

# THE ARMENIAN TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE

MANUEL M. JINBASHIAN

## THE CLASSICAL ARMENIAN TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

### I - A Brief History

King Tiridates II declared Christianity the state religion of Armenia at the beginning of the fourth century Before Christ.<sup>1</sup> When Christianity became the state religion charitable institutions were opened and schools established for the training of the clergy. The language of instruction in these schools was Greek or Syriac depending on their geographic location.<sup>2</sup>

Christianity could not resist the resurgence of the old pagan religion because its means of communicating the message of the Gospel was foreign to the people, they simply could not understand it. The members of the clergy, according to Pharbetsi, "*Wasted their days in learning the Syriac language, because the language of the liturgy of the church and the readings in the monasteries were in Syriac. As a result, the Armenians could understand nothing, nor get any benefit, since Syriac was unintelligible to them.*"<sup>3</sup>

The necessity of having an alphabet was evident. The church needed to have the means of communicating the message of the Gospel to the people in a language they could understand and a script they could read.<sup>4</sup>

The two principle sources for the study of the Armenian translation of the Bible are: (i) the historians of the fifth century Korioun, Ghazar Pharbetsi and Movses Khorenatsi;<sup>5</sup> (ii) the text of the Bible itself. The small volume written by Korioun, ca. 441-450, a disciple of Mashtots, is our main source, the other two historians rely on his account of the story. Korioun says:

*"The blessed Mashtots, with the permission of the king and the consent of saint Sahak, took a group of young men with him and...set off in the fifth year of Vramshapuh, the king of Armenia. He went to the land of Arami, to the two cities of Syria, called Edesia(Edessa) and Amid.<sup>6</sup> He presented himself to the holy bishops, the first of whom was called Babilas<sup>7</sup> and the second Akakios ... He divided the young disciples he had with him into two groups, he set some to study Syriac in Edessa and the rest to study Greek, and sent them over to the city of Samusata."<sup>8</sup>*

According to Korioun, while in Edessa, Mashtots discovered the alphabet. Then he gathered the disciples who had remained with him in Edessa and went to Samusata to join the others. In Samusata he met a certain Greek grammarian, called Hrophanos (Ροφινυζ or Ροπαυοζ?), who knew how to write characters since he was a scribe,<sup>9</sup> [and] who helped him fashion and refine the forms of the characters he had invented. It was in Samusata that Mashtots embarked upon the translation of the Bible with the collaboration of two of his disciples, Hovhan from the canton of Ekeghiat and Hovsep from Paghin. Korioun continues:

*"He began to translate the scriptures starting with the proverbs of Solomon. Solomon at the beginning of his book recommends that one should familiarize oneself with wisdom saying 'Մանաչել զիմաստութիւն եւ զիմաստ, իմանալ զբանս հանճարոյ:՝<sup>10</sup> This verse was written by the same scribe who also taught the disciples how to write the letters."<sup>11</sup>*

It is interesting to note that the base text of the translation of the *Proverbs* is not indicated. Since Samusata was in Syria, under Iranian control, and since Korioun later mentions that Hovsep and Yeznik were sent to Syria to translate the works of the Syrian fathers, one could reasonably assume that the base text was Syriac. Mashtots and his disciples then returned to Armenia to continue the work. Korioun adds:

*"At that time the blessed and desirable land of Armenia became indeed marvellous; for through the two companions [Sahak and Mashtots], arrived suddenly to the land Moses the law giver with the group of the prophets, the proficient Paul with the whole band of apostles, along with the world Saving Gospel of Christ. They all spoke Armenian."<sup>12</sup>*

Movses Khorenatsi adds an interesting detail:

*"Mashtots immediately embarked upon the translation, beginning wisely with the proverbs of Solomon, and all the twenty two canonical books (յայտնի)<sup>13</sup> and the New Testament."*

## II - The Question of Base Text

It is generally accepted among scholars that there has been at least two translations of the scriptures into Armenian: the first, done before the ecumenical council of Ephesus in 431; and the second, a revision done on the basis of the manuscripts brought back from Constantinople by the Armenian delegation to the council. If the revision undertaken after 431 was a fundamental one, as it is generally accepted, we need to raise the question of textual affinities. Since the first translation begun in Syria by Mashtots and his disciples, and completed in Armenia, was from the Syriac and the revision from the Greek,

we need to ask ourselves what then the "vorlage" of the Armenian Bible was?

The views of modern scholars vary on this point: there are those who claim that the first translation was done from the Syriac and then revised on the basis of the Greek manuscripts brought from Constantinople; others, however, think that both the translation and the revision were done from the Greek. Finally, there are some scholars who think that some books were originally translated from the Syriac while others from the Greek, but all were revised on the basis of the Greek manuscripts after 431.<sup>14</sup>

The world of scholarship has discovered two different translations of *Ecclesiastes*, *Song of Songs*, *I & II Chronicles* and *Sirach*. Generally, scholars think that one of them represents the first translation made from the Syriac and the other, the revision from the Greek.<sup>15</sup> The two books of Chronicles have been the subject of great controversy for a number of years; Khalatians thinks that one of the translations was done before 431 from the Syriac, and the second is the revision on the basis of the Greek.<sup>16</sup> A. Baumstark and L. Ter-Petrosian have both studied the Armenian *Psalter* and both have come to the conclusion that there are affinities between the Armenian translation of the *Psalms* and the Syriac. But interestingly enough, the list of similarities they present diverge from one another at a number of points.<sup>17</sup> Bo Johnson indicates that we see affinities between the Armenian *I Samuel* and the *Peshitta*. In his view, one of the best indices for the study of this problem is the change of word order due to the Syriac.<sup>18</sup> We also need to keep in mind the fact that we do not know if the text utilized was the *Peshitta*. It could well be an older version as some scholars think is the case with the New Testament.<sup>19</sup>

### III - The Nature of the Translation

The Armenian translation of *Genesis* is a literal translation. My research, however, has shown that despite the literal character of the translation, a number of translation techniques described in modern translation theory were extensively utilized. The question of analysis, transfer and restructuring from the source language to the receptor language, are translation techniques which are as old as there have been translations. These translation principles and techniques, were often implemented unconsciously, most of which went on in the mind of the translator(s). The Armenian translators were familiar with the grammatical works of Greek authors and have translated them very early on. In the preface to the *Commentary on the Octateuch* (attributed by the Armenian manuscripts to Cyril of Alexandria, but which is the work of Eusebius of Emesa), the author explains that there is nothing more dangerous than to translate literally - that is word for word. It is worthwhile to quote a long passage from this preface, because it indicates the understanding of the theory that lay behind the translation of the Armenian Bible:

*"Si l'on veut traduire le sens de toutes les langues avec les mêmes mots, on n'arrivera pas à exprimer la pensée des mots qui sont dits. En effet, il y a beaucoup de mots particuliers à chaque langue qui, s'ils demeurent là où ils sont, semblent beaux, lumineux, compréhensibles et convenables à ceux qui en usent, mais si l'on transpose ces mêmes mots dans d'autres langues, ils ne présentent pas bien le sens de la pensée. Nous en trouvons beaucoup et de toutes sortes dans la langue des Hébreux et dans celle de leurs voisins, le syriaque. Or, chez les traducteurs de l'AT, on voit beaucoup d'obscurités chez ceux qui ont traduit d'après les mots pour avoir l'air de faire une oeuvre plus exacte: dans leur zèle de traduire d'après les mots, ils n'ont pas pris garde à la succession des pensées, qui était gâtée par les mots. C'est le défaut que les savants imputent surtout à Aquila: ne prétendant à rien qu'à traduire et à sauvegarder les mots tels quels, il fut, quant à l'expression du sens, jugé défectueux par les autres (traducteurs) qui, sans se soucier d'explicitier (la forme) des vocables, se sont efforcés d'exprimer leur sens avec évidence; c'est justement là tout l'effort de la traduction ... Si l'on ne se conforme pas à cette méthode, on multiplie les difficultés pour les lecteurs, du fait qu'on ne s'exerce pas à éclaircir la pensée par l'expression et qu'on impose de force à l'enchaînement qui se présente un autre sens que les mots eux-même ne sauraient accepter"<sup>20</sup>.*

Even if there are vestiges of Syriac, the Armenian translation of the *Genesis* constitutes a synthesis in which the old Syriac "vorlage" and the Greek base texts have been poured into the mold of the Armenian language and culture, producing a homogenous and uniform text, despite some of the awkward renderings and semitisms. The language is classical and flowing. Through the use of various particles, pronouns and adverbs Armenian shows a precision which is lacking in both the Syriac and the Greek. Often the simple parataxis of the base text is turned into hypotaxis. These particles and pronouns are employed to clarify the logical relationship between the clauses. The temporal and conditional framework has been made explicit to indicate as to who does what, to whom, when and where. These amplifications in the form of explicit and implicit information have given the translation a special character.

