chair to one of his relatives, Athanasius IV Goher. Since the new Patriarch was of Damascene origin, the Catholics of Aleppo protested against him and elected Metropolitan Maximus the Wise as the new Patriarch. The Patriarch died a few days later, and therefore, the members of the Catholic Shuwayrite monasticism¹²⁴ of Aleppo elected Theodosius Al-Dahaan in his place, and they informed the Holy See about their decision, which was accepted.

¹²¹Zwierlein, Cornel. Interaction and boundary work. Source: Journal of Modern European History / Zeitschrift für moderne europäische Geschichte / Revue d'histoire européenne contemporaine, May 2020, Vol. 18, No. 2 (May 2020), p.163-167.

¹²²Horniker, Arthur. Anglo-French rivalry in the Levant from 1583 TO 1612, The Journal of Modern History, Volume XVIII, December 1946, Number 4, p. 289-304.

¹²³ Almuhalisy, Yusuf. The Outline of the History of the Melkite Church, v3, p. 12-13.

¹²⁴ The Shuwayrite Order was established by the Aleppian Catholic monks Gerasimus and Suliman when they left the monastery of Balamnd in Lebanon due to the persecution against them by the Orthodox party in 1700 AD. Patriarch Cyril V ratified the order and its canons which were derived from Jerusalem Canon Law or the so-called in Greek “the Typikon” and named after the Saint Basil the Great, the Greek bishop of Caesarea who lived in the fourth century. The monks took from Shuwayr, a village in Keserwan a place

On this ground, the Catholic communion was split into two parties. However, Athanasius IV Goher travelled to Rome to submit his case before the Holy See, but the Holy See refused his petition, and he went back disappointed¹²⁵. In implementing the decision of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith Council, which was held in Rome on the 25th of September 1763 AD, the apostolic Vicar of Aleppo, Arnould Bossu, confirmed Theodosius V Al-Dahaan in his position while he granted Athanasius IV Goher the episcopate of Sidon to preserve his dignity.

However, the competition between the two Patriarchs led their adherents to stand for their cause in many ways. One of the Patriarch Theodosius Al-Dahaan's followers, Germanus Adam, compiled a treatise refuting the allegations of Athanasius IV Goher in 1767 AD. Moreover, the activities of Germanus Adam in defending the Catholic dogma increased his fame among Catholic Christians. On this ground, the Christians of Acre nominated him to be their Metropolitan. All the bishops of the Communion endorsed the nomination except the Metropolitan of Sidon. However, on the eve of Christmas, Patriarch Theodosius Al-Dahaan consecrated him as the Metropolitan of Acre. Notwithstanding, the general situation was not in favor of the Metropolitan, and to keep his life, he left Acre for Mount Lebanon. When the Metropolitan of Aleppo died in 1776 AD, the Catholics of Aleppo selected Germanus Adam to run their episcopate since he had nothing to do effectively in Acre. Under the desire of the population of Aleppo, the Patriarch appointed him. Still, the Metropolitan had never set foot in Aleppo, mainly because he was busy with more important matters. It was not strange for the Metropolitan, who was one of the most prominent theologians of his time, to engage in many debates and controversies related to Christianity and Catholicism. He appeared to be an attorney who used all his copious knowledge to defend Catholicity and he sometimes found himself obliged to interfere in some dilemmas regarding the Catholic faith itself. In 1780 AD, Metropolitan Germanus defended the members of the Shuwayrite monasticism against the Catholic Metropolitan of Beirut, Ignatius Sorouf, and he composed many advisory opinions regarding the issue. Afterward, the Metropolitan confronted his old antagonist Athanasius IV Goher.

for their residence where they built a Church and chapel. In 1757, Pope Benedict XIV (1675-1758) endorsed the order and its canons. Anonymous Author. A Brief History of the Roman Catholic Melkites, p.36.

¹²⁵Break, Michael. The history of Damascus (1720-1782), Lebanon, 1930, p. 71.

The Metropolitan of Sidon exploited the death of the Catholic Patriarch Theodosius V Al-Dahaan in 1788 AD, and he nominated himself once more to the chair of the Patriarchate. All the Catholic bishops accepted the nomination except the Metropolitan of Aleppo, Germanus, and the Metropolitan of Baalbek, Benedict Turkmen, and they petitioned the Holy See. However, the Holy See desired to put an end to the dissent and schism inside the Catholic community; therefore, it ratified the election of the Patriarch. Furthermore, the Holy See proposed a Synod aimed at restoring the sect's harmony.

In response to the wishes of the Holy See, the Patriarch called for the Synod to be held on the first of July in 1790 AD. However, Germanus opposed the Synod firstly, but finally, he agreed to attend it and confront the Patriarch. The confrontation was raucous, and the Metropolitan of Aleppo defended the Pope and his authority.

In reviewing the Synod resolution, we found no article related to the Pope or his authority¹²⁶. However, the Patriarch tried to insult the Metropolitan of Aleppo by making the episcopate of Sidon and Tyre precede the episcopate of Aleppo in the ecclesiastical order¹²⁷, which did not satisfy the Metropolitan. Therefore, he withdrew from the meeting using the call of Prince Bashir Shihabi¹²⁸ as a pretext. The Prince summoned the Metropolitan to Deir Al-Qamar in Mount

¹²⁶Idlibi, Naupitos. The Melkite Bishops of Aleppo in the Modern Era, 157-160.

¹²⁷Sharon, Cyril. The Complex of Monastery of Savior under the Presidency of Athanasius IV Goher, AL Mashreq, N23, 1906, p.1097.

¹²⁸The Prince belongs to the Shihabi family which descended from the family of Prophet Mohamed, they came from Hejaz in the 7th century to Syria and in the 12th century they moved to Wadi el-Taym in Mount Lebanon and approached the Ma'ni family, the rulers of Mount Lebanon through marriages, when the last Ma'ni Amir called Ahmed died in 1697 AD, the Shihabi family replaced Ma'ni as the rulers of the Mount. Prince Bashir Shihabi ruled the mount from 1788 to 1840 AD. In his reign, the Prince did not have a good relationship with Ottoman governors, especially with Ahmed Al- Jazzar who wanted to control the Mount, until he died in 1804 AD. Moreover, Napoleon Bonaparte, during his campaign in Syria in 1799 AD, tried to win over the Prince to help him against the Ottomans, but the Prince refrained from any obligation that might reverse on the Mount worse. Despite that, the Prince helped the French secretly. When Mohamed Ali Pasha waged a war against the Ottomans and controlled Syria between 1832 and 1840 AD, the Prince was included among the allies of the governor of Egypt. In 1840 AD, he surrendered to the English and Ottoman

Lebanon to judge some issues related to the Maronite Community. Summoning the Metropolitan did not happen arbitrarily, but was according to a high standard regulation. In a rescript that dates back to the 15th of November, the Holy See appointed the Metropolitan as an apostolic vicar over the Maronite Communion. The trust of the Holy See illustrates that the Metropolitan was of great religious and canonical capability. According to the wishes of the Holy See, the Metropolitan held a synod and abolished the resolution of the previous one, which was held in August 1786 AD. According to the new synod, he deposed many Maronite Metropolitans and appointed others. In 1790 AD, he presided over the Maronite Council held in Bkerke. Unfortunately, his doings earned him enmity inside the Maronite Communion. Therefore, the prince of Mount Lebanon imprisoned him for a few days, and he was released when a certain amount of money was paid¹²⁹.

In Aleppo, the situation was more complicated when the deputy of the Metropolitan, Priest Michael Jerboa, started to increase the amount of taxes arbitrarily for his gain, and that caused a wave of protestation inside the Catholic Communion; thus, the presence of the Metropolitan was necessary. On this basis, the Metropolitan sent an epistle to the community's notables inquiring about his coming. It was surprising that the deputy of the Metropolitan strongly opposed the coming of his Metropolitan, and he started to instigate the people against him, while the other Clergymen stressed that the attendance of the Metropolitan would be necessary for the beneficiary of the Catholic community.

Moreover, a dispute happened between the Metropolitan of Aleppo and Stephen, an Alpen priest, over the remnants of the previous Metropolitan of Aleppo, Ignatius Gerboa. The priest wanted to sell the remnants of the previous Metropolitan, while the Metropolitan summoned the priest to inquire about the Metropolitan's inheritance. The priest ignored the request of his Metropolitan and petitioned the Patriarch directly; this latter supported him.

The situation developed, and the clergymen of Aleppo were split between advocates for the Patriarch and his opponents. The opposite party, which included the Deputy of the Metropolitan,

forces and then was sent to live in Malta. Eleven months later, he was transferred to Constantinople. Sfair, Peter. Prince Bashi Shihabi, Beirut, 1950, p. 77.

¹²⁹ Idlibi. The Melkite bishops of Aleppo in the modern era, p.135.

Michael Jerboa, filed a complaint to the Patriarch while the Metropolitan suspended them for ten days. However, the case itself was ridiculous, but it showed the grand enmity which was between the Patriarch and his Metropolitan. Moreover, the Patriarch won over some followers of the Metropolitan in Aleppo when this latter was busy in the cases of the Maronite Community in Mount Lebanon.

Much evidence indicates that the Deputy of the Metropolitan had secret cooperation with the Patriarch, or at least with his Deputy, Ignatius Sorouf, against the Metropolitan of Aleppo. For instance, he refused the attendance of the Metropolitan in Aleppo, and when the Metropolitan arrived, he started agitating the people against him. Moreover, he sent presents to the enemies of his Metropolitan in Mount Lebanon during the incumbency of the Metropolitan as a papal vicar over the Maronite Community.

More evidence indicates that the case was not intended to be solved, according to the Christian Canons. However, quite contrary, the primary purpose was to minimize the authority of the Metropolitan or at least discredit him before the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith and the Catholic population. No sooner had the petition of the opposite Party arrived than the Patriarch commenced a meeting to settle the case. The meeting included all the priests and the bishops who hated the Metropolitan. Without examining the case or at least listening to the Metropolitan, the Patriarch issued his verdict, which was against the Metropolitan and the Canons of Catholicity. The Patriarch freed the priests from their obedience to the Metropolitan while he reprimanded the Metropolitan extremely.

The opposite Party celebrated their victory over the Metropolitan, and they claimed that they were under the authority of the Patriarch from now on. In reviewing the manuscripts related to the case, it is clear that all evidence condemned the opposite Party, and the Patriarch, who had no authority over the remnants of the deceased Metropolitan, transcended his authority and judged the case in the light of his interest. According to the rescript of Pope Pius V in 1567 AD, all utensils and instruments belonged to the Metropolitan who succeeded, and no one had the right to own them. Moreover, by the power of this rescript, all the heirs and others, whatever their ranks were, had to

hand the remnants over to the Metropolitan. The Patriarch have no right to seize the goods of the widowed Churches¹³⁰.

However, the conflict was not merely between a Patriarch and a Metropolitan, but deeper than expected. The Roman Catholic Melkite had two essential institutions: Shuwayrite Monasticism and (Almuhalisiya) Savior Monasticism. Patriarch Athanasius IV Goher was a supporter of the Savior Monasticism, while Metropolitan Germanus belonged to the Shuwayrite Monasticism. In the history of Patriarch Goher, there were two failed attempts to be elected as a Patriarch before his competitors, Maximus II the Wise (1760-1761 AD) and Theodosius V Al-Dhaan (1761-1788 AD). Both Patriarchs belonged to the Shuwayrite Monasticism. For the third time, the Metropolitan of Aleppo stood against the Patriarch, and he petitioned the Holy See, as we mentioned before. However, the Holy See endorsed the third election, and the Patriarch, who did not forget the bitterness he had tasted, started to interfere in the affairs of the Shuwayrite Monasticism and exert intense pressure against its members. In return, the Metropolitan defended Monasticism on many occasions¹³¹.

However, the Metropolitan decided to travel to Rome and present his case before the Holy See. Moreover, he intended to have the episcopate independent from the Patriarch and under the authority of the Holy See. In 1793 AD, the Metropolitan arrived at Rome, and while he was confident that his case would be heard, the decision of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith was disappointing for him; the Holy See did not accept his suggestion, and he stated that the Patriarch had to deal with the Metropolitan gently and not interfere in the affair of his episcopate, and on the other hand, the Metropolitan has to respect his Patriarch and submit to his order.

The Holy See wanted to end the dispute, ignoring the rights of the Metropolitan and his feelings. The Metropolitan stayed in Italy for six years between 1792 and 1797 AD spending his time between Rome, Florence, Livorno, Naples, Messina and Malta. While he was in Messina, he stated that he was no longer subjected to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, and he

¹³⁰Ibn Dimitri ibn Gerges Al- Khoury Al- Halabi, Youssef. Daily Aleppo incidents 1771-1805, Aleppo, 2006, p. 212-239.

¹³¹Haj, Athanasius. Basilian Shuwayrite Monasticism in the History of the Church and the Country, Lebanon, p. 45-72.

justified his decision by reporting the acute rebuke that Cardinal Antonelli, the chief of the Congregation, exerted upon him over his residence in Italy and the abandonment of the episcopate for a long time. The Patriarch died in 1794 AD and his successor was Cyril V who ran the Patriarchate for less than two years. In 1796 AD, Agapius Matar was elected a Patriarch by the bishops of the Melkite Catholic Church.

9) The Differentiation between the Eastern Catholic Rituals and the Rituals of the Holy See

In 1796 AD, an argument happened between Patriarch Agapius Matar and the Metropolitan of Beirut, Ignatius Sorouf, who was the Deputy of the deceased Patriarch Athanasius IV Goher, over the Sam'an Monastery and Sam'ani Monasticism, which had been established by the Metropolitan of Beirut in 1796 AD. However, the Patriarch refused to recognize monasticism, and unfortunately, the literature did not mention the reason behind such a decision. Moreover, the Patriarch held the General Council on the 11th of September in 1797 AD regarding the issue. The Council abolished monasticism and turned the Sam'an Monastery into a school.

In return, the Metropolitan refused to recognize the resolution, and he petitioned the Holy See. The Patriarch tried to win over his Metropolitan in many ways, but this latter stuck to his opinion. In the end, the Patriarch decided to arbitrate this dispute with the rest of the Catholic Patriarchs. The Maronite Patriarch, Joseph Tian, refused to intervene; the Armenian Patriarch, Gregory, stood up for the Melkite Patriarch, while the Syrian Catholic Patriarch, Michael Jarweh, authorized the missionary expeditions to examine the case.

On the 27th of November, the Syrian Patriarch adopted the missionaries' decision and published it under the title (The Voice of the Sending Fathers). The missionary Fathers suspended the resolution of the Melkite Patriarch and his Council, awaiting the answer of Rome. The Patriarch resented, and in return, he authorized Germanus Adam to disprove the opinions of the sending Fathers. On the 20th Of March, the Metropolitan finished his composition, "Mr. Germanos Adam responded to the composition called: The Voice of Missionary Fathers."¹³² The first part of the composition was about monasticism, while the second part pertained to the regulation which organized the relationship between the Holy See and the Eastern Church. The Metropolitan

¹³² Idlibi. The Melkite Bishops of Aleppo in the Modern Era, p. 163.

mentioned that the missionary Fathers attempted to prove the validity of the Metropolitan's request, which was directed to the Holy See.

In ratifying their allegation, they invoked many testimonies from the canonical books of the Western Church and its tradition. They also used the actions of some Western supervisors who interpreted this canon. The Metropolitan of Aleppo, in his turn, refuted the allegation by examining every case alone according to the Ecumenical Councils. He replied¹³³: “The Eastern Churches do not adhere to all canons and customs, which are found in the Western councils and the actions of the supreme Pontiffs since these statutory canons fit the customs of the Western Churches of the Latin rituals’

‘Those canons have not been known in the East and have not been recognized; therefore, it is not bound since the Easterners are obliged to comply with the Eastern customs, which are the canons of the first eight Ecumenical Councils; the territorial councils and the good Customs which the Eastern Church lived according to it since the initiation of Christianity. According to these canons and customs –excluding the cases that pertained to the faith, of which the teaching of the Apostle's Churches was the cornerstone, especially the education of the Holy See, which is the most honorable and high Church- it was not permitted that the Pope judges the cases relating to the disputes between Eastern bishops and clergymen. It is the territorial councils that were to examine such things and give absolute judgments regarding the relevant issue, which would be mandatory to the conflicting groups, without the ability to transfer the case to another court according to the Fifth Canon of the First Nicene Council.

Likewise, the Eastern Church acted until the convention of the Chalcedonian Council in 451 AD. The Wisest Fathers permitted the transmission of the issue from the territorial Congregation to the Patriarchal Congregation according to the ninth resolution, in which the way of the petition from the Episcopal Congregation to the territorial Congregation was mentioned according to the old custom. In addition, it was permitted to refer the case to the Patriarchal Congregation or to the Congregation of the Patriarch of Constantinople where the last verdict is given.

¹³³Adam, Germanos. “Mr. Germanos Adam responded to the composition called the voice of Missionary Fathers”, 'Foundation Georges et Mathilde Salem, Syria, Aleppo, Shelfmark Ar 109, 15 Manuscripts. <https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/501460>.

This tradition continued to be used in all Eastern Churches without changing as the wisest king Justinian arranged it in Header 22 of Canon 123; he stated in clear words that it is allowed to refer the case of the Metropolitans only to the relevant Metropolitan and his territorial Congregation, and if it is necessary, it could be referred to the Patriarch and his General Congregation. No one can resist the judgment of the Patriarchal Council, regardless of the pretext he has. That great king was the organizer of the Roman Empire in the middle of the sixth generation, and all had accepted his canons since they were derived from the Church Canons. The Roman Pontiffs did not refuse it, but quite the contrary, they took it and used it. Not only had the Eastern Churches followed this behavior, but all the African Churches believed in it, where there were more than four hundred Metropolitans who retained this tradition since the initiation of Christianity, as it was stated in the fifty-ninth encyclical of the epistles of Saint Cyprian, which had been sent to Pope Cornelius.

The Saint, the most revered among the Saints who presided over the Chair of Cartagena during the middle of the third generation, stated that the cases should be examined and judged in the territories where sins have been committed. The convict has no right to file a claim in another place”. For St. Cyprian Christ built his Church upon St. Peter and if we consider St. Peter is the Tree of the Church itself the Bishops were its branches. For him the Pope was but a bishop who has no authority above other bishops. Moreover St. Cyprian stated that during the African Council assured that none of the Bishops has the right to make himself the Bishop of bishops. Furthermore, St. Cyprian believed that all canonically elected Bishops exercised a power independent of each other and they are responsible only before the Lord himself or provincial synod¹³⁴. He continued “The convict has no right to file a claim in another place. This justification was preserved in all African Churches without reason, as it appears in the agenda of the African Council in 419 AD, where Saint Augustine was the monitor of the Fathers; it is mentioned in the plan that the Pope accepted the communion with Priest Epiaeris who sought the help of the Pope after his isolation from his episcopate; therefore, the Pope sent an emissary to Africa to delegate with the Fathers who live in Cartagena about the possibility of reinstating the mentioned priest.

The Fathers reinstated the Metropolitan after his repentance; afterward, one of the emissaries, Faustinus, presented to the Fathers the orders of the Supreme Pontiff regarding the ability to bring

¹³⁴Geraghty, William. What St. Cyprian Thought of St. Peter's and the Pope's Supremacy, *The Catholic Layman*, Vol. 7, No. 80 (Aug. 19, 1858), p.94.

up the cases of the bishops to the Holy See on the basis that the Nicaean Council ordered that. When the Fathers reviewed the old copy of the Council, they did not find the claim of Pope Zosimus. They arranged to consul the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Patriarch of the Alexandria and asked for a genuine copy preserved in their Churches. They implored Pope Boniface, Zosimus's successor, to obtain an original copy for the Canons of Nicaean Council.

The mentioned two Patriarchs sent two copies of the original one, which contained only twenty Canons, and there was no allusion to the Canon, which the Pope claimed” However, the relationship between Rome and Church of Africa were not stable at all since the Roman Pope tried to overwhelmed the Church of Africa and control it. In 411 AD, the Council of Carthage excommunicated Caelestius and his master Pelagius for their thoughts. In 415AD, The Council of Diospolis in Palestine declared that pelagius innocent and worthy of Communion since his teaching does not go against the Catholic principles. In tow African Councils which were held in 416 respectively, the African Bishops send 2 letters to Pope Innocent I warning hin of the danger of Pelagianism therefore, the Pope confirmed the excommunication of Pelagius and Caelestius. Nevertheless, Pope Zosimus who succeeded Innocent took counteroffensive measurements against the Church of Africa declaring the exculpation of the opposite party. However, the Emperor Honorius supported the African Councils and issued an – anti Pelagian decree in 30th April in 418. However, 200 hundred Bishops convened in Carthage condemned the Pelagian heresy ingnoring the interest of the Holy See which would not go unnoticed that Pope Zosimus who declared his communion with the African Priest Apiarius who was excommunicated by his local Bishop Urban based on the Nicene Canons but were actually the third and fourth Canons of Council of Sardica 343AD. However, the Pope died 24th December 418 AD. In 419 the Council of Carthage was set to delegate about the situation with Pope Boniface I instead. The African Council insisted that the appeals should not be outside of Africa and they pointed to the Pope that the Nicene Canons do not contain such indication or privileges pertained to the Holy See¹³⁵. . The African Council then convened again and sent encyclicals to Pope Caelestinus entreating him not to accept the appeal of the clergymen and the bishops of Africa since the acceptance of such petitions opposed the Nicaean Council and the tradition of the African Church, which is one of the oldest Churches. The Church ordered plainly that all bishops and clergymen must submit to Metropolitanism, and all

¹³⁵Cheung, Julia. Augetine and the African Councils 393-427, Theology Annual 41, 2021, p. 177-179.

the problems and cases must end in the same place of occurrence. The Holy Spirit of every territory is completed since it is permitted to everyone who thinks they are oppressed to seek the justice of the territory's councils or the general councils. After that, those, the most revered Fathers, were convinced that the sinner should not bring cases before the Holy See, even though they concluded in Article 28 that every bishop judged by the Territory Council must be excommunicated if he got his case to another place outside Africa.

The Metropolitan pointed out that the authority of the Pope was limited to its jurisdiction. Moreover, the missionary Fathers and the Easterners have yet to understand each other. The Easterners looked at the authority of the Pope and his position from a fraternity perspective; he was the Father of all; his high position was preserved in the hearts of Eastern believers, but at the same time, the Holy See should have paid attention to their tradition, nature, and being, which goes back in deep history that there is no way to ignore or forget them. However, the Metropolitan continued refuting the voice of sending Fathers by saying: "The cause of that change in the discipline of the Church goes to the invention of an anonymous man, Isidore the merchant, as it appears in some manuscripts of the ninth generation that this deceiver forged about eighty canons and attributed to the supreme Popes of the first generation".

In the forgeries, he inserted his counter inventions to all the Church dates, traditions, and old canons which targeted the authority of the territorial Congregation and weakened the domination of the bishops over their subjects. These forgeries followed the same approach and did not belong to the supreme Pontiffs. For these reasons and others, the late fact-checker doctors unanimously agreed to the wickedness of that composition since it is ultimately forged.

Among other things mentioned in that composition is that every clergyman can seek the help of the Holy See, and the bishop should not be sentenced by any heavy punishment as isolation and excommunication without the knowledge of the Holy See, while the territorial councils must not be convened without the endorsement of the Holy See, and canons and customs have no power without the confirmation of the Holy See while he (The Pope) is not subjected to canons or bound to them since he was the supreme Pontiff.

Unsurprisingly, such weird perceptions are submitted to the naïve believers as religious facts despite being human-made inventions. It is known to all those who read the books of canons that there were sycophantic who used weird percepts not because they wanted to have fairness, but to

refute it by adducing sophistical opinions according to their human greed and ambition; their purpose was to have the satisfaction of the people and to win the revenue and the patronage of the Popes. I am not the one who said that (Adam, Germanos), but Paul III noted it to the nine persons who had been elected from among the most educated people of their time; four of them were cardinals, and three were Metropolitans.

