PART ONE

MEMORY POLITICS AND MEMORY WARS

CHAPTER ONE

THE USABLE PAST IN THE LEMBERG ARMENIAN COMMUNITY'S STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS, 1578–1654*

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In any society, certain segments or layers of the distant past are considered to be pillars or origins of the social order. In early modern Europe, the past—and the distant past in particular—was seen not merely as a bygone reality but as the period of origin of important charters and privileges from which social groups or individuals derived status in the ‘present’. Then as now, people who invoked the past relied on certain assumptions about causal chains that connected real or imagined factors in the past with observed or desirable outcomes in the present. These assumptions are not individual but derived from public discourse dominant in a given society—indeed they have to be in order to produce texts about, or images of, the past that are comprehensible for the public. This condition holds particularly true when such texts or images are used as arguments in litigation and court trials. In the case under discussion in this paper, the historical references had to be understandable to the king, his advisers at the royal court and to the representatives of the nobility in the Diet (*sejm*).

Yet there are more conditions to be met. The social-cultural anthropologist Arjun Appadurai argues that in order to be able to use the past in public debate there has to be consensus on four issues: (1) on what constitutes a source of *authority*, (2) on the existence of *continuity* between past and present, (3) on the value of the ‘time depth’ deployed in an appeal to the past, (4) and on the *interdependence* between one’s own past and that of others.¹ This *set of norms* is a useful analytical tool with which to approach a series of early modern legal disputes in Lemberg. Both the dominant city magistrates and the subaltern Armenian minority based their ‘charters’ and political claims on different representations of the past.

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¹ Arjun Appadurai, ‘The past as a scarce resource’, *Man* 16, no. 2 (1981), 203.

Appadurai distinguishes between five norms that provide the cultural framework within which the charters of specific sub-groups are constructed, defended and mutually evaluated. These relate (1) to the existence of *textual evidence*, that is (2) ratified by an *external authoritative figure* in the past, that (3) encodes (in addition to the claims of the group in question) the privileges of *other relevant groups*, and that is (4) continuous. Finally (5) the greater the *antiquity* of the referents of the charter in question, the better. Among these norms, the first is the least dispensable and the last, the most.²

Appadurai brilliantly demonstrates the multiplicity of different interpretations of the shared past by different interest groups, but in doing so, he accepts the past as a given body of shared knowledge/representations. In practice, the past can be invented and then successfully reinvented in the course of social conflict. This article will analyse how a group's past was constructed in the process of several court disputes which took place between the city magistrate and the Armenian community of Lemberg. It will investigate the reasons for the systematic revision of previous historical arguments made by Armenians, in order to highlight the deliberate reinvention of the past and the mechanisms of this reinvention. Secondly, it will demonstrate how the townspeople's framework of memory was influenced by the historical culture of the nobility. We will see that the evidence that has come to us is not the product of chance or reflective of a broad, continuous and largely anonymous stream of social memory. Quite the opposite.

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Between 1250 and 1350 some Armenian merchants who were actively involved in the transcontinental trade settled in the principality in which the city of Lvov (modern-day Lviv in Ukraine) had recently been founded.³ From the very beginning, Lvov was a multiethnic city inhabited by Ruthenians, Armenians, Jews, Tatars and Saracens. German merchants and artisans, mostly from Poland and Silesia, had been invited by the Ruthenian prince Daniel (1238–64) in the mid-thirteenth century. After the Polish conquest of Galicia in 1349, the German townspeople (*cives catholici*)

² Ibid., 204.

³ The original name of the city was *Lvov* or *Lviv*. Then it was renamed by German settlers in the mid-fourteenth century as *Lemberg*. In neo-Latin writings the city was named *Leopolis*. In Polish it is known as *Lwów*. From 1772 to 1918 the city—as well Galicia/Galizien province—was part of the Habsburg Empire where it was known as *Lemberg*. It is under this name that the city is known in modern times in the main European languages.

became the dominant community as these Catholics were supported by the Polish kings. The rights of other urban 'nations' were guaranteed and confirmed by the Polish King Casimir III in 1356, when the city was granted the German Law (*ius theutonicum*)—the so-called *Magdeburger Recht*. Thus, Lvov was transformed into Lemberg.

Non-Catholics (*schismatici*) were not treated as *cives*, i.e. citizens of Lemberg. All members of the city magistrate were Catholics.⁴ Within the city walls, there were special streets for Armenians, Ruthenians, and Jews. The economic opportunities of the heretics and Jews were also restricted as they were not admitted into the artisan guilds. The trade in many goods was reserved to Catholics.⁵ The only economic niche which the Catholic city authorities allowed Armenians to fill was trade with the Orient.⁶ Armenian merchants served as interpreters in the royal chancery. Some of them were royal diplomats or spies.⁷ They also provided credit to the king in cases of emergency. For all these reasons, the Polish kings protected the Armenian community.

