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Haroutiun S. Jamkochian

The Life of St. Gregory the Illuminator of Armenia in Ms. Sin. Ar. 455, Yerevan: "Gitutyun," 2016, р. 320 (in Russian, with Arabic edition, Arabic facsimile, and summaries in Armenian and English). ISBN 978-5-8080-1253-0.

The Sinai collection of Christian Arabic manuscripts contains a few dozen precious parchment codices dating to the ninth and tenth century. Lives of saints – for the most part translated from Greek or Syriac (though some original Arabic compositions exist) – occupy a central place in these codices.¹

It is from one of these manuscripts – the ninth-century Sinai ar. 460 – that in 1905 Nikolai Marr published (with a Russian translation) an Arabic version of Agathangelos' *History of Armenia*.² This Arabic version (Va) represents a recension radically different from, and likely earlier than, both the extant

1 The most significant ninth and tenth-century Sinai manuscripts with hagiographic content are: Sinai ar. 428 (cf. A. Binggeli, "Les trois David, copistes arabes de Palestine aux 9^e-10^e s.," in: A. Binggeli, A. Boud'hors, and M. Cassin [eds.], *Manuscripta Graeca et Orientalia: Mélanges monastiques et patristiques en l'honneur de Paul Géhin*, Leuven, 2016, pp. 79-117, here 85-87); Sinai ar. 431; Sinai ar. 457 (cf. J.-M. Sauget, "La collection homilético-hagiographique du manuscrit *Sinai arabe 457*," *Proche-Orient Chrétien*, 22 [1972], pp. 129-167); Sinai ar. 460; Sinai ar. 461; Sinai ar. 513; Sinai ar. 514; Sinai ar. 520; Sinai ar. 542 (cf. A. Binggeli, "L'hagiographie du *Sinai arabe* d'après un recueil du IX^e siècle (*Sinai arabe 542*)," *Parole de l'Orient*, 32 [2007], pp. 163-180); Sinai ar. 545; Sinai ar. NF Perg. 1; and Sinai ar. NF Perg. 66 (cf. Binggeli, "Les trois David," pp. 100-106). On Christian Arabic hagiography, see M.N. Swanson, "Arabic Hagiography," in: S. Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, Farnham and Burlington, 2011, vol. 1, pp. 345-367; J.C. Lamoreaux, "Hagiography," in: S. Noble and A. Treiger (eds.), *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World (700-1700): An Anthology of Sources*, DeKalb, 2014, pp. 112-135.

2 Н.Я. Марр, "Крещение армянъ, грузинъ, абхазовъ и алановъ святымъ Григоріемъ (арабская версія)" [N. Ya. Marr, "The Baptism of the Armenians, the Georgians, the Abkhaz, and the Alans by St. Gregory (Arabic Version)"], *Записки восточнаго отдѣлення Императорскаго русскаго археологическаго общества*, 16.2-3 (1905), pp. 65-211. On the various versions of Agathangelos (and the sigla used to designate them), see G. Garitte, *Documents pour l'étude du livre d'Agathange*, Studi e Testi, 127; Città del Vaticano, 1946; R.W. Thomson, *The Lives of Saint Gregory: The Armenian, Greek, Arabic, and Syriac Versions of the History Attributed to Agathangelos*, Ann Arbor, 2010; G. Winkler, "Our Present Knowledge of the History of Agat'angelos and Its Oriental Versions," *Revue des études arméniennes*, 14 (1980), pp. 125-141.

Armenian text of Agathangelos (Aa)³ and the Greek translation produced from the Armenian (Ag).⁴ Because Sinai ar. 460 is acephalous, Marr's edition and translation lack the beginning of the text. Subsequently, the Armenian scholar Aram Ter-Ghevondian discovered a second manuscript of Va – the thirteenth-century Sinai ar. 455 – which, fortunately, has preserved the missing beginning. In 1973, Ter-Ghevondian published a facsimile edition of the beginning section of Sinai ar. 455 with a modern Armenian translation.⁵

Haroutiun S. Jamkochian's book under review offers a first critical edition and complete Russian translation of Va. His edition (pp. 34-102) is diplomatic – an accurate transcription of the integral manuscript Sinai ar. 455 – while the variant readings from Sinai ar. 460 (and from Marr's edition) are relegated to the apparatus. The Russian translation (pp. 103-196) is, for the most part, Marr's with some improvements; the beginning section absent in Sinai ar. 460 – and hence in Marr's edition and translation – was translated by Jamkochian. A lacuna in Va, unnoticed by Marr, was filled (pp. 46-47) from a second Arabic translation (Ar), presumably dating from the thirteenth century and preserved in the Arabic Menologion for September (Sinai ar. 395).⁶ The Russian translation of this lacuna (pp. 122-124) is also Jamkochian's.

