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Guido Terreni at Avignon and the “Heresies” of the Armenians

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Abstract

Despite the reduction of its sphere of influence, the Avignon papacy never ceased to implement new strategies in order to bring the Eastern Christian communities under Latin control. Theological discussions held at the Apostolic See on the Eastern Churches frequently resulted in anti-heretical treatises and lists of errors: these discussions were aimed at providing Church authorities with the necessary theoretical tools to confront other Churches' views, but often produced mystifications and misinterpretations. Present at Avignon at the same time as FitzRalph and Barlaam of Seminara, the Carmelite bishop Guido Terreni (also known as Guy de Perpignan) includes a thorough discussion of the “errors” of Greeks, Jacobites, and Armenians in his *Summa de haeresibus et earum confutationibus* (ca. 1338–1342). This comprehensive and ambitious treatise, aimed at confronting all heresies of the past and present, on the model of Augustine's *De haeresibus*, testifies to the misinterpretations and abuses of Eastern doctrines circulating among Western theologians. This article focuses especially on Terreni's discussion of Armenian “heresies,” examining the different layers of his scarcely known *Summa* and placing the Carmelite's contribution into the wider context of the disputes at both the Apostolic See and Cilician Armenia in the first half of the fourteenth century.

As late medieval relations between Latins and Armenians clearly demonstrate, Church union did not always correspond to actual unity between Churches. In spite of the formal unification between the Armenian and the Roman Churches, established in 1198 and later confirmed on the occasion of the Councils of Sis (1307) and Adana (1316), during the fourteenth century this affiliation was still characterized as a precarious achievement and an unwelcome reality for a significant part of the Armenian clergy and believers.¹ While unionist and anti-unionist tendencies coexisted in Armenia, with opposing views in relation to principles of union and autocephaly, the Avignon popes did not cease to look with suspicion at the doctrines and liturgies of the sibling Christians overseas.² Yet, due to diplomatic and military factors, the Holy See and Cilician Armenia maintained their formal religious and political partnership until the kingdom collapsed in 1375. Potentially, the advantages of unitarian avenues were reciprocal: on the one hand, these avenues went hand in hand with Armenian appeals for Western support against the Mamluks and Turks; on the other, they fit with papal designs to implement missionary input in the East and to relaunch Crusader efforts in the Holy Land and in the Aegean.³ Nonetheless, the results were in all respects disappointing, testifying to the

- 1 For the proceedings of the two councils, see Alexander Balgy, *Historia doctrinae catholicae inter Armenos* (Vienna: Typis Congr. Mechitharisticae, 1878), 301–335. On the 1198 union, see Peter Halfter, *Das Papsttum und die Armenier im frühen und Hohen Mittelalter. Von den ersten Kontakten bis zur Fixierung der Kirchenunion im Jahre 1198* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1996), 189–245, especially 221–232; and Zara Pogossian, “The Armenian Reaction to the Concept of the Primacy of the Roman Church in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,” in *Frontiers in the Middle Ages*, ed. O. Merisalo (Leuven: Fédération internationale des instituts d’études médiévales, 2006), 259–290, at 289–290. On the councils of Sis and Adana see David Bundy, “The Trajectory of Roman Catholic Influence in Cilician Armenia: An Analysis of the Councils of Sis and Adana,” *The Armenian Review* 45.3 (1992): 73–89.
- 2 I have borrowed the expression from Deno John Geanakoplos, *Interaction of the “Sibling” Byzantine and Western Cultures in the Middle Ages and the Italian Renaissance (330–1600)* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976). On Armenian unionists and anti-unionists, see François Tournebiz, *Histoire politique et religieuse de l’Arménie* (Paris: Picard, 1900), 320–327.
- 3 Kenneth Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204–1571)*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1976–1984), 1: 177–194; Bernard Hamilton, “The Armenian Church and the Papacy at the Time of the Crusades,” *Eastern Churches Review* 10 (1978): 61–88; Norman Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades, 1305–1378* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 9–49; Norman Housley, *The Later Crusades 1274–1580: From Lyon to Alcazar* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1992), 25–39, 53–65.

ambivalent oscillation between formal union and suspicions of unorthodoxy, courteous diplomatic contacts and unfulfilled requests of support.⁴

Fourteenth-century popes never renounced the prospect of reinforcing Roman obedience in Armenia. Attempts at securing such obedience resulted in a number of interventions, including the mobility of missionaries, legates, and theologians and the consolidation of a Roman hierarchy in Greater and Lesser Armenia. This enabled the circulation, across the Mediterranean, of missives, codices, and pamphlets, alongside translating endeavors and the encouragement of the teaching of Latin and Armenian.⁵ Moreover, one of the prominent responses undertaken within the intellectual milieu of the Avignon court as regards the Armenians was the promotion of theological consultation and the production of polemical writings.

The Avignon popes often promoted theological reflection, submitting texts and doctrines for consideration to trusted advisors. It was particularly through the initiative of John XXII that the defense of orthodoxy was solidly anchored to the advice given by theologians and canonists, who were on many occasions called upon to express their opinions on important matters. Such issues included the poverty of Christ and the apostles, the beatific vision, magical-religious practices, and the individual positions of thinkers such as Peter of John Olivi, Meister Eckhart, William of Ockham, Michael of Cesena, and Marsile of Padua.⁶ In 1323 John XXII also interrogated the cardinals on the necessity of launching a new crusade.⁷

All of these methods, whether successful or not, were adopted in order to evaluate the alleged errors and heresies of the Oriental Churches. A number of Western theologians active at the Avignon curia during the 1330s and 1340s

4 On the relations between the papacy and the Armenian Church in the later Middle Ages see, among others, Tournebize, *Histoire politique*, 235–400; Peter Cowe, “The Role of Correspondence in Elucidating the Intensification of Latin-Armenian Ecclesiastical Interchange in the First Quarter of the Fourteenth Century,” *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* 13 (2003–4): 47–68; Claude Mutafian, *L’Arménie du Levant*, 2 vols. (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2012), 1: 570–87.

5 See the references in Irene Bueno, “Avignon and the World. Cross-cultural Interactions between the Apostolic See and Armenia,” *Rechtsgeschichte* 20 (2012): 344–346.

6 For a synthesis of John XXII’s theological consultations, see Sylvain Piron, “Avignon sous Jean XXII, l’Eldorado des théologiens,” in *Jean XXII et le Midi*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux 45 (Toulouse: Privat, 2012): 357–391. On the centrality of the Avignonese curia in the intellectual panorama of Europe, see Richard Southern, “The Changing Role of Universities in Medieval Europe,” *Historical Research* 60 (1987): 133–146.