The city magistrate made successive efforts to restrict the judicial autonomy of the Armenian community. In accordance with the royal decree of 1469, the office of Armenian judge (*advocatus, wójt*) was abolished. Decrees of 1476 and 1510 established a new order that placed the city judge at the head of the court of Armenian elders.⁸ Cases of manslaughter, certain injuries, larceny and Armenian real estate (the 'four articles') fell under the jurisdiction of the city, which would try these cases according to the Magdeburg Law. Other court cases, both civil and criminal, came under the jurisdiction of the mixed court and were judged by Armenian Law.⁹

⁴ Eleonora Nadel-Golobic, 'Armenians and Jews in medieval Lvov. The role in oriental trade, 1400–1600', *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique* 20 (1979), 352–353.

⁵ Łucja Charewiczowa, *Ograniczenia gospodarcze nacji schizmatycznych i żydów we Lwowie XV–XVI w.* (Lwów: Towarzystwo Historyczne, 1925).

⁶ See: A. Dziubiński, *Na szlakach Orientu. Handel między Polską a imperium Osmańskim w XVI–XVII wieku* (Wrocław: Fundacja Na Rzecz Nauki Polskiej, 1998); Nadel-Golobic, 'Armenians', 363–365.

⁷ B. Baranowski, 'Ormianie w służbie dyplomatycznej Rzeczypospolitej', *Mysł karaïmska. Rocznik naukowo-społeczny. Seria Nowa* 1, (1945–1946), vol. 23, 119–137; K. Wróbel-Lipowa, 'Działalność dyplomatyczna Ormian polskich w XVI–XVII w.', in M. Zakrzewskiej-Dubasowej (ed.) *Studia z dziejów kontaktów polsko-ormiańskich*, (Lublin: Studia z dziejów kontaktów polsko-ormiańskich, 1983), 107–117.

⁸ *Pryvilei natsionalnyh hromad mista Lvova (XIV–XVIII st.)* [Royal charters granted to the national communities in the city of Lviv in the fourteenth to eighteenth centuries], ed. Myron Kapral (Lwów: Piramida, 2000), 146–148, 169–172.

⁹ F. Bischoff, *Das alte Recht der Armenier in Lemberg* (Vienna: Gerold in Komm., 1862), 39–42.

In the second half of the sixteenth century tensions grew between the Armenian community and the Catholic patricians. Using capital accumulated in trade with the Orient, Armenian merchants began to push their Catholic competitors out of the Lemberg market. Armenians, who constituted only 19 per cent of the city's population, owned 62.5 per cent of so-called 'rich shops' and 78 per cent of so-called 'poor shops'. Armenian merchants bought houses beyond the designated Armenian street. In 1578, they owned 19 per cent of houses in the intramural part of the city, a percentage which had grown to 24 per cent by 1600.¹⁰ Their efforts to buy houses in the prestigious central market square were seen by the Catholic patricians as a challenge to Catholic dominance in the city. On their part, prosperous Armenian merchants wanted to obtain civil and economic rights equal to those of the Catholics. In 1563, the Armenian community filed a legal case in which they complained to King Sigismund II August (1548–72) that the city magistrate unlawfully restricted their judicial and economic rights. In response, the king issued an edict which for the most part maintained the status quo.¹¹

In 1578, the Armenians tried again, this time in the presence of the recently elected King Stefan Batory (1576–86). In response, the magistrate stated that 'Armenians are not equal [to them] because of the differences in language and religion'. That is, they were not citizens (*cives*) of Lemberg but strangers and infidels. Yet the Armenians argued that they were citizens of Lemberg; their ancestors had not been restricted in their rights. And to make their case, this time they also invoked a charter, which stated that their ancestors had been invited by the Galician prince Daniel.¹² The king was duly impressed and now granted to the local Armenians economic rights equal to those of the Catholics.¹³

In the numerous previous legal conflicts between the magistrate and the Armenian community, the Armenians had never before used the charter of Prince Daniel to prove that their ancestors had settled there at the

¹⁰ F. Sribnyi, 'Studii nad organizatsieiu l'vivs'koi Stavropigii vid kintsya XVI do polovyny XVII st.: Material'ni vidnosyny bratshchyn' [Studies devoted to the organization of the Lviv Stavropigial Orthodox Brotherhood from the late sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries: the economic relations of the brothers], *Zapysky Naukovoho tovarystva imeni T.G. Shevchenka* [Proceedings of the scientific society named after Taras Shevchenko] 111 (1912), 9.

¹¹ *Pryvilei natsionalnyh hromad*, 277–283.

¹² Quoted by Myron Kapral, *Natsionalni hromady Lvova XVI–XVIII st. Sotsialno-pravovi vzaemyny* [The national communities of the city of Lviv in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries: social and juridical relations] (Lwów: Piramida, 2003), 368–369.

¹³ *Pryvilei natsionalnyh hromad*, 298–300.

moment of the city's foundation by Lev, son of Daniel. Previously, they had shown to the king only the royal decrees that had been issued to the Armenian community by his predecessors. And that action is understandable. Daniel's charter was of no significance because after the Polish conquest of Galicia in 1349 and the re-foundation of Lvov as Lemberg in 1356, the charters issued by Ruthenian princes lost their judicial power. The land grants issued by the Ruthenian princes to the local nobility were translated into Latin and confirmed by the Polish kings in the second half of the fourteenth century. By then, the Ruthenian originals had gone out of use. In 1578, however, the remote past, the epoch before the Polish conquest which had been previously neglected, furnished a crucial argument in the dispute. Why did Armenians use Daniel's charter in 1578 while they refrained from doing so in 1563?