This supreme pontiff, who presided over the Holy See in 1544 AD, saw the fragmentation of the Church's body and the existing evil; therefore, he brought together those nine unique doctors and commanded them to discover the cause of this existing evil and the appropriate means to reform the Church. After a thorough examination, those virtuous Fathers wrote to the Pope their opinions that the source of this evil was that some of his predecessors (Popes) gathered doctors to achieve their desires, and they (the doctors) listened, not knowing what should be done but to find by their malice action a way to justify what was desired by them as saying that the will of the Pope, which stems from his talks and deeds, is the Canon which must be followed. "Our supreme Pontiff, from this fountain, the evil customs, and the heavy sickness came to existence in the Church of God(unreadable words). Our top Father, the first thing that should be done is that the canons must be over everything and be preserved as much as possible in the policy of the Church of God".

Moreover, the Metropolitan completed his response to the missionary Fathers who argued that the suspension against the Metropolitan did not meet the legal limits, which are the three warnings and the specified period. Those warnings must be presented in the presence of witnesses. The Metropolitan stated: "We answer them by saying that those warnings are not always required to prove the legality of the suspension penalty but to prove the legality of the excommunication. Excommunication can only be issued as a forced discipline; therefore, it is always assumed as intransigence and coercion. While the suspension sometimes emerges as mere retribution for an earlier sin, then pressure is not required since the suspension is confined to evil and does not warn the perpetrator. The reason for that differentiation goes to the heaviness of the excommunication, which is used by the Church only as a final resolution after using all the attractive means. Therefore, excommunication is only directed against the mistaken insurgent. While saying that the warnings should be in three batches, we answer the signs are not required to make the

excommunication legal but to make it permitted. It is sometimes agreed that excommunication would be allowed even if there is just one warning which might substitute the three warnings.

Regarding the period, all theologians agreed three days were enough. As regards saying that the warnings must be presented in the presence of witnesses, we say it is a custom that must be used not for the validity of the verdict of excommunication but for preserving the traditions as it appears in the forty-eighth resolution's header regarding the judgment of the excommunication where the sentence of that excommunication must be confirmed regardless the customs above.

The penalty of preventing from entering the Church for one month is justified against those who do not use these customs, and that pertains to the assigned judges whose jobs do not authorize them to take penalties. In contrast, genuine judges are counsellors of religious law, as appears in the header of number four regarding the judgment of excommunication. The excommunication and the suspension verdict could be given under one condition; if you don't do that, you will be included in the excommunication and suspension punishment. In such an assumption, there must not be more warnings. If these principles are accepted by all, we answer them secondly that the suspension presented against His Excellency is completed and does not lack the religious principles since His Holiness (The Patriarch) gave him a period that was not just three days (which is enough for the confirmation of the warnings) but extended for almost eight months, during which the correspondence continued between them. Meanwhile, the Patriarch threatened him with punishments as it appears in many epistles, especially in the epistle of His Excellency written on the 13th of March 1797 AD and the epistle of the 13th of June 1798 that he did not..... (unreadable words) but he gave him another deadline for three days which multiplied that the secret suspension was on the 18th of June, while the pre-publication notice was on the 27th of it. On this ground, the period between the secret suspension and the announcement was 15 days, in addition to his validation of the verdict in his petition to the Patriarch. In other writings, the secret keeper of His Holiness (The Patriarch) informed him that the publications of suspension were written. It just lacked the statutory declaration, and if he did not accept the suspension verdict, he would be excommunicated. After that, His Excellency (the Metropolitan) claimed that he took the suspension forcibly but did not present any evidence regarding the violation, except the incompatibility with the Metropolitans and the Patriarch; therefore, they issued disciplinary penalties against him. How is that possible? After all of this, it could be believed

that His Excellency ignored the necessary warnings. The purpose of the warnings enacted by the canons is that the convicted person who does not complete the thing will be available to ecclesiastical punishments. If he continues determined and uncompromising after this knowledge, he will be disobedient to the order of the President, and he deserves religious punishments for his indifference.

It is confirmed that the suspension against His Excellency contained all the ecclesiastical legislation required for the validity of the suspension and its permissibility. Apostolic Fathers argued that the Patriarch had no authority to judge the Metropolitans who were under their jurisdiction with the suspension without the awareness of the Pope. They reported the Pope's Julius definition of the second and third articles of the Nicene Council to ratify their allegations, and then the epistle of the Metropolitans of Egypt to Pope Felix, and the epistle of Pope Damasus to Bishop Stephen, to the Congregation of Africa, and similar to that was the regulation of Pope Zephyrinus sent by Pope Marcellinus to the Patriarch of Antioch that Pope Zephyrinus enacted Patriarch, Catholicos, and Metropolitans do not sentence Metropolitans without taking the permission of the Holy See, and these references are the all of what they have.

Regarding this, we say that if we are to believe these forged documents were true, it is unusual for the appeal of the opponents (the Metropolitans) since it did not mention the suspension, but it pertains to the excommunication, dismissal from service, or declining from the rank and that is off topic. We secondly answer by saying that those apostolic Fathers, by citing these documents, affirm they are either illiterate or that they deliberately wanted to deceive naive people by convincing them it is a given fact for all checker-theologians.

The mentioned publication was falsely and maliciously attributed to Pope (Zephyrinus) by Isidore, the merchant who appeared in the ninth generation. To review what we have said in the first, second, third, and fourth points of our response to this case; we demonstrated by the canons of the accepted councils and the honest ecclesiastical dates, which all theologians accept, that every Metropolitan (besides the Patriarch of the first Churches) judges in his territorial councils all the cases which relate to the Metropolitans without exception or which relates to the Pope. That means if he (the Metropolitan) sentenced the guilty bishop to excommunication and suspension, the perpetrator has the right, according to the synod, to petition his case only before the Patriarchal Council; then, we must not waste our time in refuting some lying agenda which is not fit to be

presented at this time. We (Adam Germanos) do not deny that according to the new custom of the Western Church, the Pope has preserved the right to judge the Metropolitans, their movement from episcopate to another and confirm their election and ordination which cannot be done without his special authorization, but this custom is not binding for the Eastern Church. Therefore, the honorable Patriarch got used to confirm the election of the Metropolitans and their ordination, and if they needed to move them from an episcopate to another and sentence them in their councils to suspension, excommunication and isolation according to their sins, the Eastern Church sustained its custom except it was available for the Metropolitans to transmit their cases from the Congregations of the Patriarch to the court of the Supreme Pontiff according to the Canon of filing a claim, while the Roman Pontiff did not deny the right of the Patriarch, but they fostered and confirmed it, and every time there was a union between the Eastern and Western Churches, they affirmed that the right and privacy of the Patriarch must be preserved as it is known in last definition about the faith of the Florentine Council.

These opinions are found in many books, like the fifth volume on page 539 (the Metropolitan did not mention the name of the volume). The supreme pontiffs who ran the Holy See for the first eight generations considered themselves bound more than anyone else to preserve the Canons of the Church and its customs. There was a habit in the Holy Church that the Popes, on the day of their consecration, swear before the icon of St. Peter to preserve without the diminution or modification of the Canons of the Ecumenical Councils, the regulations of their predecessor, and all the accepted ecclesiastical customs generally. This information is found in the book of the Old Customs of the Supreme Pontiffs, which was printed and promulgated by Father Cadinier, the Jesuit.

Popes preserved the duties of this part practically, and they proclaimed in their composition and epistles for churches that they were binding to hold all the Canons of Councils and Customs of the Church. There are too many testimonies to assure our sayings. For the abbreviation, it is enough to mention the testimonies of four Pops; the first is Pope Zosimus in his epistles to the Metropolitans of France; he said that the authority of this Chair (The Holy See) cannot grant or change anything against the regulation of the Fathers since these regulations are still alive and their seniority must be respected. Secondly, Pope Gelasius, in his epistle to the Metropolitans of Serbia, said there is no Chair like the first Chair (the Holy See), that he had to bind himself to complete

the regulation of each Council accepted by the universal Church. In his epistle to the Metropolitans of the Illyricum, Pope Celestine said: "We do not seize the Canons, but the Canons hold us". Fourthly, Pope Martin I, in his fifth epistle to the Metropolitan of Philadelphia John, stated: "We could not break the ecclesiastical Canons since we are the advocates and the protectors of the Canons and we are not violators of them".

From what we mentioned in these four testimonies, we can conclude that: firstly, the territorial and patriarchal congregations had full authority to give absolute verdicts to settle all the disputes which were occurring between Metropolitans, the clergy, and the rest of the people, and no one could seek another court, even the court of the Supreme Pontiff from running their judgments. Secondly, the custom of bringing proceedings to the court of the Supreme Pontiff was not derived from a divine authority but was a gift given to him by the Councils to manage some issues associated with the circumstances of time, place, and persons. Even when the Supreme Pontiffs claimed that litigation must be brought to their court from all the churches of the West in the fifth generation, they relied on the laws of the Nicaean Canons' authority and the legislation of the Sedric Council. While these canons were denied by many Metropolitans and critical territorial councils, they were accepted by the Universal Church and the sacred Fathers, who were the instructors of the Church and its pillars.

From that, it becomes obvious how wrong Brother Ignatius Sorouf, the respectable Metropolitan of Beirut, was when he stated that every Christian has the right to bring his claim to the court of the Supreme Pontiff. This saying is a rule of faith. There is no doubt for theologians that if the case is to be a rule of faith, the Universal Church must have explicitly defined and promulgated it according to the Canons of Services and present it to the believers to believe in it. Since there is no such definition regarding this case, but there is an opposite Canon, as we indicated previously, we can conclude that anybody may invent such canons and consider them a rule of faith; he made a heavy mistake against the religion itself.

The facts we mentioned are proven; therefore, it is unnecessary to answer all the testimonies mentioned by the Missionary Fathers in this part, especially some related to the Western Church only, and the others were forged. Moreover, to show its weakness, we answer them in detail by discussing the testimonies which branched in four cases; firstly, the judgment that was given abolishing the endowment of Ibn-Algadban is unjust according to their allegation and does not

take into account the condition which is necessary to the righteousness of the religious Canons; secondly, the Metropolitan brought his case to the court of Supreme Pontiff before issuing the suspension punishment; thirdly since the suspension did not take into account the religious customs, like three warnings and the period that should lapse, these warnings must be given before witnesses; fourthly the Patriarch have no authority to judge the Metropolitans with suspension punishments.

This is a summary of everything they mentioned in the second section, and regarding it, we answer as follows: firstly, we have responded to what they have said, and we have refuted their allegations since we have proven the justice of the Patriarch and his honesty regarding the Metropolitan's petition to the Holy See against fair judgment, therefore, his plea is invalid since the petition has not been placed to demolish the right decisions but to fix the oppressive reviews as the supreme Pontiff sees it right. We answer whether Ignatius's petition to the Holy See was before presenting the suspension. However, it did not precede the religious judgment, which indicated the obligation to return the endowments of Ibn-Algadban and abolish the monastic traits of the people living in the Monastery of Samaan. He gave the Metropolitan a legitimate answer about the golden purse he had taken from the inheritance of the deceased Patriarch, Athanasius that he preserved for months as he mentioned; therefore, the right of the Patriarch and his Metropolitans is established in forcing the perpetrator to accept the judgment of the ecclesiastical punishments after waiting for him for many months using the proofs and evidence which were enough for convincing him to submit.

The authority of ecclesiastical warnings was given by Christ to the presidents of his Church to make the subjects, by his power, obligated to complete what they see right and preserve the Canons of God and His Church. Everything the Missionary Fathers mentioned, from laws, theologians, and the rescripts of the Pops, which were then in the petition, is not accepted after promulgating and taking the judgment. The petition is accepted only during the initiation of the judgment before its ending or after its close within ten days, as it is known in the rescript of Pope Boniface VIII in header fifteen of the decision, chapter six in header eight about the appeals, and the other canonical books. This rule is the pillar of the Canon about the request.

The missionary Fathers could not mention any evidence except one interpretation from anonymous teachers, who are Filo and Lachellato, who said, according to their allegation, that the ten days

must be related to the light sentence which will die quickly; This explanation is not proven; therefore we do not accept it, but we refuse it altogether”¹³⁶.

However, the composition of the Metropolitan faced different reactions. The Maronite Patriarch, Joseph Tian, advised his friend to withdraw his treatise from the hands of the believers; otherwise, he would be excommunicated publicly. When the Metropolitan refused to withdraw his decision, the Maronite Patriarch denounced the composition and ordered his followers to damage all their copies. On the other hand, the Metropolitan addressed the proponents of his episcopate against the campaign of the Patriarch. The Rumi Catholic Patriarch, Agapius Matar, supported his Metropolitan before his Congregation. The missionary Fathers, especially the Capuchin Father Robert who was living in Tripoli, waged a war against the Metropolitan, accusing him of adopting the ideas of the Metropolitan of Pistoia, Scipion Ricci, who was against the individual power of the Pope.

Moreover, he was charged with adopting Anglican thoughts, similar to Scipion's ideas. During this time, the case reached the Holy See court, and Pope Pius VII ordered Patriarch Agapius Matar to investigate the matter. He also imposed upon the Metropolitan and his followers to sign the Roman documents issued against the Ricci and the Synod of Pistoia¹³⁷.

The customs of the East did not couple exactly with the Latine ones and the Easterners were not in place to abdicate their identity. For instance, on 13 June 1837, the Melkite Bishop, Athanasius Dahhan -who was responsible for the Shuwayrite order- refused to ratify the adaption of Salesian mystic order and replied to the Jesuits-backed devotees: “The rule about which you speak [St. Francis de Sales] diametrically opposes to our Eastern rites and customs ... to allow you to eat meat would be to go against all the rules that govern the religious institutions of the East”¹³⁸.

¹³⁶Adam, Germanos. “Mr. Germanos Adam responded to the composition called the voice of Missionary Fathers”, 'Foundation Georges et Mathilde Salem, Syria, Aleppo, Shelfmark Ar 109, 15 manuscripts. <https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/501460>.

¹³⁷Idlibi. The Melkite bishops of Aleppo in the Modern Era, p.157-160.

¹³⁸Khater. "God Has Called Me to Be Free": Aleppan Nuns and the Transformation of Catholicism in 18th-Century Bilad Al-Sham, p.435.

However, the Metropolitan was one of the most influential persons in the East. His ingenuity and knowledge of the Canons and Customs of the Universal Church make him a dangerous person to the authority of the Papacy in the East. The instances provided by him confined the religious authority of the Pope in the East. Moreover, the temporal power of the Holy See, which was derived from the Legacy of Rome and shaped through the prolonged struggle between the Pope and the emperor in the Middle Ages and arrived at its peak during the Crusade time, would be in the place of judgment. According to many examples provided by the Metropolitan, the Holy See's legacy lay on forgery inheritance and whims of the Pope; therefore, the whole institution will be in an unenviable position. However, the Metropolitan, Germanus Adam, continued his influence in the East by presiding over the Congregation Council in 1806 AD in the monastery of St. Anthony. Despite the radical thoughts which leaked to the resolutions of the Council, the decisions were accepted by the Catholic Rumi Patriarch, Agapius Matar, the Maronite Patriarch Joseph Tian, and the papal Emissary Gondalvi. However, the resolutions of the Council were printed and promulgated between 1809 and 1810 AD, and even before the ratification of the Holy See. The Holy See Probably did not want to enter in an open struggle with the Metropolitan for many reasons we mentioned before; therefore, they waited until his death in 1812 AD to move against him.

The Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith condemned all his opinions and the composition of the deceased Metropolitan, and the representatives of the Syrian, Armenian, Melkite, and Maronite communities endorsed this resolution and ordered that the books of the Metropolitan be burned. On 3 June, Pope Pius VII prohibited reading the books of the Metropolitan, especially the instruction of Christianity, under the punishment of excommunication. It is questionable that the Holy See and all the institutions belonging to him did not dare to comment on the Metropolitan's thoughts during his life. Moreover, we have not found any Catholic instructors whether in the West or the East who dealt with the compositions of the Metropolitan, but quite contrary, they were waiting for the chance to burn everything related to him which was proved by their doings¹³⁹. For instance, the Catholic community of Aleppo supported Metropolitan Germanus Adam, and they proved their sympathy when they elected one of his pupils, Maximus Mazlum, to take his position.

¹³⁹Idlibi. The Melkite bishops of Aleppo in the Modern Era, p.157-160.

When he headed toward the St. Savior Monastery for ordination, the Latin monks interfered and prevented the consecration. However, the Patriarch, who feared the insurrection of the Catholics of Aleppo, brought the missionary Fathers' attention to the situation. Therefore, they agreed to send him to Europe to collect benefactors' alms. When he arrived in Rome, the Pope retained him, forced him to abdicate the Chair of Aleppo, and named him the Metropolitan of Mira ¹⁴⁰.

10) The Massacre of 1818 AD in Aleppo and the Recognition of the Catholic Melkite Patriarchate in 1840 AD by Ottomans

The recognition of the Melkite Catholic Church did not happen overnight. Rather, it was full of hardship and toil. Furthermore, the massacre of the Catholics in Aleppo and the general persecution in Syria generally in 1818 AD was the main cause that finally led to the independence of the Catholic Melkite Church in 1840 AD. It is essential to mention that the episcopate of Aleppo was under the direct authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople since 1757 AD, according to the Council of Constantinople at the time, which was inclined to accept the suggestion of the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, Sylvester, who was not able to control the episcopate of Aleppo¹⁴¹. Other sources indicate that the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Paisius II, was the first to interfere in the affairs of the Melkite episcopate of Aleppo in 1740 AD since Gerasimus, the Metropolitan of Aleppo, appointed by the Orthodox Melkite Patriarch, took the side of Latin Missionary Fathers.

The population who disliked the actions of the Metropolitan petitioned the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople to put Aleppo under his authority. Moreover, the Melkite subjects (Catholic and Orthodox) hated the doings of Melkite Patriarch Sylvester, and they found that the best solution for their common charity was to get rid of the radical Patriarch.

The Patriarch of Constantinople, in his turn, started to appoint the Metropolitans of Aleppo until the era of the Orthodox Melkite Patriarch Anthemius, who tried to return the episcopate of Aleppo to his jurisdiction. However, the population of Aleppo filed a claim to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople on 21 May 1812 AD, pleading with him to keep the episcopate of Aleppo under

¹⁴⁰Break, Michael. *The Lightning Facts in the History of the Orthodox Church of Antioch, Egypt*, p. 124.

¹⁴¹Rustom, Asad. *The Church of the City of God the Great Antioch 1453-1928*, 3 volumes, United Kingdom, 2017, V3, p. 160.

his authority. In the first quarter of the 19th century, most of the Christians of Aleppo were Catholic, numbered more than fourteen thousand. At the same time, the Orthodox composed a tiny community with just three priests in Aleppo.

Why did the Catholics of Aleppo submit directly to Constantinople's Ecumenical Patriarchate, refusing to subject themselves to the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch?

In common sense, the Catholics of Aleppo benefited from the distance between them and the center of the Patriarchate. Moreover, the Metropolitans, who were appointed by Constantinople would be less radical than the Orthodox Melkite Patriarch of Antioch. For instance, the Orthodox Melkite Patriarch of Antioch, Sylvester, was in an open war with the Catholics all over Syria .

Whether our conclusion contains a small portion of the truth or is entirely wrong, the Patriarchate of Constantinople did not go easy on the Catholics of Aleppo. However, he often armed the appointed Metropolitans with rescripts to empower their authority over the Catholic believers and bring them back to the Orthodox Church¹⁴². In 1818 AD, the Orthodox-appointed Metropolitan of Aleppo, Gerasimus, carried the rescript with him and delivered it to the governor of Aleppo, Khurshid Bey. The rescript was as follows:

[تفسير خط الشريف العالي الذي جلبه معه السيد المطران كيريوكو جراسميوس في القسطنطينية يعمل ويتحرك بموجب أمري
هذا العالي الشريف ويتجنب مخالفته]

“The explanation of the decree carried by Metropolitan Gerasimus in Constantinople; he moves and acts by this honorable high command of mine and avoids violating it”.

A fenséges nemes irat értelmezése, amelyet amely a fenséges meptropolitánál (al-Maṭrān) Kiriyyoko Cirāsmiyūs-nál van Konstatinápolyban, ezen felséges parancs értelmében azon dolgozik és tevékenykedik, hogy eltávolítsa az ellentéteket.

¹⁴²Karali, Paul. The Most Important Accidents in Aleppo in the First Half of the 19th Century by Copying the Manuscript of the Metropolitan Paul Arotien the Maronite bishop of Aleppo, 1788-1850, Egypt, p. 11-12.

The interpretation of the sublime noble document, which is held by the sublime Metropolitan (al-Maṭrān) Kiriyyoko Cīrāsmiyūs in Constantine, works and acts to remove contradictions in accordance with this sublime command.

“The pride of the great, the voice of correct opinions, the respectful gentleman for the order of the universe, the operator of people's affairs by his insightful thinking, the administrator of the whole creatures on the earth by his proper judgment, the paver of the corner of the government, the establisher of the pillars of happiness and reverence, fraught with all kinds of sympathy of the Supreme King, our minister Khurshid Ahmed Bey, may Almighty bless him.

destūru ekrem *kegyelmes vezír* müşīrū efhem *tiszteletreméltó főparancsnok*, nizāmu l-‘alem a világ rendje müdebbirū ümūri l-cūmhūr b-l-fikri ş-şāqīb *bölcsességével a világ dolgainak elrendezője*, mütemmimū l- mehāmi l-ennām bi-l-reyi ş-şā’ib the disposer *bölcs ítéletével az emberek ügyeinek elrendezője*, mü‘esses būnyānū d-devlet ve-l iclāl a nagyság és a boldogság épületének alapítója müşeyyidū erkānī el-maḥfūf bi-şunūfi laṭīfī a nagyszerűség fokozataival megerősített oszlopok felállítója, ‘avāṭīfī l-meliki l-mennān a legmagasabb Király által a legkegyesebben magasztalt vezír Hūrşīd Beg edāma llāhu te‘ālā ma‘alīyehu (tegye a magasságos Isten a méltóságát tartóssá)

Moreover, to the most just judge, the head of the believers, the essence of virtue and certainty, the carrier of the honorable flags and religion. The inheritor of the prophet's knowledge, who gains the care of the Sultan, the judge of Aleppo, his virtue is to be completed by reaching this honorable Humayun's Signature / Imperial Tughra / or tevqī. For your knowledge, the Patriarch of Rumi and Constantinople, who dwelled in the supreme Empire with the other Patriarch, presented to my highness a stamped petition asking for my mercy to issue my high order that some of the capable Rum priests who are the masters of corruption by their usual malignancy and evil souls promulgated their rotten doctrine. During this time, they departed them from their Metropolitan by tempting and seducing them to convert to the tenet of the (West European) Franks and the Catholics. Except for their endless endeavors by using various instruments to prevent the Rums from entering their Church and leading them to the Franks and Catholic Churches most of whom have specified places in their homes as Churches where they exercise their prayer and liturgy, and when this situation leads to the violation of public order, the folks who get used to this corruption must be exiled and expatriated. The Frank friars were utterly prevented from entering the homes of Rums, and the Rum subjects who did not prevent themselves from such doings must be

disciplined. Conducting religious ceremonies and services in the houses must be stopped and prevented. By reviewing the records, it appears that in the forty-fifth of Muharram, by the knowledge of the previous chief clerk, a high order was issued, and after that, many high orders with different dates registered in the Porte affirm that some of the able farmers among the subjects of Rums in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Acre, and those areas have followed the religion of Franks. In their delusion to each other, most of them left their doctrine and old customs. Even though there was an order to prevent such things, they got the aid of some other parties. They disappeared by (unreadable line) and high orders have been issued on various dates that the subjects of the Rums who adopt the doctrine of Franks are to be returned to their old status. An appropriate warning must have occurred regarding the case, and whoever makes any movement against it, their property will be confiscated by the state, and they will be exiled to other lands. My high orders have been issued in 1171 to prevent these accidents. Now, regarding the petition brought up to my high court, I have decided to give my high command to exile the mentioned Patriarch. In this respect, my imperial honorable document, which is combined with prestige and honor, has been issued, and according to it, my order has been issued that the Rumi Priests who are willing to corrupt the subjects must be exiled. The Frank monks (Friars) must be warned and prevented from entering the homes of the Rumi subjects. The Rumi subjects who did not abstain from doing such things must be disciplined. Conducting prayers and ceremonies in the subjects' homes must be prevented, and caring about and examining the subjects' systems is the most critical thing that My Highness will demand. At the same time, the disorder of the subjects' system is entirely against my honorable will. My minister referred to, and my judge mentioned above with your knowledge, that you must function and act according to the mentioned way and exert more efforts and jealousy in preventing any status that could be against my will and according to that my grand and high command has been issued, which must be obeyed, and you have to avoid what opposes it. In this way, you act and rely on the honorable sign”.

