

# THE ARMENIAN VERSION OF THE TESTAMENTS OF THE TWELVE PATRIARCHS: SELECTION OF MANUSCRIPTS

MICHAEL E. STONE

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

As proposed in the writer's two previous programmatic papers, sample texts were collated and studied for all manuscripts available to him.<sup>1</sup> Thanks must be expressed to A. Hultgard and M. van Esbroeck who assisted in the preparation of the collations and to M. de Jonge who kindly supplied advance copies of the apparatus of the relevant sections of the new Greek edition which he is preparing. The manuscripts examined and their sigla are:

Siglum	Burchard, No.
A Venice, No. 346, 1220 C. E.	38
B Venice, No. 679, 15th century	40
C Venice, No. 229, 1665 C. E.	36
D Venice, No. 1270, 14th-15th century	42
E British and Foreign Bible Society, 17th century	29
G London, BM or. 8833, 17th century	30
H Oxford, Bodleian Arm e 30, 13th century	31
I Rome, Bibl. Vat. Arm 1, 1625 C. E.	34
K Vienna, Mechitarist No. 126, 1388 C. E.	43
L Vienna, Nationalbibl. Arm. 11, before 1608 C. E.	45
M Jerusalem, No. 1925, 1269 C. E.	26
N Jerusalem, No. 428, 1620 C. E.	25
O Jerusalem, No. 501, 17th century	—
P Jerusalem, No. 1927, 1649 C. E.	—
Q Jerusalem, No. 1933, 1645 C. E.	—
R Jerusalem, No. 1934, 1643 C. E.	—
S Jerusalem, No. 939, 1621 C. E.	—
T Jerusalem, No. 1170, 1787 C. E.	—
V Erevan, No. 353, 1317 C. E.	12
W Vienna, Mechitarist No. 705, 1403 C. E.	44
X Erevan, No. 346, 1390 and 1400 C. E.	7
Y Erevan, No. 354, 14th century	13
Z Erevan, No. 1500, 1282-83 C. E.	15
Aa New Julfa, No. 2, 17th century	—

<sup>1</sup> Michael E. Stone, 'The Jerusalem Manuscripts of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Samples of Text,' *Sion* 44 (1970), pp. 29-35; *idem* 'Methodological Issues in the Textual Study of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha,' *Proceedings of the Fifth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem: 1971), pp. 211-217. 'Burchard' refers to Ch. Burchard, 'Zur armenischen Überlieferung der Testamente der Zwölf Patriarchen,' *Studien zu den Testamenten der Zwölf Patriarchen*, (ZNW Beiheft 36; 1969), pp. 1-29.



Bb	Venice, No. 280, 1418-1422 C. E. (previous siglum B*)	37
Cc	Venice, No. 623, 1648 C. E.	39
Dd	Venice, No. 1182, 1656 C. E.	41
Ee	Rome, Bibl. Casanatense f IV. 8, 1596 C. E.	33

In addition:

U New Julfa 3 (*olim* Calcutta), 17th century —

was used on the basis of the text published for Testament of Levi.<sup>2</sup> Charles utilized one additional manuscript, but his collations are partial and unreliable.<sup>3</sup> All material here discussed was studied first hand either in the manuscripts themselves or in microfilms.

The samples selected were: T. Levi chs. 1, 8, 19; T. Zeb. ch. 9, T. Jos. ch. 19, and T. Benj. chs. 11-12. The base text for the collations was that published, for T. Levi in *The Testament of Levi* and for T. Zeb., T. Jos., T. Benj. in *Sion*, 1970. The following manuscripts were incomplete, or the microfilms were incomplete, in certain respects.

A lacking T. Benj. 11-12 in the manuscript;

C lacking T. Jos. 19 in the microfilm;

U only previously published samples of T. Levi available;

Y lacking T. Benj. 11-12 in microfilm;

Z lacuna from T. Levi 2:9-9:5 results in omission of T. Levi 8;

Bb lacking T. Benj. 11-12 in microfilm, some readings can be supplied from previous editions.<sup>4</sup>

The collations thus include the evidence of 29 manuscripts out of a total of 52 known today. Of the remainder (all in Erevan), three are undated and the others all of 17th century date. All the earlier manuscripts known are included in the sample collations. Thus, although it is possible that in these later manuscripts text types of interest are preserved, it is not particularly probable that they contain anything very superior to the text of the 16 manuscripts of the 17th century which were examined.

