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THE ROLE OF DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE AT THE FINAL STAGE OF THE “ANTIOCHIAN WAR” (1216)

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For about fifteen years, King Levon I struggled to defend the legitimate rights of his brother's grandson, Raymond-Ruben, in order to raise him to the Antioch's throne. After several attempts, he eventually took over Antioch in 1216. Taking into consideration previous years' experience, this time the Armenian king tried to prevent Cilicia from being attacked simultaneously by three neighboring states. To this end, he made great diplomatic efforts, not only releasing Muslim captives and sending expensive gifts to al-Malik al-Zahir, but also sending him two skillfully worded letters that no doubt played an important role in making the Ayyubid Sultan of Aleppo change his mind and abdicate from the idea of attacking Cilicia. No less important role was played in this matter by Sultan of Egypt al-Malik al-Adil, who had close ties with King Levon since 1208, acted as his patron and forbade his nephew to participate in the adventure initiated by the Sultan of Iconium. XIII-century Arab historians Kamal ad-Din Ibn al-Adim, Ibn Wasil and Izz al-Din Ibn Shaddad provide exceptional information about the diplomatic steps of the Armenian kingdom, as well as the complex relations between the Ayyubids of Cairo and Aleppo.

Keywords: *Levon I, Raymond-Ruben, Cilician Armenia, Principdom of Antioch, Ayyubid Sultanate of Egypt, Ayyubid Sultanate of Aleppo, Sultanate of Iconium, al-Malik al-Adil, al-Malik al-Zahir, Bohemond IV, Kamal al-Din Ibn al-Adim, Ibn Wasil, Izz al-Din Ibn Shaddad*

In the Northern part of Eastern Mediterranean, a conflict started in 1201 over the succession of the throne of the Principdom of Antioch, which lasted

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until 1216. It included a great number of states directly or indirectly involved in the conflict. The two main opponents in this issue were Bohemond IV, Count of Tripoli (1187-1233) and Levon I, King of Cilician Armenia (1198-1219²), who was trying to place his brother's grandson, Raymond-Ruben, on the throne of Antioch, by using both legal factors (according to the Cilicia-Antioch treaty signed in 1194, Raymond-Ruben was the legal heir) and military force. During that period, King Levon tried at least three times (1201, 1203, 1208) to place his nephew on the throne by military force, but without lasting success.

Bohemond IV had powerful allies in this struggle: the Seljuk Sultanate of Iconium and the Ayyubid Sultanate of Aleppo. Meanwhile, King Levon tried to get the support of the Pope, but already in 1208-1209 it was obvious that the Roman Church's intervention was not enough to get out of the hostile siege. Therefore, the Armenian king took a bold step by sending a message to Al-Malik al-Adil (1200-1218), the Sultan of Egypt and the elder of the Ayyubid dynasty³. According to the valuable information provided by two historians (Anonymous of Edessa⁴ and Kamal ad-Din Ibn al-Adim⁵), in 605 AH (1208-1209), in response to the request of King Levon, al-Malik al-Adil sent letters to Kay Khosrov and al-Malik al-Zahir, persuading or forcing them, to make peace with the Armenian side. According to the reconciliation, established between parties, the Seljuks of Rum and the Ayyubids of Aleppo stopped their joint attack against Cilicia. Instead, the Armenian side had to fulfill some of their demands.

² Prince of Cilicia in 1187-1198.

³ It was then that the positions of the Egyptian Ayyubids in Jazira expanded and strengthened. In 1207 they conquered Khilat and the basin of Lake Van, territories that even Salah ad-Din had not conquered. Thus, they became direct neighbors to the Seljuks of Rum. See Օտար աղբյուրները Հայաստանի և հայերի մասին, 11, Արաբական աղբյուրներ Բ, արաբ. թարգմ., առաջաբան և ծանոթագր. Ա. Տեր-Ղևոնդյան, Երևան, 1981, էջ 291-293:

⁴ Անանուն Եղեսացի, Ժամանակագրություն, Օտար աղբյուրները Հայաստանի և հայերի մասին, 12, Ասորական աղբյուրներ Բ, 12, թարգմ. և խմբ. Լ. Տեր-Պետրոսյան, Երևան, 1982, էջ 171-172:

⁵ Kamal ad-Din Ibn al-Adim, Zubdat al-halab min tarikh Halab [The cream of the History of Aleppo], ed. Sami ad-Dahhan, French Institute in Damascus, vol. III, Damascus, 1968, p. 160.

