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In vino consolatio

A 14th-c. Armenian Dispute Poem on Wine

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1 Introduction

Sometime near the middle of the 14th century, a scribe named Tērtēr Erewancʽi penned a dispute poem between Grape/Wine and Philosopher. The poem is preserved in M 8029, a manuscript both commissioned and copied by Tērtēr. Unfortunately, we do not have the exact date of when he copied that manuscript, but as the other manuscripts commissioned and copied by him date between 1336 and 1341, it is likely that this manuscript too was produced then. It was certainly completed before 1376 when it was purchased by a tailor named Aslan Kafacʽi. We know something of the life of Tērtēr, who also calls himself Tiraču, from the colophons he wrote in the manuscripts he copied.

Tērtēr was born and raised in Erewan; his parents were Sargis, a priest, and Goharmelikʽ. He also had three sisters, Xatēres, Mamaxatʽun, and Saraxatʽun. After both of his parents died, Tērtēr, being without a wife, moved northwards to the Crimean peninsula where he seems to have circulated among different places. In 1336, he copied a manuscript in the monastery of the Holy

1 It is a pleasure to submit this small contribution in honour of Prof. Theo van Lint in recognition of his sagacity, conviviality, and poetic sensibility. I would also like to thank my colleague Federico Alpi for his very useful comments.

2 Xačʽikyan 1950, 521.

3 I have been able to find four manuscripts copied and commissioned by Tērtēr where he also provides personal information in his colophons. These are: M 1654, M 8029, M 8030, and M 8281. For M 1654, I have relied upon the colophons as printed in the expanded catalogue of the Matenadaran, Eganean 2009, 763–770; for the other three, I have accessed the colophons in Xačʽikyan’s 1950, 286–288, and 328–329. He calls himself Tiraču in M 1654 on fols. 18r, 45v, 61r, 89r, 103r, 189v, 200v, but Tērtēr on fols. 71r and 200v; in M 8029 he calls himself Tērtēr on fols. 139v, 171r, and 235v; in M 8030 he calls himself Tērtēr on fols. 327v and 328v; and Tiraču on fols. 328v; and in M 8281 he calls himself Tērtēr on fols. 176v and 197v.

4 On the vibrant and important Armenian communities in the Crimea, see Mik’ayelyan 1964, Mik’ayelyan 1989, Balard 1996, Buschhausen—Buschhausen—Korchmasjan 2009, and Alpi 2018. According to Mnacʽakanyan 1976, 865, Tērtēr had studied at the monastery of Tel(e)nik’ under Yakob vardapet.
Mother of God (S. Astuacacin), also known as Šahanšah after its original patron, in Surxatʽ (Staryi Krym). At S. Astuacacin, Tērtēr befriended the monastery's senior priest and abbot, Simeon (Simewon), who had been ordained in Sis, as well as one of its ascetics named Zak'arē. In 1341, Tērtēr is found at S. Grigor Lusaworičʽ (Gregory the Illuminator) in Azak (= Tana/Azov); while he copied M 8029 in the “new city” of Kawksu, possibly between these two other sojourns. In both the colophon of 1336 and that of 1341, he comments that he crossed the sea and went up “to the city, to Frank Caffa” (իքաղաքում ՖրանկԿաֆա) before moving on to his respective destinations. The Crimean peninsula at the time was in the control of the ruler of the Golden Horde, Özbeg Khān (reg. 1313–1341). Tērtēr mentions him in his two dated colophons from 1336 and 1341. In the latter colophon he also notes that Özbeg, whom he extols as “all-blessed” (բարեհամբաւ), ruled conjointly with his son Tinibeg, described as “renowned” (պատուական). Tinibeg reigned only briefly after his father's death as he was murdered and supplanted by his younger brother, Janibeg, in 1342.

Tērtēr may have been from a family of some means. He himself was able to commission the manuscripts he copied, and his sister Saraxatʽun married a certain Paron Sučah, with whom she had two sons, Paron Amir and Ėldemir. In a colophon, Tērtēr also commemorates a Paron Shrvan and (his wife?) Murťxatʽun and (their children?) the purely-raised Juha and Tawniē. Erewancʽi does not designate this last group as his relatives, but they do follow the evocation of his nephews and brother-in-law, so they possibly were related to the latter. The title paron (baron) was in use as an honorific title among wealthy and noble Armenians in Cilicia in particular and suggests that Tērtēr's sister was able to marry into a wealthy family that lived in, or had possibly emigrated from, Cilicia.

Tērtēr clearly remained attached to his birthplace. In his colophons, he refers to Erewan as an “honourable city” (պատուական) and notes its proximity to Xor Virap, Ėǰmiacin, and Mt. Sararad (i.e., Ararat), where Noah landed. Inter-

5 According to Tērtēr, Šahanšah was assisted by his in-law Paron Sargis for its construction, M 1654, f. 95v.
6 V112, a gospel dated to 1358, was also copied in Kawksu (here spelled Kök’su), which was still referred to as a “newly built city” (նորաշենքաղաք). The scribe of that manuscript records that he wrote the text in the monastery of S. Grigor Lusaworič', so it is possible that Kawksu is to be identified with a district of Azov.
7 The relatively stable rule of Özbeg Khān is considered to have securely established the official adoption of Islam as the dominant faith within the Golden Horde, Golden 1992, 298; Manz 2011, 165; Bulliet 2011, 532–533.
estingly, in the colophons to M 1654 (1336) and M 8029, he locates Erewan in Vracʽstan, “Georgia,” while in M 8030 (1341), Xačʽikyan’s text reads Hayastan, “Armenia,” instead of Vracʽstan, in the analogous place. It is uncertain whether this is due to Xačʽikyan’s misreading of the text, or whether Tērtēr changed his formulation for some reason. Nonetheless, Tērtēr acclimated himself to his new home during the five-year period between the writing of these two colophons. In the earlier colophon, although he describes Łrim/Surxatʽ (i.e., Staryi Krim) as “famous” (անուանի) and “a metropolis” (մայրաքաղաք), he remarks that he has come to a “foreign land” (աւտարաշխարհ) and “a Mongol land” (երկիրՄուղալի). In M 8029, which is undated but likely composed between the two dated colophons, he similarly reports that he came to the new city Kawksu, “to this northern land” (երկիրհուսուական[sic]), and “to this Mongol land.” In 1341, however, he no longer says that he came to a foreign, Mongol, or northern land; instead, he remarks that he came to the “unparalleled” (աննման) city of Azak.