The Armenian translators show no poverty in their use of vocabulary but have considerable skill in handling synonyms. They, at least in the *Pentateuch* and the *New Testament*, were well aware of the polysemy of words. In their desire to avoid monotony and to be more precise in giving the semantic content of a word, they have rendered one and the same morpheme in the original, by more than one equivalent, trying to distinguish between the various connotations of a word according to its context. Conversely, because the Armenian translators were aware of the polysemy of words, the same Armenian morpheme was used to render several equivalents in the original.

The Armenian translation of the *Bible* possesses such characteristics which guaranteed its successful use from the very beginning. It had a superior literary quality and a magnificent style. Both catholicos Sahak and Mashtots were able to give the translation a polished language and an up to the mark stylistic and artistic accoutrement which became the object of imitation by later authors.<sup>21</sup>

## MODERN ARMENIAN TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE

### I - A Brief History

I propose that in this section we have a look briefly on the history of the translations of the *New Testament* and the whole *Bible* - including the Deuterocanonicals - during the 19th and 20th centuries both in Eastern and Western Armenian. We shall start with the Eastern Armenian Translations.

#### A - Eastern Armenian Translations

1 - The first Eastern Armenian Scripture translation was undertaken by the Swiss German missionary Rev. A. H. Dittrich from the Basel Mission who had settled at Shushi, in the mountainous Karabagh Region of Armenia.<sup>22</sup> It is true that Rev. Dittrich studied Eastern Armenian, but he had at least two outstanding Armenian co-workers who helped him in his translational endeavors: "Deacon Movses" (*Մովսէս Սարկաւազ*), who helped him in the translation of the *New Testament*<sup>23</sup> and Rev. Abraham Amirkhanyants, who helped him revise the New Testament and who later translated the *Old Testament*.<sup>24</sup> Rev. Dittrich and Deacon Movses translated first of all the *Gospel of Matthew* from the classical Armenian. This translation was printed in diglot, Grabar and eastern Armenian in two columns, by the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS), at the Lazarian Institute in Moscow 1831. The title page reads:

*Սուրբ Աւետարան ըստ Մատթէոսի: Հստ հարազատ նախնի թարգմանութեան հանդերձ հաւատարիմ քաջայայտութեամբ ի հասարակաց լեզուի: Ի հայրապետութեան տեառն տեառն Եփրեմայ արժանընտիր եւ աստուածարեալ կաթողիկոսի Ամենայն Հայոց եւ ասպետի: Յառաջնորդութեան Ռոսիաքնակ Հայոց առաքելաշախիղ տեառն Ներսէսի սրբազան արքեպիսկոպոսի եւ ասպետի: 1831, ի Մոսկով, ՌԻՉ: Ի տպագրատան հայկական ճեմարանի Տեարք Հազարեանց:*

*"The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. According to the authentic old translation, with a faithful rendering (lit. explanation) into the common language. During the patriarchate of the worthily elected and Holy Pontiff and Squire, Lord Yephrem Catholicos of all Armenians. During the prelatore of the follower of the conduct of the apostles, His Grace, Lord and Squire, Nerses Archbishop of the Armenians dwelling in*

*Russia. (Moscow, in the printing house of the Armenian School of the Squires Lazarian, 1831), the Armenian calendar 1280 (+551 = 1831).*<sup>25</sup>

And the complete NT was printed in diglot by BFBS in Moscow 1834. It was nine years later that the *Psalms* were translated and printed by BFBS in Smyrna 1843.

The translation of the NT by Rev. Dittrich and his native associates was revised and reprinted in diglot, with the addition of cross references at the bottom of each page in Constantinople 1850, 1856 and 1871. It is important to note that the translations and their revisions were based upon the classical Armenian.

Rev. Amirkhantiants, mentioned above, worked as an agent of the BFBS in Tbilissi. He took upon himself the revision of the *Psalms* printed in 1843 on the basis of the *Masora* and had it then printed in Constantinople 1879. He subsequently revised the NT, checking it with the Greek original and had it printed in Constantinople 1882. In 1883 Rev. Amirkhantiants completed the translation of the rest of the OT from the *Masora* and the whole *Bible* was printed in Constantinople at the end of the same year.<sup>26</sup> It is this *Bible* that has been reprinted on a good number of times without any revisions. The fact is that this translation has remained more or less fossilized and it is full of archaic classical constructions. Undoubtedly, this translation has its redeeming virtues because of its textual base - viz., Hebrew for the OT and Greek for the NT - but it should be revised to make it readable to the public today.

In 1969, with the blessing of his Holiness Catholicos Vazken I of all Armenians, three professors from the Theological Academy of Holy Etchmiadzin: Profs. A. Hadidian, P. Shahpazian and S. Antosian, translated the four *Gospels* and the *Acts of the Apostles* from classical Armenian. The translation of the NT was completed by the same team in 1975 and was printed by the UBS in 1976. I must underline the fact that this was the second translation of the *New Testament* officially endorsed and fully financed by the Armenian Orthodox Church - the first being the Grabar NT translated during the first half of the fifth century.

The title page reads:

ՆՈՐ ԿՏԱԿԱՐԱՆ: Արևելահայերէն նոր թարգմանութիւն  
համեմատութեամբ Յունարէն բնագրի: Մայր Աթոռ Ս. Էջմիածին:  
NEW TESTAMENT. Eastern Armenian new translation, compared with  
the Greek original. The Mother See, Holy Etchmiadzin.

On the back of the title page we read:

Հրամանաւ Տ. Տ. Վազգէն Առաջին, Վեհափառ եւ Սրբազնագոյն  
Կաթողիկոսի Ամենայն Հայոց: (By permission of His Holiness  
Catholicos Vazken I of all Armenians).<sup>27</sup>

This translation has been reprinted by the UBS several times, the latest being in 1990. The language and style of this NT has been criticized because all three translators are people who have immigrated to Armenia from the Middle East and are not native Eastern Armenian speakers. The NT has been recently thoroughly revised. The persons working on the revision are Prof. P. Shahpazian of the old team, and the Rev. Dr. Manuel Jinbachian, UBS Europe Middle East Regional Translation Co-ordinator, as the translation consultant. The revised NT was printed by the UBS in 1992.

After the completion of the translation of the NT in 1975, His Holiness Catholicos Vazken I, set up a new committee under the chairmanship of the dean of the Theological Academy in Etchmiadzin, Fr. Dr. Yeznik Petrossian, to continue with the translation of the OT. The base text for this translation was to be the Grabar *Bible* of the Mekhitarist father, Fr. Arsen Pakradouni, printed in Venice 1860. The translation committee was composed of professors from the Theological Academy, the University and scholars from the Matenadaran.

Of the members of the translation committee, besides Dean Yeznik Petrossian, I should mention the names of Dr. Antranik Zeytounian who translated the *Pentateuch* and *I-III Maccabees*; Dr. Levon Ter-Petrossyan who translated the *Psalms*; Dr. Yervant Melkonian, the editor of the Church monthly Etchmiadzin, who translated *Ezekiel* and the *Minor Prophets*; Prof. Dr. Arshalouys Ghazinian who translated the *Proverbs*, *Song of Songs*, the *Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sirach* and the *Wisdom of Solomon*; Prof. Dr. Boghos Khatchaterian who translated the *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah* and *Lamentations*; Prof. Dr. Pavel Sharapkhianian who translated *Joshua*, *Judges* and *Ruth*; Prof. Dr. Petros Petirian who translated *Job* and *Daniel*; and the late Prof. Dr. Aram Ter-Ghevondian who translated *I-IV Kings* and *I-II Chronicles*. Prof. Ter-Ghevondian had finished the first draft of the six books and the second draft of *I & II Kings* when he passed away. His work was completed by Dr. Zeytounian. To this group joined from the UBS in 1985, the Rev. Dr. Manuel Jinbachian, as both consultant and exegetical controller. His duty was to compare the translation of the OT with the *Septuagint*, the *Peshitto* and the *Masora*, and foot note the major semantically significant differences between the classical Armenian and the *Masora*.

The OT translation, including the deuterocanonical books, was completed in 1994 and printed by the UBS in 1995. I should mention the fact that this is indeed the second official *Bible* translation sanctioned and blessed by the Armenian Orthodox Church since the first translation under the supervision of Catholicos Sahak and the learned church doctor Mesrop Mashtots. The translation of this new *Bible* was completed and presented to His holiness Vazken I, Catholicos of all Armenians. He gave His official blessing and a paternal word, dated 14 August 1994, which is printed on the second page of the Bible. But

unfortunately he did not see the printed *Bible* because he died soon after the end of the translation.