The main demand was “not to interfere in the affairs of Antioch”. The fact is that such an attempt was not made during the next eight years (from 1208 to 1216), and there was a relative peace around the issue of Antioch. And yet, Levon I’s dream was accomplished in 1216, ending a 15-year long conflict. This was already the last stage of that conflict, in which all the aforementioned actor-states took part again, and diplomatic correspondence (especially two messages of Levon I to al-Malik al-Zahir and the Cairo-Aleppo diplomatic missions), this time also had a decisive role, greatly affecting the final result of the conflict. It clearly demonstrated, that Egyptian Sultanate-Armenian Kingdom relations had been maintained during those eight years on the level of the monarchs, and that the correspondence of 1208-1209 was not an accidental or unique phenomenon.

The purpose of this study is to examine the role played by the diplomatic correspondence between Sis and Aleppo in 1216, also Cairo’s position towards the same issues (expressed in different ways), paying particular attention to the rich information of Arab historians, which is sometimes exclusive and not found in other sources.

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Let’s try to follow what events took place in the region between 1208 and 1216. When Sultan Kay Khosrov of Iconium died in 1211, Levon the Great rushed to intervene in the struggle for the throne between two brothers. Levon was supporting Ala al-Din against the heir to the throne Izz al-Din Kay Kaus I (ruled 1211-1219). Trying to seize power, Ala al-Din called the Armenian king for help, promising to hand over the city of Caesarea to him. Levon approached Caesarea with his army, but the legitimate sultan eventually convinced him to withdraw his troops and not to interfere in the internal struggle. Al-Malik al-Ashraf Ayyubid, the Lord of Jazira, also played a role in the decision to withdraw the Armenian troops, who also mediated in favor of Kay Kaus⁶.

⁶ Shukurov R., The Image of Cilician Armenia in Anatolian Muslim Sources, in: Cilician Armenia in the Perceptions of Adjacent Political Entities (Historical-Philological Essays), ed. A. Bozoyan, V. Ter-Ghevondian, R. Shukurov, G. Danielyan, Yerevan, 2019, p. 87.

In those same years, an internal struggle was going on inside Antioch as well. Bohemond IV tried to get rid of his opponents in every possible way. In 1208, he imprisoned the Latin Patriarch of Antioch Peter of Angouleme, who was the leader of the Raymond-Ruben supporters or “pro-Armenian” party. So the Patriarch was encarcerated were he found his death⁷. However, Bohemond did not manage to remove his other opponents either. Some years later the Armenian king and his protégé made brilliant use of that circumstance⁸.

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In the colophon of a manuscript written in 1216 the scribe testifies “...in the year when Levon, the victorious Armenian king by the power of God, captured Antioch, the great capital of Syrians”⁹.

Among the Armenian authors, the most detailed description of the capture of the city gives Smbat Sparapet (Constable), a historian of XIII c. According to him on February 14, 1216 Levon the Great captured Antioch “with skill and wisdom”¹⁰. Then he explains what that “skill and wisdom” consisted of. According to Smbat, Levon I wooed some of the princes of Antioch (including Seneschal Amaury) by promising great rewards. The latter opened the gates of the city at night and the Armenian army entered the city. Most of the Franks concentrated in the citadel of Antioch, but were soon forced to surrender. The Latin Patriarch of Antioch, accompanied by the nobles of the city and led by King Levon, raised Raymond-Ruben on the throne of the Principedom¹¹.

Hethum of Korikos considering the defection of Seneschal Amaury and other Frankish nobles narrates: “Levon, the Armenian king, captured the

⁷ Burgdorf J., *The Antiochene war of succession*, Chapter twelve in: *The Crusader world*, ed. by Adrian J. Boas, Routledge, London & New York, 2016, p. 205.

⁸ Cahen C., *La Syrie du Nord et la principauté franque d'Antioche*, Institut Français de Damas, Paris: P. Geuthner, 1940, p. 611-613; Moutafian Cl., *L'Arménie du Levant (XIe –XIVe siècle)*, 1, Paris, 2012, p. 107-108.

⁹ See Հայերեն ձեռագրերի հիշատակարաններ. ԺԳ դար, խմբ. Ա. Մաթևոսյան, Երևան, 1984, էջ 96, 103:

¹⁰ Սմբատայ Սպարապետի Տարեգիրք, Վենետիկ- Ս. Ղազար, 1956, էջ 219:

¹¹ Ibid.

city of Antioch in a conspiracy at night and made his nephew Ruben Prince there”¹².