The collations made, an apparatus was prepared. All cases in which a manuscript or group of manuscripts of less than half of the total number of witnesses showed a reading in agreement with an extant Greek witness or a reading clearly intrinsically superior were isolated. These were limited to a specific group of manuscripts as is evident from the appended examples. Moreover, certain readings seem to indicate some amount of second contact with the Greek version (see Appendix I, below).

It was confirmed that the four basic text-types isolated by Hultgard exist, viz: Z MV  $\beta$   $\alpha$ .<sup>5</sup> It will be evident from the examples listed below that his statement, 'il nous paraît que le texte de la version arménienne

<sup>2</sup> See the writer's *Testament of Levi* (Jerusalem: 1969), pp. 165-188. The reader is referred, for detailed description of the manuscripts and bibliography, to Burchard's paper and to S. Ter-Avetissian, *Katalog der Armenischen HSS. in der Bibliothek des Klosters in Neu Djoulfa* (Vienna: 1970), [in Armenian].

<sup>3</sup> On Charles' collations, see *Testament of Levi*, General Index, s. v.

<sup>4</sup> R. H. Charles, *The Greek Versions of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Oxford: 1908); S. Yovsep'ianc', Անկանոն Գիրք շին Կառնարանայ [Uncanonical Books of the Old Testament] (Venice: 1896).

<sup>5</sup> A. Hultgard, *Croyances Messianiques des Test. XII Patr.* (dissertation; Uppsala: 1971), pp. 35ff. He builds upon *Testament of Levi*, pp. 27-30.



se laisse établir seulement à l'aide de A<sup>mv</sup> [i.e. MV] et A<sup>z</sup> [i.e. Z], (p. 36)' is too far-reaching. The text of  $\alpha$  is better, in a number of cases, than that of all other witnesses, even though MV Z are without doubt the best single manuscripts. These readings of  $\alpha$  are particularly important in that where MV and Z split, that which concords with  $\alpha$  is usually primitive. Moreover, certain manuscripts of  $\beta$  preserve significant readings. The text of an *editio minor*, then, should be based upon Z MV and select manuscripts of  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ .<sup>6</sup> This will ensure that the text is based upon those manuscripts preserving the best text-forms and also that all the chief textual types which have developed in Armenian are represented in the edition.

The readings considered are substantial variants of a 'non-repetitive' character.<sup>7</sup> Cases of omission, even where it accords with the Greek, are not usually considered. This is particularly the practice in the case of  $\alpha$ , which is an abbreviated text form.

#### SUPERIOR READINGS OF MINOR GROUPINGS

##### *Z alone*

T. Levi 19:2 *սուհար*] + *մեր* Z

Greek *ἡμεῖς*

T. Levi 19:4 *սւթ*] *ևթն* Z *հինգ*  $\alpha$

Greek *ἑπτά*; the reading of  $\alpha$  goes back to the text of Z by graphic corruption.

T. Zeb. 9:4 inc] + *մի բաժանիք յերկուս զսուս* Z

Greek *μὴ σχίσθητε εἰς δύο κεφαλὰς*

T. Zeb. 9:5 *գործիցէք*] + *և ամենայն կոսոց երկիր պահանիցէք* Z

Greek *καί γε πᾶν εἶδωλον προσκυνήσετε*

T. Zeb. 9:8 *ծագիցէ*] + *ձեզ* Z

Greek *ὁμῖν*

It follows that Z is characterized by a number of significantly superior readings. It may be added that it is rarely inferior to the other manuscripts.

##### *$\alpha$ alone*

T. Levi 8:2 *դիտուիեանն*] + *և զրոն ճշմարտութեան* (- *սւթեանն* H) *և զթթիւսն հաւատոց* (- *ս* HK) *և զգարդ* (*գարդ* HKB) *նշանին և զհփուսն* (+ *ի* W) *մարգարէութեան* (*մարդութեան* H\*)

Greek *καὶ τὸν ποδῆσιν τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τὸ πέταλον τῆς πίστεως καὶ τὴν μίτραν τοῦ σημείου καὶ τὸ ἐφόδ τῆς προφητείας*; in spite of some differences,  $\alpha$  clearly reflects the Greek text.

T. Levi 8:8  $\alpha$  does not have the dittography of *և լցին զձեռս իմ խնկով* found in all other Armenian witnesses.

T. Levi 8:1 *վաթսուս*] *ևթանասուն*  $\alpha$

Greek *ἑξομύκοντα*

T. Levi 8:14 *կղիցի* *կոչեցի*  $\alpha$ -W *կոչեաց* *ի* W

Greek *ἐπικληθήσεται*

<sup>6</sup> It is also evident from the present re-collation of the material used by Charles and Yovsep'iane' that their collations are neither accurate nor exhaustive.

