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## AN ARMENIAN MANUSCRIPT IN THE NATIONAL AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, JERUSALEM<sup>1</sup>.

Among the oriental manuscripts in the National Library in Jerusalem are two Armenian manuscripts. One contains the poems of S. Nersēs Shnorhali, and probably dates from the sixteenth or seventeenth century. The other, an especially handsome manuscript, will be described here. It contains a brief history and genealogy of the Bible. Its library number is Or Var 40 1. The manuscript was given to the Library by Sir Lionel Penrose in 1935.

### 1. *Physical Description*

The manuscript is composed of four quires, the first three of six folios each and the last of four, totalling 22 folios in all. The material is vellum. The first two and the last three folios are blank and are not included in the numbering of pages. The text covers seventeen numbered folios. The latest binder placed a sheet of thin, modern paper around each of the first three quires and also introduced a sheet of the same paper between the sheets of these quires. Thus, between these quires (*i.e.* between ff. 4-5, 10-11) there are two sheets of thin paper. The same is the case in the middle of quires 2 and 3 (*i.e.* between ff. 7-8, 13-14). In the centre of quire 1 there is no such sheet. Between the covers and the manuscript there are a number of thick paper sheets. The end papers are coloured. The manuscript is well preserved and the few water stains which are found are limited to the margins and have caused damage neither to the text nor to the illumination.

In the text there was an old pagination, entered in pencil according to pages, not folios. Since the third quire had been bound in upside down, the Manuscript Department of the Library had it resewn in the correct way. This, however, caused confusion in the previous page numbering and new numbers, by folios, were introduced, in

<sup>1</sup> The present is a translation of the author's Hebrew article in *Kiryath Sefer*. Vol. 42 (1967), pp. 269-271. It has been expanded and revised in certain respects.

pencil, from 1-17. They were placed in the lower corner of the page.

Page size : width 29.3 cm. × height 22 cm. The written area is 25.5 cm. wide and 18.5 cm. high. The lines of writing run, therefore, in the direction of the larger dimension, the width.

The manuscript was bound similarly to a writing pad. That is to say, the line of the fold of the sheets and of the sewing is parallel to the writing and not at right-angles to it. Thus, when the manuscript is opened, the two pages seen are not side by side, but one under the other. The upper is the verso of one folio and the lower the recto of the following folio. The European binding is covered with modern brown leather, over heavy cardboard. On the spine is stamped : *History of the World. Armenian*. A binder's stamp is found on one of the endsheets : *Bound by Wilson, Cambridge*. Inside the front cover is the bookplate of Alexander Peckover, Baron of Wisbech.

## 2. Script and Illumination

The body of the text is in a well executed *bolorgir*. The first letter is zoomorphic and the remainder of the first line is in ornithomorphic script, all in a frame on a gold background (2 a). The second and third lines are in uncial script (*erkat'agir*), in blue and red. Initials in ornithomorphic script, decorated capitals and colored *erkat'agir* letters are found throughout the manuscript. The capitals are decorated in the following colours : red, brown, yellow, gold and blue. The ink of the text is, for the most part, black, but for decorative purposes gold, red and blue inks have also been employed. On f. 7a there is a coloured dedication to the patron, enclosed in a frame.

The text is not written in two columns, as is most common in manuscripts of these proportions. Rather, in the first part, the pages are divided into sections differing from one another in size and shape. On ff. 8 a - 14 b it is divided into a number of parallel columns, separated from one another by thick, coloured lines (4.5-5 mm.), and subsequently one column covers the entire width of the page. The first lines of the various subdivisions of the text are emphasized, in addition to the initials, by red ink. Sometimes the first line is in gold and the second in red. The written area is enclosed by filleting composed of two thin red lines.

Since the work is a chronicle, a large portion of the text is written in a schematic fashion and it includes various diagrams, such as the camp of the Israelites in the wilderness (7 b) and Jerusalem in the

days of Nehemiah (12 a). Both of these are circular in form. Thin double lines of red ink surround the various links in the genealogical chains and join them to one another.

At the beginning of the text is a full page miniature which presents the Trinity on the Divine Throne. The throne is supported by the symbols of the four Evangelists. At each side of it are six-winged seraphs, pronouncing the *trisagion*. The lower part of the painting represents the Garden of Eden, with the four rivers which issue forth from it clearly indicated. In the garden there are a number of trees and two of them, one at each side, are especially elaborate. It may be that these represent the two trees that were in the Garden, the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge. At the top of the next page is a headpiece in the form of a rectangular panel containing a pattern of entwined leaves and branches, the whole on a gold background. To its right and left are two medallions containing dogs (lions?). The panel and the medallions are enclosed in a frame of intertwined snakes (2 a).