Arabic writing authors cover the issues we are interested in from other perspectives. Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, whom al-Malik al-Ashraf, the lord of Jazira, had sent as an ambassador to Aleppo, to al-Malik al-Zahir, testifies that he himself gave the news of the capture of Antioch to the Sultan of Aleppo. “On the 24th of Shawwal, 612, a Sunday (February 14, 1216) Lawin (Levon) took away Antioch from the Franks”¹³. Another historian Izz ad-Din Ibn Shaddad is more aware of the problem of the succession to the throne of Antioch. His report is more detailed, though he erroneously dates the event to late 2015 “On Monday, the 23rd of Shaaban, 612 (December 17, 1215), Ibn Lawun¹⁴ attacked Antioch, captured it, and handed it over to his sister’s¹⁵ son. The reason for this was that the father of the ruler at that time, Prince Raymond the Elder, had two sons. One of them was the aforementioned Baimund (Bohemond IV), who ruled there, and the other was named Raymund. His father’s approval was on his side, so he betrothed him to the daughter of Ibn Lawun, and [then] they were married. [Then] the kingdom was bequeathed to him and his people recognized him”¹⁶.

Izz al-Din Ibn Shaddad is also aware of the fact that Bohemond had retaliated against the Patriarch of Antioch (Peter of Angoulem). Describing

¹² Մաթևոսյան Կ., Հերթում պատմիչ Կողիկոսցին և նրա «Ժամանակագրությունը», Երևան, 2011, էջ 50, also Small Chronicles, XIII-XVIII cc., 1951, 1, p. 79, 94 as well as Small Chronicles, XIII-XVIII cc., 1956, 2, p. 63, and one of the Continuators of Samuel of Ani mistakenly mentions the capture of Antioch among the events of the year 1218, See Սամուել Անեցի և Շարունակողներ, Ժամանակագրություն. Խմբ. Կ. Մաթևոսյան, Երևան, 2014, էջ 239:

¹³ Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, *Mirat az-zaman fi tarikh al-ayan* [Mirror of time in histories of the notables], v.VIII, ed. (with introduction) by J.R. Jewett, The University of Chicago, 1907, p. 374.

¹⁴ By “Ibn Levon” Arab historians mean “Levonid dynasty” (or someone from that dynasty), which is same as the Rubenid dynasty, because they call the dynasty not after Prince Ruben I (1080-1095), but after Prince Levon I (1129-1137), See Ter-Ghevondian V., *The Rubenids in Arab Historiography*, in: *Cilician Armenia in the Perceptions of Adjacent Political Entities* (Historical-Philological Essays). Ed. A. Bozoyan, V. Ter-Ghevondian, R. Shukurov, G. Danielyan, Yerevan, 2019, pp. 113-150.

¹⁵ Alice was not Levon’s, but his brother Ruben’s daughter. An error that occurs several times in the text.

¹⁶ Izz al-Din Ibn Shaddad, *Al-Alaq al-Khatira fi thikr umara al-Sham wa-l-Jazira* [Dangerous comments on the princes of Sham and Jazira], 1.2, ed. Yahya Zakarya Abbara, Dimashq, 1991, p. 407.

the events that happened years ago (before 1208-1209) the historian adds: "Ibn Lawun had received a letter from the Patriarch of Antioch stating that the kingdom belonged to his sister's son. This letter he sent to him (to Bohemond), and when Bohemond received it and became acquainted with its contents, he said: This is my kingdom, and it is in my hands, the Patriarch was raised to the citadel and drowned"¹⁷.

A contemporary to Ibn Shaddad, Syrian historian Gregory Bar Hebraeus provides with even more precise data: "At this time PRAYNS BAIMOND (BOHAIMOND) died, and he left a son, whose name was RUFIN, which the daughter of RUFIN, the king of the ARMENIANS, had borne to him. And although the kingdom belonged rightly to him, his uncle made bold and snatched it for himself. Then LION, the king of the ARMENIANS, the brother of RUFIN the ARMENIAN, because he RUFIN the FRANK, was the son of his brother's daughter, was enraged and he came to ANTIOCH, and he made the people of ANTIOCH swear oaths of fealty to him"¹⁸.

Of greater interest is not so much the capture of Antioch as the first steps undertaken by King Levon immediately after that event. Despite the fact that there were no military operations in the previous 7-8 years, the anti-Cilician alliance of three states was still alive and the Armenian king, taking into account the bitter experience of the past, tried to avoid the perspective of fighting on several fronts. First, he showed a favorable attitude towards the population of the City, which the Arab historian Ibn Wasil talks about. "In the month of Shawwal of this year (612 AH) (January-February, 2016) Armenian king "Ibn Levon" took possession of Antioch, dealt well with the local people and exercised justice. Its (Antioch's) lord the Brins (Prince)¹⁹ was a tyrannical man, and "Ibn Levon"s position rose high [in the eyes] of the people of Antioch"²⁰.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ The Chronography of Bar Hebraeus Gregory Abu-I Faraj 1225-1286, Second Edition, trans. by E.W. Budge. London-Amsterdam: Apa-Philo Press, 1976, p. 370.