The answer lies in the 1569 Unification of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Every new king—after the extinction of Jagiellonian dynasty in 1572 kings were elected by the assembly of nobles—confirmed to the Armenian community of Lemberg the decrees issued by his predecessors, thereby reaffirming existing agreements between the ruler and a group of subjects.¹⁴ The extinction of the Jagiellonian dynasty (1386–1572) and four years of interregnum and calamities in 1572–76 were perceived by contemporaries as a break with the past, but this break also created an opportunity to revise some 'charters' derived from the pre-Jagiellonian epoch.¹⁵ In 1569, the Unification of Poland and Lithuania was proclaimed in the Diet in Lublin. Both states maintained their autonomy in the new dual state, but the lands of South Ruthenia/Rus' (modern day Ukraine) passed from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to the Kingdom of Poland. These South-Ruthenian lands with their numerous Orthodox nobility, now joined Galician Rus' *Ruthenia Rubra* conquered by Poland in the 1340s. Whereas, previously, the Ruthenian past had little political value in the Polish kingdom, the situation was now changed. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania prided itself on its cultural heritage of Kievan Rus', and an overwhelming majority of the Duchy's nobility and aristocracy were Orthodox Ruthenians. Since the Act of Unification resulted from a

¹⁴ Ibid., 124, 136–137, 167–168, 251–252, 266–267, 295–296, 302.

¹⁵ Many contemporary Polish authors trace Polish history by taking the death of King Sigismund II August in 1572 as the starting point of their narratives. See for instance: Ś. Orzelski, *Bezkrólewia Książ Ośmioro 1572–1576* (Kraków, 1617); Reinhold Heidenstein, *Rerum Polonicarum ab excessu Sigismundi Augusti libri XII* (Frankfurt, 1672); I.D. Solicovius, *Commentarius brevis rerum Polonicarum a morte Sigismundi Augusti* (Danzig, 1647).

compromise achieved by the nobility of both countries, the rights and privileges of the South-Ruthenian nobility were confirmed in the Kingdom. Thus, the Act of Unification of 1569 in a sense rehabilitated the Ruthenian past in the Kingdom of Poland.¹⁶

The Diet of Lublin also confirmed charters issued by Prince Lev/Leon, son of Daniel. Daniel's son Lev was popular in Lemberg since local legends regarded him as the city's founder.¹⁷ Many of these charters were fabricated long after the prince's death. However, they were not forged *ex nihilo*. In many instances, the original charters had been lost through wars, fires, and other societal and natural disasters. The fabricators themselves—mostly local noblemen—saw the fabrication as a renovation and restoration of the lost charters in accordance with memory and tradition. They also introduced new contemporary realities into the renovated charters in accordance with their claims (mostly for the inherited lands granted to their forefathers by Ruthenian princes of Galicia).¹⁸ In the 1578 legal dispute, the Armenians of Lemberg would follow this practice.

'The old and short charter' of Prince Daniel, which they showed to King Stefan Batory in 1578 and to the Catholic Archbishop of Lemberg Jan-Dymitr Solikowski in 1597, could be interpreted as a letter of protection given by the Prince to Armenian merchants. Such letters granted free passage—*salvum conductum*—to the merchants and guaranteed their protection in the domains of a certain lord or state. By adding new details, Armenians could transform this letter of free passage into a charter of invitation by which Daniel invited their ancestors to settle in his domains (*locatio*).

In a complaint to King Sigismund III, submitted by Catholic townspeople of Lemberg between 1597 and 1600 asking him to revise the royal decree of 1578, the complainants stated that '... Armenians connect their invitation with the aforementioned Daniel. At that time, the city of Lviv

¹⁶ The rehabilitation of the Ruthenian past from the point of view of Polish upper classes was also reflected in the growing interest in the history of the Ruthenian lands. Two works on this subject were published around 1580: Alexander Guagninus, *Sarmatiae Europaeae descriptio* (Kraków, 1578); Maciej Strykowski, *Kronika polska, litewska, żmódzka i wszysztkiej Rusi* [Chronicle of Poland, Lithuania, Zhemaitia and of all Rus'] (Kraków, 1582).

¹⁷ The legends were recorded by Martin Gruneweg—a German, born in Danzig, who was in the service of Armenian merchant Aswadur in 1582–1588: Martin Gruneweg, 'Opys L'vova' [Description of Lemberg], *Zhovten* 10 (1980), 110–111.