7 Auguste Coulon, *Lettres secrètes et curiales du pape Jean XXII (1316–1334) relatives à la France*, 2 vols. (Paris: Boccard, 1906), 2: 281–318.

began to examine and refute East Christian doctrines. Authors such as Andrea Doto, Alvaro Pelagio, and Richard FitzRalph compiled individual treatises against Greeks or Armenians, occasionally including them within larger anti-heretical collections.⁸ This article examines one such collection, the *Summa de haeresibus et earum confutationibus*, a scarcely investigated anti-heretical treatise written by the Carmelite theologian Guido Terreni (ca. 1270–1342) at the court of Avignon.⁹ A substantial section of this work includes a discussion of the “errors” of the Greeks, Jacobites, Georgians, and Armenians. Regardless of any distinction between the categories of heresy, schism, and infidelity, the Eastern Christians find their place in the book next to the Jews and over eighty heretical sects, who existed from the time of the Church Fathers until Terreni’s age. Terreni’s account of Eastern Christians has thus far been neglected, however. Whereas intellectual historians have focused mostly on his contribution to Western theology, his involvement in the East-West confrontation has so far attracted little attention.¹⁰ Yet, far from being the simple output of individual reflection, what Guido has to say about the Eastern Churches needs to be placed in the wider context of East-West negotiations and intellectual confrontations at the papal curia of Avignon. Having analyzed elsewhere Guido’s discussion of the Greeks, I will here focus on his account of the Armenians.¹¹ This essay sheds light on the connections between the Carmelite’s contribution and the wider theological consultation on the Armenians that took place at the time of Benedict XII and Clement VI. Moreover, a discussion of the manuscript

- 8 Andrea Doto draws on the *Thesaurus veritatis fidei* by Bonaccorso of Bologna and offers it to John XXII in 1326. See Jacques Quéatif-Jacques Échart, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum*, 2 vols. (Leuven: Aedes bibliotheca societatis Jesu, 1961), 1: 156–159; and Antoine Dondaine, “Contra Graecos. Premiers écrits polémiques des dominicains d’Orient,” *Archivum fratrum praedicatorum* 21 (1951): 320–446. See also Alvaro Pelagio, *Colírio da fé contra as heresias*, ed. M. Pinto de Meneses, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1954); Richard FitzRalph, *Summa de quaestionibus Armenorum*, ed. J. Sudoris (Paris, 1512).
- 9 Guido Terreni, *Summa de haeresibus et earum confutationibus* (Paris, 1528). Only a few publications have focused on this text, although they overlook Guido’s refutations of the Eastern Christians. See Romolo Cegna, “Oportet et haereses esse. Guido Terreni su catari e valdesi,” *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 3 (1967) 28–64; and Thomas Turley, “Guido Terreni, Heresy, and the Reconstruction of Tradition: 1317–1342,” in *Tradition and Ecstasy: The Agony of the Fourteenth Century*, ed. N. van Deusen, (Ottawa: The Institute of Mediaeval Music, 1997), 51–68.
- 10 Only a brief reference in Bartomeu Xiberta, *Guiu Terrena. Carmelita de Perpinyà* (Barcelona: Altès, 1932), 78.
- 11 Irene Bueno, “Les erreurs des Orientaux chez Guido Terreni et Alvaro Pelagio,” in *Guido Terreni, O. Carm. (†1342)*, ed. A. Fidora (Barcelona-Madrid: FIDEM, 2015), 241–268.

circulation of the *Summa* and of other anti-Armenian writings produced in Avignon will further highlight aspects of cross-cultural interaction between the papal court and the East during the fourteenth century.

Terreni wrote the *Summa* between 1338 and 1342, towards the end of his life. This work was the last product in a life-long engagement in defense of the Roman orthodoxy. Following his theological studies in Paris, Guido served as bishop and general inquisitor of Majorca, and then as bishop of Elne. In the 1320s, he became a distinguished theological counselor to John XXII. The pope assigned him to numerous commissions investigating heresy and evaluating the doctrines of Ockham, Olivi, and Marsile of Padua. He was called upon to advise the pope on the crucial matters of absolute poverty and papal infallibility, and he always appeared as a fierce defender of the papal position.¹²

The *Summa's* agenda lies within a long-lasting tradition. Lists of errors and polemical writings gained a particular popularity in the late medieval West, where they became distinctive tools for combating heretical dissent, providing inquisitors and clergymen with the theoretical equipment necessary to eradicate errors and heresies. Likewise, these compendia came to play a significant role in the East-West theological confrontation. In the later Middle Ages an increasing number of anti-heretical works were produced in the West as well as the East, with the aim of cataloguing and confronting the alleged errors of Latins, Greeks, Armenians, Jacobites, and Nestorians.¹³

Terreni's *Summa* fits perfectly into this tradition, as he establishes a direct linkage between the refutation of Western heretics and Eastern Christians. This ambitious treatise directly refers to Augustine's catalogue of heresies, which had been taken up by Isidore of Seville:¹⁴ Guido's stated aim was to update and complete this milestone of anti-heretical theorization, providing a comprehensive inventory of all heresies—past and present. The result is a veritable encyclopedia of religious dissent that includes Jews and Eastern

12 On Guido's biography see Paul Fournier, "Gui Terré (Guido Terreni), théologien," in *Histoire littéraire de la France* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1927), 36: 432–473; Bartolomeu M. Xiberta, "De Mag. Guidone Terreni, priore generali ordinis nostri, episcopo Maioricensi et Elnensi," *Analecta ordinis Carmelitarum* 5 (1924) 113–206; Xiberta, *Guiu Terrena*, 1–34.

13 See Tia Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists. Errors of the Latins* (Urbana-Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000); Dondaine, "Contra Graecos," 320–446; Claudine Delacroix-Besnier, *Les Dominicains et la Chrétienté grecque aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1995), 201–271.

14 Augustine of Hippo, "De haeresibus," in *Patrologia Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, ed. J.P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris: J.P. Migne, 1844–1855) (hereafter "PL"), 42: 21–50; *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, ed. W.M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), 8.5.