“It was written in the middle of the Rabi' al-Awwal in 1233 Hijri”¹⁴³ (The 28th of January 1818).

By examining the rescript, we can conclude that the decree was but a general policy applied by the Ottoman Empire to all its Christian subjects since the rescript was not new at all. Rather, it was

¹⁴³ Foundation Georges et Mathilde Salem, Syria, Aleppo, Shelfmark Ar 109, 15 Manuscripts, page 10. <https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/501460>.

recreated many times, such as in 1171 Hijri (1757 AD) and 45 Hijri which have to be 1145 Hijri which corresponds to 1732 AD. Moreover, the rescript was not just meant for Aleppo but included places like Acre and Jerusalem. The Maronite Metropolitan of Aleppo, Paul Arotien, who witnessed the events, described the massacre and its circumstances. On the 26th of March, the Orthodox Metropolitan arrived in Aleppo, and on the 29th of the same month, the Metropolitan presented the rescript to the governor of Aleppo. On the 13th of March, the Metropolitan summoned the Catholic Melkite priests with the community's notables and displayed the order to them.

On the 5th of April, the Melkite Catholic priests travelled to Mount Lebanon. On the 10th of the same month, the Metropolitan gathered the notables again and presented to them the order of the governor of Aleppo, Khurshid Ahmed Bey, preventing them from conducting prayers in the Churches of Franks. The Catholic subjects accepted the terms of the Patriarch, but that was not enough to satisfy his arrogance and he displayed to them another order forcing them to make prayers in his Church. They started protesting with outrage, and then the Metropolitan disappeared suddenly. The angry crowd that outnumbered 2000 headed to the headquarter of the governor, but the debate ended in vain since the governor gave them a choice of either becoming Muslims or Jews or obeying their Metropolitan. During this time, the crowd caught the Metropolitan hiding inside a box in the Church. However, they took him barefooted and bareheaded to the religious court where he sought the protection of the Judge who accepted him. The judge, in his turn, sent a notification to the governor informing him about the accident. On this basis, the governor gave an order to the soldiers to gather the protesters inside the cellars of the palace and slaughter them. Eleven persons were killed in this event, and afterwards, the soldiers waged a campaign of arrests among the Christians of Aleppo until the jails were full of prisoners.

After the massacre, the Orthodox Metropolitan, Gerasimus, fled Aleppo and sought refuge in the Metropolitan of Acre. On the 21st of June in 1823 AD, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Anthimus, sent an epistle to the Metropolitan of Acre and gave him orders to look after this latter. According to the notebook of the Carmelite Fathers, the supporter of the Metropolitan, the Patriarch of Constantinople, was deposed and his successor was forbearing and dealt with the Catholics in a

friendly manner while he sent a strongly-worded letter to the Metropolitan rebuking and threatening him; afterwards, he exiled him to one of the Greek islands¹⁴⁴.

Many epistles were forwarded from among the Catholic dignitaries in the East to the Holy See and the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith regarding the situation and the persecution that the Catholics of Aleppo suffered at the time, and since the Holy See was the protector of Catholicism all over the world, he started mobilizing all the strength which he might gain among the European powers to alleviate the situation and stop the extension of persecution to other lands inside the Ottoman Empire.

On the 25th of May 1818 AD, and in an epistle sent by the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to the Secretary of the Latin Faith, Monsignor Testa, the Congregation elaborated the danger which may extend to the adjacent Episcopates such as Beirut, Damascus, Sidon, and Tyra. Moreover, the epistle indicated the fear which may be generated from adopting the same methods by the Orthodox Syrians and Armenians who may be empowered by the success of their Orthodox Melkite Brothers. Under these circumstances, the Supreme Pontiff wrote to the King of France and the King of Austria explaining the situation and asking for their help before the Porte of the Ottoman Empire to extract imperial rescripts which might cancel the unfair orders and guarantee the safety of the Catholics in the East. Moreover, he allowed the previous Metropolitan of Aleppo, Maximus Mazlum, and the Metropolitan of Mira who was living in Trieste, to set out to Vienna, where he would meet the Apostolic Vicar. Together, they would display the case before the king of Austria¹⁴⁵. In the epistle written by the Metropolitan Maximus Mazlum to the Congregation for Propagation of the Faith on the 25th of May 1818 AD, he asked to have a particular recommendation from the secretary of the state of the Holy See, Consalvi, to the minister of foreign affairs, prince Metternich since the case will be presented to him directly. It was evident that the case had its priority in the eyes of the Holy See that instructions were going and coming in various directions to find the best solution that may serve the cause of the Catholics in the East.

¹⁴⁴Karali, Paul. *The Most Important Accidents of Aleppo in the First Half of the 19th Century by Copying the Manuscript of the Metropolitan Paul Arotien the Maronite Bishop of Aleppo*, p. 20-21.

¹⁴⁵Cardinal Coussa. *Aleppo Martyrs*, translation. Damiano Shparch, St. Paul press, Lebanon, p. 141. *Lettere della S. C. de P. F.* Vol. 299 Anno 1818.

On the 22nd of June, the chief of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Litta, informed Consalvi, the secretary of the Holy See, about the information delivered to him by the Patriarchal Vicar of Constantinople and the secret keeper of the Holy land that the rudeness of Orthodox reached its peak by exercising high pressure on the Catholics in all over the East. Moreover, the report mentioned the intervention of Russia in the issue since the Orthodox of the East came under their protection; therefore, the Holy See must use all the power he had in Europe to force the Ottoman Porte to liberate the Catholics of the East¹⁴⁶.

On the 18th of June, an epistle forwarded from the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith's chief to Cardinal Consalvi pointed out that the ambassadors of France, Spain, and Austria put all their efforts to stop the persecution, but it was in vain.

Moreover, according to the news coming from Constantinople, the persecution may extend to include even the Armenians ¹⁴⁷. However, the emperor of Austria continued to raise the issue before the Ottoman Porte. He gave his ambassador, Sturmer, high orders to protest with the ambassador of France against the treatment of Catholics in the East. The ambassador carried out the orders of the emperor and suggested five resolutions to the Ottoman Porte, which are:

- First, the Ottoman Porte must be convinced about the integrity and fidelity of the so-called Community of the Catholic Rumi and the Orthodox Patriarch's defamation exercised against the Catholics.
- The Ottoman Porte recognizes the community of the Rumi Catholics, and it must be entirely separated from the Orthodox Community. The Orthodox must not have any authority over the Catholics and must have any right to persecute Catholics, since the Catholics are free to exercise their religion.
- The community of Rumi Catholics must have the right to choose a public place according to the number of their subjects and to conduct religious services in any city where they do not have a Church.

¹⁴⁶Cardinal Coussa. Aleppo Martyrs, P. 148-149. A Monsignor Leardi Arcivescovo di Efeso Nunzio Apostolico in Vienna, Adi 11 Luglio 1818.

¹⁴⁷Cardinal Coussa. Aleppo Martyrs, Eminentissimo Signor Cardinal Consalvi Segretario di Stato. p.180.

- Patriarch, Archbishop and Metropolitans must have the right and freedom to reside in their Churches as the rest of the Orthodox communities. They must also have the same rights which the Jews and other Orthodox communities of the Ottoman Empire have.

- To maintain order and prevent any struggle in the future, the Ottoman Porte must issue a supreme decree to enforce the resolution, as mentioned above, and anyone who infringes these articles shall suffer the harshest penalties ¹⁴⁸.

However, the efforts of the ambassador of Vienna paid off; the letter sent by the Embassy of Vienna to the Congregation for Propagation of the Faith on the 24th of April confirmed that the Emperor informed His Holiness that he finally obtained orders to stop the persecution against Catholics. They can, henceforth, practice their ceremonies in their Churches.

Another letter sent by the embassy to the Congregation on the 8th of May pointed out that the efforts of the foreign ambassadors, especially the ambassador of Austria, played a decisive role in stopping the persecution of the Catholics in the East. Moreover, their exiled priests were allowed to return to their old position¹⁴⁹. However, in 1831 AD, the recognition of the Armenian Catholic Community led to the independence of the Rumi Melkite Catholics afterward. On the 22nd of Ramadan 1246 Hijri, 1830 AD, the Patriarch of the Rumi Melkite, Catholic Ignatius V, with his Metropolitans, sent an epistle to the Ottoman Porte thanking the Sultan for his incredible generosity for the decree issued on the 21st of Rajab.

It could be understood from the letter's content that the Sultan recognized the Catholic Armenian of Constantinople as an independent Millet. For that reason, Agob Ben Manuel was elected as its Metropolitan. The authority of the Metropolitan included all the Catholics of the East who were given the right to construct Churches for their prayers and Ceremonies, while the Patriarch of Orthodox had no right to interfere in the affairs of Catholics.

Moreover, the Patriarch of Melkite Catholics entreated the Sultan to issue a decree informing the governors of Syria (his servants) that the Patriarch and the Melkite Catholic hierarchy had the right

¹⁴⁸Cardinal Coussa. Aleppo Martyrs. p.187.

¹⁴⁹Cardinal Coussa. Aleppo Martyrs, Archivio Di Propaganda Fida, Scritture riferite nei Congressi, Greci Malchiti Patriarcato Antiocheno e Gerosolimitano e Alessandrino dal 1819 al 1820 Vol 13, p. 201-202.

to reside among their subjects and to build on Church in every city and town where there is the proper number of subjects, especially in Damascus, Aleppo, and Egypt¹⁵⁰. After the death of the Catholic Melkite, Patriarch Ignatius V, Metropolitan Maximus Mazlum was elected as the Catholic Patriarch of Antioch on the 24th of March 1833 AD, and Pope Gregory XVI sent him the pallium. On the 5th of April 1834 AD, the new Patriarch visited Damascus, where the Catholic subjects welcomed him with much warmth. It was a victory for the Catholics since they were forbidden from seeing their Patriarch for one hundred and ten years (1724-1834 AD). The petition sent by the previous Patriarch to Sultan Mahmud the Second bore fruit; the victory of Rumi Melkite Catholics continued over time, and many of the Christian subjects converted to Catholicity in Damascus, Homs, Tripoli, and different places, which means the Orthodox Patriarch lost a tremendous amount of revenues.

In Egypt, the Catholic community had the same privileges as the Armenian Catholics. In the endeavors of the Catholic Patriarch of Constantinople, the Ottoman Porte, they issued a decree in 1834 AD appointing Metropolitan Basil as their head. The rescript guaranteed the religious freedom of Catholics, forbidding any harassment that the Orthodox could exercise against them. In addition, all the civil rights, like marriage, divorce, and courts belonged only to the Metropolitan over his sect.

However, the privileges which the Rumi Catholics gained bothered the Orthodox leaders. In 1836 AD, the Melkite Orthodox Patriarch summoned the Orthodox Hierarchy to a meeting in Tripoli to undermine the Catholic's authority. In cooperation with the Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria, they collected a significant sum of money and sent one of them to Constantinople for that reason. They claimed that wearing hoods pertained to the Orthodox hierarchy and demanded that the Catholic clergymen be forbidden from that since the Orthodox subjects were not able to distinguish their priests. However, the Armenian Catholic Patriarch in Constantinople summoned the Deputy of the Catholic Melkite Patriarch and encouraged him to collect money to fight the Orthodox Patriarch.

In 1837 AD, a high decree was issued by the Ottoman Porte to the governor of Egypt and Syria at the time, Muhammad Ali Pasha, forbidding the conversion to another sect while the Catholic

¹⁵⁰Cardinal Coussa. Aleppo Martyrs, P. 640. Archivio di Propaganda Fida, Scritture riferite nei Congressi, Greci Malchiti Patriarcato Antiocheno e Gerosolimitano e Alessandrino dal 1809 al 1818 Vol 12.

priests were prevented from wearing the hoods and moving freely from one place to another. When the Orthodox Patriarch gained the decree, he travelled to Egypt to carry out the instructions, since the central court in Egypt was responsible for Egypt and Syria, the law was presented to Muhammad Ali Pasha who ordered that it be implemented and recorded in the religious court.

During this time, the Catholic Melkite Patriarch was in Egypt checking the situation of the Melkite subjects. When the Patriarch heard the news, he consulted the French Consulate. The French consul advised him to make his deputy, Metropolitan Basil, pursue the case before the Khedive Court or at least postpone it until he could present it to the Ottoman Court. The Khedive Muhammad Ali Pasha replied to the suggestion that he does not interfere in religious matters, but he executes the orders as they are. The Rumi Catholics had to issue other orders authorizing them to exercise the rights they were looking for.

However, the Orthodox Patriarch demanded that the sultanate orders be executed; therefore, Patriarch Maximus Mazlum and his priests were compelled to stay in the Patriarchal building while the Consulate of France considered the Patriarchal structure included within the scope of its protection. The consul also demanded the Khedive Court to postpone executing the orders.

Since the Orthodox Patriarch and his hierarchy had not been pleased about the procedure, they again raised the case in Constantinople by the ambassador of Russia exploiting the absence of the French ambassador. The new decree emphasized the old decrees which the Orthodox obtained and that the Catholic clergymen must distinguish themselves from the Orthodox by wearing four-cornered hoods with purple or black robes.

In 1838 AD, Sultan Abdul Majid Khan issued a decree emphasizing the equity of all Millets and subjects of the Ottoman Empire and that all cases and litigation which happened between the various Millets must be decided by the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, the Catholic Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Jewish Rabbi; afterward, the Ottoman Porte ratified the solution. However, the System did not serve the Catholics; on the contrary, it served the interest of the Orthodox. The pressure exercised by the Orthodox and their Russian consul in Egypt forced Muhammad Ali Pasha to notify the Catholic Patriarch Maximus, offering him three options. The Patriarch and his clergymen changed their hoods according to the high order; they didn't move and disappeared, waiting for another order from the Ottoman Porte or the Patriarch himself to travel to Constantinople and solve the case, and Sultan Abdul Majid

Khan opened the door for the examination of such litigation by the Patriarchal Council. The intervention of the ambassador of France and his consuls in Constantinople, Syria, and Egypt ended the status quo against the Catholics. In 1840 AD, Patriarch Maximus Mazlum travelled to Malta, and then to Rome, where the Pope and the Cardinals received him with great joy. After that, he travelled to Paris, crossing Marseille, where he met the King and the Nobles of the Kingdoms. He travelled back to Constantinople on the 15th of July, 1841 AD, to take care of the case which was still under debate and caused great harm to the Catholic Hierarchy.

When Patriarch Maximus arrived at Constantinople, he was surprised that the Armenian Catholic Patriarch at the time officially abandoned running the civil affairs of the other Catholic communities. Their abandonment was accompanied by neglecting the documents and letters which were sent by Patriarch Maximus to be presented to the Ottoman Porte, and that critically harmed the interest of the Melkite Catholic community.

The Melkite Catholic Patriarch disregarded their misconduct and wanted to renew communion with Armenians under certain conditions, but they refused. The separation of the Armenian Catholics from other Catholic sects had its benefit, which ultimately served the Patriarch, and after many mediations by the Ottoman Porte, Sultan Abdul Majid Khan recognized Maxims Mazloun as the sole Patriarch and peer to the other Patriarch in 1846 AD, but without an official order. Moreover, he appointed a deputy for him in Constantinople.

Another case that served the interest of the Patriarch was the Hoods' problems. Since Patriarch Maximus Mazloun was of great intelligence and a person of substantial ability of debate, he acquired the appreciation of the Ottoman Porte during his debate with the Orthodox Patriarch as the Sultan endowed him with the bejeweled medal for his knowledge (Nişan). His high position in the Ottoman court allowed him to decide the type of hoods his clergymen would use. Under his wishes, the Sultan ordered that the hierarchy of Melkite Catholics henceforth use the hexagonal hoods of purple. Moreover, the Sultan permitted the Patriarch to carry out the order and prevent any judge or governor from interfering in the case, ending the struggle between the Catholic Melkite and their brother, the Orthodox Melkite. The struggle between Maximus Mazloun and his peers of Orthodox postponed his official recognition as the Patriarch. In 1847 AD, the Sultan

issued his high Firman recognizing Maximus Mazloum as a Patriarch over the Melkite Catholics all over the Ottoman lands. He had equal status and rights to his peers¹⁵¹.

¹⁵¹The Patriarch Maximus. Historical Summary regarding the Rumi Catholic community from 1837 onwards, p. 119-121.

The fourth Chapter: The Chaldean Church

1) The Relationship between the (Nestorian) Eastern Church and the Holy See before the Ottomans

The Story of the Eastern Church goes back to the era of Jesus when the king of Edessa, Abgar Uchama, sent a letter to Jesus inviting him to his small kingdom to cure his son's illness and live comfortably. According to the story, Jesus did not take part in that. Rather, one of his disciples, Mar Addi, replaced him and cured the illness. After that, Edessa was one of the first places to adopt Christianity¹⁵².

We are not in a place to discuss the authenticity of such a story, but it was believed that Christianity had found its way into the territory of the Parthian Empire since the first century. The Church was organized entirely in the time of Papa Bar Gaggai in 310 AD when he divided the Church into an apostolic model of bishops, presbyters, and deacons. He centralized the administration between his hands, holding responsibility for all the Church's affairs from his residency in the capital of the Parthian Empire Seleucia Ctesiphon, assuming the title Catholicos of the East. Another important event that shaped the history of the Eastern Church was reasonably political. In 424 AD, the Council of Patriarch Maar decided that no appeals would be made to the West. The resolution was sponsored by the Parthian Empire which looked forward to maintaining its internal cohesion.

The Church cut off all relations with the Roman Empire's Christians, which was a declaration of self-autonomy. It did not start any controversy and isolated herself from the events in the West. The persecution of Nestorian proponents at that time forced them to move into the western borders of the Parthian Empire. After the Church heard about the differences in opinions, she supported Nestor or, in other words, adopted his point of view.

Two major factors that affected the establishment of the Eastern Church were the animosity between Romans and Parthians, which divided Christianity into two worlds, and the opinions of Nestor in the 5th century. The Church extended to China, the land of Japan, Tibet, and Eastern countries, e.g., Indonesia and Sri Lanka, in 635 AD. In the 11th century, she outnumbered all the western Churches put together. The first contact between the Eastern Church and the Holy See was during the reign of Khan of Mongols Arghun at the end of the 13th century. Patriarch

¹⁵²Vine, Aubrey. The Nestorian Church, London, 1937, p.152

Yahballaha chose a bishop called Rabban Sauma to represent the Khan who was searching for an ally in the East. Rabban set out accordingly, going first to Constantinople and then to Rome.

After Pope Honorius had died, the Cardinals received the monks. The meeting contained a preface about the Eastern Church and an explanation of the Eastern creed, the Nicene creed; in its core, Jesus Christ was of two natures, two hypostases, and one person, and the Holy Spirit proceeded from Father alone. When the cardinals would examine those questions, the monks told them they came to pay homage to the Pope. During the election of the new Pope, he left Rome for Paris, where he met King Philip IV and then went to Gascony to meet King Edward I of England. Upon returning, the Monk met the new Pope Nicholas IV (1288-1298). Sauma showed him great reverence and received Holy Communion on Palm Sunday.

During all events, neither the Pope nor the Cardinals discovered that the Monk was a heretic and schismatic. According to the Monk, the Pope was just the Catholicos and the Patriarch of the West, the same as Yahballaha who was the Catholicos and the Patriarch of the East, and that was a Nestorian Attitude¹⁵³. In 1445 AD, the head of the Chaldean Bishopric of Cyprus, Tethym declared his unity with the papal chair¹⁵⁴. However, this integration was less important as the conversion of the small ethnic group (since those Christians were Mesopotamian migrants) would not affect the center of the Church and its adherents.

The relationship between the Assyrian or Nestorian Church with the Holy Sees revived again during the era of the Ottoman Empire. The Church, which extended from Arab countries to China during the Mongol dominance, suffered severe persecution during the era of Timur Leng. The Church flourished in the Middle Ages in the East and transferred in the 15th century into a small Church without having political or religious connections. In the 15th century, Persia became an independent state, and the Ottoman Turks had already entered the scene; the Church suffered more from prolonged wars between the rivals on its land.

The Patriarchate seat moved between Mosul and Marga, east of Lake Urmia. In the 15th century, the isolation in which the Church had lived led to new Canons inside the hierarchy of the Church

¹⁵³Vine. The Nestorian Church, p. 153.

¹⁵⁴Samir, Abdeh. The Christian Communities in Syria, its Origins - Development – Census, edition N1, Hasan Malls press, Damascus, 2003, p.58.-120.

so that the Catholicos position or the Patriarch chair became hereditary. In the new canons, the clergy would consecrate the nephew of the perished Patriarch, who was brought up under his care and learned in his house to follow in his footsteps. If the Patriarch did not marry, the office would pass from uncle to nephew.

2) The schism of the Nestorian Patriarchate

In 1551 AD, the Patriarch Simon-Bar Mama died, and the succession problem came to the surface. Many bishops obeyed the law and consecrated the perished Patriarch's nephew in his place, but others and Nestorian dignitaries wanted to break the system down. Therefore, they elected the monk of the Raban Hormizd monastery, named John Sulaka, as a Patriarch. To fortify himself, the newly elected Patriarch made friends with Catholic Franciscan Missionaries. They sent him to Jerusalem where Custos S. Sepulchri gave him a letter of recommendation to the Pope. In the era of Pope Julius III (1550-1555) AD, he set out to Rome where he made a Catholic profession of faith, and the Pope ordained him according to the Catholic rite.

Upon his return to Mesopotamia in 1553 AD, he established his headquarter in Diyarbakir. He ordained two Metropolitans for Amed and Mardin and three bishops for Gezira, Seert, and Hassan Kef. The new Patriarch was arrested by the Ottoman governor of Diyarbakir in 1555 AD and murdered in prison by the intrigue of his rivals. Now, there are two successions of rival Patriarchates. The death of Sulaka was not the end. Sulaka was succeeded by Abdisho IV (1555-1567) AD, who kept the relationship with the Holy See, and for his trustworthiness, he received the pallium from Pope Pius IV (1559-1565) AD¹⁵⁵.

It was said that the new Patriarch travelled to Rome at the time of the Council of Trent, participated in its sessions, and the Chaldean profession of faith was read in the twenty-second session of the Council of Trent, which happened seven years after the Patriarch's ordination. The Patriarch Mar Abdisho IV moved the Patriarchate's seat from Amed to Seert to avoid the conflict with the Assyrians who were blamed for the murder of Sulaka. There, the Patriarch ordained no less than fourteen Archbishop and bishops.

¹⁵⁵Fortescue, Adrian. The Lesser Eastern Church, Catholic Truth Society, London, p.122-123.