The Title page reads:

ԱՍՏՈՒԱԾԱՇՈՒՆՉ Մատեան, Հին եւ Նոր Կտակարաններ, Արեւելահայերէն Նոր Թարգմանութիւն, Հրատարակութիւն Հայաստանի Աստուածաշնչային Ընկերութեան, Մայր Աթոռ Ս. Էջմիածին 1994-ՌԵԽԳ:

*BIBLE, Old and New Testaments, New Eastern Armenian Translation, Published by the Bible Society in Armenia, Mother See Holy Etchmiadzin, 1994.*

On the back of the title page we read:

Հրամանաւ Տ. Տ. Վազգէնի Առաջնոյ, Վեհափառ եւ Սրբազնագոյն Կաթողիկոսի Ամենայն Հայոց:

*By Permission of His Holiness Vazken I, Catholicos of all Armenians.*

There are a number of other translations done in Eastern Armenian by individuals of parts of the scriptures - such as, Perj Proshian who translated the four *Gospels* in 1884; Galoust Ter-Mekertchian who translated *Matthew* 1-5 sometime at the turn of the century; Tirayr Ter-Hovhannisian who translated the *Acts*, *Romans* and *Galatians* during 1927-1928. The works of the three above mentioned translators are still in manuscript form.<sup>28</sup>

## B - Western Armenian Translations

1 - The first modern Western Armenian translation of scriptures was that undertaken by Fr. Hovhannes Zohrabian of the Mekhitarist Order of Venice. In 1821 he started to translate some familiar OT stories into modern Western Armenian from the classical language. He continued to translate the four *Gospels*. He was encouraged in his endeavors by the BFBS and he finished the translation of the NT in 1825. This translation was checked by the French scholar J. Saint-Martin and printed the same year in diglot (Grabar/western Armenian) by the BFBS in Paris.<sup>29</sup> It was reprinted after some minor revisions in diglot, and the translated text alone in Paris 1828. The title page reads:

Տեառն Մերոյ ՅԻՍՈՒՍԻ ՔՐԻՍՏՈՍԻ Նոր Կտակարանը: Գրաբառէն՝ հաւատարմութեամբ հիմակու գրտի հայերէն խօսված լեզուն դարձուած. Հստ խնդրոյ հոգեւեր Հաւատացելոց: Աշխատասիրութեամբ Տն Յովհաննէս Վարդապետի Զօհրապեան կոտսանդնուպօլսեցոյ: Երկրորդ տպագրութիւն գրաբառէն գատ: 1828-ՌՄՀԷ, Ի ՓԱՐԻՉ, Ի Տպարանի Տնտէի Տիրրէ:

*The New Testament of our Lord JESUS CHRIST. Translated faithfully from the Grabar into the modern spoken language. Upon the request of the pious believers, With the diligent labor of Father Hovhannes Vardapet Zohrapian of Constantinople. Second printing without the grabar 1828 (1277 + 551 = 1828), Paris, In the printing press of Dondé Dupré.*



He embarked upon the translation of the OT soon after the revision and reprinting of the NT, but his death put an end to his work. His language is full of dialectal and awkward forms, with a strong Grabar and Middle Armenian influence.

Benjamin Barker, the BFBS agent in Smyrna, wrote in his report of 1828, that

*"the learned Armenian clergy and laymen find the style too low... but... instead of the work being faulty, it is commendable, on that account, as the women and less instructed portion of the Armenian nation will be able to understand it."*<sup>30</sup>

2 - Zohrabian's NT translation was revised by J. B. Adger, an American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions missionary (henceforth ABCFM), and printed in two volumes in Smyrna 1841 and 1842 and in one volume in 1842. In the annual report of the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM we read :

*"A new translation, on the basis of Zohrab's, was made at Smyrna, by Armenian scholars, under the superintendence of Mr. Adger, assisted in two or three of the Epistles by Mr. Dwight. It was printed at Smyrna, in the year 1840, at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society."*<sup>31</sup>

John B. Adger was the first ABCFM missionary who studied seriously the classical Armenian Bible text. He had compared the classical Armenian NT text with the Greek original and had found it extremely faithful. In 1843, he assumed responsibility for the publication of Armenian scriptures at the missionary press in Smyrna. When he was asked to prepare the above mentioned revision of Zohrabian's NT, because he was greatly impressed by the skills of the fifth century Armenian translators, he wrote to the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM the following report:

*"If possible I would wish to avoid the necessity of giving offense to the nation by altering their old version, a version for which they entertain feelings of the deepest veneration, and one which well deserves their esteem ... Excepting some interpolations by subsequent copyists, none of which however are of a serious nature, the version is truly admirable."*<sup>32</sup>

The names of the two Armenian scholars who worked with Mr. Adger are mentioned, in the following Annual Report (1845, 86-87), as being Baron Sarkis and Mr. Mugurdich Thomasian. Baron Sarkis is most probably Sarkis Varjabed Hovhannessian, about whom he says:

*"There are few of his countrymen who equal him in Armenian scholarship; and I do not know of one who joins to so much power over his own language an equal acquaintance with the English."*<sup>33</sup>

And concerning Mr. Thomasian he adds: *"He was also my chief assistant in revising the translation of the New Testament; and he was at work, up to the*

time of his departure from Smyrna, upon a translation of the Old Testament into Modern Armenian from the Turkish of Mr. Goodell."<sup>34</sup>

3 - The *Psalms* were translated under the supervision of Mr. H. G. O. Dwight from the *Masora* into modern Western Armenian and was printed in Smyrna 1840. A second edition of the same translation was revised by Mr. Adger, with the help of Sarkis Hovhannessian, and was printed in Smyrna 1843 by ABS.<sup>35</sup>

4 - The Zohrabian NT that Mr. Adger revised in 1842, was revised a second time under the supervision of H. G. O. Dwight and H. A. Homes, with the collaboration of the Armenian scholars, and printed in 1849. At the bottom of each page the textual variants from the Greek original were foot noted.<sup>36</sup>

5 - Other Attempted Translations: There were a number of other translations of both the NT and the whole *Bible* from the classical Armenian. A certain Zenop of Erzeroum translated the NT and it was printed by the BFBS in Smyrna 1841. We find a reference to a translation of the OT undertaken by Bishop Dionysus Karapetian in Malta. The publishing committee of the ABCFM decided to print this translation after comparing it with the *Masora* in 1831. There is, however, no further information as to what happened to this translation, all we know is that it was never printed.<sup>37</sup>

6 - In 1838 Dr. Elias Riggs moved from Greece to Constantinople and was put in charge of the Armenian *Bible* translation project in the beginning of the forties of the last century. Till then there was Zohrabian's twice revised NT translation, Zenop's NT translation and Ardzrouni's NT translation/revision, all from the Grabar. We soon see a change in the translation and publishing policies of both the ABCFM and the Bible Societies (both BFBS and ABS). It was decided that the new translations were to be undertaken from the original languages - viz., Greek and Hebrew.

To be able to supervise the translation into Armenian of the OT in a satisfactory manner, Dr. Riggs decided to learn modern western Armenian thoroughly.<sup>38</sup> His teacher was an Armenian Evangelical pastor, Rev. Mugurdich Kirechian, whom we have mentioned above. He was a great Armenian scholar and grammarian; he prepared the first grammar of Western Armenian (*Քերականութիւն Աշխարհաբար Լեզուի*), which later served as the grammatical guide of the new *Bible* translation. According to Kourian this grammar antedated the critical grammar of Fr. A. Aydenian (*Հ. Ա. Այտրնեան, Բնական Քերականութիւն*).<sup>39</sup> Dr. Riggs was well versed in classical and modern Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Turkish and a number of other languages besides Western Armenian.<sup>40</sup>

When he had mastered Armenian he embarked upon the translation of the OT. Under his general supervision, Andreas Papazian, Avetis Ter-

Sahakian, and Senekerim Ter-Minassian undertook the translation of the OT. The mechanics of the translation was as follows: the three Armenian translators produced the first draft from a French or an English base text, comparing it with the Grabar; afterwards, Dr. Riggs checked the draft against the Hebrew original and produced a second draft; this second draft was sent to Armenian scholars for their evaluation and comments on linguistic and stylistic questions. By this method Dr. Riggs was able to force the Armenian translators to clean their language and reduce individual stylistic peculiarities.

The translation principles to be followed were:

- i) The translation was to be faithful to the original languages.
- ii) Proper names - e.g., names of persons, toponyms, rivers, names of heavenly bodies and animals - would be rendered as found in the classical Armenian.
- iii) Provide footnotes, wherever it was felt necessary, to make the translation comprehensible to the readers.

