

tice their craft. Each word in his anguished text is like a drop of blood trickling from his wounded heart. His poignant descriptions are based upon bitter experiences of his time. Thus, in a state of utter desperation, he pleads for help to a high-ranking churchman to whom his report was presumably dispatched: "But we were compelled to inform Your Holiness to make you aware of the total demise of those who are living among the antichrists, so that you would warn them [the victims] and, if at all possible, you would rescue them from all manner of apostasy" (ibid., p. 59a).⁶⁰

The evidence provided by Urakh Grigor describes how Armenian artisans faced the grave temptation of becoming Islamized and Turkified through the Turkish authorities' arbitrary imposition of the Fütüvvet regulations. We do not know how many fell victim to these policies. What is known is that the Turkish government could and did engage in "all manner of machinations," which, as Paul Ricaut has stated, aimed at Islamizing the non-Muslims and which Urakh Grigor sums up by saying: "They have set up traps, they have led everyone astray, and they have ensnared them" (ibid., p. 53b).

Armenian history is replete with evidence of religious and political persecutions and oppressions during the long period of Ottoman-Turkish rule. Urakh Grigor's report is a hitherto unknown source that sheds new light on the history of Turkish assimilatory policies.

NOTES

1. J. de Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours*, Vol. I (Paris, 1840), p. 45; Paul Ricaut, *Histoire de l'état présent de l'Empire Ottoman* (Paris, 1670), pp. 83-86, 129-130. On the *devşirmes* in general see I. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devleti teşkilatından kapukulu ocakları*, Vol. I (Ankara, 1943), pp. 13-30; Vol. II (Ankara, 1944), pp. 265-268. See also M. K. Zulalyan, "Devşirmen (Mankahavakë) Osmanyen Kaysrut'yan mej ést T'urk'akan ev Haykakan Aghbyurneri," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes* (Erevan), 2-3 (1959), 247-256.

2. Th. Lavallée, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman* (Paris, 1855), p. 132.

3. Dawit' Baghishets'i's "Zhamanakagrut'iwn" was published in *Diwan Hayots' Patmut'ean*, Bk. 10 (Tiflis, 1912), p. 47.

4. Grigor Kamakhets'i, *Zhamanakagrut'iwn* (Jerusalem, 1915), p. 6.

5. See H. Manandian and H. Achafian, *Hayots' Nor Vkanerë, 1155-1843* (Vagharshapat, 1903).

6. Kamakhets'i, *Zhamanakagrut'iwn*, pp. 467-468.

7. Ricaut, *Histoire*, pp. 335-336.

8. Urakh Grigor's report was written in 1709. The complete text was published in my book *Manr Erker* (Los Angeles, 1987), pp. 581-620. In it the citations from Turkish sources are written in Armeno-Turkish, that is, Turkish text written in Armenian script.