

Catholic Armenian notables had a predilection for the title *çelebi* and, to some extent, for *hoca* too; no Catholic Armenian of some prominence was called *amira*.⁵⁸ Members of the famous Catholic Armenian Diuzian family were all called *çelebi*. The other wealthy Catholic Armenians who were leaders of the sect (later a separate *millet*) are listed simply by family name by the nineteenth century chronicler Avedis Berberian.⁵⁹ In still another source, some of them are named *ağa* and *çelebi*.⁶⁰ We have discussed the preference of Catholic Armenian notables for the title *çelebi* in the first chapter.

I have prepared a roster of *amiras*, keeping in mind all the above-mentioned considerations and clarifications (see appendix). Up to now, there has been no reliable tabulation of the *amiras* who lived in the century between 1750 and 1850. One writer claims that in this period they numbered about 150,⁶¹ another put it around 100,⁶² while a more recent scholar estimates their number at approximately 200.⁶³ I consider it vital for a study such as this to have a roster which is intended to fulfill several purposes. First, it gives us a more reliable and realistic idea about the number of *amiras*; second, to trace their family relations insofar as these can be uncovered, and third, to examine (in attached annotations) the nature of the supporting evidence. Clearly, an epigraph naming a man *amira* is more dependable than a non-contemporary's later chronicles or memoir, in which memory or the desire to flatter descendants may lead a writer to attach the honorific *amira* retrospectively to a prominent ancestor of friends or patrons. The list I have prepared attempts to substantiate the claims of *amira*-hood

⁵⁸ **Mrmerian**, *Masnakan Patmutiun*, p. 106. This author observes that "five or six families among the wealthy Catholic Armenians were sometimes called *amira*, and in general, *hoca* or *çelebi*, in the first quarter of nineteenth century..."

⁵⁹ **A. Berberian**, *Patmutiun*, pp. 82-83 and 190. The names of twelve individuals are cited without any titles.

⁶⁰ **Asadur**, *Polsoy Hayere*, p. 113, n. 1; a list of prominent Armenians was published in 1818; among the Catholics eight had the title *aga* and three *celebi*.

⁶¹ **Mrmerian**, *Masnakan Patmutiun*, p. 139.

⁶² **Leo**, *Kotjayakan Kapitale*, p. 248.

⁶³ Epigraph speaks for itself; an inscription can be a statement engraved on a wall in a church, a fountain head or in a school; record implies statement written in a book, document or church record-book; minutes are simply records of meetings and gatherings. In addition to these, colophons, bulls (issued by Katholikos, a prelate or a patriarch), certificates, proclamations are used as proof.