In the Thirty seventh Annual Report of the ABCFM we read:

*"Mr. Riggs is making progress in the translation of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew into the modern Armenian, and it is proposed to print the version in numbers, as it is already, in order to make it the sooner available for the instruction of the people."*<sup>41</sup>

The translation and revision of the OT was completed in 1849. It was printed in four parts starting with the *Pentateuch* between 1849 and 1852. Thus, the actual translation and revision of the whole *Bible* lasted from 1842-1849 some seven years. The complete *Bible* in modern western Armenian was finally printed, in one volume for the first time in Smyrna, in May 1853 and New York by ABS in 1858.<sup>42</sup>

This translation continued to be printed for three decades. In 1883-1884 a revision was deemed necessary. This revision was headed by Matatia Garagashian, a man who loved the Grabar and tried to take the translation back to the classical level. The whole process of revision failed. A second revision was attempted towards the end of the 19th century (1898) and had the same fate as the previous one. Thus, the translation of 1853 was printed with minor linguistic revisions for almost 126 years. The translation is basically a very literal one, it is quite concordant in rendering of its Hebrew and Greek "vorlage". One can notice here and there the influence of the classical Armenian.

The criticism often leveled against this translation by modern Armenian scholars and linguists that its language and style leave much to be desired is only partially true but cannot be accepted at its face value. These critics, I am afraid, exhibit a short sightedness that shows their ignorance about the linguistic background and historical circumstances under which the translation was undertaken. Adger has the following testimony on the state of the vernacular spoken in Constantinople and Smyrna at that time:

*"The popular language of the Armenians was very much corrupted by being mixed with Turkish words, and these Sarkis,<sup>43</sup> like every other intelligent Armenian, abhorred. They were so many badges of his people's ignorance and servitude to the Moslem. That the vocabulary of modern Armenian should widen, as well as become purified, if education was to make any progress amongst the people, was just such a necessity as had been felt amongst the Greeks...Their language must have words dug out from the disuse of centuries under whose ruins they were lying buried...Sarkis knew this, so did all the few intelligent scholars that remained amongst them."*<sup>44</sup>

It was this Bible translation that formed the foundation of modern western Armenian. In the conflict between the "Grabarophiles" and the "Ashkharhabarophiles", this Bible translation contributed toward the final triumph of the vernacular as "the literary language." Cyrus Hamlin wrote:

*"The idea of translating the Bible into such a language (i.e., the vernacular) was ridiculed. There was a very imperfect translation of the New Testament [probably referring to Zohrabian's translation of 1825], and it was referred to with contempt...When the Bible and Bible teaching enter the language takes on new meaning, grows with spiritual and moral forces...The modern Armenian is now holly transformed; it has become a beautiful and cultivated language."*<sup>45</sup>

Upon the publication of the one volume Bible, Garabed Utujian, the editor of *Massis*, wrote in 1853: "henceforth by reading the Western Armenian Bible our people will learn how to speak and write their mother tongue."<sup>46</sup>

7 - In 1978 the UBS undertook a revision of the above translation. The linguistic and grammatical aspect of the work was entrusted to Mr. Benyamin Jamkochian and the exegetical part to Manuel Jinbachian, then Dean of Haigazian College in Beirut, Lebanon. The NT with the *Psalms* was printed in Beirut in 1980 and the whole Bible in 1981. The revision tried to smoothen out some of the linguistic and grammatical awkwardnesses of the translation. We can qualify it as acceptable but not fully satisfactory.

8 - There were two translations that were undertaken from the Hebrew and Greek originals during the 19th and 20th centuries that we need to mention before embarking on the history of the other modern translations from the Grabar. In 1847 the *Psalms* were translated by an Armenian under the supervision of an American Episcopal Bishop H. Southgate and printed in London by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. In 1913 the *Gospel of Mark* was translated into the Zeitoun dialect under the supervision of ABCFM missionaries and printed by the ABS.<sup>47</sup>

9 - Besides the above mentioned translations, I would like to list the following translations that had the classical Armenian as "vorlage":

a) Hovhannes Hyunkyarbeyendian, *New Testament* of our Lord Jesus Christ, done in Constantinople towards the end of the 19th century and the information is found in the archives (1882) of the Armenian Patriarchate in Constantinople.<sup>48</sup>

b) Vahan Ter-Minasian, western Armenian *Gospel* and explanation according to the doctrine of the Holy Armenian Church (Constantinople 1894).<sup>49</sup>

c) Alexianos Sirounian (Guezubeyukian), *The Gospels or The New Testament* with the Armenian original and its translation into modern western Armenian; with introductions, explanation, geographic and historic information: Part I, *Saint Matthew* (Constantinople 1902); Part II, *Saint Mark* (Constantinople 1905); Part III, *Saint Luke* (Constantinople 1905); Part IV, *Saint John* (Constantinople 1906).<sup>50</sup>

d) Archbishop Karekin Khachadourian, *The Bible*, the NT of Jesus Christ, pictorial, compared with other translations, from Grabar (Buenos Ayres 1943) (reprinted in Beirut 1979).

On page 807 the translator states that the translation was done from the Grabar and he has consulted the following translations:

*New Testament* of our Lord Jesus Christ, translated from the Greek original into western Armenian (Beirut, The Bible Society, 1925); *The New Testament* J. Moffatt (London); *The Complete Bible*, an American translation; *The New Testament* E. J. Goodspeed (Chicago); *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. IV, by diverse authors (Michigan); *The Beginning of Christianity, The Acts of the Apostles*, ed. F. J. Foakes Jackson & Kirsopp Lake (London 1922); *La Sainte Bible selon la Vulgate* par l'abbé J.-B. Glaire (Paris 1901); *Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, Walter Bauer (Göttingen 1928).

Reading the translation now, one feels that the translator was ahead of his time; even today the translation is regarded by many as being too far from the original. In fact, he was trying to implement many of the translation principles and techniques we follow today. The language is beautiful western Armenian and is quite functional in translation principles.

e) *New Testament, The Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles*, translated from the Grabar with annotations by Fr. Karekin Karanfilian (Cairo 1950).

In the introduction we read:

*"I have used as base text the choice edition of Zohrabian. In my translation I have tried to reconstruct conscientiously the original of the classical Armenian rendering, by comparing each word and paragraph with the Greek original."*

He gives a general introduction to the NT and then introductions to each *Gospel* and *Acts*. He also provides section headings and some footnotes.

The translation is very literal and the language good western Armenian.

f) Fr. Srabion Oulouhadjian, *The Gospel of Jesus Christ*, translated from Grabar and compared with the Greek original (Venice 1952).

It has been reprinted in 1960. In the introduction he says that he has used Pakradouni's 1860 edition as base text and has compared it, verse by verse, with the Greek original.

g) Patriarch Shenork Kaloustian, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, translated from the Grabar and compared with the Greek original and other translations (Istanbul 1966); *The Gospel According to Mark* (Istanbul 1966); *The Gospel According to Luke* (Istanbul 1966); *The Gospel According to John* (Istanbul 1967). The four Gospels were reprinted in one volume (Beirut 1979). In the introduction of the one volume edition, the translator says he has used the Grabar as base text, without mentioning which edition. He also says that he has consulted the Greek original, the English translations of the *Vulgate* and *Peshitto*. The translator has provided section headings and some footnotes. It is an excellent western Armenian but is basically a literal translation.

h) Fr. Mesrop Jourian, *New Testament*, a western Armenian Translation (Beirut 1981).

It is a beautiful printing with an excellent introduction to the NT, with full color artwork by an Armenian artist, section headings, cross references and footnotes. At the end there is a section of readers helps dealing with the synoptic problem, the parables of Jesus, the miracles of Jesus, a list of important subjects, Sunday and feast day readings during the Mass, a chronological table of the history of Palestine from 65 to 135, three color maps, and a table of contents. It is good western Armenian but remains on the literal level of translation.

i) In 1981 appeared the western Armenian adaptation of the 1975 Etchmiadzin (eastern Armenian) translation of the *New Testament* under the supervision of His Beatitude Patriarch Yeghishé Derderian of Jerusalem and printed by the UBS. The title page reads:

ՆՈՐ ԿՏԱԿԱՐԱՆ, Արեւմտահայերէն նոր թարգմանութիւն համեմատութեամբ Յունարէն բնագրին: Երասաղէմ, տպարան Սրբոց Յակոբեանց, Աստուածաշունչի Միացեալ Ընկերութիւն, 1981. NEW TESTAMENT, New Translation into western Armenian, Compared with the Greek Original. Jerusalem, St. James Press, UBS 1981.