As evidenced in the manuscripts he copied and commissioned, Tērtēr shows an affinity for paraenetic literature, eratapokriseis, prayers, and, not surprisingly, poetry. Among his favourite authors are Vardan Aygekcʽi, Grigor Narekacʽi, and Nersēs Šnorhali. Although all the works he produced were miscellanies, in his colophons he designates M 1654, M 8029, and M 8030 as “this book of Vardan” (քերպու լանգնիկ) or as “this Vardan-book (քերպու ցուղատու),” referring to Vardan Aygekcʽi’s Counsels. In one colophon to M 1654, he exclaims that it was “the great love for this book of Vardan” (բազումսէրգրոցսՎարդանան) that encouraged him to produce the codex. Other works included in M 8029, in which his poem is found, are selected homilies and counsels, including those of Vardan; the History of Peter the publican; Questions of Athanasius of Alexandria to an old doctor; Nersēs Šnorhali’s I confess with faith; Vardan Aygekcʽi’s Profession of faith; the Vision of Grigor Lusaworičʽ; Dionysius the Areopagite’s Letter to Timothy; Questions of the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Answers of Elišē, vardapet of the Armenians; selections from the Lives of the Fathers; Moses the monk’s Letter to Amon; spiritual questions and answers; Questions of Arjan and the Answers of Eznik of Kolb; selections from Grigor Narekacʽi’s Book of Lamentation; odes (by Yovhannēs Erznkacʽi, Stepʽanos Siwnecʽi, and anonymous composers); Tērtēr’s poem; and a list which counts the number of years that have passed from a biblical personage and event until the Armenian era or an ecclesiastical council. Tērtēr’s dispute poem conforms well to the generally didactic nature of this compilation.

9 In the two-volume catalogue of the Matenadaran, this last text is labelled Դարագլուխք (“Completion of centuries”), but there is no title given in the manuscript. The text ends
2 The Poem

2.1 Structure

Tērtēr’s stichic poem, entitled “Grape and Philosopher” (Խաղողնեւիմաստա֊սէրն), consists of 219 lines of verse, including the author’s colophon that occupies lines 212–219. Despite the title, Grape only appears at the beginning; subsequently, Wine (Գինին) takes over. It is possible that Grape’s lines are to be understood as witnessing its transformation from a fruit to a liquid.

Tērtēr introduces each speaker with the phrase, “Grape says” (Խաղողն ասէ), “Philosopher says” (Իմաստասէրն), or “Wine says” (Գինինասէ), often in an abbreviated manner. Each character speaks in blocks of lines that have end-rhyme in -i: 1–9, 16–36, 43–53, 178–219, -ean/-iwn/-eamb[-luː/-luːpː:10–15, 159–170, 159–170], -ar [-wpː:37–42], -ay [-wpː:54–68], -ac [-uː:69–76], -en [-tː:77–87], -aw [-wː:88–98], -ol [-nː:99–114], -in [-ːuː:115–120], -is [-wː:121–143], -ė [-tː:143–158], -or [-nː:171–177]. The metre is generally octosyllabic, but Tērtēr is not completely consistent in the length of his lines. A number of lines have seven syllables, six lines have nine syllables, four have six, and one line has ten. The total number of lines is roughly divided equally between the speakers: the “Philosopher” has 105 lines, and Grape/Wine have 106, Tērtēr’s colophon has the remaining eight lines. These lines, however, are not necessarily distributed evenly through the poem:

- Grape: 9
- Philosopher: 6
- Wine: 9
- Philosopher: 12
- Wine: 6

abruptly in mid-word on the bottom of fol. 230v. The next page (231r) is a liturgical poem attributed to Yovhannēs Erznkacʽi Pluz. It thus seems that at least one folio is missing from the manuscript.

10 The line literally says: “It is: Grape and Philosopher” (Խաղողնեւիմաստա֊սէրն է), but the copula arguably introduces the title.

11 With half-rhyme in -in in line 194.

12 With half-rhyme in -n in line 87. This example is interesting as it marks a change between speakers: lines 77–86 are spoken by “Wine”; lines 87–98 by “Philosopher”. The rest of the stanza spoken by “Philosopher” ends in -aw. In every other instance, each speaker consistently uses one rhyme, and one would expect line 87 also to end in -aw. One wonders whether this break in the pattern is due to the line which is a praise of the eucharistic sacrifice.

13 With half-rhyme in -i in lines 115 and 118.

14 The syllable count does not include the phrase that introduces each speaker.
Tērtēr did not write his poem in a “high” or “classicising” style, but in a popular register, using what are commonly referred to as “middle Armenian forms.” Among them we may note the occasional loss of medial -ու in polysyllabic words,15 reduction of -են to -ե,16 change of -են to -եր,17 confusion of unvoiced and voiced consonants,18 disappearance of [-v-],19 use of էի for էիթ,20 use of էյիան for էյիանա,21 use of էքոր էհացար for էքոր էհացած,22 use of էիա for էիան,23 use of էենու (էյ) for էենով,24 use of էենու էիա for էենու էիա,25 use of էենու for էենու,26 use of էի for the passive,27 use of the էի- prefix,28 use of first person plural ending
-ûp instead of -ûp,\textsuperscript{29} use of the verbal stem -ûw,\textsuperscript{30} the use of the compound մարդաֆու,\textsuperscript{31} the use of պեր,\textsuperscript{32} the form փուկե for the instrumental of փուկ and of փուկ; and փուկ/փուկ for the ablative and instrumental of փուկ,\textsuperscript{33} the use of կյարդու for կյարե.\textsuperscript{34} There may also be three apocopated forms likely made for metrical reasons and dialectal forms.\textsuperscript{35} There are two loan words in the poem, both from Persian: մուշրուպայ (mušrupay/mušrubay), meaning a “drinking vessel,” derived from ںسر (mišrabat),\textsuperscript{36} and մակար (makar/magar), from گا (magar), “perhaps.”\textsuperscript{37}