In addition to the edition and the translation, Jamkochian's book includes a brief "Introduction to the Study of the Document" (pp. 6-8),⁷ an analysis of the "Arabic Manuscripts of Agathangelos' History" (pp. 9-24), which contains a very important list of corrections to Marr's edition and to the sections

3 R.W. Thomson, *Agathangelos, History of the Armenians*, Albany, 1976.

4 G. Lafontaine, *La version grecque ancienne du livre arménien d'Agathange*, Publications de l'Institut Orientaliste de Louvain, 7; Louvain-la-Neuve, 1973.

5 Ա. Ն. Տեր-Ղևոնդյան, "Ագաթանգեղոսի արաբական խմբագրության նորահայտ ամբողջական բնագիրը" [A.N. Ter-Ghevondian, "The Newly Discovered Complete Text of the Arabic Version of Agathangelos"], Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես [*Historic and Philological Journal*], 60.1 (1973), pp. 209-237 (in Armenian with an Arabic facsimile edition and a summary in Russian). I am grateful to Basile Lourié for his generous help with Armenian.

6 The second Arabic translation (Ar) was also edited by Ter-Ghevondian: Ա.Ն. Տեր-Ղևոնդյան, Ագաթանգեղոսի արաբական նոր խմբագրությանը արաբերեն բնագիր և ուսումնասիրություն [A New Arabic Recension of Agathangelos: Arabic Text and Study], Yerevan, 1968 (cf. G. Garitte, "Une version arabe de l'«Agathange» grec dans le Sin. ar. 395," *Le Muséon*, 63 [1950], pp. 231-247). On the Arabic Menologion, see A. Treiger, "Sinaitica (1): The Antiochian Menologion, Compiled by Hieromonk Yūhannā 'Abd al-Masīḥ (First Half of the 13th Century)," *Христианскій востокъ / Christian Orient*, 8 (14) (2017), pp. 215-252.

7 This section is obviously based on the Russian summary of Ter-Ghevondian's article: Տեր-Ղևոնդյան, "Ագաթանգեղոսի արաբական խմբագրության նորահայտ ամբողջական բնագիրը," p. 237.

of Joshua Blau's *Grammar of Christian Arabic* dependent on the latter,⁸ an inventory of "Systematic Variations between Sinai ar. 460 and Sinai ar. 455" (pp. 25-33), "Principles of the Present Edition" (pp. 32-33), an "Index of Proper [Names] and Place Names" (pp. 197-205), a "Glossary" (p. 206), a list of "[Conventional] Symbols" employed in the edition and translation (p. 207), a brief bibliography (pp. 208-210), summaries in Armenian and English (pp. 211-228 and 229-240 respectively), and a complete facsimile of the Agathangelos section of Sinai ar. 455 (pp. 241-320).

Jamkochian's book certainly represents a major step forward in the study of the Arabic Agathangelos. Nonetheless, it cannot yet be considered a definitive edition of Va for two reasons. First, as mentioned above, the edition is diplomatic: Jamkochian prints the text exactly as it appears in Sinai ar. 455, even in cases where this manuscript's reading is demonstrably inferior to that of the considerably older witness Sinai ar. 460. Second, and more significantly, Jamkochian does not systematically compare the Arabic translation to its Greek *Vorlage* where extant (i.e., the partial Greek versions Vg and Vo).⁹ Such a comparison would, no doubt, help correct numerous mistakes in the two extant Arabic manuscripts as well as more of Marr's misreadings.

For example, at p. 53:22 (=Sinai ar. 460, fol. 6v:2; illegible in Sinai ar. 455), the Arabic text reads: *يا ربي القوي*, "O my powerful Lord" (Russian trans., p. 133: "О Господь мой могущественный"). A glance at the Greek *Vorlage* (Vo, §76) shows that the underlying Greek text reads: *Κύριε τῶν δυνάμεων*, "O Lord of the powers".¹⁰ Given this underlying Greek phrasing, there can hardly be any doubt that *يا ربي القوي* is a copyist's mistake, and the Arabic translation originally read *يا رب القوي*, "O Lord of the powers," an exact rendering of the Greek.

Just a few lines later, at p. 54:3, the printed Arabic text follows Marr's edition in reading: *منجل* (Russian trans., p. 133: "благовестителем," an impossible translation based on the word's ostensible derivation from the Arabic term *inḡīl*, "Gospel"). The reading *منجل*, indeed, seems to be attested in Sinai ar. 455 (fol. 143r:8), but is clearly erroneous. The correct reading appears in Sinai ar. 460 (fol. 6v:7; not reflected in Jamkochian's apparatus): *مبجل*, i.e., *mubaḡḡal*, "glorious." It is this latter reading that faithfully renders the underlying Greek word *ἐνδοξον*, "glorious" (Vo, §76), and hence is undoubtedly correct.¹¹

8 J. Blau, *A Grammar of Christian Arabic, Based Mainly on South-Palestinian Texts from the First Millennium*, 3 vols., CSCO 267, 276, 279 / Subsidia 27-29 Louvain, 1966-1967.

9 On Vg (=MS Escorial gr. x III.6), see Garitte, *Documents*. On Vo (=MS Ohrid, National Museum gr. 4) see G. Garitte, "La vie grecque inédite de saint Grégoire d'Arménie (ms. 4 d'Ochrida)," *Analecta Bollandiana*, 83 (1965), pp. 233-290. The versions Vg and Vo are substantially different from the Greek version Ag mentioned above.

10 Garitte, "La vie grecque inédite," p. 257.

11 Garitte, "La vie grecque inédite," p. 257. Marr, in fact, corrected his own translation later in

A few lines later, a small typo needs to be corrected. At p. 54:7, the printed text has *ولا عداها*. This should be written as one word: *ولا عداها*, “and her enemies”¹² – this being the reading in both Sinai ar. 460, fol. 6v:12 and Sinai ar. 455, fol. 143v:3, confirmed by the Greek *Vorlage*: ἑχθρούς, *Vo*, §76;¹³ the Russian translation at p. 133:27 (врагов ее) is correct. The period after *عابرین الناموس* at p. 54:8 should be deleted.

Despite these deficiencies, it is to be hoped that Jamkochian’s study will stimulate further research into the Arabic translation of Agathangelos (*Va*). As mentioned above, a systematic comparison of *Va* to the Greek *Vorlage* where extant (i.e., *Vg* and *Vo*) is a major desideratum, and so is a careful study of the Arabic idiom of *Va*, particularly its numerous Syriacisms (including the rare term *تسعية*, *tas’iya*, “story,” in the title, p. 34:2 – a loan word from Syriac ܬܫܥܝܬܐ).¹⁴ While *Va*’s relation to the other versions of Agathangelos – in Armenian, Greek, Georgian, and Syriac – has, for obvious reasons, attracted considerable attention, *Va*’s place in the Christian Arabic hagiographical literature of the ninth and tenth centuries and in the history of Christian Graeco-Arabica¹⁵ still remains to be explored.

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the article – see Марр, “Крещение,” p. 191: “Въ 80,23 я напрасно поспѣшилъ вычитать *منجل* и перевелъ такое чтеніе словомъ *благовѣститель*, какъ гадательное вульгарное образование от *انجيل* *евангеліе*. Подлежащее мѣсто въ переводѣ (81,37-38) соответственно слѣдуетъ исправить такъ: «и сдѣлать его прославленнымъ передъ врагами» [At 80:23 I have been too hasty in adopting the erroneous reading *منجل* and translating this reading with the word “good-news-bearer” as a putative vulgar derivate from *انجيل*, “gospel.” The corresponding place in the translation (81:37-38) should, accordingly, be corrected as follows: “and made him glorious before the enemies”]. Marr’s self-correction is, however, not reflected in Jamkochian’s edition and translation.

12 The preposition *li-* here governs the direct object, as in Syriac.

13 Garitte, “La vie grecque inédite,” p. 258.

14 For another occurrence of *تسعية*, see Sinai ar. 545, fol. 406r (also in a title: *Tas’iyat iṣābat ra’s Yuhannā al-ma’madān bi-madīnat Ḥimṣ*). On Syriacisms in *Va*, see Марр, “Крещение,” pp. 196-198.

15 On this subject, see A. Treiger, “Christian Graeco-Arabica: Prolegomena to a History of the Arabic Translations of the Greek Church Fathers,” *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World*, 3 (2015), pp. 188-227; cf. A. Treiger, “Syro-Arabic Translations in Abbasid Palestine: The Case of John of Apamea’s *Letter on Stillness* (Sinai ar. 549),” *Parole de l’Orient*, 39 (2014), pp. 79-131; A. Treiger, “The Earliest Dated Christian Arabic Translation (772 AD): Ammonius’ *Report on the Martyrdom of the Monks of Sinai and Raithu*,” *Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies*, 16 (2016), pp. 29-38.

It is with great sorrow that I learned of Haroutiun S. Jamkochian's death on 25 October 2017.¹⁶ I dedicate this review to his memory. ليكن ذكره مؤبداً, may his memory be eternal!

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¹⁶ My sincere thanks to Dmitry A. Morozov for this information.