Moreover, he sent a mission to the land of Malabar. This mission consisted of the previous Murdered Patriarch's brother, Mar Joseph, along with another bishop named Mar Abraham. In the mission, two Maltese Dominicans, namely Ambrose Buttigieg and Fr. Antoninus Zahara, whom Pope Julius III (1487-1555) sent to assist Patriarch Abdisho, had joined the mission. However, the Portuguese authorities did not endorse the Chaldean Church's plan to control the Indian Church. The Chaldean bishops were detained in Goa for a while, and afterwards, they were sent to Mozambique, and later to the Franciscan friary near Bombay in 1556 AD. However, the mission failed and retreated into Rome. Like his brothers, Mar Joseph suffered a harrowing journey and died in Rome in 1569. Eugene, the Cardinal of Tisserand, in his book "Eastern Christianity in India", comments on the Pathetic end of Mar Joseph as follows: "Yet the measure of suffering was complete, and Mar Joseph received near the tomb of the Apostles, the crown he had merited through his long and slow Martyrdom, which was perhaps more painful than that of his heroic brother"¹⁵⁶.

3) The Patriarch's Line of Mar Shimun

This line was luckier than the previous one, which lasted 13 years. In 1580 AD, Shimun Dinkha, the bishop of an important bishopric in the mountainous region of Assyria, revolted at the head of forty thousand Nestorian families against the old line of the Nestorian Patriarchate headed by Patriarch Mar Elia at that time.

The revolution took a political manifestation when the Safavids encouraged the revolt. However, Mar Elia's power was formidable and bishop Dinkha was obliged to flee his See. He sought refuge in the monastery of Mar Yuhanna near Salams in Persian Azerbaijan, where the authority welcomed him as leader of forty thousand warlike Assyrian Families.

On the other hand, the Pope accepted his Catholic confession and confirmed him as Patriarch. Furthermore, the Pope appealed to Shah Abbas of Persia to support the new Patriarch. In a letter written by Na'matallah, the Syrian Patriarch, we can recognize the emissary of the Eastern Patriarch, Dinkha Elias, the archbishop of Amid (Diyarbakir), who visited Rome to ask for the

¹⁵⁶Mar Aprem, Mookan. The Assyrian Church of the East in the twentieth century, St. Ephrem's Ecumenical Research Institute, Kerala, India, 2003, p.23-33.

confirmation of Shimun Dinkha that the Syriac Patriarch invited the Eastern bishop to stay at his home as follow:

Mār Elias, the Nestorian

“... of the head of the whole Christianity, that is His Holiness the Pope, and of all the honorable Cardinals, with the prelates, the priests, and the gentlemen, that they all together yearn and greatly desire to see your illustrious person and acquaint with your long-awaited and celebrated presence.

On this account, I ask you most earnestly and fervently to be discreet and careful not to disclose any of your secrets to anyone and not converse with anyone nor give credence to anyone; you will [not] have a place to stay, or a residence, except in my house – it and its owner are indeed at your complete disposal even if someone invites you, besides us. I warn you all the more in this regard because you are not familiar with the habits of the people here. You must also know that the Pope, with his blessed mouth, told me: “Prepare a place in your house for Mar Elias,” so I said: “Holy Father, my house is his home,” and he rejoiced very much at this response. Therefore, I ask you to fully accomplish what is necessary for you and then head quickly to me – immediately, without any delay, hesitation, or uncertainty”¹⁵⁷.

In 1582 AD, the Chaldean Metropolitan returned with the Pallium and the epistles of confirmation. Shimun II succeeded the Patriarch in 1600 AD and kept the connection with the Holy See through the head of a French missionary of Aleppo, Father Thomas, who carried the Patriarch's Catholic confession from his residence in Konak. His successor, Shimun III, sent his Catholic confession to Pope Innocent X (1574-1655) in 1653 AD.

The Chaldean Patriarchate at the time included Jolamerg, Van, Urmia, Moka, Baz, and Diyarbakir, consisting of 40 thousand Assyrian families. However, His Successor, Shimun IV, was deposed from his Patriarchate because of his union with the Holy See, and his opponents tattled him to the Ottoman authority. The Patriarch sought the help of Pope Alexander VII (1599-1667).

¹⁵⁷Borbone, Pier and Farian, Margherita. New documents concerning Patriarch Ignatius Na' mallāh (Mardin, ca. 1515- Braccaiano, Near Rome,1578) 1. Elias. The Nestorian bishop, Egitto Vicino Oriente XXXVII 2014, Plasa University press, p.179-189.

The Pope assigned Plaguedes de Khanen, the associate Latin Patriarch and the Deputy of the Church of Isfahan, to help him. Moreover, he sent an epistle to Shah Abbas II asking for the mercy of the Patriarch.

This line did not maintain the relationship with the Holy See since this relation was not valuable to the Chaldean Patriarch because of the place and time circumstances. In 1780, Patriarch Shimun VII sent an epistle to Pope Pius VI asking for the union with the Holy See. In the epistle, the Patriarch admitted the presidency of the Pope over all the Churches, denied all the Nestorian heretics, and accepted the Catholic profession. The Patriarch asked for books to teach the proper Spiritual rituals. In a letter which dates back to 1772 AD, Pope Clement XIV (1705-1774) showed his affection to the Patriarch and complemented this latter's endeavors¹⁵⁸.

After that, there was no real connection between this line and the Holy See, but the relation of the Holy See was to have been conducted in Diyarbakir and with a new branch of the Nestorian Church. When we came to examine the reaction of followers of Eastern Churches toward the Papacy, the endeavors of the Holy See had not been rewarded; the Patriarch failed to get acceptance or endowment regarding such relation, and gradually, the Patriarch of this line became hostile to Rome. While some Patriarchs sent their Catholic confessions to Rome, like Mar Shimun IX and Mar Shimun X, the others neglected to do so, and after 1670 AD, no contacts were maintained. As Fortescue wrote, "Patriarch of this line occasionally sent Catholic profession of faith and protestations of obedience to Rome, receiving in return the Pallium; others did not, and the mass of clergy and people were probably little conscious of the difference"¹⁵⁹. However, in many sources, the ambiguity about this line and its relation was the main character.

4) The Mar Elia line

This line was the old Nestorian Church itself which Sulaka split up and established the line mentioned above, which disappeared at the end of the 16th century. However, this line has endeavored to consolidate the relationship with Rome. Simon ibn Mama was succeeded by Elia

¹⁵⁸Nasri, Pétros. The Origin of the Current Nestorians and their Civil and Religious Status, Al Mashreq Journal, N.7, July 1913, p. 491-503.

¹⁵⁹Aboona, Hirmis. Assyrians, Kurds, and Ottomans, Cambria Press, New York, p. 48-50.

V. The new Patriarch met with the emissary of Pope Gregory XIII (1502-1585), Leonard Abel, who invited him at the time to pay allegiance to the Holy See.

The Patriarch, in turn, accepted the invitation and sent his Catholic profession with a priest, but Pope Sixtus V (1521-1590) did not accept his confession, because of his heretic inclinations. In 1591 AD, his successor Elia VII, who was affected by the visit of a papal emissary, desired to unite with the Holy See, especially after a story reached the ears of the Patriarch about the modesty and virtue of the Pope.

In 1606 AD, during the Easter celebration, Pope Paul V (1550-1621) started washing the feet of poor people. Among them were two Nestorians who came to visit the Tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul. The Pope honored their presence and deliberated with them about the affairs of their community politically and religiously. On their way back, they visited the Patriarch and narrated the story. Moreover, they carried some gifts from the Pope to the Patriarch and the instructions of the Catholic faith.

The Patriarch took advantage of the situation and sent a delegation of priests (Hermizd and Yusha) and an Assyrian notable called Khoshaba. In that meeting, the delegation and the Pope discussed the origin of the Assyrian Church, their Patriarchate, lands, places, episcopates, their relation to the religious and political authority, and the associations previously concluded with the Holy See.

During that time, the Assyrians, including the Chaldeans, owned 35 dioceses, the inhabitants lived in 120 villages distributed between the Ottoman Empire and Persian land, and in Jerusalem, they had a chapel in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. However, the outcome of the visit was no more than a failure, since the delegation lacked knowledge.

However, the Patriarch insisted on his goal, and sent Archbishop Adam, the chief of Rabban Hormizd's monastery, to the Holy See. The priest arrived in 1610 AD to Rome carrying the Catholic confession of the Patriarch. In the introduction of his letter, he emphasized the supremacy of the Papacy as well as his adoption of the Catholic faith by stating:

"أقر ان الكنيسة الكاثوليكية هي ام لجميع الكنائس وليكن محروما من لا يقر بهذا التعليم أيها الأب الأقدس ها إن صورة إيماني تبلغ إلى قداسك مع الصحف فعائين هل يوجد حيلة في إقرارنا أو غلط أو تجنب عن امنا الكنيسة الرومانية فإذا وجد ذلك فنبه فنفعل علم فنطيع"¹⁶⁰.

"I confess that the Catholic Church is the mother of all Churches; the one who does not admit this teaching is to be deprived; here is my profession of faith, the most sacred Father, kindly examine it if there is any mistake or flaw in our confession, and if there is, we will correct it according to your point of view".

Moreover, in his letter, the Patriarch complained to the Pope about the ill-treatment of missionary Fathers to the Assyrians in Jerusalem, informing the Pope that he authorized the Franciscans to care about his people there. Furthermore, in his letter, Patriarch Elia VII mentioned Patriarch Mar Shimun as his subordinate and sometimes called him Catholicos or Patriarch. Seemingly, Patriarch Elia wanted to suggest implicitly that they conformed with their kinsmen who converted to Catholicism a long time ago and that this could ease the mission of union with the Holy See.

Furthermore, Archbishop Adam composed a book illustrating that the differentiation between the Catholic and Nestorian dogma is just in words. Therefore, the Patriarch meant to start his confession by introducing this composition to the Pope, hoping this could minimize the differences and bring the views closer.

The Pope was satisfied with the meeting since he obtained the honesty of the Patriarch in accepting the true religion and, at the same time, felt sorry before the Patriarch since the Assyrians diverged from the true faith. In his endeavors to have Assyrian Christianity corrected, the Pope sent various materials translated into Syriac which were the epistles of Cyril, the resolutions of Ephesus' Council, and the conclusion of the sixth Council (Jesus Christ is two natures and two wills in one Hypostasis).

The priest lived in Rome for years, where he wrote another treatise which he later handed to the Patriarch. The treatise pointed out the astray of the Nestorian dogma, dividing it into the following chapters: the unity of the Mighty Nature, the trinity of the hypostasis, the birth of the eternal word,

¹⁶⁰Nasri, Pétros. An overview of some famous Chaldeans, Al Mashreq Journal, N 18, 15th Sep 1901, p.847-855.

the unity of the hypostasis of Jesus, and the will of Christ. In the premise, he spoke about the Pontiff's presidency and his supremacy¹⁶¹.

Moreover, in his epistle to the Patriarch, the Pope urged him and his clergymen to accept the Catholic confession to complete the union. The priest carried other gifts, including a golden cross decorated with gemstones on both sides of which the name of the Pope was written in Latin, in addition to the name of the Patriarch in Syriac.

On the 8th of May, 1614 AD, other epistles arrived to the Patriarch and his Metropolitan over Amed who was looking forward to having the union achieved, encouraging them to do that. Furthermore, the Pope admired priest Adam and his knowledge, recommending him to the Assyrian Patriarch, Maronite Patriarch, and the Custos of the Holy Land. However, upon the priest's return in 1616 AD, the Patriarch summoned his hierarchy to have the faith corrected and examined. Among the attendants was Father Thomas, who was the Head of missionary in Aleppo, the Metropolitan of Hasankeyf, the Metropolitan of Jazzera, the Metropolitan of Siirt, and the Metropolitan of Jerusalem and Mardin, priest Adam who was promoted to the episcopate rank. The Council prevented Nestor's instruction once and for all and accepted that Catholic dogma be spread and promoted among the Assyrians. Moreover, they sent Metropolitan Adam again to Rome to inform the Pope about all the regulations and decisions taken and declared. However, the Patriarch and his hierarchy approved their foresight when Metropolitan Adam sent epistles in 1617 AD to all the Chaldeans under the jurisdiction of Mar Shimun informing them about the charity which the Pope had given to his kinsmen, especially in Jerusalem where he bought fields and towers to the Chaldeans. Moreover, he invited the hierarchy to meet in Deir Mar Evgin where the Patriarch was waiting for them to reach the community's welfare¹⁶².

During this time, Pope Urban VIII (1623-1644) sent Father Francis Quaresmius as a papal emissary to the Chaldeans of Syria and Mesopotamia with the power of deposing the Chaldean Patriarch. When the Father settled in Aleppo, he wrote to the Congregation of Propagation of the Faith about his efforts to eradicate the delusions of the Chaldeans regarding the sanctification and distribution of the Lord's Body, saying: "I found that the sanctification of the Lord's Body is

¹⁶¹Nasri, Pétros. *Histoire des Églises chaldéenne et syrienne*, Bgdad, 1905, p. 187-188.

¹⁶²Nasri, Pétros. *Histoire des Églises chaldéenne et syrienne*, p.184.

corrupted and imperfect since they neglect not only the word "Enim" (for), which is not necessary for the validity of the secret but also the essential word "Hoc" (this). This is my Body therefore, and by my hand, I delete this image from the book of their priesthood, and I sought to have it replaced with the image that Christ drew up according to the translation found in the book of the Maronite priesthood printed in Rome, and I compelled them to use it without changing". "For that reason, I deputized a competent and intelligent priest from the Maronite hierarchy to attend their sacrifice in the Chaldean Church of Aleppo to ensure whether they were using the cancelled old way or the right new one.

He informed me they had sincerely maintained the new one. Regarding the distribution of that holy secret, I found they gave it to children and offered it to deacons both ways. To eradicate these evil customs and according to the power which was entitled to me from the Holy See, I prohibited them from putting this mixture or others in the bread prepared for sanctification. Furthermore, do not accept the children on the Holy table; the glass must be given only to the sacred priest". He also mentioned in his letter, "I was able to present lots of information about the beliefs and customs of Chaldeans since I have been in tiredness for three years to convert and lead them to salvation in the city of Aleppo and Mesopotamia.

As much as I had a chance, I endeavored to view their conditions, but I stopped now since I wrote a comprehensive treatise about them which would be helpful in their return to the union with the Holy See"¹⁶³.

However, the question here is: did the missionary expedition successfully disseminate the tradition and the Latin Customs among the subjects of the Chaldean Church? The missionary expedition partially succeeded in making Chaldean subjects adopt the convention. In the previous chapter, we examined that they were seeking to force their Canons which brought about the reluctance of some parties inside the Melkite Catholic Church, led by the most influential theologian of his time, Germanus Adam.

That led to the split of the Melkite Catholic Church for many years after the death of the Metropolitan Adam. We cannot blame the Easterners for their tradition, which has gone deep in

¹⁶³Aziz, Peter. The Antiquity of the Chaldeans in Aleppo, Al Mashreq Journal, N.14, 15th of July 1903, p. 655-675.

history for thousands of years and is connected with their language, lands, and forefathers. Unfortunately, most of the missionary Fathers did not carefully examine the situation of the Easterners and their surrounding circumstances; since the Easterners lived in Islamic Countries, they adhered more to their tradition.

The rules and customs were an essential element of their Christianity. However, the Catholic subjects of the Chaldean Church were divided between the Exterminator's party which wanted to eradicate the old hymns, customs, and traditions, and the conservative party which adhered to the old parental customs and conformed to the straight beliefs. One of the most influential priests in this party in the 18th century was Korkis Al-Sayegh, who attracted Patriarch Elias XI to Catholicism. In his treatise, which dates back to 1783 AD, he denounced the deeds of the exterminator's party since, by their inclination to the foreign rituals, they denied some of their ancestors' ways which were in line with the straight faith. Suffice it to say that the missionary Fathers were more successful in attracting the Easterners to Catholicity in general terms, a universal Church that included all races, customs, and traditions led by the Pope to achieve salvation¹⁶⁴.

However, the conversion to Catholicism continued. In 1617 AD, Patriarch Elias VI died and was succeeded by Elias VII, who sent his Catholic profession to Pope Iskandar VII in 1657 AD. The Patriarch asked for the Pope's permission regarding whether the Chaldeans could remain on their rituals and whether the Pope could offer a Church in Rome for the Chaldeans.

During this time, there were two Catholic Patriarchs in the Chaldean Church, Elias VI and Elias VII in Alqosh, and Shimun IX and Shimun X in Urmia. In 1660 AD, Elias VII died, and his successor Elias VIII (1600-1700 AD) refused to obey the Holy See and started a war against the Chaldean Catholics¹⁶⁵.

During this time, Rome strove for a new Catholic line in Diyarbakir to replace the renegade one and eventually succeeded in creating a new division in the Church of the East in 1681 AD. The Nestorian Metropolitan of Amid (or Diyarbakir) Yousuf joined Catholicism. As for the Nestorian

¹⁶⁴Nasri. An overview of some famous Chaldeans, p. 847-855.

¹⁶⁵Ibrehina, Iddie Saliba. Chaldean Catholic Community, Al Mashreq Journal, N.18, 15th of Sep 1900, p.817-82.

Patriarch Elias VIII, he tried to win over the Metropolitan, but he failed. Therefore, he went to Diyarbakir personally, accompanied by fifty men. The Patriarch bribed the governor of Diyarbakir and confiscated the Church of Mardin, and the Metropolitan was twice. However, the Patriarch failed in his endeavors after proving the Metropolitan innocence; therefore, he was reinstated again as Metropolitan of Mardin.

It was just a while until the Metropolitan was imprisoned again by the plot of his enemies. Moreover, a Nestorian bishop called David arrived, while the Metropolitan was in jail. The first doings of David were to depose the Metropolitan and regulate the affairs of the Church. During imprisonment, the Metropolitan suffered all kinds of torture. Therefore, he travelled to Rome in 1675 AD, where he stayed for one year and five months and received no help. On his way, he met the French consul François Pique who helped him to obtain a supportive decree from the Ottoman Porte in 1677 AD. On this ground, bishop David fled Diyarbakir. At the same time, the Metropolitan strengthened his position when Pope Innocent XI confirmed his position as the Patriarch of all Chaldeans.

In 1694 AD, the Patriarch conceded his throne to his pupil Yousuf II and died in 1707 AD in Rome¹⁶⁶. Yousuf II (or Saliba Al-shammas) was born in a village called Tall Kayf, in Mosul, Iraq, nowadays. He was consecrated as a priest by Patriarch Yousuf the First and named Yousuf and then he ordained him as a Metropolitan and deputy of the Patriarch in Diyarbakir. It is important to mention that in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Ottoman government officially recognized the Catholic Chaldean Patriarchate. Therefore, all the Rumi, Syrian, and Armenian Catholics at the time were followers of the Chaldean Church. He sent his Catholic Profession to the Holy See. In his letter, the Patriarch recognized the supremacy of the Holy See over all Churches and pledged allegiance to the Pope:

കലാനുസൃതവൽക്കരണത്തിന് നിയമപരിധി

പ്രകൃതിയുടെ തലം : തി

¹⁶⁶Abd Alhad, Basil. The resume of Yousuf the first 1681-1707, Al Mashreq Journal, N.2, 1st of Feb 1923, p.124-140.

البابا الطوباني.

إلى حضرة الأعظم والأب العام حبرنا ومولانا صانه الله تعالى. يقبل الأرض على الوجوه غاثيا ويمرغ الوجوه على التراب وهو باكيا ويهل العبرات على الوجنات منتحبا امام وكيل ونائب ربنا يسوع المسيح ورأس المسكونة اب الإباء العام ورئيس الرؤساء الأنام الجالس على كرسي مار بطرس الرسولي والماسك بأياديه المقدسات مفاتيح القبول الممتلى من الخزائن الروحانية والمتردي بالزينة والحكمة الإلهية من اختاره الله تعالى راعيا لخرافة الناطقة واملكه موهوبات أنعامه المسلم إليه الأوامر والشريعة والمتولي على اسرار الكنيسة والبيعة اب الآباء والحبر المعظم حضرة البابا المكرم شمس الدنيا وقمر المسيحيين وسراج العالم وعموم المؤمنين امد الله رئاسته إلى دهر الدهرين بصلاة مريم العذراء والدة الله وجميع القديسين أمين اما بعد تقبيل الأقدام المفروض ونص اللازم المعروف انه مار يوسف البطريك¹⁶⁸ بعدما رسمني بطريك أنا الغير مستحق صار له نيه أن نزور قدسكم حيث عليه التزامات لذا سأكتب امانتي من جديد ثالثا وأرسلها معه إلى قدسكم الشريف وهو يقدم الطاعة إلى حضرته عوضا عن حقارتنا فالمرجو من عزمكم ومن جزيل انعامكم إن مثلما باركتكم على معلمي الموعود وشرفتموه وساعدتموه بمواهبكم الخيرية كذلك تكلفوا خاطرهم وتنعموا على أحقر عبيدكم وأصغر تلامذتكم وتباركوا علي بإرسال التثبيت وتشرفوني ببركاتكم أنا الغير لائق لهذه الأنعام ولا مستحق لهذا الإكرام وها انا مقر ومعتزف بهذه الأمانة التي حررتها في الكراس بيدي وبجميع ما رسمت بلا غش و بلا شكوك وانشالله أعرضها علانية واعلمها ظاهرا على قدر طاقتي لجماعتي وللغير واني خاضع ومنصاع إلى قداسكم بكل ما تأمروني وترسموا علي من القوانين إلى منتهى عمري وآخر نفس حياتي فالأن أخر ساجدا أمام الكرسي البطرسي وأقبل أقدامكم الطاهرة وأتضرع إلى قدسكم ثانيا وثالثا وارجو أن لا تنسونا من دعاكم المقبول وصلواتكم مشنت بين الدياب الخاطفة دتمم سالمين برب العالمين. بنعمة الله ضابط الكل الضعيف أو الصغير يوسف بطريك الكلدان:

"The blessed Pope,

To the greatest, the general Father, our Pontiff, our Master, may God Almighty protect him, who gets his face to the ground to kiss it, rolls it in dust and cries with his tears pouring down on his cheeks, weeping in front of the authorized representative of Jesus Christ, the supreme Father of Fathers. The head of the inhabited world, the leader of leaders, who sits on the apostolic chair of Saint Peter and holds in his holy hands the keys of admittance, who is filled with spiritual treasures and clothed with divine embellishment and wisdom, whom God, the Exalted, chose to be the herder of his talking sheep, in the possession of whom are all the talents of creatures, who is in charge of

orders and canons, who is the keeper of the Church's secrets and the pledge of loyalty, the Father of Fathers, the authorized representatives of Christ, the venerable Pope.

The sun of the world, the moon of Christians, the light of the world and believers in general, may God prolong his presidency forever by the prayer of the virgin Mary -the mother of God – and all priests, Amen.

After performing the obliged kissing of feet and the necessarily presented text (I say) that the Patriarch Mar Joseph, after having appointed me as a Patriarch, I am the non-worthy of this position, he intended that I visit your Holiness since he has obligations. Therefore, I will rewrite my loyalty and send it with him to your noble Holiness.

He renders obedience to your Holiness demonstrating our obsequiousness so that I beg your Holiness and your abundant benevolence, that -just as you blessed my promised educator whom you have honored and helped with your benevolent gifts- you also take the trouble and give your blessings to your pettiest servant and smallest pupil, and that you bless me with sending the decree of appointment, accepting me in your blessings even though I am too small for this grace, and does not deserve that great honor.

I hereby admit and acknowledge in this trust which I wrote with my hands in this letter and in all what I decided without cheating or doubt.

By the will of God, I will exhibit it overtly and will make it known to my community and others as far as I can, and I will be obedient and yielding to your Holiness and to all the orders and canons you pass, to the end of my life and until my last breath.

Now I will fall prostrate before the chair of St. Peter, kissing your pure feet and begging your Holiness for the second and third times, and I hope you will not forget us from your accepted invocation and prayers, which scatter the ravenous wolves. May You remain safe under the protection of the Lord of worlds and by the grace of God who is the director of all. The Little and weak Yousuf, Patriarch of Chaldean"¹⁶⁹.