2.2 Content and Context

Tērtēr’s poem is very much concerned with the role of wine in this world. Wine extols its ability to give comfort, provide hospitality, solve disputes, and help in matters of love; the Philosopher cites numerous examples of the discord inebriation and alcoholism cause. Tērtēr does evoke the blood/wine that spurted out of Christ’s side when he was pierced from the lance as well as the liturgical function of wine as an element of the eucharist, but there does not appear to be a mystical dimension to the poem. Wine is often credited with bringing about unity or union, but these instances do not allow themselves to be interpreted beyond their literal context. Wine is equated with Christ in only a very limited fashion. In lines 159–162, Wine reminds the Philosopher that Christ, who is co-essential with the Father, came to the wedding feast at Cana, and so too does wine come to the bridegroom, the king, and the holy. Tērtēr does not further develop, however, the similarities or identity between wine and Christ. In lines 82–83, he plays on the notion of spiritual intoxication among the disciples at Pentecost as well as on the coenaculum as the place of the Last Supper and the descent of the Holy Spirit, and on Peter and Christ both being called “the stone” or “rock,” but does not carry this rich image any further.\textsuperscript{38} Likewise, when

\textsuperscript{29} l. 132, cf. Karst 1901, 309.
\textsuperscript{30} l. 55; l. 58, 64; l. 108, 124, cf. Karst 1901, 283–284.
\textsuperscript{31} l. 216, from մարդաֆու, cf. Malxasyanc’ 1944–1945, 3:275.
\textsuperscript{34} l. 42; քարալա stopwatch for քարալա stopwatch, l. 48 (this could also be a dialectal form or simple error); փուկե for փուկե փուկ, l. 84 (this similarly may reflect a common dialectal form).
\textsuperscript{35} l. 31, 34, 143, 184, 185, 189, 201, 203, 206, 219; cf. Karst 1901, 224.
\textsuperscript{38} On the spiritual intoxication of the apostles, see Grigor Tat’ewac’i 1741, 265–266; on mystical wine, see van Lint 1996, 61–66.
the Philosopher concedes defeat, he acknowledges wine's participation in the holy mysteries, but does not postulate any union with Christ that the partaker of wine may achieve. And despite the many evocations of love, Tērtēr's poem does not truly explore the erotic. Wine simply helps people get along and married couples to enjoy each other's love. There is no sense of the homoerotic, either, and the figure of the cup-bearer (Pers. sāqī) nowhere appears. Nor do Tērtēr's emphasis on the material world and his awareness of mundane pains and ills lead to a meditation on the ephemerality of this life and the need to enjoy it.

The restraint and focus displayed in Tērtēr's poem underscore its didactic purpose. On the one hand, the poem defends the practice of drinking wine in that it brings people together, gives them joy and comfort, and is essential in Christian ritual. On the other hand, and consonant with the paraenetic literature Tērtēr copied, it cautions against the over-consumption of wine and brings into relief the great social, physical, and spiritual damage it can cause. In its content and structure, as well as in its lack of eroticism or mysticism, Tērtēr's poem differs starkly from the famous Arabic wine poems known as khamriyya, as well as from Persian odes on love and wine. It also differs from Syriac wine poems of the 13th century, some of which explore themes of divine union, spiritual intoxication, and, in the case of Khāmīs bar Qardāhē, are willing to employ the eroticism of the khamriyya.39

Tērtēr's poem, therefore, cannot be classified in the genre of the wine poem; rather, as a poetic debate between Grape/Wine and Philosopher, it loosely belongs to the genre of the dispute poem. Dispute poetry has a long history in the Near East, figuring among the popular literary forms of ancient Mesopotamia. In Armenia, Syriac dispute or dialogue poems attributed to Ephrem were translated among his other hymns.40 The earliest written example of a dispute poem composed originally in Armenian is the Discourse on Wisdom Composed as a Diversion by Yovhannēs Sarkawag Imastasēr (1129).41 The debate here occurs between the author and a blackbird chick. As Cowe has argued, this poem is didactic in nature and should be understood as a spiritual exhortation. Yovhannēs's poem may have inspired Tērtēr to adopt the form of a debate between a human and a non-human character to convey moral instruction. Nevertheless, formal differences between the two remain. Yovhannēs's interlocutors are himself and an animate creature, not a character “Philosopher” and an inanimate object. Moreover, his poem is unrhymed and each line consists of 16 syllables; it also presents a more sophisticated argument and poetics.

39 Taylor 2010.
40 On the dispute poem in Armenia, see La Porta 2020.
Neither Yovhannēs’s nor Tērtēr’s poem strictly adheres to the definition of a dispute poem. Dispute poems, as summarised by Jiménez, have five constituent elements: They are 1) poems or poetic texts, that 2) are tripartite in structure, 3) contain few narrative elements, 4) usually feature inanimate protagonists, and 5) discuss the supremacy of one of the interlocutors over the other. Since they use human characters and prioritise instruction over precedence, both poems arguably represent a development of the classical form of the dispute poem rather than an example of it. Yovhannēs’s and Tērtēr’s literary articulation of the dispute poem therefore likely rests on a familiarity with an oral tradition of performed dispute poems that is only later inscribed into or preserved by the literary record. The exact context for the recitation of the poem remains unknown. It is possible that Tērtēr intended the poem to be acted out in front of an audience given the character cues, but he may have had an individual reader of the manuscript in mind; or he may have conceived of both situations. Tērtēr’s poem occupies the liminal area between the literary and oral traditions. His use of a more familiar register of language, though not completely colloquial, would have made it easier for a literate, if not highly educated, reader/reciter to understand and grasp the thrust of his praise of wine as well as his warnings about its dangers. In trying to instruct his readers through the use of more popular literary forms and language, Tērtēr reflects one of the pedagogic trends in Armenian monasteries that became common in the 12th–14th centuries. Other examples of this trend are the fables composed and compiled by Mxit’ar Goš and Vardan Aygekc’i, and the increasing use of the question and answer format in the monastic schools.