On the back of the title page it reads:

*By permission of His Holiness Catholicos Vazken I of all Armenians; During the patriarchate of His Beatitude Archbishop Yeghishé Derderian of Jerusalem.*

At the back of the book on page 758, there is a statement which looks like being a reproduction of the statement found in the eastern Armenian, explaining who were the translators, what is the base text and what other ver-

sions have been consulted. The language is beautiful western Armenian, a very literal translation but exegetically it leaves much to be desired in a number of places.

j) *The Sunday Readings from the Bible* (Antelias 1984). It is the Sunday and feast day lectionary of the Armenian Church. It was translated by Bishop Zareh Aznavourian, Father Oshagan Choloyan, and Dr. Manuel Jinbachian as the translation consultant. The purpose of starting with the lectionary was that since the readings during the liturgy of the church are done from the classical Armenian, in the hope that the congregation would be able to understand what is read by following the translation. The language of the *Sunday Lectionary* is superb western Armenian<sup>51</sup> and follows the "Functional Equivalent Translation Principle."<sup>52</sup>

The title page reads:

ԿԻՐԱԿԻ ՕՐԵՐՈՒ ԱՍՏՈՒԱԾԱԾՆՉԱԿԱՆ ԸՆԹԵՐՑՈՒՄՆԵՐ  
(Արդի Աշխարհաբար Թարգմանություն): Հրատարակություն Մեծի  
Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան, գործակցութեամբ Լիբանանի Ս.  
Գրոց Ընկերութեան (Անթիլիաս 1984):

*SUNDAY READINGS FROM THE BIBLE, modern western Armenian translation. Publication of the Catholicosate of the Greater House of Cilicia, in cooperation with the Bible Society in Lebanon (Antelias 1984).*

In the forward, His Holiness Catholicos Karekin II of Cilicia explains what is the lectionary, in what manner the cooperation with the UBS developed, how translation and review committees were set up and what are the translation principles that were followed.

On page 11, there is a statement about the translation. It reads:

*"The translation is based on the grabar original; for the OT we have compared it with the Septuagint and the Hebrew Masoratic text, and for the NT with the critical Greek text. We have also consulted the Latin vulgate, French, English, Italian, modern Greek and various Armenian translations."*

And at the end we find the following bibliography:

Աստուածաշունչ Մատեան Հին եւ Նոր Կտակարանաց ըստ ճշգրիտ  
թարգմանութեան նախնեաց մերոց, Համեմատութեամբ երրայական  
եւ յունական բնագրաց (թ. տպագրություն) Վիեննա 1929; SEPTU-  
AGINTA id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes, edidit  
Alfred Rahlfs, 2 vols., (Stuttgart 1935); BIBLIA HEBRAICA, ed. R. Kittel  
et. al. (Stuttgart 1968); THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT, ed K. Aland, M.  
Black et al. third ed. (UBS 1980).

At the back of the book, there is a table of content, then a list of all the scriptural readings from the OT, the *Deuterocanonicals* and the NT, followed by four maps. The book has beautiful artwork and a full color cover.

k) During the eighties of the current century we come across two

translations of the *Psalms* of David both of which are from the Grabar. The first is one done by a Mekhitarist father, H. O. Sekoulian, printed in Vienna 1987. In the Prologue he states:

*"This translation was done semi-freely. It does not pursue scientific ends. The critical translations that have appeared in German, French, English, Greek and Latin have been consulted, but we have kept as our base text the Armenian Bible of Mesropian translation - i.e., the classical Armenian text."*

Then the translator goes on to give twenty nine topics for prayer and the corresponding *Psalms* for that occasion. The language is heavy and the attempt to produce poetry somewhat forced.

The second translation is by Archbishop Shahé Adjemian of Jerusalem. It is from the Grabar edition of the *Psalms* printed in Jerusalem 1868. It has a long introduction explaining the meaning of the *Psalms* and their place in the church's liturgical life. It was printed in Jerusalem 1989 with the Grabar and Ashkharhabar texts on facing pages. It has a beautiful artwork and is a superb production. I had a chance to read it superficially, I am in no position to express a learned opinion on it. All I want to say is that it is a literal translation of the classical Armenian text.

10 - *The New Testament*, in modern western Armenian, translated by the same team as the *Lectionary* above. This time the group of translators decided to use as base text the UBS Greek *New Testament* third edition, and the classical Armenian *Bible* as a reference. It follows the same translation principles as the *Lectionary*. The NT was printed in 1993 and the title page reads:

Աստուածաշունչ, ՆՈՐ ԿՏԱԿԱՐԱՆ, Յիսուս Քրիստոսի, Նոր Աշխարհաբար Թարգմանութեամբ, Համեմատութեամբ Յունարէնի եւ Գրաբարի (Անթիլիաս 1993). Bible, THE NEW TESTAMENT of Jesus Christ, New Vernacular Translation, compared with the Greek and Classical Armenian (Antelias 1993).

On the back of the title page it reads:

Հրամանաւ, Ն.Ս.Օ.Տ.Տ. Գարեգին Բ. Կաթողիկոսի, Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ. Հրատարակութիւն՝ Մեծի Տանն Կիլիկիոյ Կաթողիկոսութեան. Գործակցութեամբ՝ Լիբանանի Ս. Գրոց Ընկերութեան: By Permission of His Holiness Karekin II Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, A Publication of the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia with the collaboration of the Bible Society in Lebanon.

This publication has a preface composed of several parts: it starts by explaining the translation principles, methodology, language level, choice of base text, and an explanation on the reader's helps included. The preface is followed by a general introduction to the NT and its various divisions. The introduction is followed by a table of abbreviations and a table of signs and symbols. Each book of the NT has a separate introduction and on each page one can



find footnotes and cross references. At the end there are several appendices: there is a glossary list, explaining the most difficult and technical words, a chronology of the *Old and New Testaments*, a table showing the harmony of the Synoptic Gospels and John, tables showing the parables and the miracles of Jesus, there are four maps and a table of contents. This is the first NT published which has reader's helps.

Once again I must draw the attention of the readers to the fact that this is the first New Testament translation in modern western Armenian that the Armenian Orthodox Church has officially sanctioned and blessed.

## II - Concluding Remarks

Up till the eighties of the nineteenth century we see the conflict between the "Grabarophiles" and the "Ashkharhabarophiles" rage fiercely. There were those who insisted upon writing only in the spoken language of the people, the vernacular. Opposed to the above were the "Grabarophile" party who tried to beautify the spoken language by lacing it with classical Armenian style and phraseology. Ultimately the "Ashkharhabarophile" party carried the day. We must be honest and accept the fact that Grabar had its great charm and has often left its imprint on the various translations done up till the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and even subsequently.

Most modern Armenian translations are quite literal and, therefore, often unclear, misleading and unnatural. The exceptions are the translation of the *New Testament* done by Archbishop Karekin Khachadourian, the Patriarch of Constantinople,<sup>53</sup> the *Sunday Readings from the Bible*, translated by Bishop Z. Aznavourian, Bishop Oshagan Choloyan and Rev. Dr. Manuel Jinbachian,<sup>54</sup> and the *New Testament* in modern western Armenian, translated by the same group as the previous.<sup>55</sup> These three translations try to give the contextual meaning of a given morpheme over against its lexical meaning. In the case of the last two, in particular, I would say that they are both trying to give semantically the closest natural equivalent rendering and do not try to be concordant in the translation of one and the same Greek morpheme. Moreover, the last translation is not afraid to make explicit certain information and to leave other information implicit, and is courageous enough to change nominal constructions to verbal ones in order to communicate the message.

## NOTES

1. On the date and circumstances of the conversion see L. M. Chaumont, *Recherches sur l'histoire d'Arménie*, Paris, 1969, p. 131-164; Fr. Tournebize, *Histoire politique et religieuse de l'Arménie*, Paris, 1910, p. 400-462; L. Ducheanne, *The early History of the Church*, vol. III, London, 1924, pp. 366-369; B. J. Kidd, *A History of the Church*, vol. III, Oxford, 1922, pp. 419-420; J. R. Palanque, "L'expansion Chrétienne, I: Les églises des royaumes d'Extrême Orient", in Fliche et Martin, *Histoire de l'église*, t. 3, Paris, 1936, p. 430; M. Ormanian, *Azgapatoum*, vol. I, Istanbul, 1912, pp. 71-118;