Christians, heretical groups from late antiquity to the modern sects such as the Manicheans, Waldensians, pseudo-apostles, and Beguines, as well as individuals such as Joachim of Fiore and Peter of John Olivi. If the objective was to provide an exhaustive overview, then it is curious to note that successive readers attempted to update Guido's own work. A late fourteenth-century copy preserved in Caen, for example, integrates into the *Summa* remarks on the heresies of John Wyclif and of the Bohemian Hussites.¹⁵

For each sect or heresy, the Carmelite provides a list of errors. In addition, he includes in the treatise an aspect that he claims had been omitted by Augustine "for the sake of brevity" (*causa brevitatis*): a refutation of every single article.¹⁶ The outcome is both an updated inventory of all heresies and a discussion of each tenet, based essentially on the Scriptures and, to a lesser extent, on patristic authorities, chiefly Augustine. Guido himself justifies the methodology adopted to draft his refutations: his aim is to demonstrate the

15 "De heresi et heretico Wicleff in Anglia sicut dicit venerabilis Thomas Walton carmelita in tertio volumine contra dicta eiusdem Wicleff capitulo 89 quod idem Wicleff mortuus fuit XL annis antequam iste Walteu(n) contra eum scripsit, set eodem XLmo anno auctoritate pape exhumatus et combustus est. Item MCCCCLXVI nova surrexit heresis prope Bohemiam per quendam Iohannem ordinis minorum et suos qui se dicebat Iohannem de Oriente asserens multa contra fidem Ecclesie Christi de beata Virgine et Christo et contra clerum, set in brevi extinctus fuit." ("As the venerable Carmelite Thomas Walton says about the heresy and the heretic Wyclif in England in the third volume against the said Wyclif, chapter 89, namely that Wyclif was dead forty years before Walteu(n) wrote against him, but during that fortieth year, on the pope's authority, he was exhumed and burned. Moreover, in 1466 a new heresy arose near Bohemia, on the initiative of a certain John, friar minor, and his followers, who claimed him to be John from the Orient and stated many things against the faith of the Church of Christ, against the holy Virgin and Christ, and against the clergy, but after a short time he was annihilated.") Caen, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 27, fol. 208v. Guido's *Summa* is at fols. 38r–208v.

16 "Augustinus vero in suis libris copiose quidem haereticorum multorum errores reprobavit, sed causa brevitatis in recitatione haeresum eas reprobare non curavit ut vitaret tedium prolixitatis. Idcirco has haereses per beatum Augustinum sic signatas non ex praesumptione, sed ex humili devotione et fidei zelo, et ut particeps mercedis efficiar quae Dei sapientiam elucidantibus promittitur reprobare studui, necnon et alias quas post sancti Augustini decessum exortas potui reperire." ("In fact, Augustine refuted in his books the errors of many heretics. However, for the sake of brevity in his reading of heresies he did not engage in their refutation, so as to avoid prolixity. Therefore, I sought to refute these heresies pointed out by blessed Augustine not out of presumption, but out of humble devotion, zeal of faith and in order to be part of the reward which is promised to those who reveal the wisdom of God; and I sought also to refute others which appeared after Augustine's death, which I was able to trace.") Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 1r.

truth in the Bible alone, as heretics do not take either the Church doctrine or the Church Fathers into consideration.¹⁷ Similar remarks are, again, to be found in the manuscript of Caen. This is the copyist's comment on Terreni's use of *auctoritates*:

If you ask why Guido does not use canon law against the heretics, or the quotations of the holy doctors of the Church, except for Augustine, I would answer that although he was a great jurist, as shown by his commentary on the *Decretum*, and likewise a great theologian, as shown by his *Quatuor unum*, nevertheless, he chooses, since these heretics do not receive the true faith, to persuade them solely through the Old Testament and the Gospel.¹⁸

Nonetheless, Guido does not use this approach exclusively: when discussing the heresies of the Oriental Churches, for example, he cannot avoid referring directly to the doctrine and authority of the Roman Church as the chief point of reference for grasping what orthodoxy is. Hence, not only does he argue that Greeks and Armenians “err against the faith and the Scriptures” (*errant contra fidem et Scripturam sanctam*), but he repeatedly states that they are in error in so far as they contradict the truth of the Roman Church.¹⁹

But how well informed was Guido Terreni about the Oriental Christians? Misinterpretations and mystifications often undermined the Latin understanding of the Eastern Churches and Guido was certainly not immune to this risk. In particular, his knowledge of Georgians and Jacobites is extremely poor. He records only four alleged errors of the so-called Jacobites, describing them

17 “Et unumquodque contentorum in ipsa haeresi improbabo per Scripturam Sacram, quia haeretici dicta sanctorum et Ecclesiae parvipendunt.” (“And I will prove everything which is contained in that heresy through the Sacred Scripture, since heretics despise the words of the saints and of the Church.”) Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 1v.

18 “Si interrogas cur iste Guido non allegatur contra hereticos iura sacrorum canonum vel dicta sanctorum Ecclesiae doctorum preter quam Augustini, respondeo quod licet fuerit magnus iurista, ut patet in suo commentario super *Decretum*, similiter fuit magnus theologus, ut patet in suo *Quatuor unum* et cetera, tamen quia heretici tales fidei veritates non accipiunt, ideo solum contra eos ex veteri testamento et ex evangelio eos convincit, et cetera.” Caen, BM 27, fol. 207v.

19 Guido argues, for example, about the negation of the *Filioque*: “Hic error expresse adversatur determinationi Sedis apostolicae et sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae quae in his quae fidei sunt non errat.” (“This error openly contradicts the determination of the Apostolic See and of the saint Roman Church, which does not err in matters of faith.”) Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 19r.

in a confused manner: the circumcision of boys; the denial of the sacrament of confession; the custom of marking children on the forehead with a burning iron; and God's one-nature heresy.²⁰ Elsewhere, he points out only one single issue with respect to the *Syriani*: "the *Syriani*, so called after *Syria*, follow all the Greeks' errors, and ought to be equally condemned."²¹ Likewise, Georgians are praised for their stance against the Saracens, but they are also accused of following the doctrines and rites of the Greeks.²²

Conversely, when it comes to the Greeks and Armenians, much larger passages are dedicated to describing their heretical tenets, with twenty-six and thirty errors listed, respectively.²³ Guido's refutations of the Greeks reveal a close convergence between the *Summa* and another anti-heretical work written in around the same period, the *Collyrium fidei contra haereses* by the Franciscan Alvaro Pelagio (terminated after 1344). Just as Guido did, Alvaro sought to provide a comprehensive treatise against old and modern heretics, including Augustine's sects as well as the most reprehensible heretics of his own time. The sixth and last section of the *Collyrium* is dedicated to a refutation of the Greeks, which is comprised of forty-one articles. In spite of minor differences in the organization of the text, this list matches perfectly with the one provided by Guido, testifying to the mutual influence and to the sharing of common references by authors active at the Avignon curia in the same period.²⁴

When starting to compile his *Summa*, and even when writing the section known as *De haeresibus Graecorum*, Guido did not yet know that he was also to include a refutation of the Armenians. The preface, which announces the contents of the work, refers in fact to the Greeks, but does not mention Guido's discussion of other eastern communities.²⁵ Likewise, no reference about

20 Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 28v–29r.