On a broader scale, Tērtēr’s debate about the nature of wine classes it among other disputation texts involving intoxicants. An ancient Egyptian ostracon from the 12th or 11th c. BCE preserves the title of what is apparently a debate between Wine and Beer. In the T’ang period (8th–10th c. CE), a certain Wang Fu composed *Chajiu lun*, a prose dialogue between Mr. Tea and Mr. Wine mediated by Mr. Water. In the 13th century CE, the Syriac poet Khāmīs bar Qardāhē composed a dispute poem between Cup and Wine. The earliest

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43 van Lint 1996, 20–22.
44 Jiménez 2017, 129n352; Stauder 2020, 122–123.
45 Jiménez 2017, 137–138. The debate is found in seven manuscripts in the Buddhist caves of Dunhuang. As a number of East Syriac documents were also found in the caves, Jiménez plausibly speculates that the Syriac tradition may have brought the genre this far. Benn 2005, 215–221; Chen 1963, 271–287.
46 Brock 1991, 112–114; Brock 2008, 382; Jiménez 2017, 136. Although Taylor 2010 mentions dispute poems and discusses Khāmīs’s wine poems, he does not refer to this particular poem.
of the Goliardic dispute poems between Wine and Water are preserved in Latin from the early 13th century, although they are certainly older, and in the vernaculars of western Europe.\textsuperscript{47} In the \textit{Dialogus inter Aquam et Vinum},\textsuperscript{48} Water blames Wine for Noah’s and Lot’s disgrace similar to the Philosopher in Tērtēr’s poem. The accusation is, of course, a natural one for poets steeped in biblical tradition, and recurs not only in the European Christian debates between Water and Wine, but also in Zalman Sofer’s (fl. first half of 15th c.) poetic debate between water and wine, \textit{Zera Gefen} (Seed of the Vine), written in Hebrew and Yiddish.\textsuperscript{49} Yūsuf Emiri, a panegyrist of the Timurid prince Bāysonğor Mirzā (d. 1433), composed a Chaghatay dispute between Hashish and Wine (\textit{Bang o Čaḡir}), “after the manner of the Persians but in the language of the Turks, no one yet having done so,” in the 15th century.\textsuperscript{50} A century later, Fuzūlī (d. 1556) wrote a \textit{mesnevi} disputation poem in Azeri Turkish also between Hashish and Wine called \textit{Beng-ü Bāde}.\textsuperscript{51} Aynur and Schmidt have studied a 17th-century prose debate between Opium, Berş, Hashish, Boza, Wine and Coffee, which “may have been considered to belong to the canon of Bektashi literature.”\textsuperscript{52} Two contest poems by the 17th-century Yemeni Jewish poet Šālôm Šabazī between Qāt and Coffee end with Wine as the settler of the dispute. In one, however, the author then extols the superiority of wine.\textsuperscript{53}

This overview of dispute poems in which wine is a protagonist attests to the chronological and geographical popularity of the theme. Tērtēr’s poem cannot be textually linked with any of these other examples, but, given the ethno-religious diversity of the Crimea in the first half of the 14th century, encompassing Turkic Christians and Muslims, Armenians, Greeks, Georgians, Jews, Catalans, Genoese, Venetians, Caucasian and Balkan slaves, among oth-

\begin{thebibliography}{53}
\bibitem{Hanford1913} Hanford 1913, 315–367; Jiménez 2017, 147; see also Cecilia 2020.
\bibitem{Wright1866} Wright 1866, 87–92; Hanford 1913, 322–327; see also Walther 1920, 46–53. The poem may have been composed in the time of Emperor Frederick I (d. 1190), Hanford 1913, 328.
\bibitem{Hanford1913a} Hanford 1913, 358–360, stanzas 2 and 8; Zinberg 1975, 41.
\bibitem{Bodrogligeti2012} The poem is preserved in the British Museum, mS. Add. 7914, fol. 320–337, Rieu 1888, 291; Bodrogligeti 2012; Eckmann, 1964, 320–321, who also notes two other examples of this debate in Chaghatay from the 15th century by Yaqīnī and Aḥmadi; Jiménez 2017, p. 142; Aynur 2020, 287–293, for more examples.
\bibitem{Jimenez2017} Jiménez 2017, p. 142; Aynur 2020, 287.
\bibitem{Aynur-Schmidt2007} Aynur—Schmidt 2007, quote on p. 55. In addition to comparing their text to Amiri’s and Fazūlī’s poems, they also look at another anonymous and undated Ottoman dispute between opium, berş, hashish, boza, wine, and bal suyı (honey drink), 69–73. Jiménez 2017, p. 142.
\bibitem{Tobi2008} Tobi 2008, 301–310.
\end{thebibliography}
ers, Tērtēr may have been familiar with other examples of dispute poems. More importantly, though, his poem illustrates how Armenians partook of and adapted this broader literary phenomenon for didactic purposes. Tērtēr's making Philosopher one of the disputants, rather than another inanimate object or liquid, underscores human responsibility in using an intoxicant. The poem reflects and tries to negotiate the experiential tension within Christian society between wine's liturgical and theological preeminence, and moralists' admonitions against its dangers. Many ecclesiastical canons, both translated and originally composed in Armenian, decry drunkenness. In the 12th century, Dawit' Ganjakec'i in his Canonical Counsels (Xratk' kanonakank') discusses the punishments to be meted out to priests who burp because of drunkenness, “for the drunkard is to be counted as a wild beast” (ըիարբեցողնընդգազանսէ համարեալ). Mxit'ar Goš (d. 1213), too, in his Law Code (Datastanagirk') condoems drunkenness and confirms that whoever bears the signs of intoxication should “abstain from each one's ministry” (իբացկալարժանէյիւրաքանչիւր սպասաւորութենէ). Tērtēr's cherished author, Vardan Aygekc'i, composed a counsel against drunkenness as well. It was not only sermonising clergy who cautioned against intoxication. The poet, Yovhannēs Tʽlkuranc'i (14th–15thc.), who exclaims to his beloved: “Make me crazy with sweet wine—I was imprisoned in your breast” (Անուշգինովզիսխեւարիր՝որիծոցըդզնտանեցայ), also penned an admonitory poem regarding drunkenness in which he complains, “Wine is the mother of all sins, / To which every book bears witness” (Գինինէմայրամէն ﬂու, /Որա ﬂոնայնգիրքվըկայէ). Islamic law and cultural norms added a further layer of complexity to wine's valence in Armenia, the Caucasus, and Crimea. As the production of wine was forbidden to Muslims, non-Muslims were in the business of making and distributing it. Wine formed one of the major sources of Genoese trade in the Black Sea region, and they used it not only for consumption but also as a means of payment with Mongol rulers. Armenians and Georgians participated in the