- and H. Manandian, *Kennakan Tesoutioun Hay Joghoverdi Patmoutian*, vol. II, p. I, Yerevan, 1957, pp. 116-128.
2. Phaustos Buzand says that Catholicos Nerses the Great "Established in various localities schools in Greek and Syriac, in all the cantons of Armenia." See Phaustos Buzandatsvo *Patmoutioun Hayots*, Venice, 1933, Bk IV, ch. 4. cf Agathangegha *Patmoutioun Hayots*, Vardapetoutioun Serbouyn Grigori, Yerevan, 1983, p. 438. In southern and eastern provinces bordering Iran and Syria, where Christianity had penetrated from the south, through missionaries coming from Edessa and Nisibis, the language of the liturgy and instruction was Syriac. In the west and north, in the provinces bordering the Eastern Roman Empire, where Christianity had penetrated from Caesaria, Sebastia and Melitine, it was Greek. On the two currents see N. Adonts, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian*, Lisbon, 1970, pp. 270-275; E. Ter-Minassians, "Die armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zu den syrischen Kirchen," in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, Band XXVI, Leipzig, 1904, s. 1-29; and G. Garitte, "La narratio de Rebus Armeniae," *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, vol. 132, sub. t. 4, Louvain, 1967, p. 73-102.
  3. Ghazar Pharpetsvo *Patmoutioun Hayots*. Tought ar Vahan Mamikonian, Yerevan, 1982, ch 10. Buzand, Bk III, ch. 13.
  4. On the invention and date of the Armenian alphabet, see J. Marquart, "Über das armenische Alphabet in Verbindung mit der Biographie des hl. Mashtots." tr. A. Vardanian, *Handes Amsorya*, vol. XXV, Vienna, 1911, pp. 529-544, 673-684, XXVI, Vienna 1912, pp. 41-54, 199-216, 657-666, 742-750; P. Peeters, "Pour l'histoire des origines de l'alphabet arménien," *Revue des Etudes Arménien*, t. IX, Paris, 1929, p. 203-237; A. Hovhanissian, "L'alphabet arménien et son action historique," *Revue des Etudes Arméniennes*, Nouvelle Série, t. II, Paris, 1965, p. 361-373; H. Manandian, "Hay gereri giudi tarethevi hartsi shoorch," *Mesrop Mashtots*, Yerevan, 1962, pp. 85-116; R. Grousset, *Histoire de l'Arménie, des origines à 1071*, Paris, 1947, pp. 171-177.
  5. Of the redactions of Koriun's biography of Mesrop Mashtots, the longer seems to be more original. For a German translation see S. Weber, Koriun, "Koriun: Beschreibung des Lebens und Sterbens des hl. Lehrers Mesrop," in the series *Bibliothek der Kirchenväter, Ausgewählte Schriften armenischer Kirchenväter*, ed. O. Bardenhewere et al., Band LVII, München, 1927, s. 196-232; Emin has translated the shorter redaction into French, see Langlois, pp. 9-16. For a French translation of Pharpetsi, see *ibid* pp. 253-368 and for that of Korenatsi, *ibid*, p. 45-252. For an English translation of Khorenatsi, see R. W. Thomson, *Moses Khorenatsi, History of the Armenians*, Cambridge, 1978.
  6. Arami, the land of the Arameans, now Syria. In Edessa was the famous school known as "the school of the Persians." Rabula (Ραβουλοζ), the bishop of the city from 411-435, was a great champion of the school. See A. Vööbus, "History of the School of Nisibis," *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, vol. 266, sub. t. 26, Louvain, 1965, p. 9, note 13. The school was famous for the teaching of the art of calligraphy.
  7. Abeghian corrects as Rabulas, see M. Abeghan, *Koriun, Vark Mashtotsi*, Cairo, 1954, p. 109, note 63. See also note 62.
  8. Koriun, ch 7.
  9. *Op. cit.*, ch. 8; Pharpetsi, ch. 10; Khorenatsi, Bk. III, ch. 53 says that Hrophanos was

- skilled in Greek calligraphy.
10. "To know wisdom and instruction, and to perceive words of understanding." *Proverbs*, 1.1 in the Armenian, 1.2 in the original.
  11. Koriun ch. 9. Cf. Khorenatsi, Bk. III, ch. 53.
  12. Koriun, ch 11.
  13. On յայտնի see H. S. Anassian, *Haykakan Matenagitoutioun*, vol. I, Yerevan, 1959, cols. 898-910. Thomson in his translation of Khorenatsi, wrongly translates յայտնիս by "famous". The information given by Khorenatsi about the twenty two canonical books, indicate that in the first translation there were no Deuterocanonicals. The Syriac did not originally have the Deuterocanonicals; they were added during the revision on the base of the Septuagint, see A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, mit Ausschluss der chrislich-palästinensischen Texte, Bonn, 1922, 2sqq.; R. Duval, *La littérature syriaque*, Paris, 1907, p. 30; S. Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, Oxford, 1968, p. 246; H. B. Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint*, Cambridge, 1887-1894, pp. 220-222; Vardanian, pp. 385-428; H. S. Anassian, *Haykakan Matenagitoutioun*, vol. II, Yerevan, 1976, cols. 311-314; and H. Melkonyan, "Astvatzashenchi asoreren yev hayeren targmanoutiounneri patmoutiounits", *Echmiadzin*, Ecmiadzin, 1966, no. 11-12, pp. 42-45.
  14. There are those who think that there have been three translations, such as H. Ajarian, "Timotheos Kouz yev Soorb Gerki Noraber Targmanoutiounk," *Shoghakat*, vol. I, Vagharshapat, 1913, pp. 1-22; Johnson, "Armenian biblical traditions in comparison with the Vulgate and Septuagint," *Medieval Armenian Culture*, University of Pennsylvania, Armenian Texts and Studies, UPATS, 6, Chico, 1984, p. 357.
  15. For the translation of Ecclesiastes, see Norayr N. Biuzandatsi, *Koriun Vardapet yev Norin Targmanoutiounk*, Tbilissi, 1900, p. 384; Nerses Akinian, "Soorb Gerki hayeren targmanoutiounne," *Handes Amsorya*, Vienna, 1935, pp. 550-563; Tzovakan [N. Pogharian], "Joghovoghi hin hay targmanoutiounneri," *Sion*, Jerusalem, 1936, pp. 45-48. For the *Song of Songs*, Voskian thinks that both the translation and revision - or perhaps a second translation - were done from the Greek. See H. Voskian, *Yerg Yergotsi Arachin yev Yerkrord Targmanoutiounk*, Vienna, 1924.
  16. Gr. Khalatians, "A. yev B. Menatsordats Gerkeri Asorerenits Hay Targmanoutiounne," *Ararat*, Vagharshapat, 1896, pp. 311-317; and Gr. Khalatians, *Girk Menatsordats Est Henagouyn Targmanoutian*, Moscow, 1899; N. Pogharian, "Menatsordats Girkeroun Hin Hay Targmanoutiounneri," *Sion*, Jerusalem, 1937, pp. 109-114; Melkonian, pp. 40-50; L. Ter-Petrossian, "La plus ancienne traduction arménienne des chroniques," *Revue des Etudes Arméniennes*, Nouvelle Série, vol. XVIII, Paris, 1984, pp. 215-225.
  17. A. Baumstark, "Der armenische Psaltertext. Sein Verhältnis zum syrischen der Pesittâ und seine Bedeutung für die LXX-forschung," *Oriens Christianus*, NS, Band XII, XIV [1922-1924], Bonn, 1925, s. 180-213; Band I, 1927, s. 158-169, 319-333, Band II, 1927, s. 146-159; L. Ter-Petrossian, "Saghmosneri hayeren targmanoutiounne yev nera nakhorinake," *Echmiadzin*, No I, Echmiadzin, 1984, pp. 41-51, no IV, pp. 37-45; no VI, pp. 58-64; no IX, pp. 49-57; *ibid*, 1976, nos. VIII-IX, pp. 22-24.
  18. Johnson Bo, "Die hexaplorische Recension des 1 Samuel Buches der Septuaginta," *Studia Theologica Ludensia*, no 22, Lund, 1963, and "Die armenische

- Bibelübersetzung als hexaplarische Zeuge in 1 Samuelbuch," *Coniectanea Biblica*, OT serie, no. 2, Lund, 1968. (1968); --- (1963).
19. Vööbus, p. 150; S. Lyonnet, "Les origines de la version arménienne et le Diatessaron," *Biblica et Orientalia*, t. 13, Rome, 1950; J. M. Alexanian, "The Armenioan Gospel Text from the fifth through the fourteenth centuries," *Medieval Armenian Culture*, UPATS, 6, Chico, 1984, pp. 381-384; G. A. Egan, "An analysis of the Biblical quotations of Ephrem," in "An exposition of the gospel," *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, vol. 443, t. 66, Louvain, 1983, pp. 24 sq.; B. M. Metzger, "Versions-Armenian," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. IV, New York, 1962, pp. 749-760.
  20. For the French translation see J.-P. Mahe, "Traduction et Exégèse: Reflections sur l'exemple arménien," *Mélanges Antoine Guillaumont*, Genève, 1988, p. 249.
  21. M. M. Jinbajian, *Les techniques de traduction utilisées dans la Genèse en arménien classique*, Lisbon, 1996, Conclusion.
  22. The Basel Mission was founded in 1816 and in 1820 they started coming to the Caucasus. On the history of their missionary work in Shushi see J. Richter, *A History of Protestant Missions in the Near East*, New York, 1910, pp. 97-103; and E. Smith and H. G. Dwight, *Researches of the Rev. E. Smith and Rev. H. G. O. Dwight in Armenia*, vol. I, Boston, 1833, pp. 300-328.
  23. T. G. Kherlobian, *Voskematian*, vol. I, *Hamapatker Jamanakakits Hay Avetaranakan Yekeghetsvo*, Beirut, 1951, pp. 80-81.
  24. Y. S. Kassouni, *Lousashavigh: The History of the Armenian Evangelical Movement, 1846-1946*, Beirut, 1947, p. 579; Richter, pp. 97-103.
  25. Anassian, II, cols. 518-519; cf. T. H. Darlow & H. F. Moule, *Historic Catalogue of the printed Editions of the Holy Scripture in the Library of the BFBS* [British and Foreign Bible Society], vol. II, pt. 1, London, 1911, pp. 92sq.
  26. *The Book of a Thousand Tongues* (rev. ed. E. A. Nida), New York, 1972, p. 20, Kherlobian, I, p. 81.
  27. At the end of the printed volume, just before the contents, there is a page which explains who were the translators and what was the base text(s). We read that the translation was done from the classical Armenian Bible printed in Constantinople in 1895 and that the Greek original served as a reference for comparison. During the translation they have also consulted a number of other modern French and English versions, such as *La Sainte Bible*, Ecole biblique de Jérusalem, Paris, 1956, *The Holy Bible*, RSV, New York 1962; and the *Nouveau Testamen*, Traduction Oecumenique de la Bible, TOB, Ed. intégrale, 1972.
  28. Anassian, II, cols. 523 sq.
  29. See W. Canton, *A History of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, vol. I, London, 1904, p. 396.
  30. British and Foreign Bible Society Annual Report, London, 1928, p. 81; see also B. J. Merguerian, "The Armenian Bible and the American Missionaries. The first four decades (1820-1860)," *Armenia and the Bible*, Atlanta, 1993, p. 157, note 14.
  31. Thirty-fifth Annual Report of the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston, 1844, p. 109. Hereafter cited as ABCFM...Annual Report.
  32. ABCFM Archives, J. B. Adger, Letter of 16 November 1836. See also Merguerian, p. 163.