In 1695 AD, Pope Innocent XII (1615-1700) confirmed Yousuf on his Patriarchate, and in 1696 AD, he got the Coat of Arms. He died in 1714 AD. His successor, Youssef III, was from Kirkuk in

¹⁶⁹ Österreichisches Staatsarchive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Türkei V. Karton 23 (1526-1584), n 79.

Iraq. He was consecrated as the Metropolitan of Mardin with the name of Timothy. Pope Clement XI (1649-1721) confirmed him as the Patriarch of Babylon and sent him the pallium in February 1714 AD. During his reign in 1723 AD, the Nestorian Patriarch Elias died in his residence in Alqosh. Patriarch Yousef III took advantage of the situation and extracted a decree from the Ottoman Porte to run the affairs of the Chaldeans in Mosul.

All the decrees issued by the Ottoman Porte at the time regarding the Chaldean Patriarch were named after the Nestorian Church, since the Ottoman government did not recognize the Chaldeans as a separate community or, in other words, there was no recognized Catholic hierarchy in the Near East. However, the endeavors of the Patriarch were in vain as the new Nestorian Patriarch, Elias X, inflamed the situation against him; therefore, the Patriarch left Mosul and returned to his residence in Amed.

The Church of Amed, the headquarter of the Metropolitan, was confiscated by Nestorians according to a decree issued by the Ottoman Porte, and this is why the Patriarch hid for one month. Later on, he procured another decree to reverse the first one. However, the Jacobite Patriarch interfered to have the Patriarch imprisoned in the castle of Amed and afterwards in Mosul. In 1729 AD, the notables of Mardin, Mosul, and Amed assigned a man called Jacob to represent and defend the Patriarch in Constantinople. However, the Patriarch was released by a high decree and travelled to Constantinople in 1730 AD where he remained six months to regain his authority. While the Patriarch was in Constantinople, the affairs of the Chaldeans were assigned to the Metropolitan Basil of Mardin and the Metropolitan Shimun of Siirt.

When the Patriarch failed in his mission, he proceeded, roamed over Europe and gained recommendation letters, most importantly from the Chief of Congregation for Propagation of the Faith, Cardinal Petra, to collect alms from believers for the charity of the Church. In his journey, the Patriarch crossed Vienna and arrived at Rome in 1732 AD, where he was welcomed by the Pope. The charity donated by the Pope, the Congregation, and the king of Portugal were sent immediately to serve the Chaldean Church.

On the 6th of November 1733 AD, the hierarchy of the Chaldeans Church and the believers of Amed summoned the Patriarch whose travel was stopped by the French ambassador who advised him to postpone his journey until the end of the Ottoman-Persian wars. The Church of Chaldean

was badly affected by the absence of the Patriarch, the Metropolitan of Mardin was deceased leaving the chair of his Church vacant while the deputy of the Patriarch, Metropolitan of Siirt, Shimmun, informed the Patriarch that he was incapable of administrating both the Church of Siirt and the Church of Amed.

In a letter that dates back to the 5th of March 1739 AD, the Metropolitan expounded that Nestorians took advantage of his absence in Amed, took over two villages under his domination in Siirt, and forced their inhabitants to deny the Catholic doctrine, whereas the Nestorians of Amed waged a war against him.

Three other letters written by the Chaldean hierarchy of Amed and Mardin were sent to the Congregation on the 6th of May of the same year demanding the Congregation to send the Patriarch urgently and support it before the Ottoman authority. The opponent Patriarch Elia took advantage of the situation and popularized that the Patriarch died and appointed a Nestorian Metropolitan to the episcopate of Amed. However, in 1741 AD, the Patriarch returned and assumed his position. In 1746 AD, and with the support of Pope Benedict XIV, an Ottoman decree was issued recognizing the authority of the Patriarch over the Assyrian inhabitants in Mosul and Amed¹⁷⁰. In his days, the number of people who converted to Catholicism grew more, thanks to the Capuchin Father who directed their efforts in 1725 AD to Mosul and opened their school there. In 1750, the Dominican Fathers also arrived and opened another school.

In 1750 AD, the Patriarch died, and Yousef V, Ali'azer Al-Hindy, the pupil of the Congregation of Propagation of the Faith, succeeded him. He was consecrated as a Metropolitan in 1757 AD. Later on, Pope Clement XIV (1705-1774) confirmed him as Patriarch in 1760 AD. Since the Pope conferred on the newly-appointed Patriarch the title of the Patriarch of Babylon, he extended his authority to include all the Christians in Bagdad, Mosul and adjacent areas. The Latin Metropolitan of Bagdad, Emmanuel, whose authority relied on the publication of Pope Urban VIII (1568-1644) did not recognize the authority of the Patriarch and opposed it. The publication of 1628 AD was necessary at that time since newly-converted Catholics had no Patriarch or clergymen who could administer their affairs. Therefore, the Pope set up a Latin episcopate in Bagdad land entitled its

¹⁷⁰Nasri. Histoire des Églises chaldéenne et syrienne, P.314.

Metropolitan to oversee the affairs of the Catholic Easterners in Bagdad, Asfahan, and all places where they do not have sponsors.

However, after the Chaldean Patriarchate became a matter of fact, the Latin Metropolitans lost their significance partially. When the Patriarch sent priests and bishops to these places, a dispute began. The Holy See kept an eye on the situation, and Pope Benedict issued a publication in 1758 AD assigning the authority of the Latin Metropolitans over the Latin community, like merchants and travelers, and they had no power over the Easterners who had a sponsor and the authority of whom was restricted within the frame of helping the representatives of the Eastern communities in preaching and all the necessary means which are in the interest of the union.

However, in 1763, the Patriarch travelled to Constantinople to get permission to renew the Church of Amed that Muslims prevented its renovation since it was next to the Mosque called (Sheik Mater). The Patriarch concentrated all the power in the hands of his deputy, Metropolitan Yohanan and spent one year in Constantinople. However, all his endeavours were in vain, entailing substantial financial loss. Therefore, he travelled to Rome in 1764 AD to get financial support.

During his residency in Rome, the Patriarch participated in printing some liturgical materials which pertained to the Chaldean Church, like the service of apostles, different chapters of the New Testament, and epistles narrated in feasts and on Sundays¹⁷¹. When the Patriarch returned to Diyarbakir, he had a prolonged struggle with the Latin Patriarch of Baghdad, Emmanuel, over the spiritual customs and traditions of the Chaldean Community. However, the Patriarch quit, and the Holy See replaced him with Mar John.

There were many complaints against the Patriarch. On this ground, the Congregation of Propagation of the Faith had doubts regarding his eligibility and competence; therefore, they chose Augustine Hindy, under the name Yousef IV, for the Patriarchate chair¹⁷². In the last quarter of the 18th century, there were three other competitors in the Catholic Church of Chaldeans and each one of them wanted to eradicate his opponents.

¹⁷¹Nasri. *Histoire des Églises chaldéenne et syrienne*, P.334.

¹⁷²Ibrehina. *Chaldean Catholic Community*, P. 878-891.

5) The Struggle Inside the Chaldean Church

The policy of arbitrarily establishing Catholic Patriarchates among the Assyrian community by the Holy See, whenever the circumstances were available, led with time to a struggle inside the Chaldean communities over leadership and jurisdiction that every party strived to gain. In 1745 AD, The Assyrian Patriarch of Elia's line, Elia XI, affected by losing lots of followers of the Catholicity and encouraged by his nephew and deputy Ishoyahb, decided to have a union with Holy See and sent an epistle to there about his wishes.

Unfortunately, we do not have numbers about the Assyrians who converted to Catholicism at the time or whether the Patriarch's willingness came from a religious awareness of the need to take part in the union process, or from feeling the danger of losing his position to the increased numbers of Catholics who would demand to have another Patriarch.

The most recent Ottoman formal estimation of the population number we could get dates back to the last quarter of 19th century. The Ottoman formal statistics of 1875 AD (Sālnāmee) reported that the number of Chaldeans in Mosul and its jurisdiction reached 10396 souls, whereas the Nestorians, mentioned under the term "Syriacs", were 5074 souls. Other communities had the following numbers: Jacobite 2847, Protestant 142, Armenian 161. As for the population of Baghdad in 1893 AD, the number of Syriac Catholics was 305, Armenian Orthodoxes 289, Armenian Catholics 142, Protestants 39, Latins 44, and Chaldeans were 517. Syriac Nestorians were never mentioned¹⁷³.

Other sources estimated the numbers of Christians in those Ottoman governorates; however, the statistics in some ways are still ambiguous. For instance, the traveler James Buckingham estimated the population of Mosul in 1816 AD at approximately 50 thousand, where Muslims constituted the vast majority, while he mentioned the Christians as follows “ ... Chaldeans, who are slightly different from Catholics, it was believed that their numbers are about 1000 families, Syriacs are about 500 families, and the Jacobites are about 300 families”¹⁷⁴.

¹⁷³Ala'rqet, Abd Alhamied. The Role of religious minorities societies during the Ottoman era, Algeria, 2020, p. 196-197.

¹⁷⁴Buckingham, James. My travel in Iraq in 1816, translated by Salim Teh Altakrity, 2 volumes, Bagdad, V1, p. 64.

He used the word "Syriac" as a synonym for "Nestorians" since he applied the term "Jacobites" to Orthodox Syriacs, and the term "Chaldeans" to the previous Nestorians. Thus, the term "Syriacs" shall be considered Nestorians.

Unfortunately, our conclusion could not be 100% accurate since the word "Syriacs" applied to all the people who would speak Syriac and lived in Syria and Mesopotamia as they have the same origins. Therefore, the traveller might have been confused with the given numbers. The American Presbyterian missionaries reported that in Van, Seert, and Mardin (Mosul), and Bagdad, there were 80, 550, 3820, and 180 Catholic families (Chaldeans) respectively, while the Nestorians counted 5300, 690, and 870, excluding Baghdad, where there was no Nestorian presence. The missionaries estimated that each family consisted of 8 souls, representing 54.880 Nestorians to 37.040 Catholics.

Those statistics came one hundred years later when the Catholic community flourished in the East and was completely recognized by the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, and in the best conclusion, the Catholic community of the Assyrian Church did not form leverage for the Patriarch more than his hearted will to see the Nestorians and Catholics of his community united ¹⁷⁵.

However, in 1756 AD, the Patriarch restated his desires and was supported by Imanuel, the Latin Metropolitan of Bagdad, who sent an epistle professing his Catholic doctrine to Pope Benedict XIV. However, an Assyrian delegation included Catholic notables from Mosul, presided over by the deputy of Patriarch Ishoyahb, met the Latin Metropolitan providing the Catholic profession of the Patriarch and demanding the Pallium while the agreement stipulated that all the Nestorian heretics be denied, acceptance of the Catholic faith as it was articulated in the Councils of Ephesus, Chalcedonian and Constantinople, and recognized the presidency of the Pope as the deputy of Christ while keeping the traditions and customs which don't oppose the straight faith. In 1756, and 1772 AD, the Patriarch replicated his desire for union, but there was no good attention or doings which proved that the Patriarch and his deputy took the matter seriously¹⁷⁶.

In 1776 AD, Patriarch Elia XI appointed his nephew Mar John Hormuz to the episcopate of Mosul, dethroning Ishoyahb. The main cause of such a change in the hierarchy was attributed to the

¹⁷⁵Mar Aprem, Mookan. The Assyrian Church of the East in the twentieth century, p.61.

¹⁷⁶Nasri. Histoire des Églises chaldéenne et syrienne, p. 222-223

significance and empowerment of Mar John's brother inside the inherited Patriarchate family, who desired to control all the properties of the Church after the patriarch's death.

However, the confusion that the Assyrians experienced then since the latter part of the eighteenth century was because there were three Chaldean Patriarchs: two Nestorians, at Urmia and Mosul respectively, and a Uniate at Diyarbakir¹⁷⁷. Moreover, the Catholic community was divided between the Exterminator's party the supporter of western rituals and the conservative one. The Exterminator's party was represented by Al-Halaby's family who attached themselves to the Dominican missionary in Mosul in the 18th century. This family belonged to a patrilineal clan of the Patriarchate family. During the incumbent of Elia VIII, priest Elia converted to Catholicism and travelled to Rome in 1659 AD. He procured the Chief of Monks of the Church of Bagdad's title, the Chief of Dragomans of missionaries, the Count of Royal Palace and the priest of the Spanish King's Church.

The Carmelite Father Jose de Santa Maria, a missionary appointed in India, mentioned the priest in his first voyage (1656-1659 AD) while crossing Mesopotamia on his way to Rome as one of his escorts who were a guide, soldiers, 2 slaves and priest Elia, a Nestorian converted to Catholicism. In his second voyage (1660 AD), the Father indicated that he used one of the priest's brothers, called Abd-Allah, in Mosul to have some fresh water, and he mentioned that priest Elia escorted him in the first travel from Bagdad to Aleppo, then to Rome, where the Father helped him.

The priest's brother tried to persuade the missionary to meet his cousin, the Nestorian Patriarch, in Alqosh to persuade him to adopt Catholicism and recognize the supremacy of the Pope. According to the missionary, the newly-appointed Patriarch was 14 years old, while his predecessor, his uncle, died adopting Nestorianism despite that priest Elia strove to persuade the Patriarch to submit to the Pope after returning to the East.

We are sure that the priest travelled twice to Europe since the American voyage the priest travelled was in 1658 AD, and the Carmelite Father mentioned that the priest met the Patriarch after his return in 1660 AD¹⁷⁸.

¹⁷⁷Vine. The Nestorian Churches, p.173.

¹⁷⁸Sarkis, Jacob. Iraqi's Researches in Geography, History, and Relics, Bagdad, 1948, p.341-342.

The priest visited Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, and America where he composed a valuable manuscript about his journey. Later on, he returned to Rome from Mexico, crossing Spain where he mentioned his meeting with Pope Innocent XI (1611-1689)¹⁷⁹. A nephew of the priest called Isaac joined his uncle in Rome and studied in one of its schools. After that, he became a translator at the Spanish Embassy in Rome and finally moved to Aleppo.

The relationship of the Al-Halaby's family with the Papal religious authority was as great as their relation to the local political authority of Al-Jalily's house which ruled in Mosul (1726-1824). For instance, a son of Isaac called Elia worked as a banker to Hussein Bey, the governor of Mosul. The empowerment that the family procured both internally and externally eased their mission of spreading Catholicism among their countrymen. Their services were rewarded by Pope Pius VI (1717-1799), who conferred the rank of knights on the brothers Elia and Yousuf.

On the other hand, the Conservative Party was represented by the Al-Sayegh family about which we could not have information except its affiliation to the Patriarchate family. The Patriarch died in 1778 AD with eight hundred of his followers during the plague that struck Iraq at the time¹⁸⁰. After the Patriarch's death, the previous deputy, Joshuaib, was appointed to the Patriarchate's chair and called Elia XII, while his cousin, Mar John Hormuz, was assigned to the episcopate of Mosul and named the deputy of the Patriarch.

However, Metropolitan Mar Hormuz, exploiting the friendship of Al-Halaby's family and their position in the ruling elite, started a machination against the Patriarch, announcing that the Patriarch apostatized and joined Nestorianism. Moreover, he interfered in the affairs of Kirkuk's villages which were out of his authority and inside the jurisdiction of the Patriarch¹⁸¹.

When the Patriarch and his party responded to the scheme of the Metropolitan, he convinced the inhabitants of Kirkuk to claim that the Patriarch forced them to adopt Nestorianism again and to

¹⁷⁹Al-Mosuly, Elia. *The Gold and Storm, the Voyage of Elia Al-Mosuly to America 1168-1683*, revised by Nori Al-Jrah, UAE, 2001, p. 18-20.

¹⁸⁰Ibrehina. *Chaldean Catholic Community*, p. 878-891.

¹⁸¹Ra'uf Abd Alsalam, Imad. *Mosul in the era of Ottoman Empire, the period of local governorate 1726-182*, Iraq, 1973, p. 234-235.

petition the Mosul governor, Suliman Bey, who considered their accusation since he despised the Patriarch who was supported by his enemy, the governor of Amediye Ismail Bey¹⁸².

However, the governor of Mosul, Suliman Bey, recommended Mar John Hormuz before the Ottoman Porte and extracted a high decree legitimizing his presidency over the Assyrians and Chaldeans in Mosul. Moreover, the Dominican Chief Rafeal supported the Metropolitan before the Holy See and attached a recommendation letter to the Profession of Faith of the Metropolitan which was sent to Rome in 1782 AD. However, the Holy See was aligned with the desires of the Dominican Father, endorsing the position of the Metropolitan and appointing him as the Patriarchal deputy of the Assyrian Patriarchate.

The Metropolitan was not permitted to use the stamp or the name since Patriarch Yousef V was already the deputy of the Babylonian Patriarchate (In my study above, this line acquired the title of the Patriarch of Babylon) and Patriarch Elia had the right to preside over the Babylonian Patriarchate, and the Holy See was seemingly awaiting the Nestorian Patriarch to undertake more serious steps in this case.

The consensual policy which the Holy See tried to follow, to have all parties united, transformed into divisions and discords inside the same community and proved its failure since the Patriarch sought the help of Amediye governor, Ismail Bey, and instigated the Assyrian parental clan against Mar John. Later on, it was said that the Patriarch apostatized and joined Nestorianism since his opponents took Catholicism as a means to undermine his authority. However, the main supporters of the Patriarch represented by Al-Sayegh, who followed the Patriarch previously to keep the parental tradition, relinquished him and convinced him to resign.

From another perspective, the Exterminators party achieved a victory over their opponents, and the struggle was but an internal strife in which the missionary expedition played a decisive role by supporting one against another in the case of the Dominican. When Patriarch Yousef V felt that the privileges given to him by the Holy See undermined, he preferred to resign, especially after transferring the jurisdiction of the Babylonian Patriarchate to the hand of Mar John.

¹⁸²Nasri. Histoire des Églises chaldéenne et syrienne, p.368.

In 1792 AD, Pope Pius VI appointed Mar John as the Patriarchal deputy over the Patriarchate of Amed, including its episcopates of Mardin and Siirt. However, the Chaldeans of Amed did not recognize the authority of the newly appointed deputy and rebelled against him. When the news reached the Congregation of Propagation of the Faith, they sent Carmelite Father Fulgencio of Bagdad and Busra to examine the reason for insurrection against the Holy See's decision.

In 1793 AD, the governor of Amediye, Ismail Bey, arrested Mar John together with his nephew and they were kept four months in custody. Later on, he was released and then met Father Fulgencio in the Carmelite center. The Metropolitan and the Carmelite Father had a controversy over breaking off a Chaldean girl's engagement since the Father violated the sacred law.

Once again, a dispute over authority started between the Metropolitan and the Father. According to a mission given to the Father, he had to examine the situation and report to the Congregation, but instead of that, he started using his power in different ways. He deposed the Metropolitan of Kirkuk, Abraham, who was previously appointed by Mar John, and put the whole episcopate in disorder. Moreover, he instigated the inhabitants of Mosul to denounce the presidency of Mar John. However, the situation went against Mar John since he lost his support among the inhabitants and missionary Fathers. It is worth mentioning that Father Fulgencio was not wise in breaking the law nor in deposing the Metropolitan of Kirkuk, appointing Metropolitans, or instigating the people against Mar John to keep the peace. However, analyzing the evidence is associated with another story that could be more convincing.

Patriarch Elia XII consecrated his nephew Mar John (Hanna Joshuaib) as a Metropolitan and deputy of the Assyrian Church. This Metropolitan professed Catholicism before Father Fulgencio when they met in Zakho. Moreover, on the tomb of the Patriarch Elia XII who died in 1802 AD, the Catholic profession was written, and even his competitor Mar John could not deny his Catholicism.

This information pointed out that the Patriarch and his deputy were in conformity with Catholicism, but they lacked the necessary means to introduce themselves to the Holy See, especially since Dominicans favored Mar John and supported him before the Holy See. The powerless Patriarch was ignored by the Holy See, and missionary Fathers were forced to deal with the machination of Mar John who was included in the parental affection of the Papacy alone,

and we are not wrong to conclude that the Patriarch's attempts to defend himself were perceived as a war against Catholicism.

The resignation of Patriarch Yousef V, which came as a reaction against the Holy See's endeavors of supporting Mar John, assures this conclusion. The Holy See's policy in the East lacked experience and was driven by the ignorance of the environment in which they desired to disseminate their instruction. This conclusion again recalls the quarrel between the Conservative and Exterminator parties. The mistake made by the missionary in supporting the Exterminator's party had its cost. The inhabitants of many places did not recognize the authority of Mar John, like in Amed, Siirt, Mardin, and many other places where the Christian ancestors of Assyrians lived in their religious subconscious and memory¹⁸³.

Metropolitan Mar John preferred an undisputed authority over the Chaldeans, ignoring the interests of both sides, the Assyrians and the Holy See. Father Fulgencio examined the situation and testified against the doings of the Metropolitan before the Congregation of Propagation of Faith. The testimonies endorsed by the witness of the Dominican Chief of Mosul, and the war between the Ottoman Empire and France over Egypt in 1798 AD, weakened the position of Mar John since the Ottoman Empire released a campaign of persecution against Catholics. The Bey of Mosul, Mohamed, arrested many Catholic subjects under the charge of being Franks and Mar John hardly could escape the scene¹⁸⁴. We have already mentioned that Mar John relied on the support of the local authority, which attracted missionary Fathers to take a stand with Mar John against the Patriarch. However, when Mar John lost his winning card, they relinquished him since he was incapable of serving their interests; therefore, the Holy See consecrated Augustine Hindy and appointed him to the episcopate of Amed and as a deputy to the Babylonian Patriarchate.

The newly-appointed Metropolitan, Augustine, started abusing his position to strengthen his authority. For example, in 1811 AD, he dethroned Mar John and consecrated priest Shimmun Al-Sayegh as a bishop to the episcopate of Mosul. However, Dagdo's family replaced Al-Halaby's

¹⁸³Girling, Kristian. *The Chaldean Catholic Church: A study in modern history, ecclesiology and Church-state relations* (2003-2013), University of London, 2015, p. 54.

¹⁸⁴Ra'uf Abd Alsalam. *Mosul in the era of the Ottoman Empire, the period of local governorate 1726-182*, p. 336-337.

before the local authority. It was good news to the conservative party since the new family supported the bishop. Furthermore, they fabricated charges against the old enemy Mar John before the governor of Mosul, Nu'man Bey, who exiled the unfortunate Metropolitan from Mosul.

However, the Congregation endorsed the resolutions of Mar Augustine ignoring the right of the Mar John over the episcopate of Mosul. These decisions did not relieve the situation; the proponents of Mar John became more radical and Metropolitan Shimmun quit his position, and he appointed another priest called Dembo on his behalf. The party of Mar John warned him when Metropolitan Augustine decided to travel to Mosul to restore order.

Furthermore, the Metropolitan appointed to the episcopate of Bagdad could not reach his destination since the followers of the suspended Metropolitan Mar John did not recognize the authority of Augustine. It is worth mentioning that Mar John was a scion of the hereditary family of the Assyrian Church, and despite the between him and his cousin Mar Elia, he maintained his sacred position among the people of Mosul and Bagdad who refused to obey an intruder as Mar Augustine.

Mar John was a reality that had to be accepted by his opponents; therefore, suspending him was about to end, and his presence was to be accepted. For the charity of Chaldean Subjects, Mar John accepted the terms of reconciliation with Mar Augustine, which were as follows: He consecrated bishops and priests to all episcopates included in the authority of the Babylonian Patriarchate according to its need; the election must be held according to the satisfaction of the episcopate clergymen; the nominated priests to this position must have the virtue and knowledge appropriate to their positions; they must not belong to his family, and finally he would be liable to the resolution of Congregation and Mar Augustine the deputy of Babylonian Patriarchate.