55 On social interactions between the communities, see Balard 1978, 1:310–327.
56 On didactic adaptation in mediaeval Armenian poetry, see Pifer 2021, chs. 6–7.
57 Dawit' Ganjakec'i 1961a, 29; 1961b, 24.
58 Mxit'ar Goš 1975, 130; Mxit'ar Goš 2000, 268, and n. 1331, where examples of earlier canonical prohibitions against clerical drunkenness are given.
60 See Russell 1987, 7–9 (on the poet), 94–97 (translation and notes on first poem), 120–121, 133–134 (translation and notes to the second with another example).
economy of alcohol in the Safavid period and there is no reason to think they
did not do so earlier. Tērtēr's use of a Persian loanword to refer to a drinking
vessel underscores how Armenians joined in a regional culture of drinking and
of the material objects associated with the practice.

Although the Qurʾān (5:90–91) and Islamic jurists forbad the drinking of
wine (رَمْخ), the practice was common among Muslim elites, and particularly
among the Mongol elite. Nonetheless, religiously observant Muslims could
point to intoxication among Christians as an example of their moral depravity
and their faith’s inferiority to Islam, a charge it would be difficult for Christians
to refute. At the end of the century, Grigor Tatʼewacʻi attacked Islam for for-
bidding wine, accusing Muslims of contradicting the prophets. Nonetheless,
he counsels his students how to answer “an ignorant Muslim or tyrant” (պիտաց
իմանացուցիչ հարազատ) who asks whether wine is permissible (Arm. Հալալ, halal, rendering Arabic حلال) or forbidden (Arm. Հարամ, haram, render-
ing Arabic حرام): “In measure it is permissible and unmeasured it is haram,
which is drunkenness. For many evils derive from it, that is from wine and
drunkenness, for our soul and body. ... Therefore, drunkenness is prohibited,
for drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God (1Cor. 6:10), our scripture
says.” Tatʼewacʻi then proceeds to argue that wine is permissible by nature, but
the act of being drunk is forbidden; a conclusion not very different in essence
from that put forth in Tērtēr’s poem.

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62 On the drinking of wine among Muslim elites and the role of Armenians and Georgians
in wine production, see Matthee 2005, ch. 2.
63 See also 2:219, 4:43, but cf. 16:69, where it is praised. Dissensions also among jurists arose
over what constituted wine, see Wensinck 1997, 994–997.
64 Cf. the treatment of Iwanē Mxargrjeli’s failed siege of Xlatʼ/Akhlat in 1209 in which Iwanē,
the general of the Georgian forces, was captured in front of the walls of the city due to
inebriation. The episode is repeated in a dozen Arabic sources which derive pleasure from
the means of his capture and use it to emphasise the superiority of Islam, La Porta 2013,
270–271.
65 Kiwlēsērean 1903, 153. Tatʼewacʻi’s polemic against Islam originally formed part of his Book
of Questions, but was omitted in the edition printed in Constantinople in the 18th century
so as not to offend the authorities.
66 Չափաւորնհալալէեւանչափնհարամէ:
այսինքնիգինոյնեւյարբեցութենէնյառաջգանիհոգիեւիմարﬕ
։Վասնորոյ
արգելեան է արբեցութիւն
զի արբեցողքն զարքայութիւ
Աստուծոյ ոչ ժառանգեն՝
ասէԳիրնﬔր,
Kiwlēsērean 1903, 156.
67 Cf. also Grigor Tatʼewacʻi’s sermon against drunkenness in which he discusses the four
types of intoxication and gives various opinions on drinking in Christianity, Grigor
Tatʼewacʻi 1741, 265–267. Many of his general points are similar to Tērtēr’s and he also cites
the examples of Noah and Lot, but no discernible textual link exists between the two texts
and Tatʼewacʻi does not seem to have been aware of the poem.
There is no indication, however, from Tērtēr’s colophons that he or other Christians faced official censure from the ruling elite about wine drinking. If Tērtēr was sensitive to Muslim opprobrium with respect to drinking wine, such criticism most likely stemmed from the non-elite Muslim population. More than external pressure, debates about (over-)drinking within his own community arguably motivated his defence of the blessings of wine.

3 Edition and Translation of the Poem

To my knowledge, Tērtēr’s poem has been published in full only once before, by A. Madoyan, and never translated.68 Mnac’akanyan referred to Tērtēr’s poem in his Medieval Armenian Folk Songs (Haykakan mijnadaryan žolovrðakan erger), but did not provide a transcription of it.69 In his contribution on Armenian literature to volume iii of the History of the Armenian People (Hay žolovrði patmut’yun), he included five lines of the poem and a brief discussion of its contents.70 Four of the five lines correspond to ll. 178–181 of the poem in M 8029, but the fifth line differs and does not appear anywhere else in the text. Mnac’akanyan may, therefore, have relied upon a different version of the poem. The poem is cited in the Dictionary of Middle Armenian (Mijin hayereni bararan) as the only witness to the loanword մուշրուպայ.71 In their bibliography, the editors give M 5837 as the reference for the poem. The abbreviated catalogue of the Matenadaran does not list Tērtēr’s poem as one of the contents of the manuscript, but that may be an oversight and this text may be the one Mnac’akanyan cited. M 5837 is a copy of Amirdovlat’ of Amasia’s Bžškaran (Medical Book) completed in 1629 and bears no obvious connection with anything that Tērtēr copied, although one could see how his poem may have been included with a medical treatise given the emphasis on the negative impacts on health Philosopher attributes to wine. The editors do not explain why they relied upon this version of the text composed some three centuries later than the presumed autograph found in M 8029. I include a new transcription of the poem from M 8029 so that the reader can check the text and because it differs slightly from that of Madoyan’s. I did not have access to M 5837 and my modified diplomatic edition relies solely on the text found in M 8029.72

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68 Madyoan 1989; see van Lint 2014 for an overview of publications and studies of Armenian poetry.
69 Mnac’akanyan 1956, 53, 613.
70 Mnac’akanyan 1976, 865–866.
72 I would like to thank the faculty and staff of the Matenadaran for providing me with digitised images of the relevant folios of this manuscript.
resolved all abbreviations in the text and indicated the letters supplied by putting them in italics. Any editorial emendations have been placed between ⟨ ⟩; folio numbers have been inserted in the margin. A corrector, probably Tērtēr himself, went over and made some corrections to the text; I have noted these in the apparatus as corr. I have also provided line breaks and numberings; punctuation and rubrication follow that of the manuscript.

Caveat lector: I have opted to express the sense of the poem in rhyming lines rather than provide a strictly literal translation, in part in order to render aspects of Tērtēr’s poetics and jaunty spirit for readers in English.73 For ease of reading, I place the names of the characters in italics on a separate line in the translation, although I have maintained the line-numbering of the Armenian.

3.1 Text

I would like to thank my colleague Dr Michael Pifer for stimulating conversations and suggestions about the poem and its translation. Any errors, of course, remain my own.

73 I would like to thank my colleague Dr Michael Pifer for stimulating conversations and suggestions about the poem and its translation. Any errors, of course, remain my own.
74 Ὑπὲρ [written over in black ink as Ὑπὲρ, corr.]
75 σωματικῇ [-ῃ, suprascr. corr.]
76 τῇ [-ῇ, suprascr. corr.]
77 ἁ- suprascr. corr.
in vino consolatio

Гіні хвіт, ти асоми єрмір ієр.
пі арпінінхов пірірпір пір.
ті сілімін пірпір.
ті пірпірі нар пірпір пір.

20

228'

Гіні хвіт, ти асоми єрмір ієр.
пі арпінінхов пірірпір.
ті сілімін пірпір.
ті пірпірі нар пірпір пір.

25

Гіні хвіт, ти асоми єрмір ієр.
пі арпінінхов пірірпір.
ті сілімін пірпір.
ті пірпірі нар пірпір пір.

30

Гіні хвіт, ти асоми єрмір ієр.
пі арпінінхов пірірпір.
ті сілімін пірпір.
ті пірпірі нар пірпір пір.

35

Гіні хвіт, ти асоми єрмір ієр.
пі арпінінхов пірірпір.
ті сілімін пірпір.
ті пірпірі нар пірпір пір.

40

See note 35 above.

 latino: in vino consolatio
45 եւ դառն է լրավոր.
ապանուն ետք աղտոտեղ.
հավաքի այդուրյունը գիրքի սայթե.
ապանուն եւ եռա ապարազ.
առանցքապատճառ մեծ զրկում.
50 խաղքարարէրնամէնի.
պատճառեղեռանիծողի.
աղասպակություն դիմություն.
աների սայթե սայն կղվ.
պատճառեղադուիյերկրի.

228v
Հիմնելիս ապա դրա հա ամբա մարկ մինակ.
55 եւ դրիքները գնե կացեհա.
եւ եռահարկ պուրագումիչ.
ծառայություն պարարկում.
Pարագրուց ամբա սայթ.
արդյունքում ետք կացեհա.

60 քաղեր, զարկ ուղղր եւ կացեհա.
այժմ եւ էսկ երբ մինակ.
եւ եկեղեց զարկ սայթ.
Թե կապի կերպ.
65 աշխատող եթ կացեհա.
քիր բարկաբեր պտտումամ.
իգ էր տեղական ամբա կացեհա.
այն ամբա եւ հարդ զարկ սայթ.

Պատասխան այնքուեւ.
ուրբն էր կալ եւ նույնաց.
70 խաղքարարէրները կացեհա.
փոփոխություն խորսուն ամբա.
բուժ ամբականամ ամբա կացեհա.
երկր պատերը հաճախ.
կացեհամ երբ հերթապետ երբ կացեհա.

75 քեր դառն ամբ կացեհա.
երբ ամբ պահեստ կացեհա գայթում.
in vino consolatio

80. in vino consolatio, quae iudicium et propositiones maximi consolativi. 
85. inquit, quod si in udoga. 

90. quod si in udoga, quod si in udoga. 

95. quod si in udoga, quod si in udoga. 

100. quod si in udoga, quod si in udoga. 