<sup>7</sup> See *Testament of Levi*, pp. 197f.

T. Levi 8:16 *ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς* *ἡμεῖς* *ἡμεῖς* *ἡμεῖς* (HK) *α*

Greek *τῶ σπείρουσι σου*

T. Levi 8:19 *ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς* + *ἡμεῖς* *α*

Greek *τοῦτο*

*α* is a reworked text and shows numerous readings which are secondary in character. The text which served as the underlying basis of the reworking was clearly most important.

Z *α*

T. Levi 19:1 *ἡμεῖς* + *ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς* Z *α*

Greek *ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς*

T. Levi 19:3 *ἡμεῖς* *20* *ἡμεῖς* Z *α*

Greek *ἡμεῖς: μου καὶ ἡμεῖς g μου l*

T. Jos. 19:5 *ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς* Z ABHKS

The reading of Z ABHKS is clearly preferable and no Greek is extant.

These cases in which Z and *α* or part of *α* are superior to all other witness serve to confirm the value of these two text types.

#### MV

V is a copy of M or of a text very like it. Rarely does it preserve a reading clearly superior to a corruption of M. MV occur alone, superior to all MSS, only in T. Levi ch. 8 which, it should be observed, is missing in Z. MV do occur in a very significant number of readings with one or two other witnesses, usually Z, *α* or part of *α* which preserve the best text. It forms a valuable corroboration particularly for this latter witness which is not consistently superior.

#### MV alone

T. Levi 8:12 *ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς* MV *ἡμεῖς* Z *β* *ἡμεῖς* S *ἡμεῖς* *rel*

Greek *ὁ πιστεύσας*

T. Levi 8:14 *ἡ* MV om rel

Greek *εἰς*: but on this type of variant, see *Testament of Levi*, p. 69, commentary.

#### MV ABSW

T. Levi 19:5 *ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς* MV ABSW om rel

Greek *καὶ τὸ λόγιον τοῦ σπείρου*

#### MV Z

T. Levi 19:5 *ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς* MV Z om rel

Greek *ἡμεῖς αὐτὸν*

T. Jos. 19:11 *ἡμεῖς* A.V Z om rel

Greek *ἡμεῖς*

#### MV Z S

T. Jos. 19:7 *ἡμεῖς* MV Z S rel vary

This seems best in context; no Greek extant.



MV Z  $\alpha$ T. Levi 19:3 *ῥωνῆς*] MV Z  $\alpha$  om relGreek *τῶν λογῶν*T. Zeb. 9:3 *ἰβήτης* *ῥωνῆς*] MV Z  $\alpha$  *ἰβήτης* *ῥωνῆς* X Bb *ῥωνῆς*  
*ἰβήτης* relGreek *ἰβήτης ῥωνῆς*T. Benj. 11:2 *ῥωνῆς* *ῥωνῆς*] MV Z  $\alpha$  *ῥωνῆς* relGreek *ἰβήτης Κυρίου*T. Benj. 12:4 *ῥωνῆς* *ῥωνῆς*] MV Z  $\alpha$  *ῥωνῆς* relGreek *ἐκ τῆς Χαναάν*M[V] Z NO  $\alpha$ T. Jos. 19:5 *ῥωνῆς*] M Z NO  $\alpha$  *ῥωνῆς* rel: V is independently cor-  
This seems best in context; no Greek extant. [rupt.

## Summary

The readings adduced so far set it beyond doubt that MV, Z,  $\alpha$  should be included in the *editio minor* and further that Z is the best single witness.

## XBb

Bb is dependent on a text like X but has been reworked, somewhat. XBb form a special subgroup of  $\beta$ , occasionally with superior readings.

## XBb alone

T. Benj. 12:1 *ῥωνῆς*] + *ῥωνῆς* *ῥωνῆς* XBbGreek *ῥωνῆς*MV Z  $\alpha$  XBbT. Zeb. 9:6 fin ] + *ῥωνῆς* (om XBb  $\alpha$ ) *ῥωνῆς* MV Z  $\alpha$  XBbGreek *καὶ ἰβήτης*

MV Z XBb W

T. Levi 19:4 *ῥωνῆς*] MV Z XBb W *ῥωνῆς* rel [tary.\*Greek *ζῆτης*; on this reading see *Testament of Levi*, p. 129, commen-

## Other Manuscripts

L shows certain readings found in MV, Z,  $\alpha$  and not in the rest of the manuscripts of  $\beta$ . One case of ZK Bb occurs; in one instance it is just conceivable that B preserves a superior reading. No other cases occur.