¹⁹ Bohemond IV.

²⁰ Ibn Wasil, Muhammad ibn Salim Ibn Wasil's Mufarrij al-kurub fi akhbar bani Ayyub [The Dissipater of Anxieties in the Report of the Ayyubids]. Ed. Jamāl Dīn al-Shayyāl, Publisher: Ihya al-Turath al-Qadim, vol. III, Cairo, 1957, p. 233.

The next preventive measure taken by Levon I was the release of Muslim captives. This time the goal was to prevent a possible attack by the Ayyubids of Aleppo, something that happened in 1208. Once more we turn to Ibn Wasil. "...and he (Levon) released a group of Muslim captives who were in Antioch and transferred them to [Aleppo], and there was peace between him and al-Malik al-Zahir"²¹.

Immediately after, or at the same time, as the release of the captives, King Levon decides to send a letter to Sultan of Aleppo and, probably considering that the release of the captives is not enough to prevent a possible attack by al-Malik al-Zahir, he spices his letter with exaggerated compliments. We come across this information from an already familiar author Izz al-Din Ibn Shaddad. "When "Ibn Lawun" took possession of the Citadel and Baymund (Bohemond) returned to Tripoli, "Ibn Lawun" wrote to al-Malik al-Zahir Abu al-Fath Baybars, informing him that he was in his service and would [never] go against his orders and opinion, and that he himself had captured Antioch on his (al-Zahir's) behalf and released the Muslim captives there and sent them to Aleppo"²².

We will soon make sure that King Levon's preventive steps combined with the position of the Sultan of Egypt al-Malik al-Adil restrained the Sultan of Aleppo.

Immediately after conquering Antioch, King Levon fulfilled an obligation that Cilician Armenia assumed but did not fulfill in the peace made back in 1208-1209. It was about returning the fortress of Gaston (or Baghras) to the Templars. At the same time, he restored the episcopal seats of the Catholic Church in Tarsus and Mamistra, thereby restoring relations with the Roman Church. In other words, he removed the two reasons that led to the excommunication of Levon by Innocent III in 1211²³.

Here is the report of Ibn Wasil "Ibn Lawun" surrendered Baghras to the Templars (Dawiyya), appointed his sister's²⁴ son *deputy* at Antioch, and returned to his country, fearing Izz al-Din Kay Kaus"²⁵.

²¹ Ibn Wasil, 1957, p. 233. See also Cahen Cl., 1940, p. 621.

²² Izz al-Din Ibn Shaddad, v. 1.2, 1991, p. 408-409.

²³ Cahen Cl. 1940, p. 617.

²⁴ Has to be "brother's grandson".

²⁵ Ibn Wasil, 1957, p. 233.

It is interesting that King Levon, at the cost of great efforts, was able to win sympathy of the people of Antioch, regulate relations with the Pope and the Knights Templar, and seem to keep the Ayyubids of Aleppo in a neutral position (as we shall see, not completely). The Seljuks of Iconium were the only ones against whom he had no diplomatic tools.

As in 1208, in 1216 also the Seljuks of Asia Minor were the first to respond to Bohemond IV, who after losing Antioch, appealed to his allies for help. Ibn Wasil among events in the year 612 (May 2, 1215 – April 20, 2016) mentions the capture of the fortress of Lulua and some other fortresses in the Armenian kingdom by the Seljuks. It was probably this news that forced Levon to leave Antioch and return to Cilicia in a hurry. According to one of the Continuators of the Chronography of Samuel of Ani, Kay Kaus lay siege to the fortress of Kapan. The Armenian king went into battle and was winning at first, but then the army was “foolishly” defeated by the Sultan²⁶. Another historical source – a Colophon of a Gospel written in 1216 in Tarsus narrates that the Armenian forces were unable to show serious resistance near Kapan and even some princes were captured, including the Constable Costandine²⁷.

Sultan Kay Kaus of Iconium also tried to revive the anti-Cilician alliance and encircle the Armenian kingdom. Ibn Wasil addresses this question, writing that Kay Kaus in 613 AH, in the month of Muharram (April-May 1216), i.e., two months after the capture of Antioch, turned to al-Malik al-Zahir, offering to jointly free Antioch from King Levon. Answering him, the Sultan of Aleppo offers the following strategy: let the Seljuks attack from Marash, he himself will aim Darbsak, and Bohemond attack Antioch, with the troops of Damascus, Hama and Homs under his command²⁸.