21 "Item Syriani dicti a Syria per omnia sequuntur errores Graecorum et consimiliter sunt damnandi." Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 28r.

22 "Georgiani dicti sunt, quia in proeliis beatum Georgium maxime invocant et colunt. Contra Sarracenos viriliter pugnant, et se Christianos fatentur, sed ritus et errores Graecorum sectantur." ("Georgians are named like this since during battles they especially invoke and worship blessed George and they claim to be Christians, but follow the rite and errors of the Greeks.") Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 29v.

23 For Guido's refutations of the Greeks' errors, see Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 19r–28r; for his discussion of the Armenians' heresies, see 29v–42r.

24 On the refutations of the Greeks by Guido Terreni and Alvaro Pelagio, see Bueno, "Les erreurs des Orientaux."

25 "In hoc opuscolo hunc ordine servabo: nam primo ponam haereses Iudeorum. Secundo Graecorum. Tertio quas refert Augustinus et Isidorus. Quarto eas quas Gervasius recitat presbyter Massiliensis. Quinto loco eas quas in diversis opusculis inveni." ("In this booklet

Armenians appears in the section against the Greeks whilst, in contrast, internal references to the Greeks recur in the section about Armenians.²⁶ These considerations suggest that Guido might have come across a source about the Armenians at a later stage. Which source in particular?

At first sight, the reader is struck by the Carmelite's familiarity with the ongoing discussions concerning the Armenian Church. An introductory statement establishes in vague terms the connection between different Eastern Christian communities: "The Armenians follow in many ways the errors of Greeks, Nestorians, and Jacobites."²⁷ After having briefly discussed six major errors of the Armenians, he addresses their multiple errors (*quomodo multipliciter errant*) in more detail, grouping together thirty items. What he offers is a detailed overview of the chief issues which the Westerners perceived as causing division, focusing on a number of areas: trinitarian and christological issues; the primacy of the pope; the transmission of original sin; the existence of purgatory; salvation and damnation; sacramental theology; fasting practices; the celebration of the Nativity, and other issues. However, closer inspection not only reveals that Terreni's knowledge of the Armenians is second-hand, but also that it is entirely derived from one specific text that he encountered while writing the *Summa*. Reading between the lines of his work, one can easily recognize the well-known booklet, containing a list of 117 errors of the Armenians, written in Latin, nowadays preserved in a later copy housed in the Vatican Archives.²⁸ The Armenian unionist Nersēs Palienc', who had been at the papal curia since 1338, is considered to have been the principal mind behind the list.²⁹ Before setting out for Avignon, Nersēs came

I will follow this order: first, I will place the Jews' heresies; secondly, those of the Greeks; third, those mentioned by Augustine and Isidore; fourth, those mentioned by Gervasius, priest of Marseille; and fifth, those which I found in various booklets.") Guido Terreni, *Summa*, iv.

26 Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 30r and 32r.

27 "Armeni in multis observant Graecorum errores, et Nestorianorum, et Iacobitarum." Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 29v.

28 Vatican City, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Reg. Vat. 62, fols. 110r–120r; edition in *Acta Benedicti XII (1334–1342)*, ed. A. Tăutu (Vatican City: Typis poliglottis Vaticanis, 1958), 119–155; see François Tournèize, "Les cent dix-sept accusations présentées à Benoît XII contre les Arméniens," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 9 (1906): 163–181, 274–300, 352–370.

29 Girolamo Golubovich, *Biblioteca bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente Francese*, 5 vols. (Quaracchi, Collegio di S. Bonaventura, 1906–1927), 4: 338–339; Jean Richard, *La papauté et les missions d'Orient au Moyen Âge (XIII^e–XV^e siècles)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1998), 195–226, 210–214; Jean Richard, "Les Arméniens à Avignon au XIV^e siècle," *Revue des études arméniennes* 23 (1992): 253–264, at 257–259; see Karl

into open conflict with the Armenian clergy and secular powers. Apparently, he had been excommunicated by the *catholicos* James II and even briefly imprisoned, and once released, he fled to Avignon for protection, and there he pretended that he was the archbishop of Manazkert and had been persecuted because of his resolute commitment to union. This is what one learns from his adversary Daniël of Tabrīz, an Armenian Friar Minor who arrived in Avignon as papal legate in 1341 and who examined the accusatory booklet upon papal request. His *Responsio*, rapidly drafted at the papal court in the same year, is a passionate, disdainful reply to every single accusation, aimed at defending the Armenian Church from calumnious and mistaken insinuations.³⁰

However, the impact of the debates held in Avignon about the Armenians went far beyond the quarrel between Nersēs and Daniël. The booklet, which contains 117 errors, should be regarded as part of a wider theological consultation held both within the papal citadel and overseas, which involved the circulation of men, the transfer of books, and the endeavors of interpreters and translators. Indeed, after its first edition, which has not been preserved, the accusatory list was examined by a number of Western and Armenian clerics. Benedict XII was aware that his predecessor John XXII had already been concerned about rumors of “various and diverse errors,” widespread in Greater and Cilician Armenia.³¹ Once he received the accusatory booklet, he decided that it was necessary to ascertain its reliability and so charged the cardinal Bernard of Albi with leading an appropriate *inquisitio*. Accordingly, numerous Armenians and Latin missionaries travelled to Avignon, either voluntarily or having been summoned, in order to give their statements. Among them were also twenty *fratres Armeni* from Florence and other Armenian religious houses located in Italy.³²

Daniël of Tabrīz, who also came to Avignon on this occasion, brought to the papal curia a profession of faith by the *catholicos* James II, and other texts.³³ According to Daniël, seven Armenian books could be found in Avignon at the

Heinrich Schäfer, *Die Ausgaben der Apostolischen Kammer unter Benedikt XII., Klemens VI. und Innocenz VI. (1335–1362)* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1914), 112, 138, 157, 230, 285.