¹⁸ V.F. Inkin, 'ChyeistorychnaosnovavfalsyfikatakhhramotkniaziaL'vaDanilovicha?' [Is there historical ground in the falsified charters of the Prince Lev, son of Daniel?], *Visnyk L'vivs'koho universytetu* [Bulletin of the University of Lviv. Historical Issue] 24 (1988), 61–62.

did not exist yet. In accordance with it, there is no doubt whatsoever that they were invited not to the city of Lviv, but to the lands of Rus' ...'.¹⁹

Although the Act of Unification of 1569 had guaranteed equal rights only to the noble estate, this act was also invoked as a precedent by the Orthodox townspeople of Lemberg. The Ruthenian community appealed to King Sigismund II August who in turn issued a decree on 20 May 1572, by which he granted Orthodox Ruthenians of Lemberg the same rights as the Catholic townspeople, in particular the right to have their representatives in the city council. In the text of the decree the king referred to the recent Act of Unification. The decree of 1572 emphasised that the Ruthenians in Lemberg were to enjoy the same rights as the 'Polish townspeople of the Roman faith', which 'were granted to the city of Lemberg on different occasions and in different ways by our glorious predecessors, dearest kings of Poland, and dukes of Rus', as well as by other lords and governors of our kingdom and domains'.²⁰ For the first time in a royal decree issued to the city of Lemberg, there was mention of privileges granted by the Ruthenian princes. Moreover, these princes (*duci Russiae*) were put in a line after the Polish kings but before 'other lords and governors'. Thus, the Ruthenian past that predated the Polish conquest of the 1340s became valuable and could also be used by the Armenians.

Another precedent was probably also important for Armenians in 1578. In the trial, the magistrates demanded that the Armenians show them a charter of foundation of their community in Lemberg. Initially the Armenians said that there was no such a charter at their disposal, but later they 'showed the old and short charter of [the prince] Daniel'. In accordance with late medieval and early modern legal practices, every foreign 'nation' invited or allowed to settle in a certain city within the Kingdom of Poland was granted a charter of foundation by a Polish king. The Jews were the most evident example.²¹ Evidently, Armenians also needed such a charter of foundation. The problem was that Armenians had settled in Lemberg before the Polish conquest, when Galician Rus' was ruled by Ruthenian princes. Ruthenian charters—written with Cyrillic characters—were of

¹⁹ Quoted by Yaroslav Dashkevich, 'Drevniaya Rus i Armenia v obshchestvenno-politicheskikh svyaziakh XI–XIII vekov. (Istochnikiissledovaniatemy)' [Social and political contacts of ancient Rus and Armenia in the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries: problems of new reading of source material], *Drevneyshie gosudarstva na territorii SSSR. Materialy i issledovania* (1982 g.) [The ancient states on the area of the USSR. Sources and studies (1982)] (Moscow: Nauka, 1984), 195.

²⁰ *Pryvilei natsionalnyh hromad*, 46.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 390, 426.

no value if not confirmed by Polish kings. Galician Rus' and Lemberg were seen by the city patricians as having come to the Polish kingdom by the law of war (*jure belli*)—thereby the city was founded in 1356. Only the rehabilitation of the pre-Polish, that is a 'Ruthenian' past, and the precedent of the Ruthenians in 1572, stimulated the Armenians in 1578 to present Daniel's letter as their charter of foundation.

We see that Appadurai's definition of *depth* works quite well in the case of the trial of 1578. Armenians tried to derive their rights from a period situated more 'deeply' than the royal decree of 1356, which dominated the discourse of the Catholic patriciate. Nevertheless, it is evident that 'the relative value of different time-depths' was not constant in this complex society. It changed in the course of the efforts made to establish social cohesion after the Unification of Poland and Lithuania.

Appadurai's notion of a 'cultural framework within which the charters of specific sub-groups are constructed, defended and mutually evaluated' embraces the superiority of *textual evidence*, a credible *external authoritative figure* in the past, and the greater *antiquity* of the referents of the charter in question. At the same time, Appadurai's assumptions that the charter should be based on an authoritative document that encodes the privileges of a maximum number of *other relevant groups* and that the evidence for the charter in question should be reflected, as far as possible, *continuously* in the documented past, does not work in the Lemberg case. Daniel's letter—even when enriched with new meanings by Armenians in 1578—did not encode the privileges of any *other relevant group*. Every urban 'nation' derived its rights or claims from different segments of the past. What was a valuable past for one group could well be worthless for another. Moreover, Daniel's letter and 'charter' were never reflected *continuously* in the documented past before 1578.

There is no doubt that in the 1570s, the 'Ruthenian past' was included into 'a minimal set of formal constraints' because of the 'cultural consensus'²²—as well as a political one—achieved by representatives of the noble estates of Poland and Lithuania in the Diet of Lublin in 1569. Thus, the claims of Armenians in 1578 could be based on the ratification of a credible *external authoritative figure* in the past—the letter of the Ruthenian prince Daniel. Daniel's letter was in particular valuable for Armenians since it situated their invitation—real or imagined—deeper in the past than the re-foundation of Lemberg on the basis of the Magdeburg

²² Appadurai, 'The past as a scarce resource', 203.

Law in 1356. The Diet of Lublin in 1569 and the rupture of the 1570s established a new cultural consensus as to the *authority*, *continuity*, and *depth* of the Ruthenian past in general, and thereby of Prince Daniel's charter in particular, within the Polish upper-classes.

