

Reflections on Armenia and the Christian Orient:

Studies in Honour of Vrej Nersessian

edited by Christiane Esche-Ramshorn

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	7
Vrej Nersessian’s Awards	10
Vrej Nersessian’s Exhibitions and Collaboration on Exhibitions	11
Vrej Nersessian’s Bibliography	14
Interview with Vrej Nersessian: My Long Journey from Tehran to Calcutta and Via Holy Ejmiadsin to London	26
List of Contributors	47
An Armenian Prayer Scroll in the Collection of the Uppsala University Library, <i>Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, Robert Phenix</i>	48
La Traduction Médiévale Arménienne des Canons du Concile de Chalcédonie (451) Selon le Nomacanon des XIV Titres, <i>Azat Bozoyan</i>	79
The Armenian Translation of the Syriac Life of St Ephrem and its Syriac Source, <i>Sebastian P. Brock</i>	119
Reordering the Catholic Armenian Churches of Rome and Nakhichevan: “Hò Sentito la Messa Sua in Armenia et Qui in Roma Molte Volte.” Nicholas Friton (1560-1597) and Azaria Friton (1602-1604) of Aparan, <i>Christiane Esche-Ramshorn</i>	131
The Notion of the Union of Hypostases as an Idea Taken and Developed by the Armenian Church from the Third Ecumenical Council, <i>Khachik Grigoryan</i>	149
Marchands et clercs-imprimeurs: complémentarité et coopération au XVII ^e siècle de Venise à Amsterdam, <i>Raymond H. Kévorkian</i>	157
La Reine Mélisende, <i>Claude Mutafian</i>	163
An Armenian Manuscript of the Pauline Letters in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, <i>Nerses (Vrej) Nersessian</i>	173
Armenian and Foreign Sources on the Spread of Christianity in Armenia During the 1 st -3 rd Centuries, <i>Fr. Ararat Poghosyan</i>	192
Preparing for the Second Coming: the Production and Distribution of the First Hebrew Books Printed in India, <i>Graham Shaw</i>	208
Reflections on the Issue of Bibliographies of American Armenian Book and Armenian Dictionaries, <i>Gevorg Ter-Vardanyan</i>	229
Armenian Traditions Concerning the Writing of the Gospels: When, Where, and in What	

Language?, <i>Robert W. Thomson</i>	244
A Brief Survey of Systems of Musical Notation in Armenian Sacred Music, <i>Haig Utidjian</i>	261
Reflections on the History of the Armenian Church and Community in Argentina, Especially in Buenos Aires, <i>Fr. John Whooley</i>	285
The Ethiopic Testament of Antony, Edition and Translation, <i>Witold Witakowski</i>	305

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AN ARMENIAN PRAYER SCROLL IN THE COLLECTION OF THE UPPSALA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY*

Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, Robert Phenix

Abstract: The scroll copied July 1st 1681 for a certain K'aspar of Istanbul by the scribe Yarowt'iwn is a phylactery meant to protect its owner against all and sundry misfortunes and diseases. Unfortunately incomplete, it consists of 18 texts and seven miniatures. Besides very popular prayers such as "In Faith I Confess" by Nerses Šnorhali or "Eternal God" by Gregory of Narek, excerpts from the Old and New Testament are included, alongside supplications to guardian saints, presented within the narrative framework of and based on the saints' *vitae*, as well as apocryphal stories and various pieces of religious poetry. Several of these spells appear here for the first time in English translation. The miniatures of high artistic quality were executed by a painter who illustrated religious manuscripts in one of the important workshops flourishing in Istanbul, where a particular style was cultivated, being a mixture of indigenous painting tradition with imitation of pictures decorating European devotional printed books. The scroll was purchased in the beginning of the 20th century in Tiflis by the Swedish orientalist and art collector Fredric Martin.

Key words: Armenian scrolls, phylactery, protective prayers, Armenian saints, Armenian miniatures, Constantinopolitan school of painting

One of the Armenian manuscripts that found its way into the University Library in Uppsala¹ is the

* The authors are indebted to the Uppsala University Library for their generous permission to reproduce pictures of these scrolls free of charge. We extend our gratitude to Father Kevork Hintlian who facilitated our studies at both the St Thoros and Gulbenkian Libraries in Jerusalem, to Professor Andrea Schmidt for providing us access to difficult-to-find research materials and to Dr. Artsvi Bakhchinian who worked with us on this publication at an earlier stage. We acknowledge in a special way the generosity of Mr. Samuel Fogg who shared with us several photographs of the artifacts from his collection, to Mr. Johan Heldt for his assistance in photographing the scrolls, and to Ms. Weronika Witakowska, who expertly prepared the illustrations for this article. We would also like to thank Professor Cornelia Horn for introducing us to one another and making this collaboration possible. **Ձեզ անննեսան զոհութիւնս մեր մատուցանենք:**

Abbreviations:

BL – London, British Library

BnF – Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France

BS – *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, Roma vols I-12, 1961-1970.

Feydit, *Amulettes* – F. Feydit, *Amulettes de l'Arménie chrétienne*, Venise 1986.

CSCO – Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium

Matenadaran – Yerevan, the National Institute of Manuscripts.

PO – *Patrologia Orientalis*.

REA – *Revue des études arméniennes*.

UUL – Uppsala, University Library

VMSL – Venice, Library of the Catholic Order of the Mekhitarists, San Lazzaro.

VLM – Vienna, Library of the Catholic Order of the Mekhitarists.

SATI – *Synaxaire arménien de Tèr Israël*, ed. G. Bayan, PO 1910-1930.

1 J.S. Tikkanen, "Tre armeniska handskrifter" (Three Armenian Manuscripts), *Suomen Museo* 4 (1897), pp. 63-

scroll O. Arm 4, which belongs to the category of magical paraphernalia called *hamayk'*, post-classical *hmayil/hamayil* – “spell,” “charm,” “amulet,” “sorcery,” “magic.”² Incomplete,³ it consists of five paper strips glued together⁴ and contains 18 prayers copied in *nōtrgir* script in black ink. The headings are rubricated. Decoration includes several initials composed of vegetal motifs, one ornamented text and seven miniatures separated from the text by ornamented bands (Figs 1-2).

The colophon states that the scroll was ordered in 1681 and executed by the scribe Yarowt'iwn.⁵ Although only the first letter of the name of the owner is visible, its full form, *paron* (Mister)⁶ K'aspar, and the formula *caṛay astowcoy*, “the servant of God” appears several times in the main text.⁷ Therefore, we can safely assume that this is the name that was inserted into the colophon. Since the name is written in a different hand from all the prayers, most probably K'aspar himself added it to the already copied scroll.⁸

According to the first scholarly note written about the manuscript, it was purchased around 1895 in Tiflis⁹ by the Swedish orientalist and art collector Fredrik Martin, who some years later sold it to the Uppsala University Library.¹⁰

91; J. Strzygowski, “Drei armenische Handschriften,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 8 (1899), pp. 711f; A. Bakhchinyan, *Hayastan-Skandinavia: Patmamsakowt'ayin Arñč'owt'yowwnner (Armenia-Scandinavia: Historico-Cultural Relations)*, Yerevan, 2003, pp. 9f.

2 Objects of this kind are also designated *pahpanak* – “protector”; *paharan* – “defender”; *gir pahpanak* – “writ of protection”; *p'at'eraki t'owlt'* – “letter of enchantment,” itself related to *p'at'ank* – “envelope” or *p'at'et'k* – “amulet”; *kaxardakan t'owlt'k'* – “letter of sorcery”; *yowrowt'*, post-classical *owrowt'* – both rendered as “talisman,” “charm,” “incantation,” “amulet.”

3 See *infra*, p.24 ; generally the scrolls were very long: (Feydit, *Amulettes*, p. 5 indicates about 25 m). Made up of several pieces of paper, seldom of parchment strips, and glued together, they easily fell apart and there are very few examples preserved in their original length.

4 7.5 x 311 cm; the text is written between two vertical lines, which are drawn 6 mm (left) and 9 mm (right) from the edges; the written area is 6.5 cm wide; the horizontal ruling is on the back side; the strips of glazed paper are very thin; torn apart in 20 places they have been repaired on the back side by bands of paper.

5 *Grec'aw jeramb animast grē'i Yarowt'iwnin, i k'alak'n əstampōl ənd hovanəaw srboy a/stowa/cacnin, t'owin rē.l. [sic] yownis amsoy mēkn ōrn č'orek' šab't'i i vayelowmn paron K'asparin, incomplete erasure} a/stowa/c barov vayelet tac'ē amēn*: “This was written by the hand of the humble writer Yarowt'iwn, in Istanbul, under the protection of the Holy Birthgiver of God, in the year the first of the month of June, (Armenian Year) 1130 (sic, read 1160) (1681 CE) on Wednesday (New Style: Wednesday, June 11th), for the enjoyment of *paron* K'aspar} May God permit {him} to enjoy {this scroll}.” It should be noted, that given that the day of the week is specified, the only Armenian year in which June 11th falls on a Wednesday and is a multiple of ten in the 1100/1600 century is 1160/1681. We also accounted for the ten-day difference between Gregorian and Julian calendars in that year.

6 On this title see D. Kouymjian, “From Disintegration to Reintegration: Armenians at the Start of the Modern Era, XVIth-XVIIth Centuries,” *Revue du Monde Arménien*, 1 (1994), pp. 6f.

7 In one place the name Zōhrab appears, p. 30 n.81.

8 Leaving an empty space for the name of the owner was common practice for amulets of a more generic character, not custom-made for an individual and his specific needs. Quite often, the original name was effaced and replaced by another, when ownership of the amulet changed.

9 F. Macler, “Rapport sur une mission scientifique en Belgique, Hollande, Danemark et Suède,” *Nouvelles archives des missions scientifiques et littéraires* 22 (1917-1924), pp. 461f; E. Balicka-Witakowska, “An Armenian Scroll in the Uppsala University Library,” in: *Actes du XXe congrès international des études byzantines, Paris, 19-25 août 2001* (Paris, 2001), pp. 36f.

10 S. Hedin, “Fredrik Robert Martin. Orientalist, konstvetare, samlare,” *Dragomanen. Årsskrift utgiven av Svenska Forskningsinstitutet i Istanbul och Föreningen Svenska Istanbulinstitutets Vänner* 2 (1998), pp. 59-77 (in

One of the oldest records about magic being practiced in Armenia and about the use of magic objects dates to the 5th century. In the historiographical work of Movses Xorenac'i, the author recalls the story of Semiramis, who performed magical acts with help of her necklace, before it was finally thrown into Lake Van.¹¹

The practice of magic, which was strongly linked to popular medicine and healing, did not disappear with the Christianisation of the country. How deeply such practices were rooted in the minds of people is indicated, for instance, in the sermon ascribed to Catholicos Yovhannēs Mandakuni, entitled, "On the Charms of Conjurers and Impure Magicians."¹² The author itemises several magical practices common in Armenia, such as astrology, the use of prophylactic objects, laying-on of hands, communication with spirits and divination by various means, and explicitly labels them as being against God's commandments, punishable by eternal fire.¹³ This condemnation extended to astrological treatises, manuals for divination and books with recipes for magical treatments. Some of these works were accompanied by diagrams, tables, cryptograms and drawings, the latter being considered magical in their own right.¹⁴

There were also the collections of texts that were believed to possess supernatural powers, for instance the *Owrbat'agirik'*, "The Book of Friday,"¹⁵ containing the Armenian version of the *Kyprianos*¹⁶ and the collection of prayers composed by Gregory of Narek.¹⁷ The textual content

Swedish with English summary); on p. 73 the author mentions that in 1895 Martin sold a large collection of Oriental books, including the Armenian manuscripts, to the Uppsala University Library.

11 Movses Khorenats'i, *History of the Armenians*, tr. & com. on the literary sources by R.W. Thomson, Cambridge Mass. 1978, p. 102f.

12 The work is also attributed to Yovhannēs Mayragomec'i, G. Garitte, p. 348, '*La Narratio' De Rebus Armeniae*, [CSCO132, Subs. 4], Louvain 1952, p. 348.

13 *Vasn hmayic' diwt'akanac' ew anawrēn yowr't'olac'* in: Yovhannēs Mandakuni, *Tea'n Yovhannow Mandakownwoy Hayoc' Hayrapeti Čark'*, (The Discourses of Lord John Mandakouni Patriarch of the Armenians), Venice, 1860 (2), pp. 190-206, part. p. 192; F. Feydit, "La XXVI homélie de Jean Mandakouni sur les chames des sorciers et les magiciens impies," in: *Mélanges J. Dauvillier*, Toulouse 1979, pp. 293-306, part. 296.

14 E.g. the seal of Solomon or the seal of Jesus, stars, crosses, magic squares and circles.

15 This work was the first printed Armenian book (Venice, 1512), indicating how popular it was; see J-P. Mahé, "Introduction," in: H. Kévorkian, *Catalogues de 'incunables' arméniens (1511/1695) ou chronique de l'imprimerie arménienne*, Genève 1986, pp. VII-XII; N. Oskanyan et al., *Hay girik'a 1512-1800 T'vakannerin*, (The Armenian Book 1512-1800), Yerevan, 1988, pp. 1-3; see also L. Ketcheyan, "Le premier imprimeur arménien," in: *Arménie. La magie de l'écrit*, [Catalogue], Marseille, Centre de la Vieille Charité, 1 septembre 2006 – 14 juillet 2007, Marseille, 2006, pp. 301, 304.

16 *Girk' Atotic' or Kiprianos* – (The Book of Prayer which is Kiprianos), Jerusalem 1966; F. Macler, "Formules magiques de l'Orient chrétien," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 58 (1908), pp. 15-21, part. 23, 28f. On the legend of Cyprien see, H.A.J Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste I: L'astrologie et les sciences occultes*, Paris 1944, pp. 38f., 369-374. In some descriptions, the scrolls are called *Kiprianos*, G. Cuendet, "Notice de deux manuscrits arméniens vus à Genève," *REA* 2:1 (1922), pp. 117-119; Macler, "Rapport....," (n. 9); V. Nersessian, *A Catalogue of the Armenian Manuscripts in the British Library acquired since year 1913 and of Collections in other Libraries in the United Kingdom*, London, 2012, p. 1077.

17 K. Beledian, *Les Arméniens*, Paris 1994, p. 150; Feydit, *Amulettes*, p. 12; S. Kechichian, *Grégoire de Narek*.

of these books¹⁸ belongs to three main categories: religious, magico-religious and magical.

Religious texts, though regularly used in church services and even in the liturgy of the Eucharist, were conceived as magical in particular circumstances. These included passages which the laity found mysterious and difficult to understand,¹⁹ quotations from the Gospels about healings and resurrection,²⁰ canonical prayers such as the *Our Father*, the *Creed* and the *Ave Maria*²¹, or those prayers connected with holy figures and famous saints, both ecumenical and local.²² Indeed, such texts were more-or-less approved by the Church, particularly if they were used for healing. This stance found its legitimacy in the James (5:14-15): “*Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them...the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up.*”

In the particularly rich repertory of magico-religious texts two types predominate. Either the magic nucleus, usually in the form of a prayer or incantation, is presented within the narrative frame borrowed from the Old and New Testament, religious poetry, an apocryphon or a saint's *vita*, or it is only preceded by a rubric recalling an appropriate literary context. Particularly popular are the stories about the sacrifice of Abraham (Gen. 22),²³ King Abgar and the “Letter of Christ”²⁴ and the account of the Virgin Mary sitting at the source of the Jordan and lamenting her lack of remedy against the “evil eye and three hundred and sixty-five afflictions.”²⁵ A distinctive group of magico-religious texts emerged from the belief that under particular circumstances the secret names of God and of supernatural beings, having been revealed to select individuals,²⁶ as well as words uttered by important holy figures such as Solomon, Jesus, and Gregory the Illuminator, had great magical potential.²⁷

Le Livre des Prières, Paris 1961, p. 41.

18 The largest collection of this genre (about 200 texts) is kept in Yerevan at the Matenadaran Library. In addition to the printed catalogue *Mayr c'owc'ak hayerēn jeragrac' Maštoc'i anvan Matenadaranani* (General Catalogue of the Armenian Manuscripts of the Maštoc' Memorial Library) in several volumes and published by various authors between 1965-2009 the following site can be consulted: <http://www.matenadaran.am/?id=82&lng=4>.

19 For instance, the beginning of the Gospel of John. Its six first sentences appear regularly in magic scrolls and were prescribed as an effective remedy against headache and a safeguard against thunder. Similarly, the “psalms lacking the letter Ayb” (Pss 84:8; 90:6; 91:6; *ayb* being the first letter of the Armenian alphabet) were believed on account of this irregularity to have special curative effects; Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 10f.

20 For the list of the most oft-quoted texts see, Feydit, *Amulettes*, p. 11.

21 For instance, MSS VMSL 3024, 3032, 3042, Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 32, 67, 39.

22 For instance, the litanies to the Virgin Mary, Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 155-157, 159-161 or the prayer of Yovhannes Garneci' were seen as effective antidotes to nightmares, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

23 Feydit, *Amulettes*, MSS VMSL 3030, 3040, 3041, pp. 35, 50, 59, figs 4-7.

24 Feydit, *Amulettes*, MSS VMSL 3020, pp. 31, 280-283, fig. 24.

25 Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 289f; scroll BL, Or. 15404 (prayer 6), Nersessian, *Catalogue*, (n. 16), p. 1102f, pl. 28d.

26 E.g. the 1001 names revealed by God to Moses, or the names of the angels; see, for instance, Feydit, *Amulettes*, mss VMSL 1911, p. 73 and 3021, p. 23.

27 These prayers are usually introduced as follows: “Saint X asked God ...,” “Saint X prayed to God when he/she was martyred...” or “Saint X, approaching God, said...,” see Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 205-211.

Among the so-called magical texts, a special group consists of lists enumerating by name malefactors and malicious objects such as demons, white weapons as well as the locations whence their aggression might emanate, alongside the conjurations and ritual prescriptions to counter their insalubrious effects.²⁸ These subjects are not very common and on the whole the texts applied by Armenians to magical contexts are very “orthodox.” However, this orthodoxy was lost once the texts were written on scrolls and intermixed with the charms and spells, a process clearly explained by the author of the above-mentioned homily “On the Charms”.²⁹

In practice, the transformation of a religious text into a magical one is achieved with the help of various scribal techniques, for instance inversions, abbreviations and cryptograms, which render the text illegible. A similar magical effect is achieved by the addition of talismanic characters ending in little circles³⁰ (Fig. 5A), writing in red ink and sophisticated text layouts. For instance, there is a group of texts that are diagonally cross-hatched, creating a chequered pattern, some decorated with rosettes, as well as those texts enclosed with circles³¹ (Figs 1B, 5A-C).

Depending on its length, a magical text may occupy a single scroll or, more commonly, may form part of a collection of texts selected according to the needs or preferences of the owner. In order to fit onto the scroll, most of these texts are in abbreviated form.

The repertory of the texts written in the scrolls gives us a picture of the dangers people feared.³² The typical prayers and conjurations differ little from one scroll to another but it is almost impossible to find among them identical versions. This suggests, that the texts were partly copied and partly reconstructed from memory. The classical language is often mixed with the vernacular, and in some spells there appear Arabic, Turkish and Kurdish words, some of which are written with Armenian letters.

28 E.g. the conjurations against the enraged dog or the remedies and magical operations against toothache, Feydit, *Amulettes*, mss VMSL 3043, p. 63 and 3042, pp. 37f., or the names of seventy-two demons, Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, cod. Or. 95, *Roma-Armenia*, [Catalogue], Grande Salle Sixtine, Bibliothèque Apostolique du Vatican, 25 mars – 16 juillet 1999, ed. C. Mutafian, Rome 1999, no X, 8.

29 Feydit, “La XXVI homélie de Jean Mandakouni,” (n. 13), p. 297.

30 See the samples in: Feydit, *Amulettes*, figs 80-82; *La magie de l’écrit*, (n. 15), p. 177.

31 A paraphrase of Gen. 22 and the prayer to the *Arma Christi*, Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 135-145, or the epithets for God and the prayer of Gregory of Narek “Son of the Living God”, *op. cit.*, pp. 22f, 35, 50f, 593 figs 4, 5, 84 and 21-23. See also *Manuscripts of the Christian East, Catalogue 18*, London 1996, pp. 42-44, items 25, 27; *Armenia Sacra. Mémoire chrétienne des Arméniens (IVe-XVIIIe siècle)* [Catalogue], ed. J. Durand *et al.*, Paris 2007, p. 440, no. 201; V. Volland, “Aberglauben in Armenian und Kurdistan,” *Globus. Illustrierte Zeitschrift für Länder und Völkerkunde* 91:22 (1907), fig. 3a. A particularly elaborate example of the text, written in criss-cross fashion and comprising the story of the Virgin Justine and Cyprian the Magus, appears in MS Matenadaran 139, *La magie de l’écrit* (n. 15), p. 121.

32 The scrolls and their texts are an important source of knowledge about the popular belief of the Armenians, and in this context were studied for instance by A. Aharonian, *Les anciennes croyances arméniennes (d’après le folk-lore arménien)*, Genève 1913, part. pp. 35-55 and S. Hrut’yunyan, *Hay hmayakan ev žolovrdakan alot’k’ner* (Armenian Incantations and Folk Prayers), Erevan 2006.

Several scrolls contain pictures illustrating the texts of some prayers. They are often placed directly ahead of them, serving as a pictorial preface. Other scrolls have all the pictures gathered at the beginning; still others adopt a combination of both types of layouts. The proportion between the number of texts and pictures varies from piece to piece: in some, the illustrations are sparsely distributed, while others leave little room for the texts.³³

Since most of the texts are prayers and paraphrases of biblical stories, the illustrations, as a rule, represent religious themes. We find among them depictions of events from the Old Testament,³⁴ Christological scenes,³⁵ the Virgin Mary with child, the angels, apostles and four evangelists, but most common are the large galleries of martyrs, saints and holy bishops.

These pictures are either simple, colored drawings or elaborated miniatures modelled on book painting (cf. Fig. 5 A-B). The oldest known scroll, MS Matenadaran 115, executed in 1428, is decorated with six pictures of average artistic quality,³⁶ while the relatively early scroll MS BL Or. 11264, dated 1566 and containing elaborated initials, ornamented bands and three large miniatures, is an example of exceptionally high artistry both of the scribe and the painter.³⁷ The quality of the execution of a scroll correlates with the economic status of the client. The uneven level of craftsmanship indicates that the charmer's craft was in demand among clients of all social and economic strata.

In general, we may surmise that for the owners of these scrolls, the artistic quality of the pictures was of lesser importance. Whether crude or exquisite, they were intended to reinforce the power of the words and were analogous to the intercessory prayers performed before the icons chosen for the occasion. Just as an icon is made more effective by being incorporated into rituals, for instance by being carried in procession, touched, kissed and enshrouded in incense, a scroll may be activated by ceremonial display, reading, dipping in water and physical contact, such as when carried close to the body. The ways in which magic scrolls were treated and used help to explain why very few old examples have come down to us and why, of those which have survived, many are seriously damaged.

The largest group of scrolls, numbering several dozen, now dispersed among libraries and

33 The problem was shortly discussed by G. Ulughogian, "Un rotolo manoscritto inedito del Museo Storico di Sofia," *Atti del Terzo Simposio Internazionale di Arte Armena*, Venezia (San Lazzaro) 1984, pp. 605-614.

34 Especially depiction of the Sacrifice of Abraham and the Original Sin.

35 The cycle of Jesus' childhood and passion scenes. Surprisingly, Jesus' miracles, though quite often recalled in the texts, are seldom depicted; see MS VMSL 3031, Feydit, *Amulettes*, p. 53, fig. 16.

36 Y. Loeff, *Four Texts from the Oldest Known Armenian Amulet Scroll: Matenadaran 115 (1428) with Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, MA thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 2002.

37 V. Nersessian, *Catalogue* (n. 16), pp.1077-1083, pl. 27a-b.

collections in several countries and dated from the second half of the 17th century to the beginning of the 18th century³⁸ (c. 1650-1710), was produced in Constantinople. The explanation for the concentration in that city of workshops executing scrolls is not entirely apparent, but it may in part lie in the distinct increase in the Armenian population of the city at that time, among whom were merchants and traders.³⁹ Engaged in international commerce requiring dangerous travel and long stays in insecure environments, they may have felt a particular need for the protection which they believed these amulets provided.

By the beginning of the 18th century, printed versions of the scrolls could be found alongside hand-written copies.⁴⁰ In Constantinople, most of the printed scrolls were executed in the printing houses of Grigor Marzouanec'i.⁴¹ He was also an engraver and several illustrations in the printed scrolls are signed by him. In order to enhance the resemblance of the engravings to the painted pictures, they were colored by hand.⁴²

As with Armenian manuscripts in general, the richest - but not yet studied - collection of scrolls, more than five hundred, belongs to the Matenadaran Library.⁴³ In the museums and libraries of Venice there are some 25 scrolls,⁴⁴ a dozen in the Royal Library and in the library of the Mekhitarists of Vienna.⁴⁵ Smaller collections are to be found in libraries in France, Great Britain, Ireland, Bulgaria and Lebanon.⁴⁶

38 The most recently copied scroll noted by Feydit, *Amulettes*, p. 6, dates from 1808.

39 D. Kouymjian, "Armenia from the Fall of the Cilician Kingdom (1375) to the Forced Emigration under Shah Abbas (1604)," in: *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, ed. R. Hovannisian, New York 1997, vol. 2, pp. 1-50, part. 12f, 27, 30-32; Kouymjian, "From Disintegration to Reintegration" (n. 6), pp. 9-18.

40 *Armenia Sacra*, (n. 31), pp. 439, 441; *Reflets d'Arménie. Manuscrits et Art Religieux/Reflexions on Armenia. Manuscripts and Religious Art. Choix d'objets de la collections françaises présenté par Edda Vardanian avec la collaboration Annie Vernay-Nouri*, Paris 2012, pp. 99-101; *A Legacy of Armenian Treasures. Testimony to a People. The Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum*, ed. E. Azadian et al., Michigan 2013, p. 55f, figs 16a-c; D. Ghazaryan, "Չափաչափայն հմայլների տպիր աճաճեր" (The first printed ribbon-shaped scroll), *Ējmiacin Amsagir* 8 (2013), pp. 142-147.

41 Ten items copied between 1709 and 1729, Oskanyan et al... (n. 15), pp. 241, 293, 300, 306, 345, 353, 356, 365, 371, 378, 393; A. Vernay-Nouri, *Livre d'Arménie. Collections de la Bibliothèque nationale de France*, Paris [Catalogue], 29 janvier – 25 mars 2007, Paris 2007, pp. 107-110.

42 *Armenia Sacra*, (n. 31), no. 203, p. 441; *Reflets d'Arménie* (n. 40), nos 130-132, pp. 99-101.

43 See above, note 18.

44 Described by Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 21-75. See also *Gli Armeni in Italia*, ed. B. Zekiyan, Venezia 1990, pp. 147f; G. Ulughogian, *Catalogo dei manoscritti armeni delle biblioteche d'Italia*, Roma 2010, nr. 99, pp. 396f.

45 J. Tašyan [Dashian], *Catalog der Armenischen Handschriften in der k. k. Hofbibliothek zu Wien*, Wien, 1891, nr. 443, pp. 211f, 914-916; H. Oskian, *Katalog der armenischen Handschriften in der Mechitharisten-Bibliothek zu Wien*, Bd. II, Wien, 1963, nr. 596, 815 (14 pieces), nr. 1238 (2 pieces), pp. 55, 383-383, 879f.

46 R.H. Kévorkian, A.Ter-Stépanian et al., *Manuscrits arméniens de la Bibliothèque nationale de France. Catalogue*, Paris 1998, pp. 259-304; *Armenia Sacra* (n. 31), nos 201-203; E.Vardanyan, "Fragments d'amulettes manuscrites conservés au Musée arménien de France: Fondation Nourhan Fringhian. Catalogue et édition," *REA* 34 (2012), pp. 333-370; *Reflets d'Arménie* (n. 40), pp. 98-101; V. Nersessian, *Catalogue* (n. 16), nrs 226-228, 230, 235, pl. 38a-f; *Manuscripts of the Christian East*, (n. 31); *Art of the Armenians*, Catalogue 28, London 2004, nr. 13; M. & N. Stone, *Catalogue of the Additional Armenien Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin*, Leuven

An Armenian Prayer Scroll

The Uppsala scroll contains 18 prayers. Almost all are introduced by and closed with an intercession formula in the name of the owner. The beginning of the scroll is missing and the first text is an incomplete story about the angels and Jesus acting on behalf of the intercessor in everyday matters. The text, which becomes fully legible from line five onwards, reads:⁴⁷

- l.1: (*cut off; end illegible; probably the names of angels*)
- l.2 "*Leb(ōy) iēl and L(an)? iēl Zowri(ē)l and S?a?XXXiēl*
- l.3 *Ah?s?anayiēl and Mazarayiēl, and they had in their hands*
- l.4 *a key, and there chanced upon them our Lord*
- l.5 *Jesus Christ, and he said, 'Whither are you going?' The angels said,*
- l.6 *'We come and enter unto your servant, and open*
- l.7 *the door of favor and of mercy and of commerce.'*
- l.8 *Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded, saying, "Go,*
- l.9 *and I shall help my servant at that time when*
- l.10 *he stands before judges and kings*
- l.11 *I shall make an amiable heart in every human in the presence of*
- l.12 *my servant K'aspar. "Amen".*

The first entirely preserved text, a supplications calling upon Gregory the Illuminator,⁴⁸ is introduced by a full-figure portrait of the saint wearing a nimbus, episcopal vestments and holding a codex (Figs 1A, 3A). At the beginning of the prayer, alongside St Gregory,

2012, pp. 190-214, figs 34-38; *C'owc'ak Jeragrac' or i Handēs Amsōreay*, (Catalogue of the Manuscripts which are in Handēs Amsōreay), ed. H. Oskean, Wien, 1976, pp. 164-165, 373-375, 378; N. Gasparian, *C'uc'ak hayerēn jeragrac' i Bulgaria*, (Catalogue of the Armenian Manuscripts in Bulgaria) Venice 1981, nos 12-14; M. K'šišean, *C'owc'ak Hayerēn Jeragrac' Zmari Vank'i Matenadaranin*, (Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Bzommar Monastery Library), Wien 1964, p. 598. See also the item described in: Volland, "Aberglauben in Armenia," (n. 31), pp. 341-344; K.W. Hiersmann, *Orientalische Manuskripte: Katalog 500*, Leipzig 1922, p. 9, tav. 20 and cover.

- 47 l.2 *l(ēbōy) iēl ew l(an)? iēl zowri(ē)l ew s?(a)?XXXiēl*
- l.3 *ah?s?anayiēl mazarayiēl ew ownēin i jerac'*
- l.4: *iwreanc' banaliX? (ew) (d)?ēp elew n(o)c'(a) t(ē)rn mer*
- l.5 *yisows k'ristos ew asē owr ert'ayk' asen hreštakk'n*
- l.6 *ert'amk' mtanemk' i carāyn k'o ew banamk'*
- l.7 *zdown' baroy (read: barwoy) ew otormowt'ean ew vačari*
- l.8 *hramayec' tērn mer yisows k'ristos ew asē gnac'ek'*
- l.9 *ew es ōgnakanem carāyin imoy yoržam*
- l.10 *kangni ačaji dataworac' ew t'agaworac'*
- l.11 *arnem zamenayn mardoy sirt k'alc'r i dimac'(?)*
- l.12 *carāyin imoy k'asparin amēn*

48 P. Ananian, "Gregorio l'Illuminatore," BS VII, cols 180-189; SATI, pp. 341-347 (PO 6, pp. 309-315). A prayer to Gregory appears in almost every scroll.

important Armenian ecclesiastics and saints are enumerated:⁴⁹

*“Through the intercession of Gregory our illuminator, Aristakēs, Vrt’anēs, Owskan, Gregory, Nersēs, Sahak, Daniēl, the Holy Levondians, Mesrop and Elishē, the holy Gregorians, the holy Levondians and holy Nerseseans; Saints Nersēs Klayec’i and Nersēs Lambronac’i; Saints Kirakos and P’ronc’iskō and other saints and disciples of Christ: be intercessors unto the Lord, so that, for the one upon whom this writing rests, all bands and sorcery may not approach the servant of God. Amen.”*⁵⁰

The supplication continues with the binding (“ligature”) prayer:⁵¹

“I am bound with those bands, just as St Grigor Lowsaworič’ bound the mouth of the

49 *Matt’ank’ srboyn Grigori meroy Lowsaworč’in v|asn| pahpanut’ean carayi a|stuco|y* – “Supplication of Gregory our Illuminator for protection of the servant of God”); and later

Barekhōsowt’eamb srboyn Grigori meroy Lowsaworč’in...:“Through the intercession of Gregory our illuminator....”

Matt’ank’srboyn grigori meroy lowsaw

orč’in v|asn| pahpanut’ean carayi a|stuco|y

Barekhōsowt’eamb srboyn grigori

meroy lowsaworč’in. aristakisi

urdanēsi owskann grigorisi. Nersēsi

sahakay daniēli. srboč’ lewondeanc’n.

mesrōp (sic) ew elišē. sowrb grigorišanc’. Ew sowrb

nersiseak’. sowrb kirakos ew p’rōnc’isko. ew ayl sowrb ew

ašakert k’ristosi barexōs lerowk’ ar tēr oroy veray

gers kena or oc’ merjenay carays astowcoy amenayn

kapk’ ew kalxardowt’iwnk’.. amēn..

50 The names mentioned are well known in Armenian tradition: Armenian Catholicos Aristakēs I Part’ew (325-333), Vrt’anēs I Part’ew (333-341), Nersēs I the Great (335-373), Sahak I (338-428), Gregory - probably Grigoris the grand-son of Gregory the Illuminator (+ 343); Mesrop Mashtots’, the creator of the Armenian alphabet (5th century), Elishē the historiographer (5th century); the writers and religious figures Nersēs Klayec’i (Snorhali) (1102-1173) and Nersēs Lambronac’i (1153-1198); the saints Gregory refer most likely to Saint Gregory of Narek (951-1003) and Gregory of Tat’ew (1361-1409/10) but also several other persons are possible e.g. Gregory the Great, the Wonderworker, the Theologian, of Nyssa, of Agrigentos, see Feydit, *Amulettes*, “Prayer to all the saints”, pp. 161-183 part. 167-166,183. The Oskean or Voskean Saints, here misspelled “Owskean,” were five Armenian ambassadors to Rome baptized by Addai (Thaddeus the Apostle) in Edessa. According to recorded tradition, the Voskean Fathers evangelized in the court of the Armenian king, converted the Caucasian Albanian family of Queen Satenik to Christianity, and were martyred by the Armenian Prince Ardavast in 107. The Levondian saints were clerics, led by the priest Levond (Leontius), who, according to their hagiography, were martyred by the Sassanids in 455 (P. Ananian, “Leonzio Vanadetzi,” BS VII, col.1328-1332). Both of these saints play significant roles in Armenian hagiography and culture. Daniēl is likely the biblical figure, whose story often appears in Armenian hagiography and culture or the *chorepiskops* Daniel (+ 347.). The “Nersesian saints” may be a duplication. St Kirakos, e.g. Cyriacus, was the martyr child put to death with his mother Julitta (J. Habbi, “Ciriaco e Giulietta,” in: *Enciclopedia dei Santi. Le Chiese Orientali*, ed. J.N. Cañellas, S. Virgulin, Roma 1998, p. 493). The last name is undoubtedly that of St Francis of Assisi.

51 *Ayn kapanōk’n kapeal em orpēs kapeats’ s|owr|bn grigor lowsaworič’ zberan t’iwnawor oĵitsn ew orpēs yesow ordi naweay kapeac’ zaregagn ew zlowšinn ew kotoreac’ zt’agaworn ew orpēs soghomon ark’ayn kapeac’ zgowndn diwac’ ew ěac i sap’orn plnji ew orpēs kapeac’ tērn yisows k’ristos zsanayn hazar am: ayn kapanōk’n ew karōt zōrowt’eambn k’ristosi kapeal elic’i amenayn č’ar zgayarank’ ereweli ew yanerewoyt’ t’šnamoy n i dimac’ carayis astowcoy....*

*poisonous snake*⁵² and just as Joshua the son of Navi bound the sun and the moon and murdered the king (sic),⁵³ and just as King Solomon bound the legion of demons and led (it) into the copper jar,⁵⁴ and just as the Lord Jesus Christ bound Satan a thousand years:⁵⁵ with those bands and with the powerful force of Christ may all the evil senses of the visible and invisible enemy be bound in the presence of the servant of God...”⁵⁶

The next text is the popular prayer of Yohannēs Garenac‘i, “I Beseech You, Lord,”⁵⁷ the following version of which is presented in the scroll:⁵⁸

“I beseech you, Lord, and I praise your incomprehensible philanthropy, that you have made me worthy, your humble servant, to arrive at the time of night. Protect me from the fantasies of delusions and from visible and invisible terrors and the assault of Beliar, from the threats of Satan, from the depression of the xipiliks,⁵⁹ from the collapse of buildings, from the deceit of human beings, from the sects of wizards, from false advice, from dirty thoughts, from the pains of sexual desire, from frightful sleep, from the bitterness of dreams, from bad vexations and from all other charms. Protect your servant by your all-saving grace and by your all-skillful mercy, strengthen round about all sides of my bedroom, on the right and on the left, in the east and in the west, in the north and in the south, into the heavens above and to the earth below; send the army of angels, Lord, to the dwelling of your servant, and give me wakefulness of mind, and

52 The text makes reference to an event in the pit in which the saint was imprisoned by King Trdat: Agathangelos, *History of Armenia*, transl. com., W. Thomson, Albany 1976, p. 147.

53 The biblical text tells about the kings killed by Joshua, cf., Josh. 10:12-14, 26; Sirach 46:1-6.

54 See for instance P. Torijano, “Solomon and Magic”, in: *The Figure of Solomon in Jewish, Christian and Islamic Tradition: King, Sage and Architect*, ed. J. Verheyden, Leiden 2013, pp. 107-125.

55 An allusion to Christ’s descent into Hell, a theme developed in apocryphal texts, see M. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament being the Apocryphal Gospels, Epistles and Apocalypses*, Oxford 1953 (2), pp. 117-140.

56 Cf., Feydit, *Amulettes*, (prayer 89B), p. 253.

57 See for instance, *Atot‘amatoyc‘ Yovhannow vardapeti Garneč‘woy*, (Collection of Prayers by Vardapet John Garneč‘i), Venice 1911, p. 48-49. The prayer begins : “*Atač‘em zk‘ez t[ē]r ew gohanam zanhas ardasirowt‘[en] ēd...*” and ends: “*...hangeayc‘ ew gohowt‘[eam]b p‘arāworec‘ic‘ zamenas[owr]b zerrordowt‘i[wn]d ayzhm ew mishl ew ya[w]i[t]e[an]s...*”

58 *atač‘em zk‘ez t[ē]r ew gohanam zanhas mardasirowt‘[en]ēd or aržani ararer zis zanaržan carāys k‘o žamanel i žam gišeroys dow paheay zis i karcic‘ c‘noric‘. ew i yerkiwlē yereweac‘ ew yanerewowt‘ic‘ i brnowt‘enē beliaray i sastic‘ satanayi i canrowt‘enē xipileac‘. i p‘lmanē šinowacoc‘ i nengowt‘enē mardkan. i yatandoc‘ kaxardac‘ i molar xorhrdoc‘. i yalteli mtacowt‘eanc‘. i c‘ankakan c‘awoc‘. i zarhowrakan k‘noc‘ i d(a)rnōwt‘enē erazoc‘. i yarhōranac‘ č‘arin. ew ayl am(enayn) č‘areac‘ paheay zcarāys k‘o amenakec‘oyc‘ šnorhiwd ew k‘o amenahnar olormowt‘eamb šřapateal amrac‘oy yam(enayn) kolmanc‘ zsenek hangstaranis. yař ew yaneak yarewels ew yarewmowts. i hiwsiw ew i haraw i yerkins i ver ew i yerkir xonarh. zbanaks hreštakac‘ arak‘eay t(ē)r i bnakaran carāyis k‘o ew towr inj art‘nowt‘iwn mtac‘. ew zgastowt‘iwn zgayaranac‘s. zi zowart‘ mtōk‘ ew art‘owmn xorhordov. hangeayc‘ ew gohowt‘eamb p‘arāworec‘ic‘ zamenas(owr)b zer(o)rddiwt‘(iwn)d ayžm ew mišt ew y[a]w(i)t(ean)s (yavitenic‘ amēn).*

59 *Khipiliks* or *khepelik* is the name of certain evil spirits, which torment people in their sleep; see H. Alishan, *Hin hawatk‘ kam het‘anosakan krōnk‘ hayoc‘* (Ancient Belief and Pagan Religion of the Armenians) Venice, 1910, p. 522.

prudence to my senses, that with a cheerful mind and wakeful thought may I find rest and with thanksgiving I may glorify your all-holy Trinity, now and ever and unto the ag(es of ages. Amen)."

The ensuing text contains the entreaties of the martyr Antiochos Anargyros of Sebaste,⁶⁰ uttered before his decapitation, which are briefly recounted in our scroll in the following manner:⁶¹

"He, at the time of his tortures, asked God, saying, 'those who remember me and fulfill my memorial: you, Lord, fulfill all their requests;' and there was a voice from heaven, saying, 'those who remember you, in the mountains and in the fields, in the rivers and in the seas, during wars and in other places: they will be saved from tribulations.' And after this they cut off his head, and instead of blood, milk gushed forth. Christ God, through the intercession of the Holy Virgin Mary..."

The following part of the manuscript has been mutilated, because a fragment of the scroll was cut out and glued to the next piece, which is also damaged. It displays two ornamented texts written diagonally across one another (Fig. 1B). One of them is an interpretative retelling of Genesis 22, the *'aqedah* or "Binding of Isaac", which was believed to be a prayer that countered troubling thoughts and depressing influences. From the upper right-hand corner and reading the diagonal lines upper left to lower right the text appears as follows:

"... (The Lord) will see to a sheep for the burnt offering...⁶² Abraham (raised) his knife, intending to slay his son⁶³. An angel of the Lord appeared at the oak tree of Mambre and said to Abraham,⁶⁴ '(Abraha)m!' and he said, 'Here I am, Lord', 'Do not lift your hand

60 G. Dettori, "Antioco," BS II, col., 67.

61 *Hayc'owack' Antiok'ay bžškin cařayic'n a (stowco)y* (Entreaties of Antioch the Physician for the servant of God). Beginning: *Say [read: sa] i žam č'arč'aranac' iwroc' xndreac' yastowcoy ew asē t'e (sic!) ork' yišen zis ew zyišatakn im kataren du tēr zamenayn xndrowacs noc'a katareay i barin. jayn elew yerkric' ew asē: et'e ok' yišests'e zk'ez i lerins ew i dašts, i gec ew i covs, i paterazmi ew ayl teli, p'rkesc'in i p'orjanac', ew apa hatin zglux nora, ew end yareann kat'n bħxeac' K'ristos astowac barexōsowt'eamb sowrb astowacacnin...*

62 *...tesc'ē oč'xar ořjakēz* (read: *yofjakēz*); (Gen 22:8b; this is likely the end of Abraham's reply to Isaac).

63 *(abr)aham zsour iwr kamēr zenowł zordin iwr* - an allusion to Gen 22:10. Here an important difference of interpretation should be noted: the Hebrew, Greek and Zohrab Armenian read "Abraham reached out his hand to take the knife and to slay his son." This passage in the scroll has *kamēr* 'he willed/intended' to slay him. The biblical account emphasizes that Abraham was obedient, doing something which he did not wish to do, and moreover as having faith, that Yahweh would 'see to' a sheep for the sacrifice and would not permit Abraham to murder his own son. With the appearance of the word 'he intended,' Abraham is made out to be a murderer, which runs against the sense of both the Hebrew and all the relevant ancient biblical versions, including the Armenian.

64 *(hr)eštak tearn erewaal ar'katneawñ mambrēi ew asē Abraham*, - an adaptation of Gen 18:1 and conflation with Genesis 22; Armenian, Hebrew, Syriac and Greek all have "Yhwh"/Astowac/Kyrios. Could this be part of an anti-anthropomorphic tradition, or is it a harmonization with 22:11, in which it is an angel of the lord which speaks to Abraham?

An Armenian Prayer Scroll

*in sacr(ifice)'... evident. And at that time was seen hanging in a tree...(ram) burnt offering at that time with rejoicing, taking his son and blessing God... and Abraham called that place, 'that the Lord appeared'. And Saray saw her son, she became glad with a very great gladness, and Isaac..."*⁶⁵.

Here, the text, obviously copied from an existing *Vorlage*, ends. Since there is no evidence of a cut or damage to the physical surface of the scroll, we may surmise that it was abruptly concluded because the scribe ran out of space in this register. The second text, instead of the usual supplication to the *Arma Christi* written in conjunction with Genesis 22, is a spell against infamous and disruptive forces, darkness and obscurity. From the (damaged), upper left-hand corner, reading the diagonal lines from lower left to upper right, the text reads:⁶⁶

*"...doubts are melted (?) sins are dispelled, demons are wi(ped away), d(eb)ts (or deceits) are broken, chains come to life, the de[a]d are healed, the wounds are cured, the ulcers are taken away, depravities are stopped, lamentations are displaced grief, the darkness of fear (?) is separated, the mist is moved, the haze is driven off, the fog is dissipated, gloomy vexation (?) departs, the night passes, the anxiety vanish, the misfortunes are dispelled, the desperations and cro[w]ns]?..."*⁶⁷ *your almighty hand crowns..."*

65 (abraham) *m ew na asē ahawasik em t(ē)r mi mxez zjerñ k'o i pata* (Gen 22:11,12, "Lord" is not in Zohrab) */neakd.../r yayt. ew noynžam ayn tesimal i carōyn yaynmik kaxéal* (Gn 22:12-13, paraphrase; *kaxéal* 'hanging' corresponds to Syriac *ahūd*, Greek *κατεχόμενος* 'caught'; the Armenian version reflects a Christian typology of the story of the ram as a prefiguration of the Crucifixion of Jesus, cf., Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, *Crucifixion sans Crucifie dans l'art Ethiopien*, Wiesbaden 1993, pp. 35-48); */...x/oy ofjakēz yaynžam owaraxowt'eamb areal zordin ew za(stowa) c a(wrhn)ē* - (allusion to Gen 22:13, but there is no mention there about the rejoicing of Abraham, his son, or his blessing God. Could this be a tradition found in Jewish or Syriac exegesis? */.../ ew koč'eac' abraham ztelin ayn zi t(ē)r erewec'aw ew saray etes ...* (Gen 22:14a, however, the Armenian has *etes*, with the Greek "the Lord saw/provided"; the Hebrew is more complex, either "sees," perhaps to be emended to "will be seen," Syriac: "may the Lord see"; there is no mention of Sarah in this text) *zordin iwr owrakh elew owrakhut'eamb mecaw yoyzh ew sahak* (the rejoicing of Sarah parallels that of Abraham; this detail, and the name Isaac, are absent from the Armenian, Greek, Syriac, and the Hebrew traditions, as far as the major witnesses reveal, however a notion about Sarah's participation in these events was widely spread in the Syriac, Coptic and Ethiopian literary and pictorial tradition, see E. Balicka-Witakowska, "Les peintures murales de l'église rupestre éthiopienne Gännätä Maryam près Lalibela," *Arte Medievale: Periodico internazionale di critica dell'arte medievale*, ser. II, 12-13 (1998-1999), pp. 193-209, part. 194f; She is depicted in a miniature dated 1311 from the collection of B. Berenson, S. der Nersessian, *L'Art Arménien*, Paris 1989, fig. 16).

66 */..jelanst sha[-owerk'] ha_lin metk' halacin diwk' jñ[jin] p(art)apanank' (or read patrank'?) xortakin šxt'ayk' kendanacnin maħa [c']ealk' bžškin harowack' oljanan vēr'k' barnin apakanowt'iwnk' nahanjin hecowt'iwnk' telitan (?) txrowt'iwnk' vaxnow kawarn mekni mēgk'n merži maraxowln varati mrayln spaři aljmwow xjn veranamowt'n gnay gišern taragri tagnapn č'k'anan č'arik'n halacin yowsaha towt'iwnk'n ew t'avaw..*

67 The text then restarts at the beginning in a continuous loop. However, it is possible to read the last word as *t'agaw-* and then connect this with the *- oresc'ē* of the first line of the horizontal text below the register: *t'agaworesc'ē jērñ k'o amenakal...* "your almighty hand crowns..."

Gregory of Narek⁶⁸ is the author of the next prayer, the popular “Eternal God.”⁶⁹ Directly following this, a half-figure portrait of Nersēs Klayec’i also known as Šnorhali, ‘the Graceful,’⁷⁰ prefaces his well-known religious poem, *Hawatov Khostowanim* - “In Faith I Confess.”⁷¹ The saint wears nimbus and holds under his arm a book partly obscured by his mantle (Fig. 1C, 3B). This long text is interrupted by a depiction of a figure with a nimbus, his hands raised in prayer, kneeling in a simplified landscape⁷² (Fig. 1D, 3C).

The next picture (Fig. 2A, 4A), representing St Sarkis (Sergius)⁷³ armed with a mace, riding a white horse, with his son Martyros sitting behind him, prefaces the legend of the saint composed in rhythmic prose.⁷⁴ The text recalls the last prayer of the saint before his execution, in which he asks God to relieve people who make supplication in his name of all manner of suffering.⁷⁵ In the Uppsala scroll, the first letters of each verse are written in red ink. Their placement results in an acrostic that can be understood as the title of the piece, *Erg meci vkayin*, “The Song of the Great Martyr.”⁷⁶ The last stanza of the poem reads:⁷⁷

*“Always entreat the Father of Light,
Supplicate unto the Son of God;
With the grace of the Spirit help us;
From the Slanderer deliver us.”*

The subsequent text is entitled *Gir K’ac’rowt’ean ew Eresparzowt’ean*,⁷⁸ “A Writ for Gentleness

68 P. Ananian, “Gregorio di Narek,” BS VII, cols 192-194; SATI, pp. 114 4-1146 (PO 21, pp. 100-102).

69 St Grigor Narekatc’i, *Speaking with God from the Depths of the Heart. The Armenian Prayer Book of St. Gregory of Narek*, intr., trans. T. J. Samuelian, Yerevan, 2001, p. 729. See also Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 12, 39.

70 P. Ananian, “Narsete IV Klajetzi,” BS IX, col. 746-759; SATI, p. 21 (PO 5:3, p. 356).

71 See also Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 13, 40.

72 A very similar and also anonymous figure praying before a depiction of God emerging from a rayoned sky segment can be found in scroll VMLS 3130; the picture introduces the invocation known as “the Thousand and One Names of God,” Feydit, *Amulettes*, p. 52, fig. 66.

73 He is commemorated together with his son Martyros and 40 Persian soldiers killed by King Shapuh II. Wadi Abulif, “Sergio et Martiro,” *Enciclopedia dei Santi: Le Chiese Orientali*, Roma 1999, p. 485; SATI, pp. 1014-1017 (PO 19:1, pp. 120-123); A. Mirzoyan, “Les representations des saints militaires dans le manuscrit No 6305 du Matenadaran M. Maštoc’, *REA* 20 (1986-87), pp. 441-455, part. 441-445.

74 Each line has eight syllables; in line one, a *schwa* would be inserted between the ‘r’ and ‘n’ of the word “horn.”

75 Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 204ff, prayer 52. A version of this prayer is included in almost every scroll.

76 Cf. for instance the scrolls BL, Or. 14028 (prayer 8) and Or. 15402 (payer 10), V. Nersessian, *Catalogue* (n. 16), pp. 1085, 1090.

77 *hōrn lowsoy mišt malt’ec’ek’
zordin A[stowa]c atač’ec’ek’
šnorhōk’ hogwoyn mez ognec’ek’
i bansarkowēn zmez t’ap’ec’ek’.*

78 This word seems to be more often *parzeresowt’iwn*.

(lit. ‘sweetness’) and Candor.” It recurs with small variations in several scrolls.⁷⁹ In it, the author recounts both metaphorical and literal biblical examples of gentleness and sweetness:⁸⁰

“Just as God the Father was gentle in sending his son, and the son was gentle in saving humanity, and the Holy Spirit was gentle in creating the human race, and just as the speech [of the serpent] was gentle in the ear of Eve, and just as the annunciation of Gabriel was gentle in the ear of the Holy Virgin, and just as the milk of the Holy Virgin was sweet in the mouth of Christ, and just as the sun to civilization (lit. ‘the habitations of the world’) and in the sight of humanity was sweet, and just as the moon in its fullness was sweet, and just as the beautiful Joseph in the eyes of the Egyptians was sweet, and just as the honeybee in the works of the flowers was sweet, and just as the sugar within the (sugar)cane was sweet, in the same way may the heart and the tongue of all the people be gentle in the presence of the servant of God. [Written by] Zōhrap.”⁸¹

Directly after this poetic “illustration by similitude” comes “A Writ of Healing from all Pains.”⁸² This text contains the so-called Seal of Christ. According to Oriental Christian legend, the Armenian King Abgar of Edessa,⁸³ typically identified with the historical Nabatean Arab King Abgar V Ukkāmā, received a letter from Jesus sealed with seven signs or letters in the form of traces of Jesus’ palm. It was believed that these seven signs symbolizing the most powerful names of God and that their meanings were explained by Jesus himself. In the Uppsala magic scroll, the letters are given the following explanations:

79 Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 241-43, prayer 82.

80 *Orpēs hayrn a[stowa]c arak'owmn ordwoyn k'(a)lc'rac'aw ew ordin i p'rkow'(iwn) mardkan k'alc'rac'aw. ew xōsk'n yewayi yakanjn k'(a)lc'rac'aw. ew or(pēs) awetik'n gabriēli i yakanjn s(owrb) kowsin k'(a)lc'rac'aw. ew or(pēs) l[mistake]kat'n sowrb kowsin i berann k'i k'(a)lc'rac'aw. ew or(pēs) aregagn i šinowt'iwns ašxarhi ew i tess mardkan k'(a)lc'rac'aw ew or(pēs) lowsinn i lrowmn iwr k'(a)lc'rac'aw ew or(pēs) gelec'ikn yowsēp' yač'sn egiptac'oc'k'(a)lc'rac'aw ew or(pēs) melown i gorcs calkac'k'(a)lc'rac'aw ew or(pēs) šak'arn i mēfēlegann k'(a)lc'rac'aw noynpēs k'alc'ranay am[enayn] mardoy sirt ew lezow i dem ca'rayis a[stowco]y.. zōhrapin. Cf. prayer nr. 11 in BL, Or. 15274, V. Nersessian, *Catalogue*, (n. 16), p. 1088.*

81 Possibly the person mentioned in the colophon, the second owner?

82 *Gir bzhshkut'ean amenayn C'awoc'*

83 *Narratio de Imagine Edessena*, ed. E. Von Dobschütz, *Christusbild: Untersuchungen zur christlichen Legende*, [Texte und Untersuchungen 18] Leipzig 1899, “Beilagen” 39**–85** [Patrologia Graeca 113], pp. 423-54, part. 124, 179; trans. by B. Slate & al., in: I. Wilson, *The Shroud of Turin. The Burial Cloth of Jesus Christ?* London 1978, appendix C, 315-329; B. Outtier, “Une forme enrichie de la Légende d’Abgar en arménien”, in: *Apocryphes Arméniens: transmission-traduction-création-iconographie*. Actes du colloque international sur la littérature apocryphe en langue arménienne, Genève, 18-20 septembre 1997, ed. V. Calzolari Bouvier et al., Lausanne 1999, pp. 129-145, part. 137; E. Balicka-Witakowska, “The Holy Face of Edessa on the Frames of the *Volto Santo* of Genoa: the Literary and Pictorial Sources,” in: *Interaction and Isolation in Late Byzantine Culture*, ed. J. O. Rosenqvist, Uppsala 2004, pp. 100-131, part 108f; The story of the letter is included in Khorenats'i, *History of the Armenians* (n. 11), pp. 168f, who believed that Abgar was an Armenian king; see also M.A. Carrière, “La Légende d’Abgar dans l’Histoire d’Arménie de Moïse de Khoren,” in: *Centenaire de l’École des langues orientales vivantes 1795-1895: recueil de mémoires publiée par les professeurs de l’École*, Paris 1895, pp. 357-414.

(Khe) - *xač'ealn astowac or i veray xač'in hełowsaw vasn araracoy mardk[a]n...* - "The crucified God, who was fastened upon the cross for his human creature."

(Ben) - *bovandak ew yawēžabar kendani em es yawitean...* - "I am totally and perpetually alive forever..."

(Ē) - *Ēn es em, a[stowa]c ew č'ik' ayl ok' bac' yinēn...* - "I am the Existing One, God, and there is none other than I." (Ex. 3:14; Rev. 1:4).

(Se) - *sosk mardkanoc' ayl oč' ew mard čšmarit...* - "merely in-the-place-of-a-human, but indeed not a real human being."⁸⁴

(Vev) - *vehagoyn a[stowa]c astowcoy...* - "supreme God of God."

(K'e) - *k'eroubeic' veraditoł or nsti i veray noca...* - "the overseer of the cherubim, who is seated upon them."

(P'iw) - *p'rkič' ew kec'owc'ič am[enayn] ašxarhi* - "savior and redeemer of the whole world."⁸⁵

In the ensuing section of the scroll, a typical picture of St George mounted on a white horse and killing a dragon (Fig. 2B, 4B),⁸⁶ introduces the "Prayer of St Georges Stratelates Who Is the Helper of Those Who Ask."⁸⁷ The literary frame of the prayer recounts how the tortured saint addressed God and sought power to perform miracles by calling upon his name and his relics:⁸⁸

"Through the intercession of St George the Soldier. St George, after many tortures and wonderful miracles which he worked through his body, at (the time) of his perfection (i.e., death) entreated God, saying, 'Lord, give grace through (my) name and my bones in my vivification. Calm every misfortune and fury of the world, in the home and

84 *Mardkanoc'* is an interesting word, meaning "place where humans are," this would suggest something akin to either docetism, or possibly the Aphthartodocetism of Julian of Halicarnassus, which was the official Christology of the Armenian Church, though this may no longer be true.

85 Cf. Feydit, *Amulettes*, pp. 152f, prayer 30.

86 D. Balboni, Ch. Celletti, "Giorgio", BS VI, cols 512-531; Ch. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, Ashgate 2003, pp. 109-144.

87 *Mał'ank' srboyn georga* [sic] *zoravarin or ē ōgnakan xndrolac'*. The Supplications to St George are to be found in most of the scrolls.

88 *Barexōsowt' [eam] b srboyn georgay zoravarin. s[owr] bn georgeos yet bazum č'arč'aranac'n ew mecamec sk'anc'eleac'n zor arar i marmni iwrowm. ew i katarmann iwr xndreac' ya (stowco)y ew asē, "t(ē)r, towr zšnorhs anowan ew oskerac' imoc' o(r)pēs i kendanowt'ean imowm. dadarec'oy zam(enayn) p[a]tihar ew zc'asowmn ašxarhi i tan ew artak'oy. Manawand yawowr marti ew paterazmi yereweli [yac' marked as a mistake with strokes above the letters] ew yanerewoyt' t'šnamoyn. ew owr yišesc'i anown im lic'i and erašt kam korows ptloc'. mi kaycak (Grabar: kaycakn) mi xoršak ew ayl inč' patahar. towr ew inj zšnorhs zays et'ē ok' yišē zis pataragaw ew yišen zč'arč'arans ew xndren i k'ēn mi lic'i i tann elc(o)wmn inč'. owr ew kac'c'ē yišatak im mi lic'i and owrowk. kam barot. mi gos (read: k'os?) mi xeł. mi xowš ew hamr. mi kowr ew mi kał. mi mahtaražam. ew mi nelowt'itwn diwac'. zmelš soc'a t'ol t(ē)r im zhogekan ew zmarmnakan yoržam xndren mijnordowt'eamb imov. ew elew jayn yerknic' ar nay ew asē ek mšak bari. ew ašxatasēr vasn xndreowacac' k'oc' zor xndrec'er katareal elic'in yinēn.*

An Armenian Prayer Scroll

abroad; even on the day of battle and war with the visible and invisible enemy, and wherever my name is remembered, may there be there neither aridity nor loss of fruit, no lightning bolt (or: anthrax), no drought, and (not) any other misfortune. Give me also this grace: if anyone should remember me with a sacrifice (or: with a Eucharistic liturgy) and remember my sufferings and beseech you: may there not be in his house any corruption (or: ruin, decay), and wherever my memorial stands, may there not be there the gos-disease (meaning unclear; read 'itch'?) or a leper (or: scurvy), no mange, no cripple, no deaf and no mute, no blind, no lame, no pestilence (or: untimely death) and no affliction of the demons. Remit their sins, my lord, both spiritual and corporeal, when they ask through my mediation.' Then there was a voice from heaven, saying to him, 'Come, good and diligent farmer⁸⁹! For the sake of your petitions which you have asked, it shall be done by me.'

The prayer ends with the invocation:⁹⁰ "Through the intercessions of the holy Birthgiver of God and of St George the soldier, protect, Lord God, Zōhrap, the servant of God."

The next prayer is also a plea for protection, but this time it is directed to the Holy Trinity.⁹¹ The supplicant asks to be purified by the power of Christ's Passion and to be protected against sundry dangers posed by people, animals, natural forces and malign powers.⁹²

"Spirit of God, sanctify me; flesh of Christ, cleanse me; water from the side of Christ, wash me; holy betrayal of Christ, free me; holy arrest of Christ, release me; holy sufferings of Christ, strengthen me; holy crucifixion of Christ, raise me up; holy condemnation of Christ, revive me; holy burial of Christ, vivify me; holy resurrection of Christ, renew me; holy ascension of Christ, shelter me. O sweet and good Christ,

89 The name *geōrgios* means 'farmer' in Greek. One wonders whether it was an intentional wordplay by the author, or a translation from a Greek prayer.

90 *barexōsowt'eamb s(owr)b a(stowa)cacnis ew srboyn gēorgay zōravarin paheay t(ē)r a(stowa)c zcarāys k'o zōhrapin* [last word scribbled through].

91 *Alōt'k' ar' s(owr)b erroradow(t'iwñ) ōgn(a)k(a)nē c(a)r'(a)yis a(stowco)y*. "Prayer to the Holy Trinity, with help for the servant of God."

92 *Hogi a|stowco|y srbeay zis. marmin k'ristosi mak'reay zis jowr i kolēn k'ristosi loway zis. sowrb matnowmn k'ristosi azateay zis. sowrb əmbrñowmn k'ristosi herk'eay zis. sourb čarčarak'n k'ristosi zōrac'oy zis sowrb xac'elowt'iwñn k'ristosi barjac'oy zis. sowrb awandowmn k'ristosi kenagorceay zis. sowrb t'alowmn k'ristosi kendanaç'oy zis. sowrb yarowt'iwñn k'ristosi norogeay zis. sowrb hambarjowmn k'ristosi patspareay zis. ov k'alc'r ew bari k'ristos olormeay ew paheay zcarāys k'o yam (enayn) [pata}harac'. i hroy i jroy ew |i yōt'oy)|(read: yōdoy) i hołoy ew hołmoy. i hiwandowt'enē ew yankarcaki mahowanē. i diwac' i kaxardac' ew i č'ar atandaworac'. i šaržmanē ew i darñ sastkowē [i yampoc'] (read: yampoc') ew i kaycakac'. i covē ew i c'amak'ē i sōñnoc' ew i gazanac'. i gołoc' ew awazakac' matnołac' ew i sowtelbarc' čarčič' (read: čarararčic'?) ew i čar lezowē. i gišeri ew i towəñjean. anwnas paheay t(ē)r a(stowa)c zcarāys k'o*. This kind of prayer enumerating the various types of danger were very popular, cf. for instance Feydit, *Amulets*, prayers 13, 14, pp. 108-111.

have mercy and protect your servant from every misfortune: from fire, from water and from air, from dust and wind, from illness and from unexpected death, from demons, from wizards and from bad sorcerers, from provocation and from bitter violence, from (thunder)clouds, from lightning bolts, from the sea and from dry land, from reptiles (or: creeping things, or: gangrene) and from wild beasts, from bandits and plunderers, betrayers, and from false brothers, evildoers, and from an evil tongue, by night and by day preserve unharmed, lord God, your servant."

The text ends by notifying the owner how to make his talisman more effective as a prophylaxis, namely by carrying it on his chest, close to his forehead (thereby recalling the custom of keeping the amulet under a pillow at night) and by repeated reading of the prayer:⁹³

"I shall say this at all times continuously this writ of God on my chest, the manuscript on my forehead, the word of God in my mouth. This is my love of my heart, and (it) is my perpetual memory in my mind; my body is the lordly house, my mind is like the holy priest, my heart (is) the table of the bread of life, my mystery (is) of(!) the unblemished sacrifice, my prayer (is) the acceptable incense. The father a strong fortress of my soul, the son a strong rampart of my mind, the spirit the strong door of my spirit. Now I shake from something, trembling; now I give an oath with the witness of the holy writ which has been written; may it be a help and protection for your servant K'aspar, amen amen."

The text that follows is an invocation to 66 saints, Armenian and ecumenical: "Entreaty to St. Minas and to Other Saints."⁹⁴ It begins with the name of St Menas and is introduced by a miniature of the saint depicted as a warrior, mounted and holding a spear⁹⁵ (Fig. 2C, 4C).

The subsequent miniature shows within a tondo a saint in half-figure holding a book partly

93 *Ew es yam(enayn) žam zays asem t'ē hanapaz a(stowco)y girn i grkis jerūgirn i čakalis a(stowac) abann i beranis. ays ē sēr im srtis. ew anmořac'ē im mrtis. marins townē tērowni mišk's nman s(owr)b k'ahani* (read: k'ahanay). *sirts selan kenac' hac'i. xorhowrds anarat pataragi. alōt'k's xownk andowneli. hayrn bert'* (read: *berd) arjins amowr ordin parisp mtac's amowr. hogin dowrn hogw(o)ys amowr. ardes yowmmē* (classical: *yowmemnē) dotam sarseal. ard erdownn tam vk(a)yowt'eamb s(owr)b gr(o)ys zor grel(o)c' yetic'i ōgn(a) k(a)n ew p(a)h(a)p(a)n carāyis a(stowco)y k'asparin. amēn. (a)mēn*. Cf. the note in the scroll BL, Or. 11264, V. Nersessian, *Catalogue*, (n. 16), p. 1081.

94 *Malt'ank' srboyn Minasay ew ayl am[enayn] srboč'*; the text begins: *barexōsowt'eamb srboyn mecin Minasay...* "Through the intercession of St. Menas the Great" and ends: *...ew ayl amenayn s(owr)bk' ew sirec'ealk' a(stowco)y s(owr)b kowsank' ew s(owr)b kanayk', ōgnakan ew pahapan lerowk' carāyis a(stowco)y...* "...and all other saints and beloved ones of God, the holy virgins and the holy women, may you be helpers of the servant of God." For several variants of this prayer see Feydit, *Amulettes*, prayer 36, pp. 160-183.

95 *Synaxarium alexandrinum*, CSCO 78, transl., p. 59; SATI, pp. 700-704 (PO 18:1, pp. 14-18); Walter, *Warrior saints* (n. 86), pp. 181-190.

obscuring his mantle (Fig. 2D, 3D). It precedes “The Prayer of St Gregory of Narek” whose text begins and ends as follows:⁹⁶

“Lord God of hosts, looks upon the supplications of your servant and the supplications of the holy Birthgiver of God, and for the sake of your holy, glorious name. Now, my lord, although acts of lawlessness may be in the land of the Armenians, and we are full of lawlessness, you are able to guide every place. On the day of battle and of war, do not turn your face away from me, rather look upon your servant whom you have reestablished by your holy, precious blood...because those who have been resurrected before us know that there is a God of the Christians, and to your holy name is due glory, dominion and worship, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.”

The prayer entitled, “Entreaty to God the Father, [who] Drives Away All Adversity”⁹⁷ is a noticeable text enumerating the attributes of God:⁹⁸

“We cry out to you, father of our lord and savior Jesus Christ, lord of hosts, (you) who bound the wild beast and condemned the authority of the demons: you are great, lord, and unfathomable (lit. ‘unutterable’) by those who have hoped in you. Accept the supplications of your servant, almighty God, omnipotent God, all-provident God, all-preserving God, all-holy God, all-saving God, all-merciful God, all-compassionate God, all-wondrous God, all-great God, all-copious God, all-generous God, all-good God, all-fatherly God, all-perceiving God.”

Several of the epithets are constructed of stylized words, often adjectives in the superlative

96 *Ałot'k' srboyn Grigori Narekats'woyn; Beginning: T(ē)r a(stowa)c zorowt'e(an)c' nayeac' zalač'ans cařayis k'o ew alač'anōk' s[owr]b a(stowa)cacnin ew v(a)s(n) p'aravoreal anowand k'owm srboy ard t(ē)r im t'ēpēt ew ic'en anorēnowt'iwnk' [y]ašxarhis hayoc'. ew mek' emk' anorēnowt'eamb li. ew dow karol es xratel iwrak'anč'iwr telis. isk yawowrn marti ew paterazmi mi darjowc'aner zeres k'o hinēn. ayl nayeac' i cařays k'o zor kangnec'er patowakan areamb k'o srb(o)y... ; End: zi canic'en yarowc'ealk'n i v(e)r(ay) mer zi goy a(stowa)c k'ristonēic' ew k'o s(owr)b anowand vayelē p'ark' išxanowt'iwn ew patiw ayžm ew mišt ew yawiteans yawitenic' amen. Cf. prayer nr 9 in the scroll BL, Or. 14028, and prayer 6 in BL, Or. 15274, Nersessian, *Catalogue*, (n. 16), p. 1085, 1088.*

97 *mall'ank' ar hayr a(stowa)c vanič'ē amenayn č'ar[ea?]c' (read: čarac')*

98 *kardamk' ar k'ez hayr t(ear)n meroy ew p'rkič' y(isou)s k'(risto)s (read: p'rkč'in yisousi k'ristosi) t(ē)r zōrowt'eanc'. or zgazann kapec'er ew zdiw(a)c' išxanowt'iwn datapartec'er. mec es dow t(ē)r ew anpatowm yowsac'eloc's i k'ez. ənk'al zalač'ans cařayis k'o. amenakal a(stowa)c. amenakarol a(stowa)c. amenaxnam a(stowa)c. amenakec'oyc'a(stowa)c. amenas(owr)b a(stowa)c. amenap'rkič'a(stowa)c. amenaotorm a(stowa)c. amenagowt'a(stowa)c. amenahraš a(stowa)c. amenamec a(stowa)c. amenaarat a(stowa)c. amenapargew a(stowa)c. amenabari a(stowa)c. amenahayr a(stowa)c. amenahas a(stowa)c.*

form.⁹⁹ Other epithets of a more prosaic nature follow, such as “Father of orphans and judge of widows.” These are followed by petitions:¹⁰⁰

“Protect us untroubled from what is bad, and not tripped up by the snare of the seen and unseen enemy. Save my soul from Gehenna and from the sleepless sons of him-who-is-worst, to hear the sweetest sound, which you have promised to the sheep of the pen.”

The next text, “The Prayers of Tribulation,”¹⁰¹ is a long supplication directed to God to protect the supplicant against all manner of mischief which begins:

“O sweetest Lord Jesus Christ, God who from the bosom of the most revered and almighty Father was sent into the world to remit sins, to free the distressed, to release the imprisoned, to gather the scattered, to repatriate those who have rebelled against their homeland, to have mercy on the heartbroken (lit. those afflicted at heart), to cheer up the chagrined and the weeping: manage, lord Jesus Christ, to release and to free your servant from tribulations and distress, [you] on whom [his] desire has been set...”¹⁰²

Further, the author invokes several well-known biblical examples of divine protection:

“And you, lord Jesus Christ, just as you saved Abraham from the hands of the Chaldeans, and his son Isaac from the slaughter of sacrifice in place of a sheep, and Jacob from the hands of Esau his brother, and Joseph from the hands of his brothers whom they fling (sic) down into a tomb, and Lot from the city of the Sodomites, your servants Moses and Aaron and the people of Israel from the hands of Pharaoh and from the enslavement of Egypt, King David from the hands of Saul and Goliath the giant, Susanna from false accusation and witness, Judith from the hand of Holophernes, Daniel from the den of the lions, the three youths Shedrak, Misak and Abednego from the furnace of intense

99 *anoxakal a (stowa)c; anyišačar a (stowa)c; ank'nneli xorhowrd; ančareli ban ansparaber himn; anbekeli gawazân; anstower loys; ansahman cov or miayn s(our)b miayn anel; miayn anmah miayn ardar; miayn i'agawor; miayn ararič; miayn azatič ew stelcič' amenayn erewealeac' ew yanerewowt'ic; miayn p'arâworeal; miayn yalt'ol p'rkič' mardasēr.*

100 *paheay anp'orj i č'arē ew ansayt'ak' yorogayt'ē, yereweli ew anerewoyt' t'šnamoyn. p'rkea zhogis gehenoy. ew ank'own ordanc'n č'aragown. Isel zjaynn k'alc'ragoyn. Zor xostac'ar yōdeac' dasowm.*

101 *A'tot'k'ner p'orjowt'ean*

102 *Ov k'alc'ragoyn t[ē]ry (isow)s k'[risto]s a[stowa]c or i coc'oy vehagowni hōr amenakaroli arak'ec'ar yašxarh zmets t'owtowl. zneleals azatel zbantarkeals arjakel. zvarateals žolovel. zntdehs (read: znškahēls) i hayrenis iwreanc' verabere. trtmeloc' srtiw olormel zc'awagneals ew zartasowal'ors mxil'arel. aržanaworeay t(ē) r y (isow)s k'(risto)s arjakel ew azatel zcariays k'o i tarāpanac' ew i nelowt'enēs norowm (read nelowt'enē ast orowm): edeal kam.*

An Armenian Prayer Scroll

*(lit. burning) fire, Jonah from the belly of the whale, and the daughter of the Canaanite Woman who was tormented by a demon, Adam in the deep tomb of Hades through your precious blood, and Peter from the sea, and Paul from prison: in that [same] way may you, sweetest Lord Jesus Christ, son of the Living God arrange to save also me, your servant, from all my enemies...”*¹⁰³

Henceforth the petitioner enumerates all the earthly sufferings of Jesus, in whose name of he beseeches protection:

*“Hasten to me in aid through your holy beneficence and through your holy incarnation, which you accepted as a human being from the virgin Mary, through your holy birth, through the hunger, through the thirst, through the cold, through the heat, through the labors and the actions, through the spittings, through the slaps, through the whippings, through the nails, through the lance, through the crown of thorns, through the tasting of gall and vinegar, through the fatigue of death on the cross, through the eight words which you said while hung up on the cross, namely to God the omnipotent father, ‘Forgive them for they do not know what they do’...”*¹⁰⁴

His final plea reads:

“On account of this, and all the other [things] which the eye has not seen, and which the ear has not heard, and which has not entered the human heart, I beseech you, sweetest lord Jesus Christ, through your clemency and mercy to manage to save me, your servant, from all dangers of the spirit and of the body, now and always. And after [these] things may you grant me to offer up such a course of life to the living and true

103 ew dow t(ē)r y(isow)s k'(risto)s o(r)p(ēs) p'rkec'er zabraham ijerac' k'aldēac'oc' ew zordi nora zisahak i zenmanē pataragin handerj xoyiwn. ew zyakob i jerac' yesaway elbōr iwroy. ew zyousēp' i jerac' elbarc' iwroc'. znoy tapanaw helelin. ew złout i k'atak'ēn sodomac'woc' zpaštōneays k'o mousēs ew zaharon ew zžolowowrds i (srayē)lean i jerac' p'arawoni. ew i carāyisowt'enē egiptosi. zdawit' t'agawor i jerac' sawowlay ew goliat'anow hskayi zšowšan i stoy ambastanowt'enē ew vkayowt'enē. zyowdid (read:yowdit') i jeranē holēgerneay (read: holop'ērneay) zdaniēl i gboy ariwcowc'n. zeri mankownsn zsedrak zmisak. ew zabit'negour [sic] i hnoc'ē hroy n kišanoli. zyōnan i yorovaynē kitin. ew zdowstr k'ananač'woyn or ēr tanjec'eal i jerñ diwin. zadam i xoroy gboy džoxoc' patowakanaw areamb k'ov. ew zpetros i covēn. ew zpōlos i kapanac'. noynpēs ew zis zpaštōneays k'o k'atc'ragown t(ē)r y(isow)s k'(risto)s ordi a(stowco)y kendantwoy p'rkel patkanaworesc'es yamenec'ownc' t'snameac' imoc'.

104 ew ačaparel yōgnowt'iwn inj. i jerñ srboy barerarowt'ean k'o. ew i jerñ srboy marmnaworowt'ean k'o. zor arer ibrow mard i kowsēn mariamay. i jerñ srboy cnndean k'o. i jerñ sovown. i jerñ carawown. i jerñ c'rtown. i jerñ tapown i jerñ vastakoc'n ew gorjowt'eanc'n (read: gorcolowt'eanc'n). i jerñ t'k'oc'n. i jerñ aptakac'n. i jerñ ganic'n. i jerñ bewerac'n. i jerñ tigin. i jerñ gšey (read: p'šey) psakin. i jerñ čašakman letwoyn ew k'ac'axin. i jerñ tažaneloy mahow xač'in. i jerñ eot'eanc' banic'n zors kaxeal i xač'in asac'er. manawand a(stowco)y hōr amenakari. t'ol soc'a zi oč' giten zinč' gorcen.

God, you who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen."¹⁰⁵

The next supplication, called "The Psalms of Tribulation, [for one] Waiting for Help,"¹⁰⁶ addresses a similar theme. Given the long tradition, also evident in Armenia, of viewing the Psalms as possessing protective and curative power, it is not surprising the author of the prayer took them as his model of biblical poetry.¹⁰⁷ The beginning and the end of the text read:¹⁰⁸

"God, who does not ignore the sighs of the sorrowful, and does not despise the sufferings of the afflicted, hearken to our petition which on account of our vexations we extend (lit. spread out) to you, as well as things like these, gentle listener, that whatever is against us, satanic as well as human, may be mollified..."; "...and which is the completion of our entreaty, with the offering of the humble voice of your supplicants, through our Lord, amen."

The stylistic uniformity of the miniatures indicates a single, quite skilled painter. He used a large range of colours, expertly moderating the dominant cool palette of purple and blue with warm orange and yellow. He also applied gold, mostly for the nimbi, but also for details of the garments. The figures are drawn in black lines against a plain, two- or three- coloured background. Its upper part is flat, displaying a stripped, decoratively draped textile, possibly an element borrowed from the vocabulary of Islamic art. From the same source seems to derive the decoration of the upper corners of the background, coloured dark blue and covered in faded ornaments executed in silver paint (Fig. 4A). The ornament is best preserved in the last miniature, where it is applied around the circle containing the picture of Gregory Narekaci' (Fig. 2D). In two cases, the ground rises diagonally from left to right in an attempt to make the scene three-dimensional (Fig. 2 A, 2C). A landscape is suggested only once, in the form of two stylised trees (Fig. 1D).

The figures are represented in frontal or three-quarter pose. Facial features are not painted but marked by black strokes and dots, one characteristic being a large nose drawn with the same

105 *saks aysoc'ik. ew amenc'own ayloc' zors akn oč' etes. ew oč' ownkn lowaw ew oč' i sirt mardoy el. atač'em zk'ez k'alc'ragown t(ē) r y(isow)s k'(risto)s amenc'ownc' utangic' hogwoy ew marmnoy yalags k'oyoy gt'owt'ean ew olormowt'ean zis zpaštōneays k'o ayžm ew mišt p'rkel aržanaworesc'es. ew zkni aysoc'ik kenc'atoy ant'ac's ar a|stowa|c kendani ew čšmarit zis veraberel patkanaworesc'es or keas ew t'|a|g|a|wores yawiteans yawitenic' amēn.*

106 *Salmosner p'orjowt'ean, bnakeal i yōgnowt'iwñ.*

107 Feydit, *Amulettes*, p. 9.

108 Beginning: *a|stowa|c or trtmeloc' oč' antes arñes zharāč'ans. ew vštac'eloc' oč' anarges zkirs. arler zndrowacac' meroc' zor k'ez saks halacanac' meroc' taracanemk' ew aynoc'ik ews ownkndir hetabar. zi or inč' anddēm mez satanayakank' or ew mardkayink' |han|dartesc'in... ; End: ...or ew zkatarowmn xndroy meroy talov palataworac' k'oc' hezabar lowr i jerñ t[ear]n meroy amen.*

line as one of the eyebrows (Figs 3A-D). Compensating for uniformity of the faces is the variety of hair styles suggesting the differing ages of the depicted persons. The folds of the garments, indicated by darker shades of the nearby colours, are natural but at the same time decorative. Holy warriors are distinguished by flowing cloaks and St George by an ornamented cuirass. (Fig. 4A-C). Also decoratively rendered are the prancing, staggering steeds. The portrait of Gregory the Illuminator is executed with the greatest of care, evident in the delicate drawing of his face and the attention paid to the details of his dress. (Fig. 3A) The iconography of all the figures is not innovative and the painter has simply followed well-established models in Christian art, which customarily present an ecclesiastic in the liturgical dresses appropriate to his function, a writer holding a book and a holy warrior armed and on horseback.

The stylistic and iconographical characteristics of the miniatures permit us to identify our scroll with the center of book painting that flourished in Constantinople from the second half of the 17th century to the first decade of the 18th. Although the artistic output of Constantinopolitan workshops has not yet been subjected to detailed study,¹⁰⁹ it has been established that the apparently eclectic character of the miniatures from this center has two main sources of inspiration. On one hand the painters followed old traditions, mostly copying Cilician works from the 13th and 14th centuries,¹¹⁰ on the other, they imitated illustrations based on Western European woodcuts and engravings, which were disseminated through printed books.¹¹¹ The influence of the latter models is most obvious in attempts to show architectural settings in perspective, in the simplification of landscape, in the arbitrary colouring and in the specific modelling of draperies based on shades of the same hue. From the second half of the 17th century, dependence on these models increased. The contours of faces and bodies were marked in thick, black lines. Similarly,

109 S. der Nersessian, "Armenian Painting," in: A. Mekhitarian, *Treasures of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem*. [Helen and Edvard Mardigian Museum. Catalogue 1], Jerusalem 1969, p. 17. It should be noted that most overviews of Armenian miniature painting end with the manuscripts executed in the 16th century. A very short characterisation of the Constantinopolitan School is to be found in: S. der Nersessian, *The Chester Beatty Library. A Catalogue of the Armenian Manuscripts; with an Introduction on the History of Armenian Art*, Dublin 1958, pp. XIIIff; V. Nersessian, *Armenian Illuminated Gospel Books*, London 1987, pp. 36ff; T. E. Mathews, R.S. Wiecek, *Treasures in Heaven. Armenian Illuminated Manuscripts*, New York (Pierpont Morgan Library), 1994, pp. 108-110; V. Nersessian, *Armenian Illuminated Gospel Books*, London 1987, pp. 36ff; some remarks on the stylistic relations between particular manuscripts are included in H. & H. Buschhausen, *Die Illuminierten armenischen Handschriften. Der Mechitharisten-Congregation in Wien*, Wien 1976, pp. 96-103. The single work known to us which discusses the subject in more detail is T. Greenwood, "An Unpublished Seventeenth-Century Armenian Psalter. A Constantinopolitan Scriptorium and Markos Patkerahan," *REA* 29 (2003-2004), pp. 323-382. However, the author had at his disposal mainly black-and-white photographs, unsuited to a more advanced comparative analysis of style.

110 On the Cilician school of painting see for instance, S. der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century*, Washington D.C. 1993; *Armenian Art Treasures of Jerusalem*, ed. B. Narkiss et al., New York 1979, pp. 47-74; S. Agemian, *Miniatures arméniens enluminés du Catholicossat de Cilicie*, Antélias, Liban 1991.

111 On several of these books see V. Nersessian, *Catalogue* (n. 16), p. 1099.

rendered folds of garments lost their natural volume. The figures became short and heavy, their faces expressionless. The background was depicted in two colors, often with a golden sky, and the painters paid great attention to small details and ornamentation.¹¹²

The key characteristics of both phases of the Constantinopolitan style are evident in the miniatures decorating religious books and scrolls. The iconography and stylistic features of the pictures illustrating both kinds of texts resemble one other to such a degree that there is no doubt about the involvement of the same workshops, or even the same painters, in decorating both books and scrolls.¹¹³ However, any certain attribution of scrolls to manuscript painters is difficult. Although in the colophons of the books the name of the painter is often added to those of the scribe and the owner, it seldom appears in the colophons of the scrolls.¹¹⁴

Representative examples of the Constantinopolitan style¹¹⁵ in its first phase of development include three manuscripts presently held in the St Thoros Library of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem: "The Life of the Fathers," MS J293, dated 1652, with four large and several marginal miniatures; the Gospels, MS J1970 dated 1651 decorated with 22 full-page and 293 marginal miniatures; and the Bible MS J2561, executed between 1654 and 1661, containing 41 full-page and 205 marginal miniatures, two of the latter being signed Markos *patkerahan*, "the illuminator."¹¹⁶ He also painted a Psalter dated 1659 and decorated it with eight large and 26 small miniatures presently in the Manogian Museum, Southfield, Mich¹¹⁷ (Fig. 7A). Among the scrolls worthy of mention are BnF, MS 99 (*olim* 121) dated 1639-1641 and decorated with six miniatures;¹¹⁸ MS BL, Or. 14028, a luxurious example executed around 1655, written on vellum, with 13 miniatures ornamented with golden paint; and MS BL, Or. 15274, dated 1666, with 11 miniatures¹¹⁹ (Fig. 5C).

112 It seems the transition from the first to the second phase of the Constantinopolitan style can be tentatively dated to the 1670s, with two dates standing out as reference points, both connected to the best known painters of the school: death of Markos "the Painter" in 1676 and the first signed work by his son Gabriel dated 1672; see Greenwood, "Psalter," (n. 109), p. 353 and *infra* pp. 40f.

113 See, for instance, the observations made by M. & N. Stone, *Catalogue Chester Beatty* (n. 46), p. 190, concerning the manuscript ARM 625 and the scroll ARM 636.

114 In the colophon of scroll BL, Or. 11264 a certain Naxaš introduces himself but as one who "copied, decorated and illuminated the Prayer Book," V. Nersessian, *Catalogue* (n. 16), pp. 1077, 1083.

115 Very useful for this purpose is the list of the manuscripts executed between 1601 and 1689 provided in Greenwood, "Armenian Psalter" (n. 109), pp. 332-342.

116 N. Bogharian, *Mayr c'uc'ak hayerēn jeṛagrac' srboc' Yakobeanc'* (Grand Catalogue of St James Manuscripts), Jerusalem vol. II 1967, pp. 119-121, vol. VI, 1972, pp. 549-551, vol. VIII, 1977, p. 263.

117 This manuscript was the subject of a detailed study by Greenwood (n. 109), who enumerates nine other manuscripts decorated by Markos, pp. 344-356; the Bible MS J2561 is discussed on pp. 347-502. Two miniatures from the Psalter were reproduced in color in: *Art of the Armenians* (n. 46), nr. 9.

118 Kévorkian *et al.*, *Manuscrits arméniennes* (n. 46), p. 295.

119 V. Nersessian, *Catalogue* (n. 16), nr. 227, pp. 1083-1087, pl. 28c; the colophon does not contain a date of the scroll's execution; rather it was dated on the basis of the notes and the style of the miniatures; nr. 228, pp. 1087-1089, pl. 28e and see also *Manuscripts of the Christian East* (n. 31) nr. 25, pp. 42f.

For the second phase of this style, three hymnals are usually seen as the most representative: MS VLM 986, executed around 1675 and illustrated with 51 full-side and 25 marginal miniatures;¹²⁰ MS 547 in the Walter Arts Gallery, Baltimore, executed in 1678 and decorated with 38 full/half-side and numerous marginal miniatures;¹²¹ and MS 621 in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, executed in 1659 with five full-sided and 50 marginal miniatures.¹²² Another work of the same painter as the latter manuscript is a lectionary, held in a private collection in London and dating to 1672¹²³ (Fig. 7B).

Several manuscripts painted in the last quarter of the 17th century are signed by Gabriel, son of the above-mentioned Markos *patkerahan*. It seems that from young age he worked with his father on the decoration of books and later used his manuscripts as models, thereby promoting their workshop's continuity of style.¹²⁴ Gabriel executed two manuscripts that are preserved in the St Thoros Library: the Psalter, MS J1569, dated 1672, which he made for his own use;¹²⁵ and the *Book of Theological Problems* by Gregory Tatev, MS J205, with 18 miniatures and marginal decoration, dating to 1667.¹²⁶ He also illustrated the Gospels, MS BL, Or. 14161 from 1695, with 16 full-side and 50 marginal miniatures.¹²⁷

The same stylistic features evident in the miniatures in these books can be discerned in the illustrations in the group of scrolls belonging to the Mekhitarist Library in Venice, all executed between 1680 and 1710: MSS VMSL 3021, 3026, 3030, 3031;¹²⁸ in two scrolls in private collections: one executed in 1682 and decorated with 29 miniatures (Fig. 6B) and the second dated to 1710 with 19 pictures¹²⁹ (Fig. 5A), as well as, in another scroll, presently

120 H. & H. Buschhausen, *Die Illumierte Armenischen Handschriften* (n. 109) pp. 97-99, pl. 73-79, figs 219-224, cf. part. fig. 22.

121 S. der Nersessian, *Armenian Manuscripts in the Walters Art Gallery*, Baltimore 1973, pp. 76-82, pl. 230-241, figs 427-486, cf. part. figs 438, 443, 448, 469, 483; Mathews & Wieck, *Treasures in Heaven* (n. 109) nr 14, p. 155 fig. 102.

122 M. & N. Stone, *Catalogue Chester Beatty* (n. 46), pp. 41-66, figs 6-12.

123 *Art of the Armenians* (n. 46), nr. 10.

124 On the cooperation between both painters, see Greenwood, "Psalter" (n. 109), pp. 350, 355f. A good example of the stylistic continuity visible in their works is the bilingual Armenian-Turkish Gospel Book in the Free Library of Philadelphia, John Fredrick Lewis Oriental MS 116, dated 1655, which, according to Greenwood, was executed by Markos, p. 353, while in Mathews & Wieck, *Treasures in Heaven* (n. 109), nr. 71, pp. 109, 198 it is ascribed to Gabriel.

125 Probably modelled on a Psalter produced by his father, Greenwood, "Psalter" (n. 109), p. 355.

126 A. Mekhitarian, *Treasures of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem*, [Helen and Edvard Mardigian Museum. Catalogue 1], Jerusalem 1969, nr. 39, p. 32.

127 V. Nersessian, *Illuminated Gospel Books*, n.109, pp. 37-39, 93, pl. 18, and figs 25-27.

128 Feydit, *Amulettes* nrs VII & XVII, pp. 34-37, 52-54, figs 13, 16, 20, 24, 25, 40, 45-49, 65, 66 and 4, 9, 53, 55, 71; nrs II & IV, pp. 21-25, figs 21, 41, 70 and pp. 28-31, figs.17, 23; *Gli Armeni in Italia* (n. 44), nr. 9, p. 149f; *La Magie de l'écrit* (n. 15), nrs 3:33, 3:34, pp. 166f.

129 *Manuscripts* (n. 31), nr. 26, p. 42f; *Art of the Armenians* (n. 46) nr. 13 with a colour plate.

divided into three parts and held in the Musée Arménien de France, MSS 124, 125, 128.¹³⁰

Finally, in addition to scrolls that imitated manuscript decoration and were consequently of high artistic standard, the workshops of Constantinople produced very simple amulets made without care and supplied with naive and crudely drawn pictures. One such example is the scroll belonging to the Library of the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul, dating to 1706 and decorated with 12 coloured drawings¹³¹ (Fig. 5B). Most probably, these were the work of scribes who were not necessarily skilled in painting.

This short overview of the artistic milieu to which the Uppsala scroll belongs allows us to conclude that the miniatures on the scroll are an example of the transition from the first to second phase of the Constantinopolitan style. Precision of design, elaborated but elegant decorativeness, elongated figures and draperies modelled in colours rather than marked by sharp lines, indicate that the painter, who certainly also worked on book decoration, was well versed in older pictorial techniques. On the other hand, by 1681 when the scroll was produced, he was already influenced by new, less refined ways of painting. This is indicated, for instance, in the generic facial features of his figures (cf. Figs 3B and 3D; 3C and 4A) and by their standardized poses. We also observed a close similarity between the miniatures decorating our scroll and those in scroll MS VMSL 3031, executed in 1690, most strikingly in the characteristic background in the form of a draped curtain¹³² (Fig. 6B).

It would be valuable to establish more connections between the Uppsala scroll and other manuscripts stemming from the workshops of Constantinople. However, given the material at hand, such a project was not possible. Hopefully, the context will be addressed afresh when studies of the Armenian scrolls and of the Constantinople school of painting have progressed.

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130 *Reflets d'Arménie* (n. 40), pp. 94f.

131 According to an accompanying note the scroll was acquired on 25.5.1975. See also Ms. no. 121 in: *Armenia Sacra* (n. 31), nr. 202, p. 441 and Feydit, *Amulettes*, nr. XVIII, pp. 55-58, figs 15, 51, 69.

132 Cf. Feydit, *Amulettes*, figs 16, 47, 66 and colour illustration on p. 116.

An Armenian Prayer Scroll

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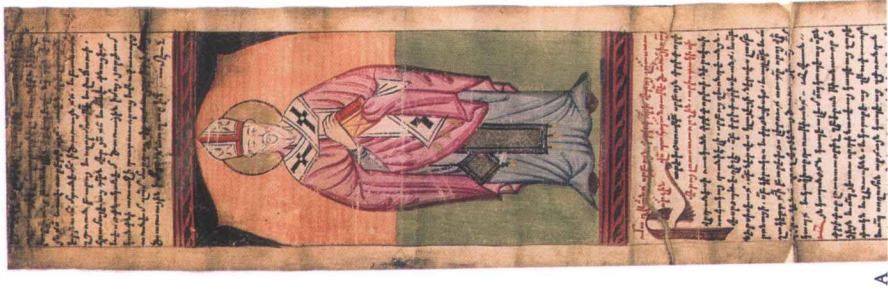
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A



B



C



D

Fig 1. Uppsala, UB, O. Arm. 4: A. Gregory the Illuminator; B. Ornamented text; C. Nerves the Gracious; D. Saint in prayer, (courtesy of UUL) [*Exwa Balicka-Witakowska*]



A



B



C

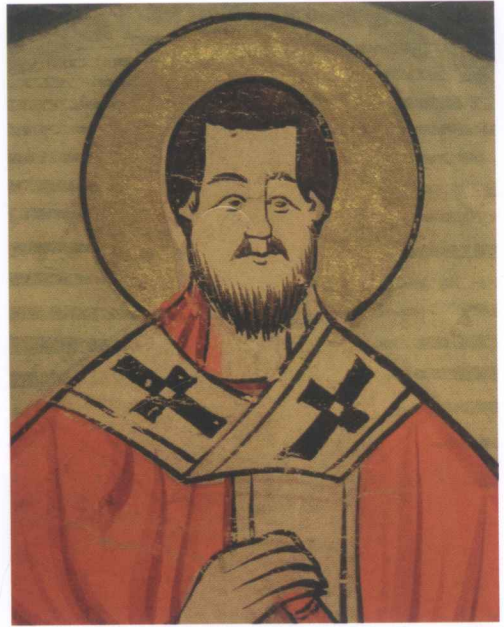


D

Fig.2. Uppsala, UB, O. Arm. 4: A. Ss Sargis & Martyros; B. St George; C. St Menas; D. St Gregory of Narek, (courtesy of UUL) [Ewa Balicka-Witakowska]



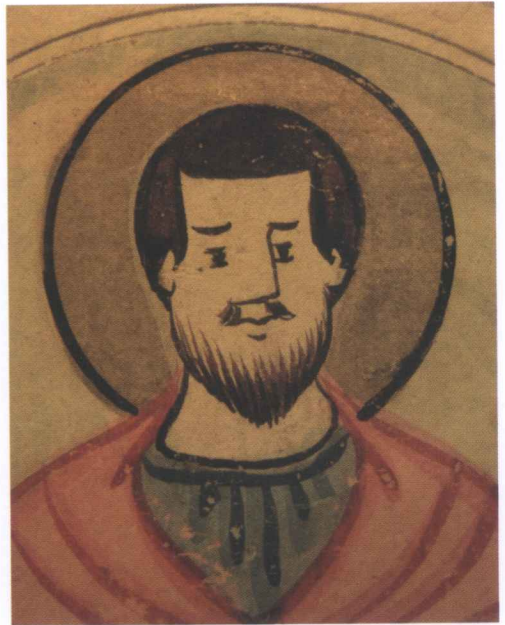
A



B



C



D

Fig. 3. Uppsala, UB, O. Arm. 4: details of the miniatures, (courtesy of UUL)

[Ewa Balicka-Witakowska]



A



B



C

Fig. 4. Uppsala, UB, O. Arm. 4: details of the miniatures, (courtesy of UUL)
[Ewa Balicka-Witakowska]



A



B



C

Fig. 5. A. London, Sam Fogg, LOF* 4300, (courtesy of Sam Fogg); B. Istanbul, Library of the Armenian Patriarchate (photo by E. Balicka-Witakowska); C. London, BL, Or. 15274 (courtesy of Sam Fogg) [Ewa Balicka-Witakowska].



A



B

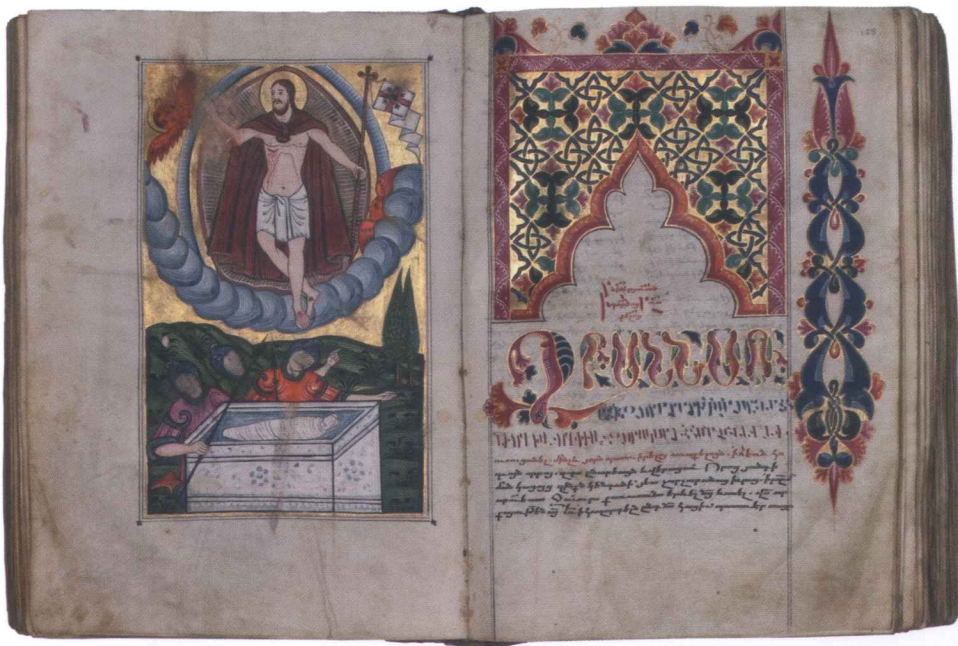


C

Fig. 6. A & B: London, private collections, (courtesy of Sam Fogg); C. Venice, VMSL 3031 (after Gli Armeni in Italia) [Ewa Balicka-Witakowska]



A



B

Fig. 7. A. Psalter, Southfield, Mich., Manooigan Museum, ff. 1v-2r; B. Lectionary, London, private coll. (courtesy of Sam Fogg) [Ewa Balicka-Witakowska]