The mediation conducted in 1811 and 1818 AD by the Metropolitan of Assyrian Catholics and the Chaldean Metropolitan of Bagdad, Korkis, was refused by Augustine Hindy who did not want the power of his opponents to be restored since that would challenge his ambition of becoming a Patriarch of Babylon.

However, the Carmelite Father, Sigmund, who was the papal deputy of Bagdad, briefed on the matter and informed the Congregation of the Faith about the situation. The Congregation of

Propagation sent, Cobre, the Latin Metropolitan of Bagdad, to investigate the situation and solve the problem.

When the Metropolitan ended the suspension of Mar John, his opponents increased the charges they sent against him to the Congregation of Propagation to than one hundred letters and only the letter of Cobre defended him. The situation was complicated to the extent that the front against Mar John included various figures of different interests, as follows: Metropolitan Augustine Hindy and his interest in the position of Patriarch of Babylon; the conservative party and its desire to keep the old Nestorian tradition, and the priests of Raban Hermozd's Monastery and its disputed endowments with Mar John.

However, Metropolitan Mar Augustine took advantage of the permission of Pope Leo XIII in 1820 AD, which allowed him to elect bishops for the vacant positions of the episcopates, and he chose priests from among the monks of Hermozd's Monastery for the reasons we have already pointed to before and five bishops (Basil, Ignatius, Josef Odu, Laurens, and Michael) who were elected for the five episcopates of Amadiya, Telskuf, Ninawa and Mosul, Kirkuk, and Siirt respectively. These appointments added insult to injury; the followers of Mar John did not recognize the status quo, and anarchy prevailed since Basil was prevented from entering Amadiya, Ignatius never set foot on Telskuf, and Josef lost the conflict with Mar Hohn over Ninawa. Therefore, the papal deputy cancelled the suspension of Mar John in 1826 AD¹⁸⁵ to restore tranquility to the Chaldean community; he reinstated Mar John to the Episcopate of Mosul and as a deputy of Babylon Patriarchate, and added the Patriarchate of Amed to his authority, revoking the privileges of Mar Augustine as a deputy and he became only the Metropolitan of Amed. He died in 1827 AD.

However, it is worth mentioning that Metropolitan Augustine used the Patriarch's title in his formal correspondence without the consent and ratification of the Holy See. The Metropolitan exercised pressure upon the Holy See to obtain the title, but the Holy See ended this line again and maintained all the Authority in the hands of Mar John¹⁸⁶.

All the adversarial parties were subjugated to the resolution except Josef, the Metropolitan of Ninawa. Metropolitan Cobre presented Josef with the episcopate of Zakho (or Sinjar) as

¹⁸⁵Nasri. *Histoire des Églises chaldéenne et syrienne*, p.400-402.

¹⁸⁶Hanna, Elia Burhan. *Amed the city of pride*, Aleppo, 2008, p.229-232.

compensation, but the Metropolitan insisted on having the episcopate of Amadiya in return; however, Mar John refused. Once again, the Chaldean community split between both sides and the struggle continued for ten years.

Furthermore, the Chief of Monastery of Rabban Hermozd Gebrael Dembo foresaw that Mar John would avenge the Monastery. Therefore, he travelled to Rome in 1827 AD and petitioned the Congregation's Chief to include the Monastery and its friars under the protection of the Holy See directly. When the news reached Mar John, he used the government of Amadiya to scatter and imprison the monks.

The apostolic vicar, Cobre, received the recommendation letters of the Congregation and encouraged Mar John to stop persecuting the monks; otherwise, the protection of Cobre that was given to Mar John before the Holy See would stop. However, the future accidents would prove that Mar John was an avenging man. Cobre examined the situation carefully and found that the best way to end the discords among Chaldeans at the time was to concentrate all the power in the hands of a strong man who could do whatever it took to subject all the rivals to his authority as we can say "the end justifies the means".

In 1830 AD, Pope Pius VIII (1761-1830) dropped all the charges brought against Mar John and declared that Mar John is the Patriarch of Babylon over all the Chaldeans, abolishing the Patriarchate line of Amed once and for all. However, the Pallium did not arrive to the newly-appointed Patriarch until the 8th of June, 1832 AD.

The death of the papal vicar, Cobre, in 1829 AD by the plague of Bagdad prevented the Holy See from declaring the Patriarchate of Mar John; however, conducting further steps until the appointment of another vicar could control the situation and prevent any attempts of division. The pupil of Cobre, the French priest Lawrence, substituted his Master in his position as the Metropolitan of the Babylon and Asfahan Latin episcopate.

The appointment of Mar John and the regulation taken by the Holy See to stop the struggle inside the Chaldean Church failed once again. Mar John violated the reconciliation that happened between Metropolitan Josef and Patriarch Mar John through the mediation of Cobre. The mediation conducted before the death of Cobre granted Josef the episcopate of Amadiya, and that did not satisfy Mar John.

When Mar John became a Patriarch and the power was concentrated in his hands, he deposed Metropolitan Josef and imprisoned him in the castle of Amadiya in 1832 AD. Later on, the party of Josef procured a decree to exile Mar John outside of Mosul and Amadiya. In 1835 AD, the party of the Patriarch restored their strength and imprisoned Josef and Gebrael Dembo, the Chief of Rabban Hermozd Monastery, for more than a year.

Metropolitan Lawrence was incapable of achieving his Master's goals or at least preserving marginal tranquility inside the Chaldean Church. The episcopate of Salamas (in the northwest of Iran nowadays) who belonged to the jurisdiction of the Catholic Patriarch of Babylon, came to the front. In 1833 AD, the Metropolitan of Salamas died and was succeeded by Malki Sadek who was consecrated by the Nestorian Patriarch Mar Shimmun.

However, the Metropolitan had a conflict with Mar John regarding the faith, and finally, the Metropolitan became a friend of the Patriarch and recognized his authority. During this time, Nikolas Zi'a and Korkis, the pupils of the Congregation, returned to Salamas to preach and serve believers. While Nikolas Zi'a gained the respect of Khosrowabad's inhabitants, the place of his origin, the other priest could not get along with those people; therefore, he headed to Baghdad to meet the papal emissary Lawrence. This latter lacked empowerment among the Chaldeans and found that establishing a new hierarchy would strengthen him. Therefore, he convinced the old Mar John to elevate Korkis to the episcopate level by making him deputy of the Babylonian Patriarchate and appointing him to the chair of Salamas in 1837 AD.

The Metropolitan of Salamas did not recognize the new Metropolitan's authority, while the subjects of Salamas petitioned Mar John to appoint Nikolas Zi'a for the episcopate. Moreover, the hierarchy of Salamas petitioned the Congregation of Propagation of the Faith for the same purpose. However, in 1835 AD, Nikolas was elevated to the episcopate level, but it is not quite accurate whether he was appointed to the chair of Salamas or not, especially because Malki Sadek was still the legitimate Metropolitan of Salamas.

Later on, the papal deputies, Nikolas and Korkis, constituted a party to control the situation and eliminate their adversaries. Nikolas took over the Episcopate of Salamas, while Korkis, the Patriarch's deputy, started a war against the party of Josef to make him submit to his desire since Patriarch John got older and was incapable of administrating the Chaldean Church and in the case of his death, the high figure Josef Odo would be nominated to the Chair of the Patriarchate.

Therefore, getting rid of one of the tenacious adversaries would pave the way to the Patriarchate's chair.

The news of that dispute reached the Holy See; therefore, they dispatched a secret mission consisting of Carmelite Fathers Relu and Peter. The mission examined the situation and sent reports to the Holy See. As a consequence, the papal deputy was summoned to Rome while Nikolas, the Metropolitan of Salamas, was appointed as a deputy to Mar John, and in 1839 AD, the Holy See conferred on him the Patriarchate title.

The appointment of Niklos and replacing Mar John was attributed to the fact that Mar John got older and lost the strength to keep the order inside the Chaldean Church. Moreover, the Holy See desired to put an end to the Patriarchate hereditary line¹⁸⁷. In 1844 AD, Patriarch Nikolas Zi'a was the first among his kinsmen to be recognized as the Patriarch of the Catholic Chaldeans by the Ottoman Porte¹⁸⁸.

¹⁸⁷Nasri. *Histoire des Églises chaldéenne et syrienne*, p. 441.

¹⁸⁸Sako, Louis. *Summary to the History of the Chaldean Church*, Kirkuk, 2006, p. 41.

The Fifth Chapter: The Catholic Armenian Church

The Armenian Church

1) The Status of the Armenian Church on the Eve of the 16th Century

By the 16th century, the Armenian nation had spread across a wide geographical area throughout the Near East. Most of that area was under the Ottoman Empire's domination, especially after Sultan Salim I's expansion policy. Despite that, the Armenians were not under one authority or Church at the time, and there were many Armenian Churches. The first was the Church of Etchmiadzin, where most of the Armenian people recognized its Catholicos. Another Church was placed in northern Syria, and the Patriarch who ran its affairs was known as the Catholicos of Sis. Two lesser Catholicates existed, one at Akhtamar, an island in Lake Van, and the other in Jerusalem. Another hierarchy originated when Sultan Mehmet II established the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople.

There was also an Armenian Catholic Church located in Azerbaijan; the Nakhichevan Catholicos had been created in the 14th century at the hand of a Dominican bishop named Bartolomeo of Podio whose life and Western education attracted some Armenians prelates in their place of residence in the monastery of Qrna Nakhichevan. They called themselves "Unitors Brothers", adapting the Dominican way of life, and serving 15000 people.

The war between the Ottomans and the Safavids affected all the Armenians living near the roads of Armies and battlefields, which took place on the Arminian soil. On this ground, Armenians sought Western help to alleviate their distress. The first connection between Armenians and the Holy See happened when the Armenian delegation arrived in Rome in 1548 AD, and a panel was headed by the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin Stevon. During his stay in Rome, the Armenian Catholicos willingly professed the faith of Catholicism, while Pope Paul III offered him moral support.

However, the Armenian Patriarch convinced his successor, Mikael of Sebastea, to continue conversing with the Holy See. In 1562 AD, the Patriarch sent a new delegation to Rome consisting of Abgar of Tokat, his Sone Sultan, and a priest called Agheksanter. The delegation carried the Patriarch's profession of faith, a list of monasteries and Churches under the domination of the Patriarch, a copy of medieval forgery, which narrated the meeting between the Armenian apostle Gregory the Illuminator and Pope Sylvester, and a petition, requesting the support of the Holy See.

In addition, the delegation presented gifts to the Pope, such as the relics of St. Theodore, a ring, a cross, a vial of Holy Myron, and sacramental oil consecrated on special occasions. Many decisions were taken during the conversation between the delegation and Pope Pius IV, especially regarding communion between the Armenian Church and the Holy See. The mission was dispatched to the east but has yet to be discovered and examined¹⁸⁹.

2) The Process of Spreading Catholicity Among Armenians in the 16th and 17th Centuries

In the 16th and 17th centuries, the Armenian communities, like other Eastern Christians, were under the effect of missionary expeditions, especially the Capuchins and Jesuits, who played a grand role in converting people as well as establishing a national hierarchy that could achieve the goals of missionary expeditions. For instance, one of the most renowned missionaries was Dominican Fr. Paolo Piromalli worked in the Armenian communities in the Ottoman land and Persian Empire between 1632 and 1664 AD and moved between many places, such as Nakhichevan, Etchmiadzin, Julfan, and Constantinople.

Despite the failure of the Missionary to convince the Armenian hierarchy to take serious steps for the union with the Holy See, he succeeded partially among the subjects. In the reports sent to the Holy See, Piromalli emphasized that the hierarchy was enlightened about the Catholic truth and their diversion from Christ, but the mass population and clergymen were by no means to accept unprecedented terms to their knowledge; therefore, the process of union should start with the roots.

Among the Missionary's students were Kirakos (Ca. 1605–1642) and Oskan Erewanc'i (1614–1675), both of whom left a remarkable mark in the process of conversion¹⁹⁰. The Congregation of Propagation of the Faith was aware that preaching Catholicity among Armenians should be transmitted to esteemed local priests to achieve more noticeable results.

Among the pupils of the Congregation were Gomidas Kemurjian, Khatchatour Arakelian, and Bedros Manuk, better known by his monastic name Mekhitar. They were principally responsible

¹⁸⁹A. Frazee, Charles. Catholics and Sultans, Cambridge University Press, London, 1983, P. 49.

¹⁹⁰Lucca, Paolo. From Doctrinal Persuasion to economic Threats: paolo piromalli's missionary work among the Armenians and his conversion strategies, *Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries*, Gorgias Press LLC, 954 River Road, Piscataway, USA, 2022, P. 451-489.

for the Catholic movement among their countrymen. Arakelian initialized proselytizing in the Armenian Church of Samatya and Saint Astuacacin in Kumkapı in Constantinople. During 1701 AD, and by the blessing of the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople Melk'isedek, Arakelian - with the aid of Mekhitar and Bedros- presented to the Armenian liturgy a commentary on the Gospel of John and Key of Devotion translated from Latin to Armenian, and printed in Surb Ējmiacin and Surb Sargis Zoravar in an underground printing press. More Latin literatures were brought to the Armenian one under the supervision of Mekhitar, such as *Imitatio Christi* which was translated by Thomas a Kempis, and *Reasonable Prayer and Commentary on Song of Songs* by Arakelian. Disseminating Catholicity and its customs through translation and printing books was the most influential weapon in the hands of missionaries¹⁹¹. Mekhitar was born on the 7th of February, 1676 AD, in the city of Sebastea, Sivas, in central Anatolia. He had his education by the local Armenian parish priest. At the age of fifteen, he was ordained a deacon. He soon left home, accompanied by a travelling legate called Stevon Ghazar Vardapet, from the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin, who was passing through Mekhitar's hometown.

In 1692 AD, he travelled with the legate to Tokat, then Erzurum, and finally to the Holy See of Etchmiadzin which was long famed as the center of Armenian higher learning. Like his contemporaries, Mekhitar was in search of enlightenment and knowledge. Disappointed by corruption and the spread of ignorance, he travelled to the monastery of the Holy Virgin on the island of Lake Sevan. He became disappointed there too. He spent the next twelve years crisscrossing the rugged terrains of Asia Minor, visiting one monastic center after another. One of the monastic places was the complex of Bassen in the province of Erzurum, where he stayed a year and a half. He met a young Armenian missionary named Poghos, who had recently graduated from Rome's celebrated Collegio Urbano. During this time, Mekhitar became acquainted for the first time with the anti-Catholic persecution which was launched by Patriarch Avetik Evdokiatsi.

Being affected by the stories of his friends and the persecution of Catholics deepened Mekhitar's curiosity. In 1695 AD, on the road of Aleppo, Mekhitar started his journey of Catholicism from a

¹⁹¹Ohanjanyan, Anna. *Intra-Armenian polemics and confession-building in Ottoman Constantinople: the case of gēorg mxlayim ḡli (1681/85–1758), Entangled Confessionalizations Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries*, Gorgias Press LLC, 954 River Road, Piscataway, USA, 2022, P. 491-493.

city with nearly 8000 Armenians, of whom only 500 were Catholics. He spent three months with Jesuits, especially with Antoine Beauvillier, who convinced Mekhitar that his goal could only be reached with the help of Rome.

Armed with several letters of recommendation testifying to his Catholic faith and missionary zeal, he started his voyage. However, his journey was unsuccessful, and he endured suffering and hardships in Cyprus. On this ground, he returned to Aleppo. After recovering his health, he returned home to his family, and in 1696 AD, at the age of twenty, he was ordained as a celibate priest at the Church of Surb Nshan. His missionary preaching brought the discontent of his hometown, and he was forced into exile.

He travelled to Constantinople to meet Khachatur Erzurumets'i, an Armenian Catholic renowned for his erudition and education as a former alumnus and missionary trained at Collegio Urbano. When Mekhtiar failed in convincing his friend to establish a monastic order for the education of the Armenian youth with Khachatur at its head, he once again embarked on another journey. He travelled east to Erzurum with his two disciples. He taught at a nearby monastery called Karmir Vank for a while. In 1700 AD, he returned to Constantinople, where he received an invitation to one of Istanbul's Armenian Churches and attracted several disciples to the Catholic faith. In 1701 AD, many Armenians converted to Catholicism, which drew the attention of Millet, the previous Patriarch of Armenia and the current bishop of Edirne Ephrem of Ghafan. The bishop accused the incumbent Patriarch, Melchisedech, of secret correspondence with the Pope. He also charged three Armenian priests of becoming Franks and reported them to the Ottoman authority.

The Ottoman authority arrested those priests and exiled the Patriarch. Moreover, the Porte appointed Ephrem as a Patriarch. He issued a decree that all Armenians should publicly profess their faith. Confessors were told to deny absolution to anyone who refused. Furthermore, he demanded that all relationships between the Armenians and missionaries be ceased.

Those procedures put the existence of the Catholic Armenians in danger. Some fled the city, and others, like Mekhtiar and his disciples, took refuge with the Capuchins in the French embassy. In 1702 AD, the Armenian Patriarch was fired, and his deputy, Avediq of Tokat, assumed his place. The new Patriarch was more hostile to Catholics than his predecessor, and the status of the Armenian Catholics did not improve. On this ground, the ambassador of France, Charles de

Ferriol, summoned the Latin Catholic superiors to meet with Mekhtiar and Arakelian to discuss possible solutions.

According to Arakelian's point of view, Catholic Armenians should attend the national Churches on Sundays and Holy days and should receive sacraments from national priests. In return, the national Church must agree to remove the condemnation of the Chalcedon Council and the name of Pope Leo from its teaching.

Those decisions, however, did not receive any support from the national Church or the conservative Catholics. However, Mekhtiar and his community immediately left Constantinople for Izmir, and they did not wait for the compromise. From there, he left to Italy, where they stayed in Venice¹⁹². While the Catholics of Constantinople were under persecution, the missionaries were making new gains in Anatolia. In 1695 AD, the Jesuits convinced the Armenians of Erzurum and Trabzon to convert to Catholicism.

At the same time, the correspondence between the Holy See, the Catholicos of Sis Krikor of Adana, and Nahabet, the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin, was fruitful in that the Pope promised to support Nahabet who recognized the supremacy of the Holy See. In 1703 AD, the Armenian Patriarch was deposed and imprisoned, but it was just a while until he would be reinstated. The Party of the Patriarch raised sufficient capital for bribes. However, the Patriarch believed that Catholic Armenians, especially those employed as dragomans at the French embassy, were behind the conspiracy of his imprisonment. More Catholics were arrested on such grounds, while others were deprived of their property.

However, the destiny of the Patriarch was more miserable than that of his enemies; the French ambassador, exploiting his influence in the Ottoman Porte, had the Patriarch removed and exiled to the island of Tenedos. From there, the men of the ambassador kidnapped the Patriarch and shipped him to France; he was chained and sent to the Monastery of St. Michel, where he was kept in captivity for three years. After that, he was transferred to the Bastille in Paris, where he

¹⁹²Aslanian, Sebouh. The “Great Schism” of 1773: Venice and the founding of the Armenian Community in the Trieste, Jordan Center for Persian Studies, 2018, p.83-131.

converted to Catholicism and was ordained according to the Latin rite. He died in Paris in July 1711 AD.

The treatment of the Patriarch did not ease the situation, but quite contrary, the gap between the two parties widened. In 1707 AD, the Hovannes of Smyrna became Patriarch, and the persecution of the Catholics started again by arresting several bishops, forty priests, and one hundred and eighty laymen. Arakelian fled Constantinople and sought refuge in Venice, while Kemurjian was arrested. The charge was ready against them; they converted to Catholicism and became Franks. This action was considered treason against the Sultan. However, the eight clergymen were presented to the Armenian Millet court. Gomidas, the group's representative, tried to convince the court that they had made no treason against the Sultan and that they had become Catholic but not Franks.

However, the priest's words did not find listening ears, and they were presented to the Islamic court. The punishment for the treason of the Sultan was death. The judge offered to remit the penalty to anyone who would convert to Islam. All the group accepted the term except Gomidas, who was beheaded before a crowd of three thousand people, including his wife and Children. The capital punishment of Gomidas instigated the situation, and the ambassador of France intervened to have the Patriarch removed. Soon afterwards, the persecution of Catholics stopped. In 1711AD, the new French ambassador, Pierre des Alleurs, endeavored to alleviate the situation by establishing a Catholic Armenian Millet.

However, the Ottoman government refused the proposal, and it was in no mood to give Christians more concessions, especially after their victory over Russia. In 1715 AD, a new Armenian Patriarch was appointed. The Patriarch, who was a radical proponent of the national Church, exploited the Ottoman war with Venice and Austria to start a campaign of arrests against the Armenia Catholics in Istanbul. At the same time, the station of Jesuits in Trabzon and Erzurum was closed.

The Turks brought in the chain the Catholic leaders, among whom were bishops Abraham Ardzivian of Aleppo and Melkon Tasbasian of Mardin, who died in prison. However, the number of Catholic Armenians increased, and in the report of Latin Patriarchal Vicar Giovanni Battista Mauri, there were more than 20 thousand Armenian converts. Five thousand attended the Latin Church in Galata; nine thousand went to Latin and national Churches, and six thousand were secret

Catholics who professed Catholicism but never attended the Latin Churches. The last category was in place of discussion, and there were different opinions about the Status of the secret converts. Mekhitar emphasized that the converts should not expose themselves to capital punishment; therefore, it was unnecessary to confess the Catholic faith publicly.

On the Other Hand, the Franciscan Custodian of the Holy Land, Lorenzo Cozza, urged the Holy See to reject the secret confession of the faith since it would encourage indifference. However, the Fairman of Ahmet III closed the door before the public Catholic confession since the decree forbade Catholic conversion.

In 1727 AD, Patriarch Hovannes met with the Catholics of Etchmiadzin Karapet III to discuss the problem of Catholicism among the Armenians. The agreement forbade the condemnation of the Chalcedon Council and Leo I in liturgical prayer, while the Catholic Armenians could attend the national Church. However, Pope Benedict XIII rejected the request, while the Congregation declared that such behavior would open the door to scandals, danger to the faith, and indifference. In return for such a response, Patriarch Hovannes obtained permission from the Porte authorizing him to station informers at the entrance of the Latin Churches in Galata to report on Armenian worshippers. He further ordered a thorough examination to discover those with Catholic tendencies. These measures resulted in a new wave of arrests of Armenian Catholics¹⁹³.

3) The Struggle between the Latin Missionaries and the Armenian Catholic Hierarchy

The Aleppian example of electing a national Catholic hierarchy in Aleppo was accepted by the Catholic Armenians of Constantinople who sought to have a Catholic Armenian bishop, and that would solve most of their problems with the national Armenian hierarchy. However, the missionaries represented by bishop Bona, who was appointed by Pope Benedict XIV in 1742 AD, did not accept the suggestion, and they proved to have the upper hand when the Holy See rejected the proposal.

Notwithstanding, the setback proved short-lived when Benedict XIV allowed the Catholic Armenians to nominate Athanasius Merassian, an Armenian Catholic priest, as their Patriarchal

¹⁹³A. Frazee. Catholics and Sultans, P. 178-182.

Vicar. He was promised to have episcopal consecration, but that did not happen for several years because of the objections of the Catholic missionaries in Constantinople. It was only in 1759 AD that Athanasius was ordained as a bishop with the authority of ordaining bishops of his community. However, his domination was nominal since he did not have jurisdiction nor was he allowed to determine a policy independent of the Latin Patriarchal Vicar when Armenian Catholics were more than twelve thousand served by twenty-eight clergies.

However, the Armenian Vicar did not get along with the missionary. The Latin Vicar Biagio Paoli insisted on having the final words in any problems faced by the Armenian community, while the Armenian Vicar was thought to be his deputy. However, in 1765 AD, a special delegation arrived from Rome and decided that the final authority should be the Latin missionaries. The Armenian National Patriarch and his successor, Krikor III, were sympathetic to the Armenian Catholic community even though Patriarch Krikor converted to Catholicism in 1776 AD.

However, the tension between the Armenian Catholics and the hierarchy of the Armenian National Church never stopped. The Patriarch of the Armenian National Church, Zacaria, endeavored to narrow down the marginal freedom of Catholics. Thirty-five Armenian priests were brought before the Patriarchate's court for investigation. The priests were innocent, and the court could not charge them, notwithstanding the court declared that the Armenian Catholics must consider themselves outside the Patriarchal jurisdiction and, therefore, excommunicated. Hovannes Serposian, a famous Catholic Armenian at the time, petitioned Grand Vezir Mehmet Zilifdar for a separate Catholic Millet. When Hovannes failed in his mission, he appealed to Rome, asking permission for the Catholics to attend and communicate with the national Church, thereby lessening the tension.

The Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith rejected the proposal. In 1783 AD, archbishop, Frachia, reported to Rome that there were now twenty thousand Catholic Armenians in Istanbul, served with six priest alumni of the Urban College, five Mekhitarists, and four Lebanese clergies, as well as twenty-five Armenian convert priests from the national Church¹⁹⁴.

4) Abraham Ardzivian: The Foundation of Armenian Catholic Patriarchate

¹⁹⁴ A. Frazee. Catholics and Sultans, P. 182-184.

The existence of Catholic Armenians in the Levant preceded the missionary expedition's work during the reign of the Ottoman Empire. Some resources mentioned that the Armenian king of Sis, Hetoum, was united with the Holy See. The king probably wanted to support his position against Muslims at the time, and for the same reason, he allied with the Mongols. Moreover, the Armenian Patriarch of Sis, Constantine V, sent the Metropolitan of Aleppo, Joachim, to the Council of Florence in 1438 AD, where the Pope praised him.

Much evidence indicates that Catholic Armenians existed. For instance, some of the Catholic Armenians of Aleppo travelled to the Holy See and their names are still preserved in the records of the papal archive. In 1584 AD, when the papal emissary, Leonardo Abel, travelled to the East to examine the doctrine of Easterners and invite their hierarchy to the union with the Holy See, the notables of Armenians in Aleppo sent him an invitation to deliberate about the procedure of union.

In 1585 AD, Patriarch Azaria I of Cilicia wanted to pay allegiance to the Pope; therefore, he sent Bishop Krikor Al-Halabi to deliver Pope Gregory III his profession. Next year, they sent another profession to Pope Sixtus V which was signed by four of his bishops.

When the Jesuit Fathers entered Aleppo, they discovered the Armenian Catholics. One of the Fathers, called Aime Chezard, mentioned in one of his epistles that the Armenians at that time were Catholic and non-Catholic, while the Chief of the Jesuits at the time, Father Poirresson, mentioned that Father Chezard served the Armenian Catholics well. Notwithstanding, the Armenian Catholics were few, and the missionary Father played a decisive role in preaching Catholicity among the Armenians¹⁹⁵. In Diyarbakir, and during the third decade of the 17th century, the Carmelite Fathers started their work among the Armenians, and in 1641 AD, the Capuchin Fathers settled there. One of the Fathers, John, chose a young Armenian pupil called Malkon Tasbas and sent him to Rome to acquire the knowledge of Catholicity. When he returned home, he ardently started preaching among his kinsmen. In 1709 AD, the Patriarch of Sis, Peter, appointed him a bishop of the episcopate of Diyarbakir.

During his term, he won over the Armenians of his episcopate by converting them to Catholicism. However, six years later, this unfortunate bishop suffered from the intrigue of the Orthodox Party

¹⁹⁵Paul. The Armenian Catholic Diocese of Aleppo, Al Mashreq Journal, N.6, 15th of Mar 1906, p. 275-281.

until he became a martyr in 1716 AD¹⁹⁶. His pupil continued on the path; his name is Peter the First, or Ibrahim Erzivian (mentioned in the documents), who was born in Aintab in 1679 AD into a Catholic family. When he was young, he started learning theology from the famous bishop of Mardin, Malkon Tasbas. In 1706 AD, he was ordained a bishop by the Catholicos of Sis, Peter Bisag, who was later accused of having Catholic tendencies, and he made him the keeper of his secrets.

Finally, in 1710 AD, the Patriarch appointed him to the Church of Aleppo, but the successful period he served attracted the attention of Constantinople's Patriarch. The offensive waged by the Patriarch of Constantinople compelled the Patriarch of Sis to flee the Levant to Rome. On the other hand, the new bishop of Aleppo was exiled to Rhodes Island based on a decree issued by the Ottoman Porte. Eventually, in 1720 AD, the Ottoman Sultan Ahmed declared that the Ottoman land is no longer a land of Catholic subjects, and ordered to deny anybody converted to the new faith. After that, the bishop was sure that returning to Aleppo was impossible for him; he corresponded with the Chieftain of Al-Hazin house¹⁹⁷, called Daher, who accepted him in his region in Mount Lebanon.

The bishop settled in Keserwan, built a new church and a monastery, and established Antonin Monasticism. In 1722 AD, the ambassador of France seized the opportunity to drop all charges against him¹⁹⁸. Moreover, in 1739, the archbishop found his way to Aleppo again. When the Catholicos of Sis passed away, the synod of Armenian Syrians convened and chose Ibrahim Erzivian as the new Catholicos of Syria¹⁹⁹.

¹⁹⁶Monseigneur Alexandrian. The Armenian Diocese of Mardin, Al Mashreq Journal, N. 11, 1st Jun 1907, P.502-507.

¹⁹⁷The family belonged to a feudal lord of Kiserwan, north of Lebanon, called Nadir al- Khazin known then as Abu-Nawfal for the Ma'ni Amir Mullhim (1655-1657) and guardian for his son Ahmed (1657-1697). His father Khazin had been the chief counsellor of Amir Fakher al-Din II. Lord Nadir protected French missionaries, mainly Capuchins and Jesuits. The missionaries recommended the Lord to King Louis XIV; therefore, he appointed him as a deputy of the French consul in Beirut in 1655 AD, and IN Sidon. Najjar, Emils. The Jesuits in Lebanon Since 1831, Beirut, 1961, p.3.

¹⁹⁸Chaque, Louis. The Armenian Patriarch, Al Mashreq Journal, N.3, 1900, p.53-56.

¹⁹⁹Anton, Hanjy. The Short History of Armenians, Jerusalem, 1983, p. 332.

In 1742 AD, the new Armenian Catholicos travelled to Rome and was vested with the Pallium by Pope Benedict, and he made his confession to the Catholic Faith. Still, the unfortunate Patriarch, Peter, failed and did not ever achieve his goal of returning to his Chair in Sis, since the reluctant party in Constantinople ordained another Patriarch for Sis. In addition to that, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Hagop Nazlan, and the new Patriarch of Sis issued decrees to arrest him once he arrived. Patriarch Peter, whose dreams vanished, changed his way to Mount Lebanon again, and then settled down in Kreim's Monastery, maintaining good relations with Syrian Catholics through missionary monks²⁰⁰.

The Patriarch's enemies in Constantinople had the potential to prevent him from achieving his goals. So, at this level, the Patriarch sought the help of the Pope who started sending epistles to the high-ranking officials²⁰¹. Those documents illustrate the endeavors of the Pope to strengthen the Catholic Patriarch status inside the Ottoman Empire.

The First document²⁰²:

إلى الجي سلطنة المجر الماكث حكما في مدينة القسطنطينية باناديكتوس الباب الرابع عشر:

أيها الولد العزيز السلام عليكم والبركة الرسولية تشملك إن الأخ المكرم بطرس بطريرك كليكية على طائفة الأرمن قد وجد عندنا قبولا عظيما جدا حين حضر إلى رومية في العام الماضي ليطالب الباليون المقدس إثباتا لسلطانه البطريرك المؤتمن عليه من الكرسي الرسولي وليلتبس التأييد اه ولمله الأرمنية فرأينا به قلبا شهما في حماية الإيمان الكاثوليكي وحبا بالغاية لشعبه وموثوقا برباط البيعة الخاصة نحو راعي البيعة العام فلذلك وهبناه درع الرئاسة الخاص من كل خاطرنا ووعدناه بالتأييد على قدر استطاعتنا من خالص لبنا وإثباتا لحصول هذا التأييد أوصينا حضرتك ببراءة لكي نسعى امامه عند الدولة العثمانية في قضاء أغراض وأغراض الإيمان المقدس لأنه عالم بأن إجي الإبنه العزيزة له اعتبار عظيم وبالخصوص إذ كان رجلا مزيئا نوصيك جدا بالبطريرك المذكور وبايجاب مطلوبنا لشدة ديانتك نحو الله واحترامك نحونا ونحو الكرسي الروماني ومهما علمتم من الخير معه ودمتم من الحماية عن الأرمن الكاثوليكين فيبقى لك الثواب عند الله والفضل عندنا وعربونا لفضلك نمنحك أيها الولد العزيز البركة الرسولية من صميم قلبنا حرر في رومية في اليوم الخامس والعشرين من شهر نيسان سنة 1743م.

²⁰⁰A. Frazee. Catholics and Sultans, p.186.

²⁰¹Chaque. The Armenian Patriarch, p.54.

²⁰²The Epistle of the Armenian Patriarch of Cilicia Peter the First to the Pope Benedict XIV And the response of His Holiness, Syrian Catholic Archdiocese of Aleppo, Aleppo, Syria, self-mark Ar 7/103, document number 27-28.

To the ambassador of the Hungarian Queen [Heinrich von Penklerf]²⁰³ in Constantinople, Pope Benedict XIV:

Peace upon my beloved Son, on whom the apostolic blessing is bestowed, we inform You about the honored brother Peter, the Patriarch of Armenian Catholic in Cilicia. Since he came to Rome last year, he has had excellent acceptance to get the sacred pallium to prove his episcopal dominance, which was entrusted by the Holy See, and to seek support for himself and his community. We saw in him a generous heart in defending the Catholic faith and great love for his community. Since the Holy See trusts him, we grant him the special shield of the presidency, and we promised to support him as much as we can. To assure the support, we recommend Your Honor issue a decree that helps him in his endeavor before the Ottoman Authority, and he can be of great significance in managing the Community affairs since he knows that you have a significant status. We recommend Your Honor regarding our mentioned Patriarch to meet our wishes for you being a great believer and respectable person, and your loyalty to the Holy See is not questioned. For the goodness you will offer him, including the protection of the Armenian Catholics, you will be rewarded by God, and we will appreciate you for doing that. To show our gratitude, we award you our Son by Apostolic blessings from our hearts.

It was written in Rome on the twenty-fifth of April 1743 AD.

The second document²⁰⁴:

الى ولدنا المسلح بالمسيح لودوفيكس ملك فرنسا الكلي الديانه
بانديكتوس الباب الرابع عشر.

أيها الولد الاعز بالمسيح السلام لك والبركة الرسولية تحل عليك أنه معلوم عند الجميع ومختبر عند كثيري في عظم إفادة كلام
سعادتك وجلالك عند الدولة الإسلامية لذا يجب عليك الاحتمال والرضى إذ التجئ إليك كثيرون واذلك عليك الاحتمال والرضى
إذا التجئ اليك كثيرون لإقضاء اشغالهم هناك وعلى الخصوص إذا كانت متجهة إلى منفعة الديانه الكلية التي تعتني وتهتم بها في
كل العالم وتستعمل بذلك قوتك وسيط ملكك القوي بالغايه بنوع أن يحصل من ذلك مدد عظيم لنا منه وفرح جزيل فلاح بطرس

²⁰³Spuler, Beltold: Die europäische Diplomatie in Konstantinopel bis zum Frieden von Belgrad (1739). 1. Teil. Jahrbücher für Kultur und Geschichte der Slaven, Neue Folge, 3. Teil, Bd. 11, H. 3/4 (1935), 342.

²⁰⁴The Epistle of the Armenian Patriarch of Cilicia Peter the First to Pope Benedict XIV and the response of his Holiness, documents numbers. 21-22-23.

بطريرك كليكيا على طايفة الأرمن الكاثوليكين متوكلا على حنوك الملوكي يتوسل بخضوع لجلالك لكي تتنازل وتوصي إلى وكيلك في اسلامبول فيه وفي كل ما يخص اشغاله الكنائسية ووظيفة البطريركية ويرجو نيل مطلوبه بقوة براءتنا هذه التي نسأل بها فضلك إيجاب ما يؤثره ويتوخاه ويقتضي ذلك اهتمامنا الرسولي بخير طائفته الأرمنية وزيادة مودتنا له لأنه عند قدومه إلى روميه على سبيل العبارة أظهر خضوعا ساميا وانشهر عندنا بحسن فضايه الجليله فنحن نعلم ان جلالك لا يحتاج إلى من يناشده ويناشده لحماية عبادة الله الصادقة لكن نذكرك بالمكافأه من الرب سبحانه وتعالى على سعيك الحميد بالغاية ليعود ذلك بالسرور الروحي لا محركا لعمل الخير لانك لا تحتاج للإدكار بذلك .

ثم نمنح لك أيها الولد الأعز بالمسيح البركة الرسولية من صميم قلبنا. حرر في روميه في اليوم الخامس والعشرين من شهر نيسان مسيحيه سنة 1743 .

To our Son, the King of France, the Most Religious,

Pope Benedict XIV:

To the Son whose magnificence comes from Jesus Christ, peace be upon you. Apostolic blessing is bestowed on you; since it is known for all and experienced that your words are of great significance and acceptance in the Islamic state. Therefore, you have to show forbearance and feel satisfied when many people resort to Your Majesty seeking your help in managing their affairs, especially if the aim is serving the all-inclusive religion of which you are the patron, supporter, and sponsor in the entire world. I encourage you to use your power and well-known domination, which will reflect on us in excellent support and great joy.

Our brother Peter, the Armenian Catholic Patriarch of Cilicia, depends on your royal kindness. He begs before Your Majesty to recommend your representative in Constantinople about his Church and patriarchal functions. He wishes to have his demands met by our papal decree that we ask Your Majesty to kindly respond to whatever he wants because the attention we give to Armenians, and the goodness we wish them, require us to ask you for that.

When he came to Rome, he showed great submission to us, and we saw in him a man of good manners. We know that Your Majesty needs no appeal to protect the sincere people of God. However, we remind you of the rewards the Mighty God will bestow on you for your good offices, which will get back to you in spiritual pleasure, and since your motivation for doing good is not questioned, there is no need to be reminded of that. We lay our apostolic blessings upon you, the Son whose magnificence comes from our Jesus Christ.

Written in Rome on the twenty-fifth of April 1743 AD.

A mi Krisztusban fegyveres fiunknak, a mindenható hitű Franciaország királyának, Lajosnak.

XIV. Benedek pápa.

Krisztusban szeretett fiunk, béke neked és apostoli áldás szálljon rád. Mindenki tudja és sokan megtapasztalták, hogy milyen nagy hatása van a te szavaidnak és fenségednek az iszlám világban. Ezért kötelességed türelemmel és elégedettséggel lenni, amikor sokan fordulnak hozzád, különösen akkor, ha kérésük a vallás javát szolgálja, amelyről te gondoskodsz és amelyet védelmezel szerte a világon. Ezzel használsz erődet és erős királyi befolyásodat oly módon, hogy ez nagy segítséget és örömet jelent nekünk.

Petrosz, a Kilikiai örmény katolikusok pátriárkája, a te királyi kegyességedre támaszkodva alázattal kéri fenségedet, hogy kegyeskedj közbenjárni a konstantinápolyi (Isztambul) ügyében és minden egyházi ügyben, amely a pátriárkai hivatalával kapcsolatos. Kérjük tehát, hogy kegyeskedj megadni neki azt, amit kér, hiszen apostoli gondoskodásunkkal a saját népének javát, és a mi szeretetünket is növelni szeretnénk iránta. Amikor Rómába érkezett, nagy tisztelettel mutatkozott be, és kiváló erényei miatt hírnévre tett szert nálunk.

Biztosak vagyunk benne, hogy fenségednek nincs szüksége buzdításra ahhoz, hogy védje az igaz hitet és Isten imádatát, de emlékeztetünk arra a jutalomra, amelyet az Úr ad azoknak, akik buzgón törekednek a jóra, és ez lelki örömet hoz majd neked. Ez nem azért van, hogy ösztönözzük a jót, mert tudjuk, hogy neked nincs szükséged emlékeztetőre ehhez.

Ezután Krisztusban szeretett fiunknak, tiszta szívből adunk apostoli áldást. Rómában kelt, 1743. április 25-én.

The third document²⁰⁵:

إلى الولد العزيز إلهي ملك فرنسا الكلي الديانة الكاين في مدينة القسطنطينية

²⁰⁵The Epistle of the Armenian Patriarch of Cilicia Peter the first to the Pope Benedict XIV and the reponse of his Holiness, document's number 24-25.

باندكتوس البابا الرابع عشر.

أيها الولد العزيز السلام عليك والبركة الرسولية تشملك عن الأخ المكرم بطرس بطريرك كليكية على طائفة الأرمن الكاثوليكين يومل أملا مؤكدا ويرجو رجاء صوابيا في إن أشغاله وأشغال ملته الكنايسية تقتضي عليّ أتم المراد إذا أيدها ابننا العز بالمسيح ملك فرنسا الديانة بتأييده المقتدر بالغاي وبحمايته المتينه عند الدولة العثمانية لأن الجميع يعلمون بأن اسم جلاله السعيد معتبر ومكرم جدا فلأجل ذلك توسلنا ببرائتنا إلى هذا الملك العظيم إلى أن يجعل نظرة في تتميم أغراض البطريرك المذكور ونؤمل ذلك لعلنا بشدة غيرته في حماية وانتشار أمانة الله الصادقة ومن كل بد يتنازل من باب جوده في مثل هذا الأمر المهم فاجتهد انت إذا على قدر استطاعتك وتمم قصده الصالح متى دعتك الحاج إلى ذلك ليبقى لك عندنا الفضل والثنا الجميل إذا سعيت به سعيا كليا بما أن وظيفة الخدمة الرسولية تقتضي منا فرضا بأن نحامي عن الأرمن الكاثوليكين واهتمامنا ونود مودة خالصة البطريرك نفسه الذي وجد عندنا قبولا وافرا حين قدم بذاته إلى روميه ليزور الأعتاب الرسولية ويقدم خضوعا لراعي الكنيسة العام وبما أننا تحققتاه متعبد لله عبادته صادق ومحرما الكرسي الأعلى طاعه تامة واحترما واجبا ومزينا ومجلا بالفضائل السابقة لذلك وهبنا الدرع المقدس تثبيتا لسلطانه الكنايسي وخلصنا عليه بغيرها من الهدايا فليكن اذا عندكم محققا بحصول اجر عظيما لك اذا سعيت بما قصدنا فضلك وتسهيل قضا أغراضك عندنا دائما اذا قصدتنا وعربونا لذلك نمحك أيها الولد العزيز البركة الرسولية من صميم قلوبنا.

حرر في روميه في اليوم الامس والعشرين من شهر نيسان سنة مسيحية سنة 1743.

To the dear Son, the ambassador of France King, the Most religious, living in Constantinople.

Pope Benedict XIV:

Our dear Son, peace be upon you, and apostolic blessing is bestowed on you. Our honoured brother Peter, the Arminian Catholic Patriarch of Cilicia, fervently hopes and requests the help of our son, the king of France, whose magnificence comes from Jesus Christ- regarding his community and its affairs before the Ottoman Empire.

Since the honored and respected King's reputation is known to all, we beg the great King to support the Patriarch in meeting his responsibilities. We hope so since what we know about him assures his passion for protecting and spreading the Divine Will and we have no doubt that the great King will not hesitate in helping us thanks to the highness He enjoys. Therefore, strive as hard as you can to complete his intention when the need comes.

If your efforts are complete, we will appreciate it highly since our apostolic service requires us to protect Armenian Catholics and show a particular interest in the Armenian community that we want to express our affection perfectly to the Patriarch. The Patriarch found great acceptance when

he came to Rome to visit the apostolic lands and pledge loyalty to the authorized representative of Jesus Christ. In addition, after we made sure that he is a true believer and that he shows respect toward the Holy See, we awarded him the sacred shield to strengthen his Church authority and granted him other presents. We hope it would be known for you that divine reward will be granted to you if you seek to help us, and whenever you seek our help, we will never hesitate in that, and as a bounty, we award you – our dearest Son – the apostolic blessing from the depth of our hearts.

Written in Rome on the twenty-fifth of April 1743 AD.

Still, the miserable Patriarch gained nothing and, most probably, the Hungarian Queen's ambassador, together with the French king and his ambassador, did not give priority to Catholics' future, at least during this time. The war of Austrian succession (1740- 1748 AD) was of significance in determining the political future and sovereignty of all Europe's internal and external prospects. Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary, Bohemia, and the Duchess of the Habsburg Lands, who relied on the Magyars, did not want to provoke the Ottomans' hostility at the time²⁰⁶. On the other hand, the King of France, whose mind was occupied with European affairs, did not find that supporting the Patriarch could be essential for their interest since France's ambassador pushed the Ottoman Sultan to highlight the King's prestige through conducting the treaty of 1740²⁰⁷.

These reasons, led the Armenian Patriarch to his shelter in Mount Lebanon until he died in 1749. Another thing related to the Patriarch was the verification of the Kitar Association (الجمعية الكيتارية) which was established by the above-mentioned Mekhitar, that the Armenian Patriarch during his journey in Rome got the authentication of the Pope who offered a monastery to it in Venice, which would have a significant role in spreading the Catholic faith among Armenians at a future time²⁰⁸. The next Armenian Patriarch of Aleppo, Hagop Hovespian, was consecrated by Patriarch Abraham in 1740 AD as coadjutor for Aleppo. However, the new Patriarch took from Bzommar in Mount Lebanon a residence place. Three years later, the Patriarch died, and he was succeeded by Mikael Gasparian, who received the Holy See recognition.

²⁰⁶Carlton J. H, Hayas. A Political and Culture History of Modern Europe, Washington, 1944, p. 350.

²⁰⁷Muhana. Al-Muhammad, the European Community in Aleppo, Damascus, 2009, p. 53.

²⁰⁸Chaque, Louis. The Armenian Patriarch, p.56.

Several years later, a jurisdictional dispute broke out between Patriarch Mikael and the Armenian Catholic Vicar in Constantinople. The Armenian Patriarch, the only legitimate authority representing Catholic Armenians, appointed members from his clergymen to run Catholic affairs in Constantinople, Trabzon, and Diyarbakir.

The Latin hierarchy argued that Mikael's authority should be limited since Constantinople has its representative. However, the Patriarch visited Rome to discuss this issue personally before the Congregation of Propagation of the Faith, but unfortunately for the Patriarch, the committee disapproved of his vision. They decided that his power should be confined to the ancient land of Sis: Cilicia, Anatolia, Cappadocia, and Syria.

However, the Patriarch returned disappointed to his residency in Mount Lebanon and his successors continued to raise the issue of the Armenian Patriarch's jurisdiction, which should include all Armenian Churches. In the 18th century, the Armenian Catholics multiplied; they numbered four thousand in Ankara, while the Mekhitarists in Erzurum counted 12 thousand, and in Aleppo four thousand²⁰⁹.

5) The Establishment of the Armenian Catholic Millet

A series of events led to the Armenian Catholic expulsion of 1828 AD that the Russian troops occupied Persian Armenia including the city of Etchmiadzin, the seat of the Armenian Patriarch, and they allegedly planned to create an autonomous Armenian principality dependent on Russia, similar to Moldavia and Wallachia. Moreover, the attitude of its Armenian subjects was unpredictable, particularly after the Ottoman governor of Erzurum had announced the emigration of some Ottoman Armenians to Etchmiadzin since the city was in the Russian hands.

The Ottoman government was fearful of such possible creation which would lead the Armenian Catholic to use the European support to have an independent policy from the Porte, especially after the defeat of Navarino in 1827AD. Consequently, Mahmud II invited the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople to meet him and asked him whether he was able to answer for his co-religionists' loyalty. The Patriarch declared that he could do so only for the part of the nation he was the spiritual

²⁰⁹A. Frazee. Catholics and Sultans, p.188-189.

head of, but not for the Armenian Catholics who were obedient to the Pope and in close contact with the Europeans living with them in Pera and Galata.