But the *interdependency* of Daniel's past with the Polish past also had negative consequences for the Armenian case. In 1597, the Catholics submitted a complaint to King Sigismund III (1587–1632). While they conceded that the Armenians' ancestors had indeed been invited into Lemberg, they accused Armenian warriors of participating in the hostile incursions against Poland led by Prince Daniel or his son Lev/Leon together with the Tatars in the 1250s–1280s:

Lviv was founded around 1280 by Leon, son of the Ruthenian prince Daniel. This Daniel died around 1263 or 1264. It means that the Armenians had been invited earlier, since Armenians connect their invitation with the aforementioned Daniel. At that time, the city of Lviv did not yet exist. In accordance with it, there is no doubt whatsoever that they were invited not to the city of Lviv, but to the lands of Rus' in order to wage war together with Daniel, Ruthenians and Tatars against the Kingdom [of Poland] as it is written in the chronicles of the Kingdom at the times of [Prince] Lesco Czarny. Equally, even if the Armenians later lived in accordance with the privileges [granted to them by] Leon—which we never admit [as legitimate]—they lost all these privileges in accordance with the law of war exactly when, conquered with a sword, part of Rus' with the city of Lviv, was subjugated by [King] Kazimierz in 1340. It means that the foundation of Lemberg should be connected with his [Kazimierz's] ordinance but not of those previous princes of Rus'. It goes in accordance with the first privilege of Kazimierz granted in Sandomierz in 1356.²³

In this way the Armenians—loyal subjects in 1578—were turned into the descendants of Poland's enemies. In April 1600, the royal court in Warsaw considered the complaint of the Lemberg magistrate. The new edition of the decree proclaimed equal rights for Armenians in general but limited their opportunities in many particular cases.

To construct this historical accusation against the ancestors of Armenians, Lemberg's Catholic patricians used certain sentences about Princes Daniel and Lev and about the foundation of Lvov that were mentioned in a history of Poland written by Martin Kromer (1512–89). The patricians also invoked isolated sentences from other texts as well as the fact

²³ Quoted by Dashkevich, 'Drevniaya Rus i Armenia', 195.

that the Armenians living in Lemberg used Tatar as the language of their everyday conversation.²⁴

Kromer's history was very popular. It was published in Latin in 1555, 1558, 1568, and 1589, in German in 1562, and in Polish in 1611. Kromer had been born into a burgher family of German immigrants in Biecz, in southern Poland, which rendered his work particularly authoritative as a source of historical knowledge for Polish townspeople.²⁵ In 1552, he was ennobled and granted a coat of arms for his diplomatic services to Kings Sigismund I and Sigismund II, and in 1573 he was promoted to Prince-Bishop of Warmia (Ermland).²⁶ Thus, his career and royalist vision of Polish history also made his work authoritative at the royal court. Along with the emergence of printed books and the spread of interest in national history among the Polish nobility and urban upper class, Kromer's work offered an extensive historical framework for the public past.

In the Polish historical tradition, Prince Daniel and his son Lev were seen as enemies. Kromer's history mentioned Lemberg for the first time in 1280, in connection with the war between the Ruthenian Prince Lev and the Polish Prince Leszko Czarny (*Lesco Niger*).²⁷ He tells how Prince Daniel had defeated other Ruthenian princes and made them his vassals, establishing a near-monarchy in Southern Rus'. In 1254, he was crowned by the papal legate, Cardinal Oppiso, with a crown sent by the pope, on condition of entering into unification with the Roman Catholic Church and undertaking joint military actions against the Tatars. However, Daniel ignored his promises and, together with the Tatars and pagan Lithuanians, devastated Christian countries.²⁸

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed growing discrimination against townspeople by the nobility (*szlachta*), which ruled the country through their dominance in the Polish Diet—'*Sejm*'. The arrogant attitude toward townspeople and peasantry was affirmed and elaborated within the so-called culture of Sarmatism or Sarmatian ideology.²⁹

²⁴ See Alexandr Osipian, 'The lasting echo of the Battle of Grunwald. The uses of the past in the trials between the Armenian community of Lemberg and the Catholic patriots in 1578–1631', *Russian History* 38, no. 2 (2011), 243–280.

²⁵ Ludwik Finkel, *Marcin Kromer. Historyk polski XVI wieku. Rozbiór krytyczny* (Kraków: W Drukarni Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1883), 7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 34, 36.

²⁷ Martinus Cromerus, *De origine et rebus gestis Polonorum libri XXX* (Cologne, 1589), 171.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 161.

²⁹ Stanisław Cynarski, 'The shape of Sarmatian ideology in Poland', *Acta Poloniae Historica* 19 (1968), 5–17.

Noblemen proclaimed themselves to be the descendants of the Sarmatian warriors, who dominated Eastern Europe in ancient times. Townspeople and peasantry became descendants of the subjugated Slavs. Noble status was very attractive to city patricians not only as a sign of prestige but also because it freed them from many taxes.

It is hardly surprising that both parties to the conflict in Lemberg, Armenians and Catholics, had also begun to emphasise the noble origins of their ancestors. Under the influence of Sarmatism, in the writings of the local Catholic humanists the early German settlers in Lemberg were transformed into German mercenaries (*stipendiarii Germani*) in the service of King Casimir III, who conquered Galicia and settled his German warriors in Lemberg in the 1340s.³⁰ These self-imagined glorious warrior ancestors reflected the ambition of the contemporary Lemberg patricians to obtain noble status. Yet the efforts of wealthy Armenian merchants in Lemberg to claim their own warrior ancestors were now turned against them: in the Catholic complaint of 1597 the Armenians were proclaimed enemies of Poland.