105. quod si in udoga, quod si in udoga.
Իմ աստած ասերն։ թէքննելիզինքն կան։ անքնի բարին վարս՝ ուր հրդին։ իրածո յորդիքնի։ ինին յիշեցոյաստորին։ զորքո աչ աւքտկու հայիս։ եւ յինէնկեղծավորիս։ որյերակխմէնային։ իմխմողն կարիզերդիս։ թէշահիլկա Բանտարիս։ Երբ ենք հարսանիս։ այգում ըննդնիմ իս։ Բազ ու մսիրէզիւրսիրեն։ յերակես պառքեմ աշխարհիս։ փառքու պատիւաստորիս։ զսիրտնուրա խառնեմզերկրիս։ իմխմողն կարիզերդիս։ թէշահիլկա վերաստեն։ քոինչ բանկային իս։ զիսէրածէքի կավիշնի։ կամի փղընծում տուպանիս։ իյարծաթառէիզ դուք զիս։ կամի նուրբ ամանանիս։ Թէաղքատեսունի նայկուննի հայոլմտէ։ սիրտն դողայուզն է։ ինչպիտի կարիզերդիս։ զափնիճակտին իներակդէ։
in vino consolatio

155 P. 439.4x666.1

\[ suprascr. corr. \] Sergio La Porta - 9789004527607
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\[ suprascr. corr. \] Sergio La Porta - 9789004527607
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When all fruit have reached their time
And have ripened on the vine,
Mine becomes the most desired
B'cause its presence is required
Both at court and at the altar.
E'en the weary farmer
May in me find soothing slumber.
I bring joy and comfort to his life
As he holds me like his wife.

Philosopher says:

You conquer them with your nature
Seizing them in a grip of pleasure.
You kindle in them a demon passion
So that they lose all sense of discretion.
You lead to feckless fornication

Those stupefied by your intoxication

Wine says:

For these reasons I was born,
To give comfort to those who mourn,
And the gracious table to adorn,
For the beloved to receive his guest,
And to let weddings do the rest!
To satisfy all those who thirst
And to reproach them who cause hurt,
For let quarrelers no longer be hostile
But o'er a bounteous table reconcile.

Philosopher:

Wine! You are worthy of neither honour nor praise
By them who walk in the holy one's ways,
Rather the good man, filled with virtue,
Knows that he should completely reject you!
The lewd hold you in admiration,
While the drunk praise you in celebration.
Because through you a man goes far astray
As his money and wealth quickly fly away.
All his goods go straight out the door
As you leave your beloved washed up and poor.
A son turns his back on his mother
And seeks solace in the arms of an unknown other.
**Wine says:**

Why, you say such bitter and difficult words!
Be silent now and let me be heard.
Melchizedek, with his longevity,
And Abraham, in his righteous purity,
Brought me out repeatedly
As well as presented me lovingly.  

**Philosopher:**

But when Noah had too much wine
He was left hanging out to dry.
And you know what happened to his younger son—
Well, he became the jest of everyone.
In public they thought him worthy to shun
And even to curse his next generation.
That prophet of great acclaim
Even his mind you overcame,
Leaving him naked and ashamed.
To inspire unspeakable curses
Constitutes the entirety of your purpose!

**Wine says:**

Everyone unites with me,
As they want to drink in harmony,
Showing their joyful faces jovially.
The king rejoices in his cups
And all the servants come right up
When he fetches me and drinks his fill
He lavishly distributes gifts at will.
When a man and wife join conjugally
Their love will increase mightily.

---

88 Cf. Gen 14:17–20. I have emended the text in line 40 to read ւրախանայ (Abraham) instead of ւրախա (Abrah); it is also possible that Tērtēr intended ւրախա (Abram) as the encounter between Abraham and Melchizedek occurred before Abraham received his full name. Trisyllabic Abraham, however, fits better with the metre.


90 This is a reference to the fact that although it was Ham who saw Noah's nakedness, it was his son Canaan whom Noah cursed.

91 “rejoices,” ուրախանայ: the text reads ուրախա, “denies,” which does not make sense here, and the trisyllabic ուրախանայ, “rejoices,” fits better with the meter.
If a guest\footnote{“guest,” ։ որոն: Madayan 1989 transcribes as ։ որոն, “father,” but it is clearly ։ որոն, see note 16 above.} gets up before it’s time
He’ll keep his seat if you bring out wine!

When the pauper imbibes liberally
He comes to rejoice royally
For all his troubles melt away
And laughter fills his entire day.

\textit{Philosopher:}
Sodom’s ill-bred daughters
Got that poor Lot slaughtered
They led their father into bed
When he was smashed out of his head.\footnote{Cf. Gen 19:30–38.}
Both of them became impregnated
Because he was so inebriated.

If you at that time had not been downed
This wrong in the world would not be found.

\textit{Wine:}
Do you not fear the Creator,
Who is the supreme Benefactor?
Who drew me from that holy side.\footnote{Cf. John 19:34.}
From which generous spring the law derived,
Which his vivifying right hand did provide.
From that wondrous room\footnote{“room,” ։ պահանջումն է, lit. “upper house” or “upper room,” a reference to the coenaculum where the Last Supper took place and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.} disseminated,
From the disciple among the intoxicated,\footnote{A reference to Peter among the disciples at Pentecost, Acts 2:5–15. When the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, certain onlookers believed them to be drunk. Peter exclaimed that they were not drunk. Here Tērtēr plays with the idea of the apostles being spiritually intoxicated, cf. e.g., note 67 above and the use of Persian sitemap in the poems of Rūmī.}
E’erything from that holy stone,\footnote{Tērtēr uses the image of the upper room and the stone or rock to allude to the Last Supper and Pentecost, to Peter, whose name means rock (Matt 16:18, John 1:42), and to Christ, who...}
Philosopher:
Mighty and great it is celebrated,
The sacrifice that you initiated,
But by your presence strife has proliferated
While many of the commandments dissipated.
The legislator was deceived,
And son against father did angrily grieve;
Woman split from man,
While work fell from his hand,
His eyes grew ever more bleary,
And his aching head made him weary,
His liver dissolved, worn and shot,
Then he fell dead, brought to naught.