Immediately after designing the plan of attack against Cilician Armenia Al-Zahir sends a mission to Cairo to get his uncle's opinion. “So al-Malik al-

²⁶ Samuel of Ani and Continuators 2014, p. 238:

²⁷ Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, XIII c., 1984. p. 101: Samuel of Ani and Continuators 2014, p. 238, Smbat Sparapet. 1956, p 221-222: Levon released the mentioned captives only three years later, ceding Lulua and Lozat fortresses to the Sultanate of Rum as a ransom, See Smbat Sparapet, 1956, p. 222.

²⁸ Ibn Wasil, 1957, p. 234.

Zahir sent [a messenger] to al-Malik al-Adil to consult him about that²⁹, but al-Malik al-Adil rejected his opinion and pointed to the corruption in that, so al-Malik al-Zahir fell into great confusion between betraying what he had promised Izz al-Din (Kay Kaus) and disobeying his uncle al-Malik al-Adil³⁰.

Kamal al-Din Ibn al-Adim describes the same events in a slightly different way. According to him, correspondence was established between the sultans of Iconium and Aleppo in 1216. It was agreed that al-Malik al-Zahir would come under the rule of Kay Kaus and make an alliance with him as he was afraid of his uncle (al-Malik al-Adil)³¹.

Kamal al-Din adds that the Sultan of Aleppo nevertheless regretted what he had done and sent an embassy to Cairo to seek al-Malik al-Adil's approval of his intentions: "The Sultan regretted what he had done and saw that preserving his household was a priority and that his agreement with his uncle was more important"³². This time he could not have high hopes for his uncle, because, as narrates Ibn al-Adim "And he (al-Malik al-Zahir) sent an ambassador to Egypt. The Sultan prepared post horses to receive fresh news from his uncle (al-Malik al-Adil), so that he would know what to do if he saw any suspicious moves on his part. And he himself appealed to Kay Kaus, and in all this his purpose was to keep the army in readiness, and to be ready to meet Kay Kaus and join him in order to [attack] the land of "Ibn Levon" first." Ibn Levon" had taken possession of Antioch, and the Sultan was in a desperate situation, for he bordered him, but he knew that [Levon] was under the patronage of his uncle (Al-Adil)"³³.

It is very important what word the narrator uses to express the relationship between Levon and al-Malik al-Adil. He uses the phrase "Intima ila", which literally means "to belong to something", or "to be part of something", but in our opinion it is not wrong to translate as "under the patronage". The information of Arab historians allows us to assume that from 1208 until 1216, King Levon accepted the Egyptian sultan's supremacy

²⁹ About the joint attack on Cilician Armenia and Antioch.

³⁰ Ibn Wasil, 1957, p. 234.

³¹ Kamal al-Din Ibn al-Adim 1968, p. 168.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid, p. 168-169.

(albeit formally) on his own initiative in order to counterbalance the neighboring hostile states.

Levon was well aware of the internal contradictions between the various representatives of the Ayyubid dynasty and sought, in cooperation with al-Adil, to restrain his nephew, thereby neutralizing the key member of the anti-Cilician alliance. There was an additional reason (it is difficult to guess whether the Armenian king knew about it) because of which al-Zahir would avoid angering his uncle. The fact is that al-Malik al-Zahir, foreseeing his imminent death (it happened a few months later), was going to transfer the throne of Aleppo to his son, and this would be considered legitimate only if he received the approval of the Sultan of Egypt³⁴. Al-Zahir sent his ambassador – Baha ad-Din, the judge of Aleppo to Cairo with a letter in which he asked to confirm his son as the future sultan of Aleppo. Soon he received a positive answer from Cairo. Immediately after that phrase we come across the following sentence: “He kept thinking that his uncle had agreed with him and he did not see the need to return to the king of Rum and spoil what was between him and his uncle”³⁵.

Unlike the previous tense situations during the “Antiochian War”, this time the Ayyubids of Aleppo avoided attacking Cilicia. Al-Malik al-Zahir not only did not receive the support of Egypt, but also could annoy his uncle for starting a war against the monarch under his patronage. In order to finally prevent the possible attack of the Sultanate of Aleppo, King Levon sent another letter to Aleppo (already the second one in two months) together with rich gifts. In his message, he uses diplomatic tricks to the maximum extent, trying to get his point across between phrases full of sometimes exaggerated compliments. This is how Anne-Marie Eddé describes Levon I’s initiative “...il (Al-Zahir) reçut de nombreux cadeaux de Léon, accompagnés d’un message très habilement rédigé...”³⁶.