Nevertheless, Catholics in Lemberg generally accepted that the early Armenians who settled in the city were warriors in the prince's service. For instance, Jan Andrzej Próchnicki, Lemberg's Catholic archbishop in 1614–33, stated in a 1622 report addressed to the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide: 'It is said that [Armenians] migrated from Armenia to these lands *three hundred years ago*, invited by the Ruthenian prince Leon for the military service. Then they degenerated into merchants and spies'.³¹ The Papal Nuncio in Poland Honoratio Visconti (1630–36) in 1631 also described the origins of the Armenian migration to Rus'. Apparently, the report was written by Visconti from the evidence presented by Armenians, and the story recorded in Visconti's account reflects all the previous historical debates between Armenians and the Catholic patricians. 'Thus, Armenians have lived for *about 500 years* in the provinces of Rus'.

³⁰ Sebastian Petrici, *Polityki Aristotelesowej, to iest rzqdu Rzeczypospolitey z dokladem ksiag osmiro* [Eight books of Aristotle's 'Politics', that is on the government of a republic, with comments] (Kraków, 1605), 187; Ioannes Alnpekus, 'Topographia civitatis Leopolitanae', in Stanisław Rachwał (ed.) *Jan Alnpek i jego "Opis miasta Lwowa" z początku XVII w* [Jan Alnpek and his 'Description of the City of Lviv' written in the early seventeenth century] (Lwów: Wschód, 1930), 11; J.-B. Zimorowicz, 'Leopolis triplex', in J.-B. Zimorowicz, *Opera quibus res gestae urbis Leopoli illustrantur*, ed. K.J. Heck (Lwów: s.n., 1899), 37, 61–3.

³¹ *Litterae Episcoporum historiam Ucrainae illustrantes (1600–1900)* (Rome: PP. Basiliani, 1972), vol. 1, 87.

Their arrival, initially discussed and agreed upon by these dukes with the Nation, was finally concluded in the times of Prince Daniel and affirmed by his successor Leon, at that time ruler of Rus', who founded the city of Leopoldis [at that time capital of Rus']'.³²

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After they lost their case in 1600, one might logically have expected the Armenians to abandon their link with Daniel and Lev as 'inviting-fathers'. Yet, this did not happen. Instead, until the early 1630s, Armenians continued to maintain this version of their ancestors' invitation to Rus' and city of Lviv by Daniel and/or Lev. It was only the beginning of a new phase of open conflict between the two rivalling groups in the 1630s which stimulated Armenians to revise their version of the usable past and introduce substantial changes to it.

The 1620s and '30s witnessed a gradual change in the Armenian narrative of invitation. This new perception of the past was influenced by two factors—education and reading. Slowly, Armenians were transformed from an isolated community of merchants into consumers of Polish Renaissance culture. Many young Armenians received a Renaissance education in the Academy of Zamość, which had been founded in 1585. The Polish translation of Kromer's history was published in 1611, thus becoming accessible to Armenian readers. This new, well-educated generation of Armenians in Lemberg realised that neither Daniel nor Lev—discredited within the framework of Kromer's history—could be a credible *external authoritative figure* from the past. The religious conflict of the 1630s stimulated a search for a new 'founding-father' of the Armenian diaspora in Ruthenian lands.

In 1630, Nigol Torosowicz, Armenian bishop of Lemberg, with support of Catholic Archbishop Andrzej Próchnicki and with the implicit consent of King Sigismund III (1587–1632), tried to force a unification of the local Armenians with the Roman church. The archbishop was actively supported by the Jesuits, the royal governor (*capitaneus*), and city authorities. The Armenians for the most part rejected religious unification. This religious conflict resulted in a series of trials and sometimes in violent acts against Armenians and their property.³³ Under such circumstances

³² *Acta nuntiaturae Polonae*, ed. Adalbertus Biliński (Rome: Institutum Historicum Polonicum Romae, 1992), vol. 24, part 1, 278.

³³ For a detailed description see: Edmond Schütz, 'An Armeno-Kipchak document of 1640 from Lvov and its background in Armenia and in the diaspora', in György Kara (ed.),

Armenians constructed a new version of their past, which could be more useful in protecting their rights.

A delegation of Armenian elders (*seniores*) submitted a confession of faith (*confessio fidei*) to King Władysław IV in 1641, in which they declared allegiance both to St Peter and St Gregory, and accepted the decisions of the first seven Councils of the Church. The Polish kings considered these confessions to be so significant for the process leading to the catholicisation of the Armenians that they confirmed all their former privileges. As a result, Władysław IV renewed the rights they submitted to him in 1641.³⁴

Along with the royal decrees by which Polish kings granted rights to their Armenian subjects in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Armenians now also presented a short charter allegedly issued by a Ruthenian prince, who was neither Daniel nor Lev. It was a letter from Prince Feodor/Theodore, son of Dmitry. His title and domains were not indicated any more precisely and the date was also absent. 'From prince Teodor, son of Dmitry, to the Armenians of Kosochac(ean): Come under my hand and I shall grant you freedom for three years'.³⁵ Thus, in 1641 Armenians officially put into circulation the so-called 'charter issued in 1062 by the Ruthenian prince Feodor, the son of Dmitry'. But in 1062 there were no Ruthenian princes with such a name. Actually, the Armenians used the letter issued—perhaps in 1382³⁶—by the Volhynian prince (in 1377–93) Feodor, the son of Lubart (the Lithuanian prince Lubart was baptised as Dmitry) to invite the Armenian merchants into his principality. It was a typical protection charter (*salvum conductum*) for foreign merchants, of the variety we have seen above. Why had the Armenians of Lemberg never used Feodor's letter before 1641? In the early seventeenth century, the old Armenian communities in Volodymyr and Luts'k—both in the province of Volhynia—as well as in Kiev were in the final stage of their

Between the Danube and the Caucasus (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987), 247–330; esp. 285–313.