Wine:
For that one who is a greedy drinker
I am certainly a killer,
And for him who is unable to be smart
I will surely try his heart.
For him who cannot hold his drink
He will think that I do stink:
Vomit in his mouth, wallowing like a swine
Barking like a dog, me he will malign.
I am a lover of the wise
When he who drinks me acts civilised,
To the poor he becomes a provider,
And of his family he is an admirer.
In worship his voice resonates;
It exclaims, rises, and renovates—
And if anyone becomes a dissenter,98
He knows how to give an answer!

Philosopher:
But if one wants something tangible
Your good is simply inscrutable.

---

98 “dissenter,” ἄσωτος: the text reads ἄσωτος, which could also be: ἀσωτικός.
It is on account of our holy mystery
That we are sons of God spiritually
Classed among the angelic hierarchy
And crowned with His unfading glory.\textsuperscript{99}

\textit{Wine:}
Remember this world right here
That before your eyes appears
and with me always be sincere.
With every drink one pours
He loves his beloved more and more.
Of glory and of honour I am replete
And of this world, I am the pulse and beat
That I make the heart of this land complete.
Like me the drinker’s face is red
But don't overdo it when you are to wed
For if do, you will be misled
And won’t be of much use in the wedding bed!
You have a cup of horn for display,
So why then bring me in a pot of clay?
A bronze vessel\textsuperscript{100} can deliver,
But more fitting is one of silver,
A goblet made of gold, suits me even better.
But if you’re poor and don’t have one,
A two-cent glass will get it done,
With a swig infuse your veins
And free yourself from every pain,
And health in life you will attain.

\textit{Philosopher:}
Far from you one should remain,
For he who takes you in his veins

\textsuperscript{99} These lines are somewhat cryptic, but I understand the Philosopher to say that Wine should not take credit for the spiritual work of the liturgy, which is a divine mystery; rather, Wine should keep in mind the more tangible problems it causes. Wine then turns to the physical world.

\textsuperscript{100} *vessel,* מַעְמָרָה: a loanword from Prs. מַעְמָרָה, see above note 36.
The Lord’s commandments does forget
And does not recall the day of death.
His manifold sins he does not confess,
Nor the clocking of the clapper\(^{101}\) does he address.
Even when he tries to pray,
Sleep upon his eyes does weigh,
His heart trembles, he pulls his cheek,
He rubs his temples, and shakes his feet
The light of morn dawns vividly,
But his heart and head hurt terribly,
If they bring him food, he doesn’t eat,
He keeps the day and his word discrete,
Perhaps,\(^{102}\) if from the vine you did not arise,
Only cold water we would imbibe!

_Wine:_

As He who is with the Father essentially
On account of His ineffable humility,
Willingly and with authority,
Came to the nuptial festivity,\(^{103}\)
To the bridegroom the wine comes merrily,
And to the king it comes piously.
To the holy it comes joyfully
While to the wedding feast in gaiety.
To him who drinks with gratitude,
I am the stuff of beatitude,
But he who drinks me ungratefully,
I am the poison of stupidity.

_Wine says:_

He who ingests me immoderately,
Like a pilgrim exclaims with audacity
That I am the king of this great city!
Then two fine young men approach,
Grab and twist his beard in reproach;\(^{104}\)

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\(^{101}\) “the clapper,” ժամհար, the semantron that calls people to prayer.

\(^{102}\) “Perhaps,” դուլչքպ, a loanword from Prs. DataStream, see above, note 37.

\(^{103}\) A reference to the wedding at Cana, John 2:1–11.

\(^{104}\) See also the contribution by M.E. Stone and E. Vardanyan in this volume.
They cast him into a deep, dark pit  
And make his head some sort of nut to split.\textsuperscript{105}

\textit{Philosopher:}
\begin{quote}
Wine—I have done you a disservice,  
Maligning your sweet and fragrant purpose.  
I have sinned against the Creator,  
Who keeps your good cup in His favour.  
Your honour flows through one and all,  
The glory and pride of every royal hall.  
A thousand evils you do obstruct,  
And quarrelers to peace you do conduct,  
The Father is glorified majestically,  
So why did I slander you viciously  
When indeed you are a cup most praiseworthy?  
A man who goes astray through you,  
Himself is to blame for lacking virtue,  
And it is the man who is evil, for you are true.  
Wine should not be given out  
To the fornicator and the lout;  
To the greedy and the sot  
Who are no use at all to God,  
Only give vinegar and bile\textsuperscript{106}  
So that their liver will soon expire.  
But you are good to the hierarch,  
To the prince, and to the monarch.  
Wine, you are not to blame  
For you the Lord of all proclaim.  
You bring joy to our life of dread,  
When the crown is placed upon our head,\textsuperscript{107}  
When baptism you do attend,  
When Christ from heaven does descend
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{105} This is a very liberal translation. Literally the text says: “they make his head like a gallnut (գխթոր).” Tērtēr would likely have been familiar with the process of making iron-gall ink from smashed up gallnuts. The verse may mean, then, that they split his head open.


\textsuperscript{107} This is to be understood as referring to the wedding ceremony where crowns are placed on the heads of the bridegroom and bride.
Through you to the sinner mercifully
By means of the holy liturgy.
The sins of the dead are fully erased
And legions of demons completely effaced,
God is glorified with eternal praise,
For through His mercy we are saved.

I, Têr têr, miserable scribe,
Lazy priest filled with sin,
Anguished, crying, widow and orphan,
Composed this praise of wine.
You who read this in humanity
Remember me to Christ’s monastery,
My sins I need to erase completely,
May Christ, through you, have mercy upon me.

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