30 Daniel’s refutations are preserved in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 3368, fols. 1r–58v; and edited in Daniel of Tabriz: *Responsio fratris Danielis ad errores impositos Hermenis*, in *Recueil des historiens des croisades, Documents arméniens*, ed. É. Dulaurier, 2 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1869–1906), 2: 559–650; about Nersēs, see 619–620. See also Golubovich, *Biblioteca*, 4: 338–339.

31 *Acta Benedicti XII*, ed. Tăutu, 119.

32 Jean Richard, “Les Arméniens à Avignon au XIV^e siècle,” *Revue des études arméniennes* 23 (1992): 253–264 (259).

33 *Acta Benedicti XII*, ed. Tăutu, 119–120, no. 57.

time, six of which were in the possession of the pope.³⁴ Interpreters skilled in Armenian and Latin translated these works, and perhaps others, “which the Armenians commonly used both in Greater and Lesser Armenia,” in order to make them available for examination. Furthermore, an apostolic notary was charged with the task of recording both the depositions of witnesses and the errors extracted from these books. This is what we read in the introductory note to the list of errors:

[The pope] appointed for that purpose a trustworthy apostolic notary, who wrote down depositions and confessions as they were being released and proven errors as they were being translated or extracted from the said books by trustworthy persons who could understand and speak both languages, namely Armenian and Latin. Consequently, it was found from their depositions and confessions that the Armenians, or at least some of them, held, believed, and taught the articles written below.³⁵

As shown by the introductory note, the pope judged that the finding of this scrutiny demonstrated the veracity of the suspicions. Moreover, this passage suggests that Nersēs Palienc‘ may have been the primary, although not necessarily the only, author of the list as his work is likely to have been revised in the light of the investigation. Indeed, sections of Nersēs’s original text are quoted in Daniël’s *Responsio*, but they are not coincident with the text of the booklet of errors, testifying to later interventions on the first draft of this list.

In any case, at that time the debate about the alleged errors of the Armenians was still only at the beginning. Benedict XII promptly transmitted the investigation’s results to the king of Cilicia Leo V, the *catholicos* Mxit‘ar I, and the high dignitaries of the Armenian Church.³⁶ Moreover, he requested that a council be held in Armenia, where all the errors would be officially rejected in the name of submission to the Roman Church. A few years later, in around 1345, approximately fifty Armenian clergymen effectively gathered at Sis, in

34 The former is preserved in Paris, BnF, MS lat. 3368, fols. 59r–70v; the latter is mentioned by Daniël of Tabriz: see Golubovich, *Biblioteca*, 4: 336–337.

35 “[A]d haec eis certo notario apostolico assignato, qui depositiones et confessiones dum fiebant et errores certos dum de praedictis libris interpretarentur seu extraherentur, per certas personas utramque linguam, scilicet armenam et latinam, intelligere ac loqui scientes, redigebat et redigit in scriptis. Consequenter ex depositionibus et confessionibus eorum inventum est dictos Armenos vel aliquos ex eis tenere, credere et docere articulos infrascriptos.” *Acta Benedicti XII*, ed. Täutu, 119–120, no. 57.

36 That is, the archbishops of Sis, Tarse, Navarzan, Sultanieh, and S. Taddeus. See *Acta Benedicti XII*, ed. Täutu, 114–9, nos. 55–56.

Cilicia, on the occasion of a new council of the Armenian Church. The assembly, which was essentially composed of Latinophiles, produced a new booklet containing a *responsio* for each one of the accusations. This text was heavily inspired by the responses of Daniël of Tabrīz and was an official document aimed at demonstrating that the Armenian Church was orthodox and aligned with Rome.

Evidently, a theologian such as Guido Terreni must have been aware of the significance of these discussions. The composition date of the list of 117 errors (around 1338–1341) demonstrates that he must have had the pamphlet at hand during his stay in Avignon. Indeed, the Carmelite was at the papal curia from 1341 until his death in 1342. At precisely the same time, Armenian unionists such as Nersēs Palienc‘, Yohan K‘r nec‘i, Simeon Bēg, and Daniël of Tabrīz, among numerous others, were also at the papal court.³⁷ Moreover, during his stay in Avignon, Terreni is likely to have come into contact with other eminent theologians engaged in Church union negotiations and debates about Greek and Armenian doctrine. Richard FitzRalph was in Avignon during the same period—before starting to write his *Summa de quaestionibus Armenorum* in the late 1340s, and Barlaam of Seminara, one of the key figures of the Greek-Latin negotiation, arrived at the papal court in 1339–1340.³⁸ Their simultaneous presence in Avignon testifies to the vitality of East-West debates in the intellectual circles of the curia during the period under consideration. In such a receptive environment, the advent of a new, original, and detailed list of errors, written in an accessible language, was likely to attract great attention. Regardless of its reliability, this text was meant to have a relevant impact on the intellectual milieu of Avignon. Indeed, by reading this new source material, Western intellectuals were sharpening various tools, which in different ways contributed to

37 Richard, “Les Arménins à Avignon,” 253–264.

38 On Richard FitzRalph see Katherine Walsh, *A Fourteenth-Century Scholar and Primate: Richard Fitzralph in Oxford, Avignon and Armagh* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 137–147, 152–158; and Chris Schabel, “Richard FitzRalph on the *Filioque* before and after his Conversations with Barlaam the Calabrian,” in *Richard FitzRalph. His Life, Times and Thought*, ed. M.W. Dunne and S. Nolan (Dublin: Four Court Press, 2013), 128–155; on Barlaam de Seminara, see Martin Jugie, “Barlaam de Seminara,” *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1932), 6: 817–834; Martin Jugie, “Barlaam est-il né catholique?,” *Echos d'Orient* 39 (1940–1942): 100–125; Jean Meyendorff, “Un mauvais théologien de l'unité au XIV^e siècle: Barlaam le calabrais,” in *1054–1954. L'Église et les Églises. Neuf siècles de douloureuse séparation entre l'Orient et l'Occident*, 2 vols. (Chevetogne: Éditions de Chevetogne, 1954–55), 2: 47–64; *Barlaam calabro. L'uomo, l'opera, il pensiero*, ed. A. Phyrigos (Rome: Gangemi, 2001).

fostering reunion, or, on the contrary, to emphasizing East-West divergence. Terreni's contribution certainly fits into the latter group.

How, then, does Guido refer to the content of the booklet? First and foremost, he carefully adheres to the list of errors, often copying them word for word. However, the Carmelite re-organizes the material at his disposal, removing repetitions, grouping errors according to type, and omitting those he considers less relevant. Article fifteen of the *Summa*, for example, is a combination of several items (nos. thirty-four to forty-one in the original list), concerning the usual key differences between the Armenian and the Latin Church, including the dual nature of Christ, the celebration of the Nativity, the reception of the Council of Chalcedon, the mixing of water and wine in the Eucharistic sacrament, baptism and rebaptism, and confession. Guido thus groups a heterogeneous set of errors into one, which comprises them all: the denial of Roman primacy.³⁹ Guido's reorganization of the original text responds in this case to his intention to make one particular point: namely, to demonstrate that the Roman Church, instead of the Armenian Church, is the one which is catholic and apostolic.

Guido's synthesizing revision of the 117 errors tends to leave aside topics that he considers less important. This category comprises, among others, the most fabulous and superstitious passages extracted from the booklet. For example, Terreni condenses Nersēs's errors nos. 10, 11, and 12, concerning the condition of infidels and evil people after the Judgment, into one error (no. 6). When dealing with these issues, Guido limits himself to mentioning that, according to the Armenians, "they will be tormented in a sulfurous ocean." However, he overlooks further details on alleged beliefs about worms as big as dragons tormenting these sinners and growing according to the gravity of their faults.⁴⁰ Another passage, which is overlooked by the author, refers, for example, to the creation of angels and the fall of demons throughout the galaxy, and to the return—after having accidentally fallen—of one good angel to the sky, thanks to saint Basil's prayers.⁴¹ The idea that women will be resurrected "in male

39 "Quintus decimus error Armenorum est: Dicunt enim quod ipsi sunt ecclesia catholica habentes pontifices catholicos, quia sequuntur apostolos, et quod ecclesia Romana non est ecclesia catholica, nec apostolica." ("The fifteenth error of the Armenians is: They claim to be the Catholic Church, having Catholic pontiffs, since they follow the apostles, and that the Roman church is not the Catholic, nor the apostolic church.") Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 34v–35r, no. 15.

40 Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 31v–32r, no. 6; *Acta Benedicti XII*, ed. Tăutu, 123–124 nos. 10–12.

41 *Acta Benedicti XII*, ed. Tăutu, 125.

sex” (*in sexu virili*) is also treated very quickly.⁴² Evidently, Terreni was better equipped to discuss topics such as the *Filioque*, the denial of purgatory, or sacramental theology, than with the other original and unusual matters that were surfacing in the anti-Armenian pamphlet.

Most importantly, Guido’s interventions produce a shift in the genre and purpose of the booklet: after his re-elaboration of the text, the list of tenets becomes an actual anti-heretical treatise. This transformation goes hand-in-hand with the changing objectives of his work. In fact, Nersēs’ pamphlet does not contain terms such as “error” and “heresy.” Rather, articles are usually introduced by the recurring formula, “Likewise, Armenians say and hold . . .” (*Item, Armeni dicunt et tenent . . .*). Even if such formulas do not neutralize the controversial intention of the booklet, they nonetheless allow one to grasp the nuances between the original scope of the list and Guido’s particular reception. Indeed, the booklet discredits the beliefs “commonly held by the Armenians” (*quod Armeni communiter tenent*), but it avoids open criticism and limits itself to recording tenets and rituals, rather than overtly denigrate them. On the contrary, Terreni’s intention is to undermine any unitary approach, demonstrating that the Armenians are nothing more than dangerous heretics. The diversity of the two texts is reflected in the way the Armenians’ arguments are classified: as “opinions” (*opinionones*), in the booklet; as actual “errors” (*errores*), pronounced by “heretics” (*haeretici*), in the *Summa*. Guido continuously supports this view with numerous comments in the following vein: “Henceforth they openly say a heresy against the Scriptures”; “Oh you foolish Armenians and slow in belief (Luke: 24:25), abandon your blindness, and do not be disbelieving!”; “The arid-minded Armenians err in this, because without the water of wisdom of the Savior, they make up many irrational, false, and fabulous things”; their Church is defined as the “diabolic and heretical congregation of the Armenians,” and so forth.⁴³

Within this *Summa* against all heresies, reflections against Armenians can be gleaned from the linguistic and conceptual tools that had been long developed and employed by the Roman Church against heterodoxy. For Guido, the association between the Armenians and other heretics from different ages is almost mechanical. Having at hand an actual encyclopedia of all heretical sects, he engages in a creative re-elaboration of this material, suggesting

42 Error no. 29, see Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 42r.

43 “O vos stulti Armeni et tardi ad credendum deponite caecitatem et nolite esse increduli,” Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 34r; “In his errant Armeni aridi mente, quia absque aqua sapientiae Salvatoris muta irrationabilia, falsa et fabulosa confingunt,” 31r; “. . . in congregatione diabolica et haeretica Armenorum,” 34v.

audacious comparisons between Oriental Christians and other religious groups of any period. The most prominent touchstone is obviously the Greeks. At certain points, Guido simply offers the reader the refutations he has already provided with respect to some of the Greeks' errors. This is what he does, for example, when discussing issues such as the rejection of the *Filioque*, the condition of souls until the Last Judgment, the denial of purgatory, the celebration of mass during fasting periods, and the doctrine of sacraments.⁴⁴ Moreover, the Armenians are also juxtaposed with heretics of Late Antiquity, such as Eutyches, the Pelagians, the Serdonites, or the Donatists, and medieval heretics, such as the Manicheans, the Waldensians, Joachim of Fiore, and Peter of John Olivi.⁴⁵ When discussing the Manichean heresy, for example, Terreni observes that "like the Armenians, they reveal to others the sins heard during confessions," offering immediately afterwards the exact cross-reference, "See above, at the nineteenth error of the Armenians" (*Vide supra XIX errore Armenorum*) in order to encourage a comparative analysis of heresies.⁴⁶

MS 891 of the Bibliothèque Mazarine of Paris, a late fourteenth-century copy of the *Summa*, contains a *tabula*, where this comparative approach is pushed to the extreme. What the index provides is a list of eight "errors in which Nestorians, Jacobites, and Armenians are commonly mistaken," (*Errores in quibus communiter errant Nestoriani, Iacobite et Armeni*) including the denial of purgatory, the admission of divorce, the understanding of the Last Judgment, and the celebration of saints' feasts.⁴⁷ In addition, the index enumerates the many similarities between Armenians, Maronites, Saracens, Manicheans, Waldensians, and Pseudo-Apostles. Indeed, the reception of the Oriental Christians appears once again to be filtered and adapted to the categories elaborated by Latin heresiologists.⁴⁸

Which categories? In order to better understand how sibling Christian communities in the East could fit into the Latin category of "heretic," one should turn to the *Summa's* preface, where Terreni defines what heresy is, and what qualifies a heretic as such.⁴⁹ Following Augustine, the author assembles

44 Cf., respectively, Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 30r, 31r, 32r, 40v; 41r–v.

45 Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 30r–v, 35r, 37v.