³⁴ Ibid., 309–310.

³⁵ This Ruthenian document was lost in the mid-nineteenth century. The original content of Feodor's letter is known to us thanks to F.-X. Zachariasiewicz (1770–1845): 'Oto Kniazia Teodora Dmytrowicza Kosochackim Armenom. Prejdili na moju ruku dam wam wolnost na try lita' in F.-X. Zachariasiewicz (ed.), *Wiadomość o Ormianach w Polsce* (Lwów: Józefa Schnaydera, 1842), 10.

³⁶ F.-X. Zachariasiewicz stated that he could not decipher the last words of Feodor's letter. This is probably because he tried to read them as a word rather than as a date. In medieval Ruthenian manuscripts figures were transmitted in Cyrillic script. This document would also have used medieval Orthodox chronology rather than that of the Christian era.

decline. The few Armenians still living in these cities were not able to pay their priests and to maintain their churches. In the 1620s, the prosperous Armenian community of Lemberg took the Armenian churches and priests in these cities under protection.³⁷ It is possible that Armenians of Lemberg took possession of the archives from these churches and among other papers found Feodor's letter.

Yet in the process of translating the original letter from Ruthenian into Latin in the royal chancellery on 18 October 1641, the Armenians included in the Latin copy information they could use in their legal conflict with the Catholic patricians. According to the extended and updated charter, the prince invited Armenian warriors to help him in war and permitted them to settle anywhere in his domains: 'The charter issued by Feodor, (son of) Dmitry, prince of Rus', translated from Ruthenian into Latin, and granted to Armenians in the year 1062 AD, now read as follows:³⁸

Theodor *great prince of Rus'*, son of Demetr, to the Armenians of Kosohac(ean). Who wish to come here, *they should come to help me*, and I am going to grant them freedom for three years. *And when you shall be with me, you may freely go wherever it pleases you.*³⁹

Since in the Ruthenian original the title of the prince was not indicated, in the Latin translation he was easily transformed into 'the great prince of Rus'. Along with the other documents submitted by Armenians in 1641 the extended Latin copy of Feodor's charter was written down in the records of *Matricularium Regni Poloniae*. The Armenians received from the royal chancellery the Latin copy, which they used as an officially confirmed, credible document in future trials.⁴⁰

In 1654 Armenians won the trial and were granted equal rights with the Catholics according to the decision of King Jan Casimir/Kazimierz

³⁷ Lekhatsi, *Putevye zametki*, 249; *Akty otnosiashchiesya k istorii Yuzhnoy i Zapadnoy Rossii, sobrannye i izdannye arkhograficheskoy komissiei* [Acts concerned with the history of southern and western Russia, collected and published by the Archeographic Commission] (St Petersburg, 1865), vol. 2, 73–74.

³⁸ I use *italics* to accentuate new words inserted into the Latin translation in 1641.

³⁹ In Latin it reads: 'privilegium Theodori Demetrii Ducis *Russiae* ex Ruthenico idiomate in latinum transpositum in a. Dni millesimo sexagesimo secundo Armenis datum, cujus ea sunt verba: Ecce *Magni* Ducis Theodori Demetrii filii Kosohacensibus Armenis, qui huc volunt venire, *veniant in auxilium meum*, et ego vobis dabo libertatem ad tres annos *et cum fueritis apud me, ubi quis voluerit, illuc ibit libere*'. Quoted from: F. Bischoff, *Urkunden zur Geschichte der Armenier in Lemberg* (Vienna: K.K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1864), 4; Sadok Barącz, *Rys dziejów ormiańskich* (Tarnopol: Józefa Pawłowskiego, 1869), 60–61.

⁴⁰ Schütz, 'An Armeno-Kipchak Document', 308–309.

(1648–68). There is a mention in the royal decree that Armenians demonstrated to the King ‘a charter issued by the Prince Dmitry in 1062’.⁴¹

With the end of the ‘hot’ phase of the conflict in the late 1650s and when facing the common threat of the Cossack-Tatar and Cossack-Muscovite sieges of Lemberg in 1648 and 1655, respectively, and the probable dissolution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1655–58, the magistrates of Lemberg and the Armenian community found their way to a shared vision of the early period of urban history. The second half of the seventeenth century witnessed the process of coming to terms with the instrumentalised past, which was accompanied by the ennoblement of the upper strata of both rivalling groups. In 1670, a French envoy visited Lemberg. His secretary Ulrich von Werdum described the multinational population of the city and noted in his diary that ‘These Armenians, *according to their own words*, 600 years ago were invited into Poland from the Pontic Island of Caffa, which earlier was known as Theodosia, by the Ruthenian prince Dmitry for [military] assistance against his rebellious subjects. For the loyal service [the prince] granted them many significant privileges’.⁴² Jan Thomas Józefowicz (1662–1728)—a Catholic canon born into an Armenian family—wrote a history of the Lemberg archdiocese in 1700–14.⁴³ According to Józefowicz, ‘[The Armenians] were invited by the princes of Rus’ against the Tatars, who many times made incursions into Roxolanian/Ruthenian lands, and the Nosochacean Armenians were granted a privilege by the great prince Theodor, son of Dmitry, written in the Ruthenian language and translated into Latin in the year 1062 of the Nativity of our Saviour, with exemption from taxes for three years’. Thus, having been accused in 1597 of being allies of the Tatars, in the early eighteenth century the imagined ancestors of Lemberg Armenians were finally transformed into brave defenders of Ruthenian lands against Tatar incursions. Józefowicz’s narrative can be seen as a compromise between the two competing versions of the past. By the late seventeenth century, the newly invented invitation of the Armenians by Prince Feodor, son of Dmitry, in 1062, had become part of the memory canon of local Armenians,

⁴¹ *Pryvilei natsionalnyh hromad*, 334.

⁴² Ulrich von Werdum, ‘*Shchodennykpodorozhi, yakuyazdysnyvuroky 1670, 1671, 1672... cherezkorolivstvo Polske*’ [Itinerary of my voyage in 1670, 1671, 1672 through the Kingdom of Poland], *Zhovten* 9 (1983), 91.

⁴³ Jan Thomas Józefowicz, ‘*Leopoliensis ArchiEpiscopatus Historia Ab anno 1614...*’, *Collecta* 672, Microfilm 11417, Biblioteka xx Czartoryskich (Library of the Czartoryski family, Krakow, Poland). Józefowicz’s narrative was actually a continuation of an earlier one written by Tomasz Pirawski (1565–1625): *Relatio status almae archidiocesis Leopoliensis*.

legitimised by inclusion into the urban history narrative and later seen by Romanticist historians as a part of tradition passed within the community from generation to generation since time immemorial.

Conclusion

As we have seen, each of the successive stages of the creation of a memory was closely linked with the centres of power. Because of this relationship, the authors were required to take a qualified public (however limited) into account. Kromer's work deeply influenced the normative framework for debating the past in the urban community of Lemberg as well as beyond it—at the royal court and Diet, where the arguments of both sides were considered and evaluated, and solutions found. Kromer's history of Poland introduced into public discourse a certain coherent cluster of images of the past. It structured townspeople's historical imagination and became its framework for at least the next century. All the new representations of the past had to be situated either inside this framework with reference to Kromer's narrative or outside it. The latter option was used by Armenians in 1641 when they introduced a new person—Prince Feodor, son of Dmitry—into their narrative of their ancestors' invitation to Rus'. The prince was absent from Kromer's history. Moreover, an earlier date was introduced in the Latin translation of the charter—1062. This date was temporarily situated outside Kromer's historical framework—long before the Polish conquest of Galician Rus' in the 1340s and the invasion of Tatars/Mongols and their incursions with Ruthenian princes into Poland in the thirteenth century. In 1062, Rus' was independent and almost completely absent from Kromer's history. By changing the 'inviting father' to Prince Feodor, son of Dmitry, in place of the 'discredited' Princes Daniel or Lev—and the date of the invitation—1062 instead of the 1260s–70s—Armenians preserved and even reinforced the main idea of their narrative—their ancestors were warriors invited to Rus' by the Ruthenian prince who freed them from taxes and duties except for military service. Thus, Armenians could use the updated narrative to stress that 1) they were not 'newcomers' because their ancestors had been invited in 1062—even before the Germans and Poles had settled in Galicia; 2) they should not be treated as tolerated aliens but as true citizens of Lemberg and be free of improper taxes and fees; and 3) their elite could appeal to the king for ennoblement because their ancestors had been noble and brave warriors who had been rewarded with privileges.

If Arjun Appadurai emphasised the *constraints* of using the past, this article has, first, tried to demonstrate how social actors could avoid these constraints. Appadurai underlines that the 'interdependence of charters can occur in one of two ways. Either a specific authoritative text in the past encodes the rights of a larger number of groups... Or it can occur when a group links its claim in a general way with a broad textual tradition or corpus, to which other groups must also necessarily have recourse'.⁴⁴ In the case of the Armenians in Lemberg, it is evident that in 1578 and in 1641–54 they preferred to use unique sources in order to avoid both the royal decree of 1356, which 'encoded the rights of a larger number of groups', and Kromer's history of Poland, which had become 'a broad textual tradition' in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

While Appadurai accepts the suggestion that the normative framework for debating the past is culturally variable, we can now conclude that it is also variable in a given culture in the process of inter-group interaction. This means that interaction between competing interest groups stimulates permanent construction and reconstruction of the valuable segments of the past that could be usable in present social conflicts. The normative framework for debating the past, so well described by Appadurai, poses not only constraints but also creates opportunities.

⁴⁴ Appadurai, 'The past as a scarce resource', 211.