There are no marginal ornaments in the manuscript. On folio 3 a is a small miniature of Adam and Eve by the tree. At the base of the tree lies the serpent. Subsequently there are portraits of biblical figures, mostly in the form of medallions. For example : 4 a, b, 5 a the patriarchs; 6 a, b Moses and Joshua; 7 b Saul; 8 a David; 13 a, 14 Jesus; 15 a ff. the Evangelists, the twelve apostles, Paul, Mary.

## 3. Author, Scribe, etc.

No title is to be found at the beginning of the book. From the colophon it may be concluded that the title was something like « A Brief Genealogy of Scripture ». The names of the author and scribe are not mentioned, although it is clear that the scribe and the illuminator are the same person. According to the colophon the manuscript was copied in ..... 1142 A.E. = 1693. It was written for Tēr Isahak of Y(H)amit' (Tigranokert), vardapet. It was copied in the church of S. Sargis Zawravar and his son Martiros in Tigranokert. The text of the part of the colophon giving these details is (17 a-b) :  
 ... ew a'cabanut'e vrdptn tēr Isahak Yamit'ec'in. zor tesimal zimastāsar ew  
 zdiwragiwt karg tohmīc' azgagak'ut'ec' patmut'ec's hin ew n or ktaka-  
 ranac' a'cašunč' tařic'. ew et greł zsa ... Ard greč'aw ew calkeč'aw  
 oskenkar madeans a'cašunč' hamat'awt tohmat'iwk's i haykazean t'ua-

*kanut'es. RČ. ew. XB. amin i mayrak'alak's Yamit' or ew Tigranakert.  
and hovaneaw srboyn sargsi zawravarin ew ordwoy nr mardirosin :*

### Translation

... and the doctor of theology, Tēr Isahak of Yamit; who having seen the most wisely arranged and easily understood order of the families of the kinships of the histories of the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, also gave it to be written ... Now this gold lettered volume, this brief scriptural genealogy was written and illuminated in the year of the Armenians RČXB (1142 = 1693) in the metropolis of Yamit', which is also (called) Tigranakert, under the shelter of (i.e. in the church of) S. Sargis Zawravar and his son Martiros<sup>2</sup>.

The incipit :

*ast mecin Aristoteli imastasiri hark ē am and hanrakani ...*

« According to the great philosopher Aristotle everyone should in general ... »

The explicit :

*yoržam lrumn ašzarhi mtč'ē yaynžam am iel kec'c'ē, i p'ars k'i yawi'-  
teans. Amēn.*

« When the end of the world approaches, all Israel will live in the glory of Christ for ever. Amen. »

On f. 7 a there is a coloured dedication to :

*tn Yi c'ry Isahak vrdpt*

« Isahak vardapet, servant of the Lord Jesus »

Following this is a short explanation of the contents of the subsequent pages.

### 4. Contents

The book is a summary of biblical history from creation to the end of the New Testament. It contains :

<sup>2</sup> Compare the colophon of the Gospel of 1616, no. 13 in A. SURMEYAN, *Grand Catalogue des Manuscrits arméniens des collections particulières* (in Armenian), Paris, 1950, p. 20, col. 2 : ... i Tigranakert mayrak'alak's Hamit' and hovaneaw srboyn Sargsi zawravarin ew ordwoy norin Martirosi.

2 a : Introduction.

2 b - 16 a : Text. In more detail : 2 b Table of Books of the Bible; 3 a - 5 b Adam to Moses; 6 a - 8 a Moses to David; 9 a - 13 b the period of the Monarchy, the Babylonian Exile, the Return, the period of the Second Temple; 14 a-b the birth and death of Christ; 15-16 Mary, mother of Christ, the Apostles, Paul, etc.

16 b - 17 a : Prayer for speedy redemption.

17 a-b : Doxology and colophon.

On f. 8 commence the thick coloured lines which were mentioned above. These represent the royal and priestly lines and the succession of prophets. From right to left they are :

1. The blue line : the High Priestly line (8 b - 13 b).
2. The yellow line : the prophets of Judah to Baruch and Ezekiel (8 b - 11 a).
3. The green line : the kings of Judah and the Davidic line to the birth of Christ (8 a - 14 b).
4. The red line : the kings of Israel (8 b - 10 b).
5. The blue-black line : the prophets of Israel to Daniel (8 b - 10 b).
6. The orange line : the foreign rulers from Assyria to the Hellenistic kingdoms (8 b - 13 a).
7. The second blue line : the Roman rulers (13 a-b).

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