46 "Errant preterea peccata publice confitendo, et etiam cum Armenis peccata in confessione audita aliis revelando, vide supra XIX errore Armenorum." Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 75v.

47 Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 891, fol. 83v.

48 For the *tabula* see Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 891, fols. 79r–86r.

49 See the section "Quid sit haeresis, et quae faciunt haereticum," Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 3r–4v. On the references for such formulations see Lucy J. Sackville, *Heresy and Heretics in the Thirteenth Century. The Textual Representations*, Heresy and Inquisition in the Middle Ages, 1 (York: York Medieval Press, 2011), 190–200.

the prominent elements that contribute to defining the notion of heresy commonly held by medieval authors: having received the Christian baptism and yet holding “false and erroneous opinions against the truth of faith and the determinations of the Church”; enduring in error, obstinately and secretly; and separating from the unity of the Catholic Church.⁵⁰ Most importantly, Guido claims an opinion to be heretical when it openly contradicts the Sacred Scriptures and the articles of faith.⁵¹ Based on examples drawn from his refutations of the Greeks, he makes a distinction between articles that the Church holds only to be probable (such as the use of unleavened bread during the sacrament of the Eucharist) and articles of faith (as the *Filioque* doctrine). Denying the former does not imply a qualification of heresy; on the contrary, articles of faith cannot be denied without being characterized as heretics.⁵² Thereafter, Guido tackles the idea of heresy from a different perspective, regarding as heretical those opinions, which refuse and contradict the general councils approved by the Apostolic See. Strangely enough, when focusing on the Council of Chalcedon, the author limits himself to denouncing Euthyches, but he does not make any reference to the Armenian Church as non-Chalcedonian. Completely absent from the preface, such a connection will instead be formulated later on, in the main body of his refutations of the Armenians. This again suggests that Guido did not have the Armenians in mind when he started to compile the material for his work. Conversely, he did have in mind the categories outlined in the introduction when he later examined the booklet of the Armenians’ errors.

The analysis of the manuscript tradition of the *Summa* provides supplementary information for the reception of this text among the pontifical entourage. The main biographer of *Guiu Terrena*, Bartolomé Xiberta, identified a dozen manuscripts containing the *Summa*, which attests to a wider circulation of this work than of any of the other works by the same author.⁵³ However, Xiberta’s list is incomplete and does not take into account two important exemplars, which contribute to our knowledge of the early circulation of the treatise. The copy nowadays preserved in Wolfenbüttel is a very elegant, finely illuminated volume (see Figure 1).⁵⁴ The ornate historiated capital on the initial page of the manuscript represents Guido submitting his codex to cardinal Pierre Roger, the future Clement VI, to whom the book was in fact dedicated.

50 Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 3r–v.

51 Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 4v–5r.

52 Guido Terreni, *Summa*, 8v–9r.

53 Xiberta, *Guiu Terrena*, 76–78.

54 Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, MS Cod. guelf. 5.1 Gud.lat.

The evidence from other contemporary manuscripts suggests that the codex was produced and illuminated in a prominent workshop in Avignon.⁵⁵ Moreover, Pierre Roger's coats of arms, represented at the bottom of the page, help to identify the person who commissioned the volume. Given that the *Summa* was completed in 1342, we can without hesitation date the codex to during the pontificate of Clement VI (1342–1352).⁵⁶ Soon after he became pope, the dedicatee of the *Summa* commissioned a precious exemplar of this work, and assigned its decoration to the same artist who had already depicted Terreni's commentary on the *Decretum*.⁵⁷ Within such a refined codex, Guido's refutations of the Eastern Christians found an important place in the pontifical library (Fig. 1).

Yet, we learn elsewhere that these refutations were intended to be circulated even in Armenia. Another exemplar of Guido's *Summa*, which escaped Xiberta, is contained in MS lat. 3365 of the Bibliothèque nationale de France. The colophon contains precious pieces of information regarding the date, the identity of the copyist, and the occasion for the production of the codex:

In the year 1346 from the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ in the month of April, this work was written by me, brother John < de Vergonis >, by God's grace bishop of Sutri, when by mandate of our Lord Pope Clement VI I had to be sent to the Armenians to bring them the articles of faith and the tradition of the Roman Church.⁵⁸

55 I am grateful to Francesca Manzari for confirming the provenance of the manuscript from an atelier in Avignon and identifying the artist who illuminated it as the Master already studied in Chiara Frugoni and Francesca Manzari, *Immagini di San Francesco in uno "Speculum humanae salvationis" del Trecento* (Rome: Editrici Francescane, 2006); Francesca Manzari, *La miniatura ad Avignone al tempo dei papi, 1310–1410* (Modena: Panini, 2006), 101–114.

56 On Pierre Roger's personal library and on the possibility it may have contained a copy of the *Summa* see Etienne Anheim, "La bibliothèque personnelle de Pierre Roger/Clément VI," in *La vie culturelle, intellectuelle et scientifique à la cour des papes d'Avignon*, ed. J. Hamesse (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 1–48 (43).

57 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 1453. See Manzari, *La miniatura ad Avignone*, 108–109.

58 "A nativitate Domini nostri Jhesu Christi, anno Domini M CCC XLVI de mense aprilis, scriptum fuit hoc opus per me fratrem Johannem < de Vergonis >, Dei gratia Sutrinum episcopum, quando de mandato domini nostri pape Clementis VI debui mitti ad gentem Armenorum ad portandum eisdem articulos fidei et traditionem Ecclesie Romane." Paris, BnF, lat. 3365, fol. 189v.



FIGURE 1 Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, MS Cod. guelf. 5.1 Gud. Lat., fol. 1r. This figure is published in colour in the online edition of this journal, which can be accessed via <http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com/content/journals/15700674>.