As the Patriarch intended, his words—spoken at a moment when the relations between several European powers and the Porte could hardly be worse owing to Greek affairs—aroused the Sultan's suspicions against the Armenian Catholic. The Patriarch's retinue further increased those suspicions by spreading a rumour in the Divan that Catholics desired to achieve political independence from the Ottoman Empire with the help of the Pope and Catholic powers.

The Ottoman monarch was finally led to take measures against the Armenian Catholics; he evicted them from the capital and the execution of this order was entrusted to the Patriarch. The expulsion of the Armenian Catholics from Constantinople started with the issuance of a Ferman on 8 January 1828 AD, ordering the leading members of this nation to leave the capital and go first to Scutari, (Üsküdar) and afterward to Angora (Ankara). On 10 January, another Ferman ordered three generations of Catholic Armenians originating from Angora, regardless of their situation, age, or sex, to move to Angora within 12 days.

The Patriarch warned them that if they did not obey this order, they would be put on a list prepared by him and presented to the sultan who could punish them as he wished. The Patriarch also informed the aggrieved individuals that if they wanted to escape the expulsion, they had to renounce their faith in writing and adopt the Eastern Orthodox religion. On 22 January, the Patriarch ordered the Armenian Catholics who originated from Constantinople to move from Galata and Pera to the inner quarters of the city where the majority of the Orthodox population lived and which consequently had mostly Orthodox Churches.

Since the Catholics were unable to rent houses in the designated quarters and were further obstructed by the Patriarch who was willing to permit them to do so only if they converted, which they generally refused to do, the Catholics were ordered to move to villages on the Bosphorus which were also inhabited by Orthodox Christians. However, the ambassador of Austria intervened to solve the problem by suggesting freedom of faith and the creation of the office of an Armenian Catholic Patriarch as the head of this community in the Ottoman territories: 1) this official would be entirely independent of the Armenian Orthodox Patriarch; 2) that they have the right to build their churches, hold their ceremonies, and repair their old Churches without necessity of asking

for a new Ferman; 3) the return of the individuals expelled from Constantinople; 4) the restoration of confiscated property; 5) compensation for the injustices.

The diplomatic efforts of both France and Austria culminated when the Ottoman Porte on the 17th of January accepted the Austrian-French suggestion including that the Armenian Catholics would have their spiritual leader independent from the Orthodox Patriarch; a leader with the rank of a bishop or archbishop would be voted for by the leaders of the Armenian Catholic nation and obtain the approval of the Pope; the Porte would nominate a Muslim official to be the only agent between the sultan and the Armenian Catholics in civil affairs; the Armenian Catholics would obtain a certain number of churches sufficient for their needs; they would not be compelled to make use of Orthodox clergymen's services in spiritual matters, like christenings, weddings, and funerals; the Porte would make every endeavor to restore the properties confiscated and sold in the two years before its order. However, the obstacles reflected on the project, especially after the French invasion of Algeria in 1830 AD. The opposite party exploited the situation and charged the Catholics of inclination to the Frank cause against the Sultan. The decision of exiles returns and church building suspended. However, the diplomatic efforts of Vienna were fruitful. In late December 1830 AD, the Ottoman Porte agreed with the division of Armenian Millet and nominated Bishop Giacomo della Valle as the leader of the Catholic community. Three years later, the Patriarch title was bestowed on the new leader Artin Vartabet²¹⁰.

²¹⁰Miroslav, Šedivý. Austria's Role in the Constantinople Armenian Catholics Affair in 1828–31, *Middle Eastern Studies*, January 2012, Vol. 48, No. 1 (January 2012), p. 51-71.

Conclusion

The theory of Millet system inside the Ottoman Empire during the classical age is not true and need more examination. In the study which focused on the establishment of Catholic Churches of the Levant the Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople and the Armenian Patriarch had no independent authority over the Christians of the Levant and the appointments were confined to Ottoman Porte and all the accounts which attached the Orthodox of the Middle East to Armenian Patriarch or the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople should be reexamined. In perfect circumstances both Patriarchs were instruments inside the Ottoman Porte and did not have an independent authority to enforce their decision. The Melkite Church, the Jacobite Church and Eastern Church were independent in its hierarchy and did not derive its appointments from those Patriarchs of Constantinople. In the struggle which prolonged through the centuries between the Orthodox and the Catholic of the Levant the main character which played a decisive role in appointing or supporting one side against the other was the political authority which represented by the governors of the Ottoman governorate, the Ottoman Porte and the European countries. As such the Ottoman authority did not have special treatments for Christians nor they classified them in the so called Millet system. Millet System did not appear until 19th century at the time of reform and regulation.

The main aspects which contributed to the flourish of Catholicity inside the Ottoman Empire the readiness of Eastern Christians to acquire the methods of science and education which carried out by missionary. The ignorance of the Ottoman Empire and its neglecting to its population especially the Churches in the East contributed to splitting up the Church into an old Orthodox hierarchy and a new Catholic one, the struggle and war inside the communities of Syrians, Armenians, Rums, and Nestorians were the main character of their relation. Both sides used all possible means like bribes, frames or using outside supporters to eradicate or at least harm his brothers. In many times the Orthodoxy of Christianity was not in a place of debate between the competitors but it was their desire to the rule. Many dignitaries were not honest in their conversion that many of them were hesitated between the old tenants and catholicity, and they pushed themselves toward the union with Holy See only for support. On the other hand, many others were honest in their deeds and bore the hardship and turmoil for unification of the Church in order to establish the Church of God. The Holy See in the return sought many ways to support his agenda by using different means such as organizing the missionary expedition activities when he

established the Congregation of Propagation in 1622AD in order to regulate the work of missionary Fathers, moreover the Holy See opened many attached schools for educating the Easterners about Catholic theology in order to disseminate the Catholicity between the Christian Subjects.

It is quite obvious the missionary Fathers and the Holy See tried to raise new elites in their schools and Churches to serve in the future as preachers inside their communities. The Latin Fathers found the most effective way to spread out Catholic doctrine is to be done by the sons of the Easterners and not by some of foreign preachers have limited knowledge about the East and its communities. The Holy See succeeded in his endeavors and created a new elite or Catholic hierarchies inside the East. The dignitaries of the East during the whole process which extended for centuries emphasized on the superiority of the Pope and they were looking at him as the Father of all, the Savior but at the same time it appeared that the Holy See did not see that enough but in quite contrary the missionary Fathers ignored the tradition of the Easterners, their Customs and their rituals and sought in many ways to change it and replace it with the Latin one. The Holy See looked at the Easterners just as subjects and not as peers looking for salvation and the charity of the whole community. In many times and in many cases the Latin elites in the East did not hand over the authority which replaced between their hands to the legal representatives of the Catholic communities but in quite contrary they tried to exert a pressure upon them and prevent them from exercising the right of leadership. In all cases the last word belonged to the Latin Missionary Fathers and marginal freedom of Christians inside the Ottoman Empire were confiscated sometimes by orders coming from outside and had nothing to do with East. The bad exercises of missionary Fathers led in some cases to condemnation and disapproval of the Easterners and sometimes caused a split within the Catholic community and sometimes changed to a struggle against the Holy See and his unlimited authority. The Holy See according to the sources laid between our hands ignored the feelings of Easterners and dealt with them as subjects must obey or excommunicated. The ignorance of the Latin Fathers about the East made their mission more difficult and the old hierarchies went more radical in their endeavors to stop such process but the conversion turned to be fact with the time passed. It is important to know what the Easterners gained in return for their converting. Was it for the charity of the community or were there internal aspects attributed to this process that they felt marginalized and their decisions confiscated by the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Armenian Patriarch therefore they sought any kind of support

to gain back their position as the creedal of Christianity. The main causes of conversion's movement of Easterners must be studied by illustrating the internal aspects which led grand portions of Ottoman Christians toward Catholicity.

The Holy See and the missionary Fathers targeted individuals among the Christians to hold the torch of Catholicity in the East and the newly-established hierarchy by the protection of France started their preaching among their countrymen. Unfortunately, those indigenous people had not been aware of the Latin theology and its condemnation to their forefathers. For instance, the metropolitan Adam's case divided Catholics between supporters and opponents and his composition was forbidden to reach the people. Therefore, the conversion's movement had other causes rather than religious. It very decisive to study the economic and social circumstances which accompanied the conversion's movement in the future. The coordination between the Holy See and the European Countries especially France was at a high level as many documents indicated that there was a common interest in establishing the Catholic Hierarchy since the European consuls, ambassadors, and authority were used in accordance with the plan of Papacy but it still ambiguous why France had shown such interest in the Christians of the East. The relationship between the Holy See and France regarding their united policy toward Easterners must be given more space to be examined under the term of modern colonization and its relation to religion. The preaching, proselytizing, and conversion between Easterners succeeded but unfortunately, the union with the Holy See continued to stay an unaccomplished dream, the superiority of the Pope has been preserved in the eyes of the East long time ago but differentiation in Customs, tradition, languages have its costs. The Patriarchates of Catholic Rum or Chaldean, Syrians, and Melkites have rituals which are incompatible to each other and they derived their legitimacy from the deep-rooted Christianity of Antioch, Edessa, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, the creedal of Christianity. There was no mean to unify the Christians of East, and the endeavors of union was just a fantasy could not be achieved. Finally, the strife of the Catholics of the East was the first liberation of its kind in East which unfortunately in some ways have stopped in favor to the radical puritanismus which put the Levant once more in religious and political anarchy.

Literature

Unpublished Documents.

Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Türkei V. Karton 23 (1526-1584).

Mr. Germanos Adam responded to the composition called the voice of Missionary Fathers", 'Foundation Georges et Mathilde Salem, Syria, Aleppo, Shelf mark Ar 109, 15 manuscripts.
<https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/501460>.

The Epistle of the Armenian Patriarch of Cilicia, Peter the first to the Pope Benedict XIV and the response of his Holiness, Syrian Catholic Archdiocese of Aleppo, Aleppo, Syria, self-mark Ar 7/103.

The Holy Book, Surah Ali'Imran, Surah Al-Maaida.

Monographs.

Aboona, Hirmis. Assyrians, Kurds, and Ottomans, Cambria Press, New York

Anton, Hanjy. The Short History of Armenians, Jerusalem, 1983,

A. Frazee, Charles. Catholics and Sultans, Cambridge University Press, London, 1983

Armeleh. The Smart Flower in the Syriac Patriarchate of Antioch, Beirut, 1909

Al- Sabbagh, Laila. European Communities in the Levant in the 16th and 17th centuries, Beirut, 1989,

Almuhalisy, Constantine. The history of the Melkite Roman Church and Almuhalisy Monasticism, Sidon- Lebanon, 1938

Almuhalisy, Yusuf. The outline of the history of the Melkite Church, 3V, Sidon- Lebanon, 1949

Al-Mosuly, Elia. The Gold and Storm, the Voyage of Elia Al-Mosuly to America 1168-1683, revised by Nori Al-Jrah, UAE, 2001,

Ala'rqet, Abd Alhamied. The Role of religious minorities societies during the Ottoman era, Algeria, 2020.

Barsoum, Ignatius Aphram. The History of Tur Abdin, Translated by Matti Moosa, Gorgias Press, USA, 2008

Break, Michael. The Lightning Facts in the History of the Orthodox Church of Antioch, Egypt.

Buckingham, James. My travel in Iraq in 1816, translated by Salim Teh Altakrity, 2 volumes, Bagdad.

Break, Michael. The history of Damascus (1720-1782), Lebanon, 1930, Braude, Benjamin. Christians & Jews in the Ottoman Empire, London, 2014/

Cheung, Julia. Augetine and the African Councils 393-427, Theology Annual 41, 2021

Cardinal Coussa. Aleppo Martyrs, translation. Damiano Shparch, St. Paul press, Lebanon

Duweih, Marastan, History of the Maronite Community, Beirut, 1890

Dionysius, Ephram. The blessing of the lord in conversions of the Syrians, Beirut, 1910

Fr Giuseppe di S. Maria O.C.D Sebastiani, the Journey of Sebastiani to Iraq in 1666, translated from Italian by Peter Hadad, Beirut, 2016,

Fortescue, Adrian. The Lesser Eastern Church, Catholic Truth Society, London

Girling, Kristian. The Chaldean Catholic Church: A study in modern history, ecclesiology and Church-state relations (2003-2013), University of London, 2015

Hitti, Philip. History of the Arabs: From Earliest Times to the Present, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

Hayek, Ignatius Anton II. The relationship of Jacobite Syriac Church with the Holy See since 1143-1656,

Haj, Athanasius. Basilian Shuwayrite Monasticism in the History of the Church and the Country, Lebanon

Hanna, Elia Burhan. Amed the city of pride, Aleppo, 2008,

John. Confessional Politics and Religious Identity in the Early Jesuit Missions to the Ottoman Empire, Syracuse University, 2014,

- Inalcik, Halil. The Ottoman Empire the Classical Age 1300-1600, London, 1973
- Idlibi, Naupitos. The Melkite bishops of Aleppo in the Modern Era, Aleppo, 1983
- Ibin Dimitri ibn Gerges Al- Khoury Al- Halabi, Youssef. Daily Aleppo incidents 1771-1805, Aleppo, 2006
- Mar Aprem, Mookan. The Assyrian Church of the East in the twentieth century, St. Ephrem's Ecumenical Research Institute, Kerala, India, 2003,
- Najjar, Emils. The Jesuits in Lebanon Since 1831, Beirut, 1961
- Shahrur, Muhammad. The Qur'an, Morality and Critical Reason, Translated, Edited, and with an Introduction by Andreas Christmann, LEIDEN • Boston, 2009
- Samir, Abdeh. The Christian Communities in Syria, its Origins - Development – Census, edition N1, Hasan Malls press, Damascus, 2003
- Raheb, Abdallah. Conception of the Union in the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch (1622 - 1672), Beirut 1981
- Sanjian. The Armenian Communities in Syria under Ottoman Dominion, Harvard University, 1956
- Shamun, Saliba. The History of Mosul's Diocese, Bagdad, 1984,
- Jarweh, Michael. Biography, Beth Mardutho Library, 2000.
- Issac, Rafeal. The Church of Christians of Bagdad during the Ottoman Era, Arabic House, Beirut, 2010
- Ibin Dimitri ibn Gerges Al- Khoury Al- Halabi, Youssef. Daily Aleppo incidents 1771-1805, Aleppo, 2006
- Jerdack, Gorge. AL- Imam Ali- The Voice of Humman Rights, Beirut, 5 Volumes, 2000.
- Kursar, Vjerman. Non-Muslim Communal Divisions and Identities in the Early Modern Ottoman Balkans and
- Le P. Aphram, Barson. Historie Du Couvent De S Hanania Appele Deir-uz-Zapharan, Syriac Press, Mardin, 1917

Karali, Paul. The Most Important Accidents in Aleppo in the First Half of the 19th Century by Copying the Manuscript of the Metropolitan Paul Arotien the Maronite bishop of Aleppo, 1788-1850, Egypt

Nerses Sayghian AL- Baghdadi. The History of Catholic Armenians in Iraq, Beirut, 1944, the Millet system theory.

Nasri, Pétros. Histoire des Églises chaldéenne et syrienne, Bgdad, 1905.

Papp, Sándor. The System of Autonomous Muslim and Christian Communities, Churches and States in the Ottoman Empire, Leiden. Boston, 2013

Raheb, Abdallah. Conception of the Union in the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch (1622 - 1672), Beirut 1981

Ra'uf Abd Alsalam, Imad. Mosul in the era of Ottoman Empire, the period of local governorate 1726-182, Iraq, 1973

Rustom, Asad. The Church of the City of God the Great Antioch 1453-1928, 3 volumes, United Kingdom, 2017,

Sarkis, Jacob. Iraqi's Researches in Geography, History, and Relics, Bagdad, 1948

Sako, Louis. Summary to the History of the Chaldean Church, Kirkuk, 2006

Küng, Hans. Islam: Past, Present and Future, translated by John Bowden. Oxford: One world Publications, 2007

Vine, Aubrey. The Nestorian Church, London, 1937

Anonymous Author. A brief history of the Roman Catholic Melkites, Beirut, 1884

Articles

Abd Alhad, Basil. The resume of Yousuf the first 1681-1707, Al Mashreq Journal, N.2, 1st of Feb 1923,

Aslanian, Sebouh. The "Great Schism" of 1773: Venice and the founding of the Armenian Community in the Trieste, Jordan Center for Persian Studies, 2018,

Aziz, Peter. The Antiquity of the Chaldeans in Aleppo, Al Mashreq Journal, N.14, 15th of July 1903

Arnakis, Georgiades. The Greek Church of Constantinople and the Ottoman Empire, The Journal of Modern History, Vol. 24, No.3,1952.

Buğra, Poyraz. The Definition and the Development of the religious protectorate of France in Ottoman land, Journal of Eskişehir Osmangazi University Faculty of Theology, Vol 8, No 1, 2021

Borbone, Pier. Monsignore Vescovo di Soria”, also Known as Moses of Mardin, Scribe and Book Collector, Journal of studies in the Christian Culture of Asia and Africa, volume 8 (XIV), 2007

Borbone, Pier and Farian, Margherita. New documents concerning Patriarch Ignatius Na‘mallāh (Mardin, ca. 1515- Braccaiano, Near Rome,1578) 1. Elias. The Nestorian bishop, Egitto Vicino Oriente XXXVII 2014, Plasa University press

Chaque, Louis. Afthimos Al-Siafi the Metropolitan of Sidon, Originator of the Almuhalysia Monasticism historical overview, Al Mashreq, N 9, 1911,

Chaque, Louis. The Armenian Patriarch, Al Mashreq Journal, N.3, 1900

Dursteler, Eric. Education and identity in Constantinople’s Latin Rite community, c. 1600, Renaissance Studies Vol. 18 No. 2

Feodorov, Loana. Christian Arabic Printing in Aleppo in 1706-1711: an Audacious Project Tolerated by the Ottoman Authorities, World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies, Sevilla, 16-20/07/2018

Ezzo. The Letter of the Patriarch Ignatius N'met Allah, AL Mashreq, no.8, 1933,

Geraghty, William. What St. Cyprian Thought of St. Peter's and the Pope's Supremacy, The Catholic Layman, Vol. 7, No. 80 (Aug. 19, 1858),

Horniker, Arthur. Anglo-French rivalry in the Levant from 1583 TO 1612, The Journal of Modern History, Volume XVIII, December 1946, Number 4

Idlibi, Naupitos. The Melkite Bishops of Aleppo in the Modern Era, Aleppo, 1983,

Kessel, G. "Moses of Mardin (d. 1592)." *Manuscript Cultures* 9, Hamburg, Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (2016)

Ozcosar, Ibrahim. Separation and conflict. Syriac Jacobites and Syriac Catholics in Mardin in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* Vol. 38 No. 2 (2014)

Raheb, Abdallah. Greek Melkite Catholic Patriarchate of Antioch: Birth, Evolution, and current Orientation, In *Ekklesiastikos Pharos*, Vol. LII. II-III, 20 December 1969

Salvadori, Matteo. African Cosmopolitanism in the early Modern Mediterranean: the diasporic life of Yohannes, the Ethopian pilgrim who became a counter reformation Bishop, *The Journal of African History*, 2017

Stevanov, Svetoslave. Millet System in the Ottoman Empire- example of oppression or for tolerance?, *Bulgarian Historical Review*, 1997, 2-3,

Sirriyeh, Elizabeth. The Memoires of a French Gentleman in Syria: Chevalier Laurent d'Arvieux (1635-1702), *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)*, 1984, Vol. 11, No. 2 (1984),

Panchenko, Constantin. A " Melkite Protorenaissance" A Forgotten Cultural Revival of The Melkites in The Late 16th Century, *Parole d e l 'O r ie n t* 39, 2014

Sarah, Peter. The biography of François Pique, *AL Mashreq journal*, No 3, 1925,

Sharon, Cyril. The Complex of Monastery of Savior under the Presidency of Athanasius IV Goher, *AL Mashreq*, N23, 1906

Ceylan, Ebubakir. The Millet System in the Ottoman Empire, *New Millennium Perspectives in the Humanities*, Global Humanities Press, SBN 0-9724918-0-5, 2002

Çolak, Hasan. When a Catholic is invested as the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch: Serafeim/Kyrillos Tanas and the Ottoman central administration in 1745, *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 20, (2023)

Ibn Al'bri. The Ecclesiastical History of Ibn Al'bri, 2 volumes, *Al Mashreq*, Duhok, 2012, vol 2

Ibrehina, Iddie Saliba. Chaldean Catholic Community, *Al Mashreq Journal*, N.18, 15th of Sep 1900,

- Mércz, András. The Coat of Arms of Moses of Mardin, *Journal of Syriac studies*, Vol 22.2, 2019
- Francois, Wim. Andreas Masius (1514-1573) Humanist, Exegete, and Syriac Scholar, *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 2009
- Khater, Akram. "God Has Called Me to Be Free": Aleppo Nuns and the Transformation of Catholicism in 18th-Century Bilad Al-Sham, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Aug., 2008)
- Monseigneur Alexandrian. The Armenian Diocese of Mardin, *Al Mashreq Journal*, N. 11, 1st Jun 1907
- Nasri, Pétros. The Origin of the Current Nestorians and their Civil and Religious Status, *Al Mashreq Journal*, N.7, July 1913.
- Nasri, Pétros. An overview of some famous Chaldeans, *Al Mashreq Journal*, N 18, 15th Sep 1901.
- Ohanjanyan, Anna. Intra-Armenian polemics and confession-building in Ottoman Constantinople: the case of gēorg mxlayim ōlli (1681/85–1758), *Entangled Confessionalizations Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries*, Gorgias Press LLC, 954 River Road, Piscataway, USA, 2022.
- Pavone, Sabina. The Deceivers Deceived: How a Seventeenth Century Venetian Anti-Jesuit Circle Duped a Jesuit Rector, *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 10 (2023),
- Pektaş, Nil. The Beginnings of Printing in the Ottoman Capital: Book Production and Circulation in Early Modern Istanbul, *Osmanlı Bilimi Araştırmaları*, XVI/2 (2015).
- Lucca, Paolo. From Doctrinal Persuasion to economic Threats: paolo piromalli's missionary work among the Armenians and his conversion strategies, *Entangled Confessionalizations? Dialogic Perspectives on the Politics of Piety and Community-Building in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–18th Centuries*, Gorgias Press LLC, 954 River Road, Piscataway, USA, 2022,
- Paul. The Armenian Catholic Diocese of Aleppo, *Al Mashreq Journal*, N.6, 15th of Mar 1906,
- Palabıyık, Nil. A Public Debate on Cyril of Alexandria's Views on the Procession of the Holy Spirit in Seventeenth-Century Constantinople: The Jesuit Reaction to Nicodemos Metaxas's Greek Editions, *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* (2020) 27(3)

Spuler, Beltold: Die europäische Diplomatie in Konstantinopel bis zum Frieden von Belgrad (1739). 1. Teil. Jahrbücher für Kultur und Geschichte der Slaven, Neue Folge, 3. Teil, Bd. 11, H. 3/4 (1935)

The Patriarch Maximus. Historical Summary regarding the Rumi Catholic community from 1837 onwards,

Wakim, Fr. Rami. The Commentary in the Melkite Lectionary the Case of Patriarch Athanasios III Dabbās's Lectionary of 1706, *Scrinium* 19 (2023)

W. Puchner, 'Jesuit theatre on the islands of the Aegean Sea', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 21 (2003), 207-222

Zwierlein, Cornel. Interaction and boundary work. Source: *Journal of Modern European History* / *Zeitschrift für moderne europäische Geschichte* / *Revue d'histoire européenne contemporaine*, May 2020, Vol. 18, No. 2 (May 2020),