Z L  $\alpha$ T. Levi 1:2 *ῥωνῆς*] om Z L  $\alpha$  = Greek

MV U L

T. Levi 8:14 *ῥωνῆς* 1<sup>o</sup>] M V U L *ῥωνῆς* relGreek *καὶ ῥωνῆς*

Z K Bb

\* Note also: T. Benj. 12:2 ZX om *ῥωνῆς* = Greek; on T. Levi 8:10 where Bb preserves a phrase which might be viewed as superior, see *Testament of Levi*, pp. 82f. The reading is, however, probably a result of the recensitional activity of Bb.

T. Zeb. 9:8 *արդարութեանն* ] + *h* Z K Bb

Greek *xzi*

*B* alone

T. Levi 8:18 *յանդիմանեցա* | *անդ իմացա* B

Greek *συνήλ*: B could be the text from which the corruption was made, but it equally plausibly could be the result of a correction. If it were to reflect the original, that would witness a non-existent Greek.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. It follows from these examples that the *editio minor* should be based upon the collation of Z, MV $\alpha$  (or part thereof, see below), X, L. The position of Bb is not certain and although it seems unlikely to produce any good readings not in X it should probably be collated. This selection of witnesses will, most probably, preserve all readings significant for the resituation of the Greek text which have survived in the Armenian tradition. Equally, it presents a spectrum of the textual types which developed in Armenian.

2. Of  $\alpha$ , the edition will utilize S W K with occasional consultation of B (see Appendix II, below).

3. The text of the edition should be based upon Z, into the text of which readings from the other text types will be introduced in those cases in which they are indubitably superior. In cases in which Z is not extant, M should be used.

[Since the preparation of this article in April, 1975 a sample edition of the Testament of Joseph, based upon the manuscripts here selected has appeared. In the Introduction to that edition certain refinements of the conclusions presented here have been achieved, in particular as regards the utilization of V and Bb. See: M. E. Stone, *The Armenian Version of the Testament of Joseph* (Texts and Translations 6, Pseudepigrapha Series 5, Missoula: 1975).]

## APPENDIX I

### *Evidence for a Possible Second Contact between Armenian and Greek*

A second, important result of the study of the samples was that a number of cases emerged in which two attested Greek readings both seemed to be presented by Armenian manuscripts. Their sparseness makes it possible that conjunctive developments may be responsible for them. Yet certain of these seem to form a pattern of occurrence and in these cases the likelihood of conjunctive development or incidental glossing is reduced.

$\alpha$  and part of  $\alpha$

T. Levi 8:3 *առին* ] MV Z  $\beta$  + *gh*  $\alpha$

Greek *εἰπεν*: + *μου d m c i*

T. Levi 8:17 *h* *q* *առաւարք h* *դարբ* ] MV Z  $\beta$  om  $\alpha$

Greek *xai xutai xai γαρματεις*: om Greek  $\alpha$

This may be conjunctive, but the homoioteleuton is easier in Greek than in Armenian.



T. Levi 8:17 *q h* | MV Z  $\beta$  *h*  $\alpha$

ἔτι: καὶ *c h i*

T. Levi 8:18 *ααωξήν* | MV Z  $\beta$  *ααωξήν ααυήκων*  $\alpha$

ἐκείνου (τοῦ πρότερου *k*): τοῦ πρώτου ὀνείρου *c h i*

Notably all these cases show a reading of  $\alpha$  coinciding with Greek *c h i*. A similar pattern can be observed in three readings of BW in T. Levi 19:2-3. In these cases, however, the identity between BW and the Greek minority readings is not complete.

T. Levi 19:2 *ζωερὺν δὲρ ααωγωφ* | MV Z  $\beta$  AHKS *ζωερὺν ἱερήων* *ααωγῆν* BW

Greek ἀπεκρίθημεν ἡμεῖς τῷ πατρὶ (+ ἡμῶν *e*): ἀπεκρίθησαν οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ τῷ πατρὶ αὐτῶν *d*; cf. *c h i*

The split of the first and third persons is evident in both versions, but there is a good deal of variation in the Greek tradition.

T. Levi 19:3 *ζωγρὺν δὲρ* | MV Z  $\beta$  AHKS *ζωγρὺν ἡγω* BW

Greek ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν: ὁ πατὴρ αὐτῶν Λευὶς *d* ὁ πατὴρ αὐτῶν *c h i*

T. Levi 19:3 *ααωγωφ δὲρ* | MV Z  $\beta$  AHKS *αρηρῆφ ἡαωγῆν* BW

Greek εἰπώμεν: εἶπον αὐτῶν (om. *d*) οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ *d c h i*; cf. εἶπον ἐκεῖνοι *g*

In this connection note also the following two readings:

*L X Bb*  $\alpha$

T. Levi 8:10 *lgḥ* | MV Z rel  $\beta$  *hlg* *LX Bb*  $\alpha$

Greek ἐπλήρωσαν: ἐπλήρωσε (-σεν *m f*) *d a c h i m f*

*L* alone

T. Levi 8:3 *ααων* | om *L*

Greek κυρίου: om *c h i*

#### Summary

It seems that, at least in T. Levi ch. 8,  $\alpha$  may show a special relationship with *c h i*. It also seems possible that this is true of WB and *d c h i* in T. Levi ch. 19<sup>9</sup>. Caution, however would dictate the suspension of final judgement until further evidence emerges. Any possible relationship between *L*, *X*, and *Bb* and *c h i* remains unproven.

#### Other Manuscripts

A number of other such splits have been found, but no pattern emerges from an examination on them. They are given here for the sake of completeness of the presentation.

#### *X Bb*

T. Levi title *qḥḥaw* | + *αρηρῆφ ἡαωγῆν* *X Bb*

Greek Λευί: + υἱοῦ Ἰακωβ *e*

T. Benj. 12:1 *ḥawarḥaw* | + *ḥḥḥḥḥ* *X Bb*

Greek ἐπλήρωσε: Πλήρωσας πενταμην *d*

Both these cases are expansionary additions, cf. also *X Bb* in T. Levi 19:5 *bis*.

<sup>9</sup> After examining these examples, Prof. M. de Jonge cautiously observes that "secondary influence cannot be excluded, but it has not been proved" (letter of March 18, 1975). The hypothesis must now actively be examined, and all that is needed for the present study is that manuscripts possibly showing such splits be included in the edition.

*MV alone*

T. Levi 8:4 *ηωρηδωμ]* MV om rel

Greek + *εα*

*MV Z α*

T. Zeb. 9:5 *δωρηδωμ]* MV Z *α* + *βα* rel

Greek *εγω*: + *εγω* *ch i*

Here the majority reading of Armenian agrees with *ch i* and its minority reading, including *α*, with majority Greek.

*MV Z*

T. Benj. 11:1 *ηωρηδωμ]* McV Z *ηωρηδωμ* M\* *ηωρηδωμ* X *ηωρηδωμ* rel

Greek *κληρονομαι*: *κληρονομαι* g 1

*H K*

T. Levi 1:1 *ηωρηδωμ]* *ηωρηδωμ* H K

Greek *το αμωρηδωμ d m*: *εγω* *τελευτη*: g 1

A doubtful case.

From this evidence it follows that the possibility of a second contact of *α* with a Greek text like *ch i* should be entertained. All other readings have been given too, even in cases where they are not certain. New evidence may emerge as the work on the edition proceeds or it may eventuate that such scattered readings are the result of glossing or conjunctive developments.

As far as the selection of manuscripts for use in the forthcoming *editio minor* is concerned, it is important that witnesses showing significant evidence of such second contacts be included in the collations. It may be remarked, parenthetically, that in fact there is almost complete overlap between those manuscripts discerned to contain superior readings and those containing evidence of the second contact.

## APPENDIX II

### *Selection of the Manuscripts of α*

The six manuscripts of *α* examined fall into three major groups: B W, H K, A S. The following table sets forth cases of superior or split readings involving part of this group, cited in the order in which they occur above. It makes apparent that no such readings occur in A H which are not included in B K S W. Moreover, the single reading of B alone is doubtful in highest order. Therefore, for the *editio minor* K S W will be collated. B will be consulted where additional evidence seems to be required.

	A	S	B	W	H	K
T. Levi 8:2	x	x	x	x		
T. Jos. 19:7		x				
T. Levi 19:4				x		
T. Levi 9:8						x
T. Levi 8:8			x			
T. Levi 19:2			x	x		
T. Levi 19:3			x	x		
T. Levi 19:3			x	x		
T. Levi 1:1					x	x