This miscellany, which the bishop of Sutri was supposed to transfer to Armenia, comprises the most complete dossier pertaining to the recent debates over the Armenian Church.⁵⁹ It contains: (1) a list of seventy-eight articles of faith of the Roman Church, based on “the book sent by the Armenians,” i.e., the proceedings of the Council of Sis;⁶⁰ (2) a list of the errors of the Armenians, grouped by subject (*circa sacramenta*, and *contra Scripturam*), extracted from the proceedings of the Council of Sis; (3) the proceedings of the Council of Sis, in 116 articles; (4) an abbreviated version of Nersēs’s list, in 116 errors; (5) Guido’s refutations of the Armenians’ errors, followed by a detailed summary listing thirty prepositions and the relevant errors for each of them; and (6) Guido’s refutations of the Greeks and Jacobites, followed by a summary listing twenty-six prepositions of the Greeks.

The book never reached its destination as, in the end, John de Vergonis never left for Armenia. Nonetheless, it testifies to a deliberate attempt by the entourage of the pope to synthesize the available knowledge about the Armenian Church within a single codex that was addressed to the communities overseas. This body of knowledge grew progressively whenever it circulated from one edge of the Mediterranean to the other. One can easily detect the repetitive feature of the documentation collected within the miscellany: indeed, it comprises a series of texts, which were all compiled, even if in different ways, from the one and sole available source: the list of 117 errors. Drawing on this work, both Latin and Armenian authorities compiled a varied panorama of texts, including lists of errors, lists of articles of faith, refutations, and responses to accusations.

For the purpose of John de Vergonis’s mission to Armenia, it was not necessary to provide a full exemplar of the *Summa*. The bishop of Sutri instead limited himself to transcribing Guido’s refutations of the Greeks, Jacobites, and Armenians. He reversed their order in such a way that the discussion of Armenians would be the first to appear, even though various cross-references make this text dependent on the one against the Greeks. Furthermore, the copyist inserted tables of contents, which are much more accurate for the discussion of the Armenians’ errors than those of the Greeks.

As this volume demonstrates, by as early as 1346, only four years after the *Summa* was completed, Guido’s refutations of the Orientals started circulating independently from the rest of his work. Other extant manuscripts testify to similar selection criteria. MS Vat. lat. 988 was copied in Leuven in 1455, on the occasion of Philip III of Brabant’s plan to launch a crusade against the Turks.

59 On this manuscript see Golubovich, *Biblioteca*, 4: 351–352.

60 BnF, lat. 3365, fol. 1r.

Together with Thomas's *De articulis fidei et Ecclesiae sacramentis*, the codex contains Guido's refutations of a number of *achademici*, of Greeks, Georgians, and Armenians, and of Jews and Muslims.⁶¹ Indeed, a full transcription of Guido's work would have been redundant and the selected material perfectly suited the overall purpose of the collection.

MS Pal. lat. 679 of the Vatican Library is even more eloquent about the features of the later circulation of Guido's *Summa*. This collection was compiled in the fifteenth century—possibly prior to the Council of Florence—and contains a selection of texts about the Greeks and about the *potestas* of the pope. In this case, the copyist only extracted Guido's refutations of the Greeks. Other texts included in the miscellany are the treatises *contra Graecos* by Bonaccurse of Bologne and Thomas Aquinas, and the profession of faith imposed on the Greeks on the occasion of the Second Council of Lyon. As shown by these various examples, Guido's work was perfectly suitable for a selective use, and his treatment of the Oriental errors gained a greater impact within miscellanies, which grouped together various works on similar topics.

A few decades earlier, the memory of fourteenth-century debates about the Armenians—split between unity, schism, and heresy—was to be entrusted to the pontifical archives. In the second half of the fourteenth century, the booklet of 117 errors was copied into Vatican Register 62, which collates papal letters and various other texts concerning overseas populations identified as “tartars,” “infidels,” and “schismatics” (*negotia tartarorum parcium ultramarinarum et infidelium ac scismaticorum*).⁶² Most documents pertain to the four pontificates of Clement V, John XXII, Benedict XII, and Clement VI; in addition, a few letters addressed to Innocent III were also copied in the last folios of the volume.

As we learn from a note by the copyist, no letter issued by Saracens, schismatics, and Mongols was normally copied within papal registers. Some of these letters, however, were preserved inside a chest in the *archyvum* of the Roman Church (*de archyvo Ecclesie Romane de quodam coffro*). The copyist adds that

61 *Codices Vaticani latini*, ed. A. Pelzer, 2.1, Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae codices manuscripti recensiti iussu Pii XI pontificis maximi (Vatican City: Vatican Library, 1931), no. 988, pp. 462–464.

62 Vatican City, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Reg. Vat. 62, fol. 1r. On this register see James Muldoon, “The Avignon Papacy and the Frontiers of Christendom. The Evidence of Vatican Register 62,” *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 17 (1979): 125–195; and Thomas Thanase, “L’universalisme romain à travers les registres de lettres de la papauté avignonnaise,” *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome—Moyen Âge* (on-line) 123.2 (2011), available online at <http://mefrm.revues.org/641> (accessed 25 August 2014).

the same chest also contained “numerous other letters, written in gold as well as purple, which cannot be translated here, since there are no interpreters nor scribes who are capable of copying them.”⁶³ The presence in the pontifical archive of a register entirely dedicated to oriental matters testifies to the intention to revive the universal mission of the papacy through the production of the documents themselves. The very existence in the archive of the Avignon popes of a chest containing letters written in different, and often incomprehensible, languages, originating from the lands overseas, bears witness to the urge to organize in a unitary manner the available documentation pertaining to the world outside Europe. It is not a coincidence that the 117 errors of the Armenians found a place within this peculiar register. As we have seen, this accusatory pamphlet was the outcome of a complex operation, leading two distinct cultural universes to confront each other in Avignon and continue the discussion in Cilicia and beyond. This was a complicated process, which involved passing through the linguistic, theological, and procedural filters of the curial culture and mobilizing, on the two ends of the Mediterranean, witnesses and theologians from the East and from the West. All this ultimately proved how difficult it was to foster plausible perspectives of unity based on theological confrontation, even when formal unity between the two Churches had already been established.

63 “Est sciendum quod in registris felicitatis recordationis Clementis V, Iohannis XXII, Benedicti XII et Clementis VI nulla littera prefatis summis pontificis missa per infideles, scysmaticos, sarracenos et tartaros registrata invenitur. Ideo supradicta de dicto coffro hic sunt posita. Est etiam sciendum quod in dicto coffro sunt multe alie littere tam auro quam causto scripte que non possunt hic alia via explicari sermone, quia non sunt interpretes seu explicatores nec scriptores qui scirent contrafacere.” ASV, Reg. Vat. 62, fols. 4r–v.