The content of the letter is reported (or retold) only by Ibn Wasil. “I am the sultan’s slave (“mamluk” in the original text), and the seedling (“ghars”

³⁴ Eddé A.-M., *La Principauté Ayyoubide d’Alep (579/1183 – 658/1260)*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999, p. 84.

³⁵ Kamal al-Din Ibn al-Adim, 1968, p. 169.

³⁶ Ibid. He received many gifts from Leon, accompanied by a very cleverly written message.

in the original text)³⁷ of his state. I came to him as an Arab³⁸. And I ask him to save me from this predicament and I will be his slave as long as I live. And I have preserved the Sultan's country more than once and served him. Including when the Sultan besieged Damascus the first time and the country remained empty of soldiers, I did not occupy his heart (I didn't give him any worries) nor did I harm his country, rather I helped him and supported him with my money and men. And also when he besieged Damascus the second time³⁹, I was offered money so that I would be a concern for him and make him stop the siege, I did not do anything about it. Even though the Prince⁴⁰ had served the Sultan, but my service was greater than his. The Sultan will see my service and my constant attendance at his noble court as I have recommended my nephew⁴¹, whom I have appointed in Antioch, to adhere to his service".⁴²

Summarizing King Levon's letter, the Ibn Wasil adds the following: "“Ibn Laun” sent a great and luxurious gift together with this message, so al-Malik al-Zahir became disposed to his (Levon's) saying (appeal) and remained (became) hesitant [to attack]”⁴³

This report of Ibn Wasil is unique and significantly helps to reveal the relationship between the Armenian Kingdom and the Ayyubids. After quoting Levon's letter, the narrator goes on to say that ambassadors from the Sultan of Iconium were coming to Aleppo to persuade al-Malik al-Zahir to hasten the withdrawal of troops against Cilicia. However, the Sultan of Aleppo sent the Seljuk ambassadors back and refused the promise he made earlier⁴⁴.

³⁷ Probably referring to the recently joined Ayyubids. A.-M. Eddé translated as “prosélyte” (neophyte, new believer) (See A.-M. Eddé, 1999, p. 84).

³⁸ The word “Arab” in this phrase could also have the meaning of “local”, “one of our own” (not “foreign” or “stranger”) in opposition to the crusaders (Bohemond IV).

³⁹ Probably refers to the sieges of Damascus in 1199-1201 in which al-Malik al-Zahir took part with his army. See Humphreys S. R., *From Saladin to the Mongols, The Ayyubids of Damascus, 1193-1260*. New York. 1977.

⁴⁰ Bohemond IV.

⁴¹ Raymond-Ruben.

⁴² Ibn Wasil, 1957, p. 235.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

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Usually 1216 is mentioned as the end of the conflict⁴⁵, but, for example, Jochen Burgdorf⁴⁶ brings it up to 1219. In the first case, the military operations and hostile steps between the countries of the region are over, and the conflict reaches to some conclusion, while in the second case, as an endpoint is chosen the moment, when the question of the ownership of Antioch is finally resolved by passing back to Bohemond IV. However we prefer to follow the traditional point of view, considering that after 1216, the conflict loses its regional and international character, and the events of 1219 had much less international impact and were the result of internal changes in the Principdom of Antioch.

Summarizing the data of Armenian, Syrian and Arab historical sources, but especially the unique information provided by two historians of XIII c. Kamal ad-Din Ibn al-Adim and Ibn Wasil about the last stage of the “Antiochian War” we get the following picture. After a series of unsuccessful attempts (1201, 1203, 1208), the Armenian king Levon finally chose a suitable moment in the middle of February 1216 and entered Antioch with his army and installed his brother’s grandson, Raymond-Ruben on the throne of the Principdom. Bearing in mind the bitter experience of the past, he immediately took steps to prevent the attack of the anti-Cilician states. To this end, he

- Secured a just government in Antioch by winning the trust of the population,
- Released the Muslim captives previously captured and held in Antioch,
- Sent the captives to Aleppo, to al-Malik al-Zahir as an expression of goodwill,
- At the same time a letter of a friendly nature was sent to the sultan of Aleppo, seasoning it with compliments,

⁴⁵ The famous researcher Claude Cahen named a chapter of his research as such, marking the dates we use as the beginning and end of the conflict: “La guerre de succession d’Antioche (1201-1216)”.

⁴⁶ See Burgdorf J., *The Antiochene war of succession*, Chapter twelve in: *The Crusader world*, edited by Adrian J. Boas, Routledge, London & New York, 2016, p. 196.

- Returned the fortress of Gaston (Baghras) to the Templars,
- Restored the episcopal sees of the Roman Church in Tarsus and Mamistra.

All these steps were taken in the second half of February. And despite all the precautionary measures, about two months later, in April 1206, the situation escalated. Kay Kaus Sultan of Iconium and al-Malik al-Zahir, the Ayyubid Sultan of Aleppo, agreed to launch a simultaneous attack on Cilicia, one by Marash and the other by Darbsac, and to provide Bohemond with additional forces to capture Antioch. Immediately after designing the plan of attack against the Armenian kingdom, Al-Zahir sent a mission to Cairo to get his uncle's opinion. Al-Adil conveyed his opinion to the Aleppo mission, which was decidedly negative, urging al-Zahir to stay away from the adventurous endeavors of the Seljuks of Rum. Also it was known that since 1208, Levon I enjoyed the patronage of Sultan Al-Adil. Apart from other circumstances, there was another factor that acted as a deterrent for Al-Zahir. He wanted to get the consent of the Sultan of Egypt in declaring his son the heir to the throne of Aleppo. In the end, he received that approval, but he was well aware that if he went against his uncle's will it could be revoked. It is at that moment that, as if sensing Al-Zahir's hesitation and to finally convince him, King Levon sent a second letter (this time probably from capital Sis) two months after the previous one along with a lavish gift. And it is only after that that Al-Zahir abandons the idea of attacking Cilicia and sends back the ambassadors from Iconium.

Thus, the diplomatic efforts bear fruit; unlike in 1208-1209, the Armenian kingdom avoids the danger of fighting three states at the same time, and Raymond-Ruben remains on the throne of Antioch for another three years (1216-1219).

* * *

Thus, thanks to great diplomatic efforts and particularly intensive correspondence, it becomes possible to neutralize the danger hanging over Cilician Armenia. All that remained for King Levon was to fight against his

implacable northern rival, the Sultanate of Rum. However, during the last years of Levon the Great (1216-1219), the unity within Cilicia was partially broken. The weakness and illness of the king contributed to this. Some important feudal lords refused to help him in the fight against the Sultanate of Iconium, so King Levon was only able to make peace with the Seljuks at the cost of concessions. After the death of the king (May, 1219) the centrifugal aspirations of these feudal lords became more apparent. Raymond-Ruben also tried to take advantage of this opportunity; he became an enemy of Levon in the last years of his reign and even tried to arrest him. As the Prince of Antioch he showed himself to be an incompetent ruler by turning against him the princes who had supported him before. Having apparently received no support from either Cilician Armenia or the population of Antioch, Raymond-Ruben was defeated by Bohemond IV's army (with almost no resistance), and after a three-year (1216-1219) reign, Antioch once again ceded to his uncle, who stayed on the throne of the united Tripoli-Antioch state up to his death (1233)⁴⁷.

Raymond-Ruben fled to the port city of Damietta in Egypt, which was besieged by the participants of the Fifth Crusade under the leadership of Cardinal Pelagius. The dethroned prince hoped to conquer Cilicia with their help ⁴⁸.

The situation also changed in the Sultanate of Aleppo. Al-Malik al-Zahir died in 1216, and was succeeded by his son al-Aziz Muhammad, who was only two-three years old⁴⁹. Atabek Shihab al-Din Tughril took charge of the country. Aleppo's foreign policy also changed drastically. Not only was it not hostile to the Armenian Kingdom, but a certain cooperation began between Sis and Aleppo in 1216-1230.

⁴⁷ Տեառն Միխայելի պատրիարքի ասորոց ժամանակագրություն, Երուսաղեմ, 1870, էջ 520-521:

⁴⁸ About the motives of Raymond-Ruben's actions and his fate see Տեր-Պետրոսյան Լ., Խաչակիրները և հայերը, Հատոր Բ, Պատմա-քաղաքագիտական հետազոտություն, Երևան, 2007, էջ 225-229:

⁴⁹ Bar Hebraeus, 1976, p. 369.

ԴԻՎԱՆԱԳԻՏԱԿԱՆ ՆԱՄԱԿԱԳՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԴԵՐԸ «ԱՆՏԻՈՔՅԱՆ ՊԱՏԵՐԱԶՄԻ» ԵԶՐԱՓԱԿԻՉ ՓՈՒԼՈՒՄ (1216)

Վահան Տեր-Ղևոնդյան⁵⁰

Լևոն Ա թագավորը շուրջ մեկուկես տասնամյակ համառ պայքար մղեց իր եղբոր թոռան՝ Ռայմոնդ-Ռուբենի օրինական իրավունքները պաշտպանելու և նրան Անտիոքի գահին բազմեցնելու համար։ Մի շարք փորձերից հետո, ի վերջո, 1216 թվականին նրան հաջողվեց գրավել Անտիոքը։ Հաշվի առնելով նախորդ տարիների, հատկապես 1208-1209 թվականների փորձը, Հայոց թագավորը այս անգամ փորձեց թույլ չտալ, որ Կիլիկիան ենթարկվի հարևան երեք պետությունների միաժամանակյա հարձակմանը։ Այդ նպատակով նա դիվանագիտական մեծ ջանքեր գործադրեց, ոչ միայն ազատ արձակելով մուսուլման գերիներին ու թանկարժեք նվերներ ուղարկելով ալ-Մալիք ալ-Զահիրին, այլև նրան հղելով երկու հմտորեն ձևակերպված գրություններ, որոնք անկասկած կարևոր դեր խաղացին այն հարցում, որ Հալեպի Այյուբյան սուլթանը փոխեց իր որոշումը և հրաժարվեց Կիլիկիայի վրա հարձակվելու գաղափարից։ Այս հարցում ոչ պակաս կարևոր դեր խաղաց նաև Եգիպտոսի սուլթան ալ-Մալիք ալ-Ադիլի դիրքորոշումը, որը դեռևս 1208 թվականից սերտ կապեր ունենալով Լևոն թագավորի հետ, հանդես եկավ որպես նրա հովանավոր և արգելեց իր եղբորորդուն մասնակցելու Իկոնիայի սուլթանի նախաձեռնած «արկածախնդրությանը»։ Հայոց թագավորության դիվանագիտական քայլերի, ինչպես նաև Կահիրեի և Հալեպի Այյուբյանների բարդ հարաբերությունների մասին բացառիկ տեղեկություններ են հաղորդում XIII դարի արաբ պատմիչներ Քամալ ալ-Դին Իբն ալ-Ադիմը և Իբն Վասիլը։

Բանալի բառեր՝ Լևոն I, Ռայմոնդ-Ռուբեն, Կիլիկյան Հայաստան, Անտիոքի իշխանություն, Եգիպտոսի Այյուբյան սուլթանություն, Հալեպի Այյուբյան սուլթանություն, Իկոնիայի սուլթանություն, ալ-Մալիք ալ-Ադիլ, ալ-Մալիք ալ-Զահիր, Բոհեմունդ IV, Քամալ ալ-Դին Իբն ալ-Ադիմ, Իբն Վասիլ, Իզզ ալ-Դին Իբն Շադդադ

⁵⁰ Վահան Տեր-Ղևոնդյանը Մեսրոպ Մաշտոցի անվան հին ձեռագրերի ինստիտուտ «Մատենադարանի» ավագ գիտաշխատող է, պ.գ.դ., էլ. փոստ՝ vterghevondian@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0004-7212-4683:

РОЛЬ ДИПЛОМАТИЧЕСКОЙ ПЕРЕПИСКИ НА ФИНАЛЬНОМ ЭТАПЕ «АНТИОХИЙСКОЙ ВОЙНЫ» (1216 Г.)

Ваан Тер-Гевондян⁵¹

Царь Левон I около пятнадцати лет последовательно защищал законные права своего внучатого племянника Раймонда-Рубена с целью возведения последнего на престол Антиохии. В 1216 г. попытки царя увенчались успехом, и он наконец завладел Антиохией. Учитывая опыт предыдущих (особенно 1208-1209 гг.) лет, армянский царь на этот раз сделал все, чтобы предотвратить одновременное нападение на Киликию трех соседних государств. С этой целью он приложил большие дипломатические усилия, не только освободив мусульманских пленников и отправив дорогие подарки аль-Малик аль-Захиру, но и отправив ему два искусно сформулированных письма, которые, несомненно, сыграли важную роль в том, чтобы заставить Айюбидского султана Алеппо отказаться от идеи нападения на Киликию. Не менее важную роль в этом вопросе сыграла позиция султана Египта аль-Малик аль-Адила, который с 1208 г. имел тесные связи с царем Левоном. Он выступил в качестве его покровителя и запретил племяннику участвовать в «авантюре», инициированной султаном Иконии. Арабские историки XIII века Камаль ад-Дин Ибн аль-Адим и Ибн Василь предоставляют уникальную информацию о дипломатических шагах Армянского царства, а также о сложных отношениях между Айюбидами Каира и Алеппо.

Ключевые слова: Левон I, Раймонд-Рубен, Киликийская Армения, Антиохийское княжество, Египетский Айюбидский султанат, Алеппский Айюбидский султанат, Иконийский султанат, аль-Малик аль-Адил, аль-Малик аль-Захир, Боэмунд IV, Камаль аль-Дин Ибн аль-Адим, Ибн Василь, Изз аль-Дин Ибн Шаддад

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