

**THE CHURCH OF ARMENIA: HER  
HISTORY, DOCTRINE, RULE,  
DISCIPLINE, LITURGY,  
LITERATURE, AND EXISTING  
CONDITION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649719563

The Church of Armenia: Her History, Doctrine, Rule, Discipline, Liturgy, Literature, and Existing Condition by Malachia Ormanian

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**MALACHIA ORMANIAN**

**THE CHURCH OF ARMENIA: HER  
HISTORY, DOCTRINE, RULE,  
DISCIPLINE, LITURGY,  
LITERATURE, AND  
EXISTING CONDITION**





*Antonín Janda*

# THE CHURCH OF ARMENIA

HER HISTORY, DOCTRINE, RULE, DISCIPLINE  
LITURGY, LITERATURE, AND EXISTING CONDITION

BY

MALACHIA ORMANIAN

FORMERLY ARMENIAN PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH EDITION  
WITH THE AUTHOR'S PERMISSION BY

G. MARCAR GREGORY, V.D.

REVENUE SERVICE, BENGAL, INDIA (RETIRED)  
LIEUT.-COLONEL, INDIAN VOLUNTEER FORCE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY THE

RIGHT REV. J. E. C. WELLDON, D.D.

A. R. MOWBRAY & CO., LTD.  
LONDON: 28 Margaret Street, Oxford Circus, W.  
OXFORD: 9 High Street

## INTRODUCTION

BY BISHOP WELLDON

THE task of writing an Introduction to Mr. Gregory's translation of Mgr. Ormanian's book upon the Church of Armenia is not free from difficulty ; nor is it made the less difficult because the Bishop who should have written it, had his life been spared, was a man of such wide and various learning as the late Bishop of Salisbury, Dr. Wordsworth. Yet in that Church there is much that is interesting to all Christians, and perhaps especially to members of the Church of England. For the history of the Church of Armenia is a witness to certain great principles of ecclesiastical life. It is a protest against the assumed infallibility and universality of the Church of Rome. For the Church of Armenia believes that "no Church, however great in herself, represents the whole of Christendom ; that each one, taken singly, can be mistaken, and to the Universal Church alone belongs the privilege of infallibility in her dogmatic decisions." \* She takes her stand then upon the national character and prerogative of Churches. She holds, as the Church of England holds, that it is a fraternity of Churches tracing their pedigree backwards to an Apostolical origin, developing themselves on separate lines, yet knit together by a common creed and by spiritual union with the same

\* Preface to the French Edition, p. xix.

Divine Head, which constitutes the true ideal of the Universal Church.

✠ The Church of Armenia claims descent from the Apostles St. Bartholomew and St. Thaddaeus. Whether it is or is not true that "Armenia was the first state in the world to proclaim Christianity as its official religion,"\* there is no doubt that Armenia as a whole was converted to Christianity at the very beginning of the fourth century A.D. by the preaching of St. Grigor Partev (Gregory the Parthian), better known as St. Gregory the Illuminator. He became the first Catholicos of Armenia. He ruled and organised the Armenian Church, and it is curious to notice that he died in the year of the Council of Nicæa, A.D. 325.

From St. Gregory's day to the present the Church of Armenia has pursued an independent course. In her early history she resisted the controlling influence of the Churches of Caesarea, of Antioch, of Constantinople. In later times she has been subject to aggressions from the Greek, the Syrian, and the Latin Churches, and in some degree from missionaries of the various Protestant denominations. But although individual secessions from her communion have taken place, she has never compromised her separate national life. To quote Mgr. Ormanian, she has "always understood the meaning of union in the true and strict sense of the term. She has desired to see its establishment on the basis of a spiritual communion between the Churches, of mutual respect for their several positions, of liberty for each within the limits of her own sphere, and of the spirit of Christian charity overruling all." †

One special merit of the book now recommended to English readers is that it is an appre-

\* p. 10.

† p. 58.



ciation of the Church of Armenia not from without, but from within. The author, as having himself been the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, is entitled to put forward the case of his own Church. It is thus that he claims a hearing for his repudiation of the Eutychian heresy so frequently associated with the Church of Armenia. It is thus too that he dwells with authority upon the unfailing tolerance characteristic of that Church in all the ages.

Not only is the Church of Armenia a standing instance of a Church developing on her own historical lines, but her independence is exemplified in numerous aspects of her past and present history. It will be enough to instance her recognition of three, and three only, Oecumenical Councils, the small number of the dogmas upon which she insists as necessary to salvation, her estimate and use of the sacraments, her hierarchical system, the strong influence of her laity in deliberation and administration, the dependence of her clergy upon voluntary offerings, her so-called dominical festivals, her special hagiology, and the democratical spirit which has endeared her to the nation.

It is probable that no other book gives so clear an account of the Church of Armenia in so brief a space as that of Mgr. Ormanian. If I do not mistake it, it will create in the minds of Anglican Churchmen not only a keen sympathy with the Church of Armenia, but a stronger confidence than ever in the strength of their own ecclesiastical position as accordant with the spirit and practice of the Christian Churches which are not merged in the Church of Rome, and as justified not only by ecclesiastical history, but by the Spirit and Will of Jesus Christ Himself.

J. E. C. WELLDON.

*March 16th, 1912.*



## P R E F A C E

THE intention of Mgr. Ormanian in writing his work in French was to place before the Western public an authentic account of a Church regarding which much ignorance and misrepresentation prevail; and it is a special privilege in being accorded his permission to join in the attempt to dispel such ignorance and misrepresentation by placing this translation before English readers interested in ecclesiastical history.

It is not uncommon in this country for the term "Armenian" to be connected in some way with massacres, which, with periodic recurrence for centuries, have played havoc with the nation's fatherland and Church. On the other hand, the innermost history of Armenia and her Church has been practically a sealed book, except for such glimpses which have been vouchsafed by a few foreign writers and compilers, whose statements have frequently to be taken with caution.

An ancient nation, which has seen empires around it rise and disappear, which has been through the fires of persecution as few nations have, and which, in spite of every possible drawback, political and religious, still upholds its Church as the emblem of its nationhood—such a nation cannot but be possessed of an inborn independence of character which, under favourable surroundings, is the best augury for human activity and progress. This essentially