33. ABCFM Thirty-sixth Annual Report, Boston, 1845, see also J. B. Adger, *My Life and Times*, 1810-1899, Richmond, 1899, p. 100.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 97. There were a number of other native assistants who worked with these missionaries on the translation of both the OT and NT. To meet the great demand for translators the missionaries engaged another translator called "Baron Arisdages". We should also mention the names of Andreas Papazian who was an outstanding linguist, Hovhannes Ter-Sahakian, Senekerim Ter-Minassian (all three former students of Peshtimaljian's School), Poghos Physica and Megertich Papazian who was the younger brother of Andreas Papazian. One should not forget the former members of the monastery of Saint James in Jerusalem - Bishop Dionysus Karapetian, Hakob Vardapet (the famous author of the Vortabed's *Arabic-English Dictionary*) and Grigor Vardapet - who were also engaged in translation work. To all the above, the names of Avetis Varjapet Ter-Sahakian, Rouben Tovmassian (not to be confused with Megertich Tovmassian), Avetis Konstandian and Megertich Kirechian should be added. See F. D. G. Prime, *Forty Years in the Turkish Empire*, or Memoires of Rev. William Goodell, D. D., New York, 1876, pp. 83-84; Kherlobian, I, 74 sq.; Kassouni, p. 587; A. Petikian, *Patmakan Aknark Astvatsashounchi Ashkharhabar Hayeren Targmanoutian Tepagrouitian*, 1853-1953, New York, 1953, pp. 20-22; Merguerian, p. 165; and Kh. S. Kourian, *The Ancient Armenian Translation of the Bible in the Light of Philosophy*, Cairo, 1944, pp. 721 sq.
35. ABCFM Thirty-fifth Annual Report, Boston, 1844, p. 109.
36. Anassian, II, cols. 513-514; Darlow & Moule, II, p. 95 nos. 1840, and 1843; Petikian, p. 14; *Book of a Thousand Tongues*, p. 21.
37. Kherlobian, II, pp. 73-74; Kassouni, pp. 577-579; Petikian, p. 22.
38. This was a decision originally taken by the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM and reported in the Thirty-fifth Annual Report, 1844, p. 98, that Dr. Riggs was to learn Armenian.
39. Kourian, p. 722.
40. On Dr. Elias Riggs see Richter, pp. 109-110.
41. ABCFM Thirty-seventh Annual Report, Boston, 1846, p. 100.
42. See ABCFM Forty-fifth Annual Report, Boston, 1854, p. 73; see also Kherlobian, II, pp. 75-77
43. He is Sargis Varjapet Hovhannessian, mentioned above.
44. Adger, p. 98 sq.; Merguerian, pp. 164 sq.
45. C. Hamlin, *My Life and Times*, Boston, 1924, pp. 210 sq.; Merguerian, pp. 162 sq.
46. On the contribution of the Bible translation to the evolution of the western Armenian see Kassouni, p. 579; Kherlobian, I, pp. 76-77; Kourian, pp. 722 and 724.
47. *Book of a Thousand Tongues*, p. 21.
48. Anassian, II, cols. 514-515.
49. *Ibid.* col. 515.
50. *Ibid.*
51. For stylistic polishing it was given to Mr. Moushegh Ishkhan, a well know Armenian poet.
52. On Functional Equivalent translation principles, see E. A. Nida, *Toward A Science of Translating*, Leiden, 1964; W. I. Wonderly, *Bible Translations for Popular Use*, London, 1968; E. A. Nida & Ch. R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, Leiden, 1969; J.-C. Margot, *Traduire sans trahir*, Lausanne, 1979; J. de Waard & E.

- A. Nida, *From One Language to Another*, Nashville, 1986.  
 53. See above under "Modern Armenian Translations of the Bible," B9d.  
 54. *Idem*, B9j.  
 55. *Idem*, B10.

#### ARMENIAN TRANSLATIONS

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2. *Nor Ketakaran* [New Testament] Tiyaren Mero Hisousi Kristosi, 3rd impression, with references, in diglot Grabar-eastern Armenian, constantinople, Bs, 1856.
3. *Astvatashounch* [The Holy Bible], Girk Hin yev Nor Ketakaranatas, Yebrajakan yev Hounakan Benagirmeren targmanvats, New York, printing press of the Bible Society, 1859.
4. *Astvatashounch* [The Holy Bible - old and New Testament], in eastern Armenian, translated from Hebrew and Greek originals, Constantinople, B. S. 1896.
5. Karaekin Bish. Kachatourian, *Astvatashounch; Nor Ketakaran* Hisousi Kristosi, from Grabar, Buenos Aires, 1943; reprinted in Beirut, 1979.
6. Garegin Garanfilian, *Nor Ketakaran yev Gortsk Arakelots* [New Testament: the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles], from Grabar to Ashkharahabar, Cairo, 1950.
7. Fr. Serapion Oulouhadjian, *Nor Ketakaran* Hisousi Kristosi [The Gospel of Jesus Christ], from Grabar, and compared with the Greek original, Venice, 1952.
8. *Nor Ketakaran* [New Testament], Arevelahayeren nor targmanoutioun, hamematouti-amp hounaren benagrere, Echmiadzin, UBS, 1976.
9. Shenorhk Archb. Galoustian, *Avetaran* Hisousi Kristosi, [Four Gospels], Beirut, UBS, 1979.
10. *Nor Ketakaran Yev Girk Saghmosats*, [New Testament and Psalms], hounakan benagren targmanvats, Beirut, UBS, 1980.
11. *Nor Ketakaran* [New Testament], Arevmetahayeren nor targmanoutioun, hamematoutiamp hounaren benagrere, Jerusalem, UBS, 1981.
12. Fr. Mesrop Jourian, *Nor Ketakaran* [New Testament], Beirut, 1981.
13. *Astvatashounch* [The Holy Bible: Old and New Testament], in western Armenian, translated from the Hebrew and Greek originals, Beirut, UBS, 1981.
14. *Kiraki Orerou Astvatashenahkan Entertsounner* [The Sunday Readings From the Bible], modern western Armenian translation, publication of the Catholicosate of the Greater House of Cilicia, Antelias, UBS, 1984.
15. Fr. H. O. Sekoulian, *Saghmosk Davti*, in western Armenian, translated from Grabar, Vienna, 1987.
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# ԱՄՏՈՒԱԾԱՇՈՒՆՉԻ ՀԱՅԵՐԷՆ ԹԱՐԳՄԱՆՈՒԹԻՒՆՆԵՐԸ

(ԱՄՓՈՓՈՒՄ)

ՎԵՐ. ՄԱՆՈՒԷԼ Մ. ԵՒՆՊԱՇԵԱՆ

Ըստ Կորիւնի, Խորենացիի եւ Փարպեցիի տուեալներուն՝ հայերէն այբուբենի գիտէն ետք Սամոսատի մէջ էր որ սկսաւ հայերէն առաջին քարգմանութիւնը *Աստուածաշունչ*ին, որուն մէջ զգալի կը մնան ազդեցութիւնները ասորերէնին եւ յունարէնին, որոնց սկզբնաղբիւր օրինակներն օգտագործուեցան քարգմանութեան համար: Այսուհանդերձ, դասական հայերէնին՝ գրաբարին լեզուական ճկունութիւնը եւ անոր մասնիկներու, դերանուններու եւ մակբայներու խելացի գործածութիւնը, մանաւանդ հոմանիշներու առատ օգտագործումը տուին յանկուցիչ գեղեցկութիւն մը մեսրոպեան այս քարգմանութեան, որ տասնհինգ դար մնաց հիմը հայ հաւատքին, եկեղեցիին եւ հոգիին:

Հազար իննհարիւր վաթսունիննին էր որ Վեհափառ Վազգէն Առաջինի հրահանգով, գոյութեան կոչուեցաւ քարգմանչական յանձնախումբ մը, որ 1975ին իր արարտին հասցուց արեւելահայերէն քարգմանութիւնը *Նոր Կրակարան*ին՝ հիմնուելով հինգերորդ դարու գրաբարեան մայր օրինակին վրայ եւ յունարէն սկզբնաղբիւրին, թելետել այս գործը նախորդած կը գտնենք Ա.Հ. Գիթրիխի, գերման միսիոնար մը, Մովսէս Սարկաւազի եւ Պատ. Աբրահամ Ամիրխանեանցի 1831ին քարգմանած *Նոր եւ Հին Կրակարանները*: Սակայն 1975ի քարգմանութիւնն ենթակայ մնաց քննադատութեան, որովհետեւ յանձնախումբին անդամներէն – Արթուր Հատիտեանը, Պարգէն Շահպազեանը եւ Սամուէլ Անթոսեանը – եւ ո՛չ մէկը արեւելահայ էր ծնունդով եւ կազմաւորումով: Ինչ որ ալ ըլլար իրականութիւնը՝ արեւելահայ այս գործին տպագրութեան արարտին էր որ Վեհափառ Հայրապետը կազմեց նոր յանձնախումբ մը, որ հիմ ունենալով Մխիթարեան հայր Արսէն Բագրատունիի գրաբար *Աստուածաշունչ*՝ անցաւ գործի եւ 1994ին արարտեց արեւելահայերէն քարգմանութիւնն անոր: Յաջորդ տարի, 1995ին, տպուեցաւ գործը:

Արեւելահայ այս քարգմանութիւններէն անկախ՝ կան տակաւին քարգմանութիւնները Պերճ Պոռշեանի, Գալուստ Տէր Սկրտչեանի, եւ Տիրայր Տէր Յովհաննիսեանի, որոնք հատուածներ են *Նոր Կրակարան*էն եւ առ այժմ կը մնան անտիպ:

*Աստուածաշունչ*ի արեւմտահայերէնի առաջին քարգմանիչն եղաւ Մխիթարեան Յովհաննէս Վրդ. Չոհրապետանը, որուն 1821ին քարգմանած *Նոր Կրակարանը* 1825ին լոյս տեսաւ գրաբարին հետ ղիմառնաբար: Երեք տարի ետք լոյս տեսաւ աշխարհաբար քարգմանութիւնն առանձին: Նոյն տարին անիկա ձեռնարկեց արեւմտահայ աշխարհաբար քարգմանութեան *Հին Կրակարան*ին նաեւ, սակայն վերահաս մահն եղաւ արգելք գործի ամբողջական արարտին եւ տպագրութեան: Չոհրապետանի այս քարգմանութիւնն էր, որ, սակայն, յետագային կատարուած կարգ մը սրբագրութիւններով լոյսին տրուեցաւ Ամերիկեան Պորտի միսիոնարներէն Էտկերի կողմէ: Նոյն քարգմանութիւնն ի վերջոյ վերստին ենթարկուեցաւ սրբագրութեան եւ վերատեսութեան Տուայր եւ Հոմա

միսիոնարներու կողմէ եւ լոյսին եկաւ 1849ին:

1838ի Յունուարին Պոլիս հասած Դոկտ. Էլայըս Ռիկզ, տիրանալէ ետք արեւմտահայերէնին, 1842ին սկիզբը ձեռնարկեց թարգմանութեանը **Հին Կրակարանին**՝ օժանդակութեամբ Անդրէաս Փափագեանի, Աւետիս Սահակեանի եւ Սենեքերիմ Տէր Մինասեանի: Թարգմանչական աշխատանքներն աւարտեցան 1849ին, իսկ տպագրութիւնը՝ 1852ին: Միայն յաջորդ տարին էր, որ Իզմիրի մէջ ընթերցողին ձեռքը հասաւ ամբողջական **Աստուածաշունչը** արեւմտահայ իր թարգմանութեամբ, եւ հինգ տարի ետք, 1858ին ալ՝ Նիւ Եորքի մէջ: Մինչեւ 1979 ա յս թարգմանութիւնն էր որ վերատպուեցաւ բազմաթիւ անգամներ եւ հիմ ծառայեց ժողովուրդի խօսակցական լեզուին գրական լեզուի մը փոխակերպումին:

Միայն 1978ին էր որ Աստուածաշունչի Միացեալ Ընկերութիւնը ձեռնարկեց հիմնական թարգմանութեանն ու հրատարակութեանը **Նոր Կրակարանին**, որուն լեզուական եւ քերականական հարցերուն պատասխանատուն կարգուեցաւ Բենիամին Ժամկոչեանը եւ մեկնաբանական հարցերունը՝ Դոկտ. Մանուէլ Դինպաշեանը: Աւարտած գործը լոյս տեսաւ 1981ին:

Մինչ այդ, սակայն, անհրաժեշտ է հոս յիշել զանազան ամբողջական թարգմանութիւնները **Հին ու Նոր Կրակարաններուն**, եւ անոնց կարգ մը հատուածներուն: Այսպէս՝ 1847ին **Մաղմուսացը**, 1882ին՝ Յովհաննէս Հիւնքիարպէյեանեանի **Նոր Կրակարանը**, 1894ին՝ Վահան Տէր Մինասեանի **Նոր Կրակարանը**, 1902–1906ին՝ Ալեքսիանոս Սիրունեանի (Կեօզիւպէոյիքեանի) **Չորս Աւեպարանները**, եւ 1913ին ալ՝ **Աւեպարան ըսք Մարկոսին** Ջէյրոմի բարբառով, թէպէտեւ, պէտք է նշել որ, ասոնցմէ ոմանք կը մնան անտիպ: 1943ին էր որ Պուենոս Այրէսի մէջ լոյս տեսաւ **Նոր Կրակարանի** աշխարհաբար թարգմանութիւնը Գարեգին Արք. Խաչատուրեանի, եւ վերատպուեցաւ 1979ին Պէյրութի մէջ. 1950ին Գահիրէի մէջ լոյսին տրուեցաւ գրաբար աշխարհաբար թարգմանութիւնը **Չորս Աւեպարաններուն** եւ **Գործք Առաքելոցին**, Գարեգին Վրդ. Գարանֆիլեանի աշխատասիրութեամբ: Երկու տարի ետք, 1952ին, Վենետիկի մէջ Կիւթեմպերիկի զլանէն անցաւ Սրապիոն Վրդ. Ուլոտոճեանի թարգմանութիւնը **Նոր Կրակարանին**, որ վերատպուեցաւ 1960ին: 1966–1967ին Պոլսոյ մէջ անջատ կերպով լոյս տեսան **Մաքրեոսի**, **Մարկոսի**, **Ղուկասի** եւ **Յովհաննոս Աւեպարանները** Շնորհք Պատրիարք Գալուստեանի աշխարհաբար թարգմանութեամբ, որոնք յետագային՝ 1979ին, միացեալ կերպով լոյսին եկան Պէյրութի մէջ: Այս միացեալ հրատարակութենէն երկու տարի ետք էր, որ, 1981ին, Պէյրութի մէջ լոյս տեսաւ Մեսրոպ Վրդ. Դուռեանի կատարած թարգմանութիւնը **Նոր Կրակարանին**, իսկ Երուսաղէմի մէջ արեւմտահայերէնի մէկ վերածումը 1875ի Էջմիածինի **Նոր Կրակարանին**: 1984ին Անթիլիասի մէջ լոյս տեսաւ **Կիրակի Օրերու Աստուածաշնչական Ընթերցումները** Ջարեհ Եպսկ. Ազնաւորեանի, Օշական Վրդ. Չոլոյեանի եւ Դոկտ. Մանուէլ Դինպաշեանի թարգմանութեամբ: 1987ին Վենետիկի մէջ Միսիթարեան Սերուլեան Վարդապետի թարգմանութեամբ լոյսին եկան **Գաւթի Մաղմուսները**, իսկ երկու տարի ետք ալ Շահէ Արք. Աճեմեանի թարգմանութիւնը անոնց: Այս վերջիններէն ետք պէտք եղաւ սպասել վեց տարի՝ 1993ին, ունենալու համար հրատարակութիւնը **Նոր Կրակարանին**՝ աշխարհաբար նոր թարգմանութեամբը **Աստուածաշնչական Ընթերցումներու** թարգմանիչներուն եւ համեմատութեամբը Յունարէն եւ գրաբար մայր օրինակներուն: