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The Reception of Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 264–339) in Armenia*

Abstract: The contribution deals with the reception of the literary work of Eusebius of Caesarea in classical Armenian historiography (particularly in the formation of the text type of the *Chronicon*) as well as in the medieval translated literature and the manuscript tradition. In addition, the paper focuses on the current state of Eusebian research in Armenia.

Eusebius of Caesarea, the father of ecclesiastical history and the author of the first Christian Chronicle, was highly revered in Armenia, where his works served Armenian authors as an original source from the 5th until the 17th century. He was the author of some forty works on biblical exegesis, dogmatics and apologetics, but his most widely consulted works in Armenia are the *Church history* and the *Chronicle* (*K'ronikon* or *žamanakagrowth'awn*). Both works were translated into Armenian during the so called Golden Age of Armenian literature, in the 5th century: the ecclesiastical history was translated from the Syriac version and the chronicle from the Greek original, although with traces of Syriac. However, the chronicle is now extant only in the Armenian translation, as the Greek original has been lost¹. These sources were adopted by the Armenian historiographer Łazar P'arpec'i (5th century), Movsēs Xorenac'i, As¹¹¹¹ 10th century), Samuel A¹¹¹¹ 'i, Yovhannēs Sarkawag (11th century), a philosopher, mathematician and poet¹¹¹¹ the 10–11th century; and additionally, by the 13th century historians Yovhannēs Awagerec', Kirakos Ganjakec'i and Vardan Arewelc'i; the 14th century historians Step'anos Orbelean and Nersēs Palienc'i or Palianenc' as well as David Bališec'i, an author of the 17th century.

The German linguist Rüdiger Schmitt reproached Armenologists for neglecting one of the important constitutive texts of Christian Oriental historiography, the *Chronicle* by the famous church historian Eusebius², which survived only in the old 5th century Armenian translation. I informed the experts at the conference on Julius Africanus, organized by Martin Wallraff (Basel) at the Friedrich Schiller University Jena (Eisenach 2005), of the longstanding research work by the

* English language revision by Rachel Barritt Costa.

1 Cf. Thomson 1995, 51–52.

2 Schmitt 2001, 273–281.

leading Armenian historian and philologist Gevorg Abgaryan (1920–1998) from the Matenadaran institute for ancient manuscripts in Yerevan. About 30 years ago Abgaryan discovered previously unknown traces of the Eusebius transmission in some further Armenian manuscripts and aimed to prepare a new edition of Eusebius' *Chronicle*³.

In the mid 1980's, a project was set up, under his direction, to prepare a new edition of the Armenian text based on recent discoveries relating to the chronicle of Eusebius in the manuscripts of the medieval Armenian historians. Simultaneously the GCS series deputed Gevorg Abgaryan to update the German translation of Karst by inclusion of material from the oldest paper-manuscript in the Matenadaran manuscript collection (ms. Maten. 2679, dating from the year 981) containing a compilation of the chronicle. Unfortunately he was not able to bring this intensive task to completion. After his death in 1998, I took on this task. Because of the challenging obligations of a single chair of Christian Oriental Studies in Germany, it has up to now been impossible for me as an official standing alone in this academic field to fulfil the legacy of my father.

Accordingly, I am grateful to the organizers of this outstanding conference at the University of Genoa for inviting me and helping me to cultivate this project and resist any temptation to abandon this lifelong endeavour.

Below I will shortly introduce the most important new discoveries of the last few decades relating to the manuscript tradition of the Armenian version of this chronicle. I will also report on the results of the previous unpublished work, and outline the state of progress of the new edition. In particular, today I would like to give account of the reception of the literary work of Eusebius of Caesarea not only in classical Armenian historiography (particularly in the development of the *Chronicle* as a textual form), but also in medieval translated literature, miniature painting and the manuscript tradition.

1 Eusebius in Armenian historiography

The Armenian historiographer Kirakos Ganjakec'i (1201/1203–1271), the famous witness and reporter of the first Mongolian Campaigns in Asia and Europe as well as of information on the language and social life of the Mongols, mentioned the "Great Eusebios" in his *History of Armenia* among the historians who have left living monuments for the following generations.

³ Drost-Abgarjan 2006, 255–262. This article is recorded electronically in the English translation by Roger Pearse. Some updated excerpts of it are available in the present article as well.

For that is a divine law: *The fathers should show* (this / the Book of Law, divine words and sayings of old) *to the(ir) sons, so that they should make them known* (to their children) *and that another generation might know them* as the prophet David demands⁴.

For so instructed Moses, the Greatest among the prophets, the sons of Israel and said: *You shall meditate on them day and night when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up*⁵.

And to these who help us and extend their hand to us, join the circles of divine men who bequeathed their writings as living monuments for all nations / generations: so the Great Eusebios (*mecn Ewsebios*), who left two writings: the Chronicle (*K'ronikon*), starting with forefather Adam ... unto the Advent of Christ and the *Church History*, starting with the rising of the Sun of Justice ... unto the days of pious Constantine⁶.

Historiography is, along with literary translation, the most extended genre of Old and Medieval Armenian literature. It provides early sources of information on the history of neighboring nations (lost or living), and it offers important insight into ethnic groups such as Arabs, Mongols, Tatars, Seljuk Turks, Caucasian Albans. Furthermore, knowledge on the Crusades can be gained from the *Histories* and *Chronicles* of Sebēos and Movsēs Kałankatowac'i (7th century), Łewond Vardapet (7th/8th century), Yovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i, Stepannos Asołik, Uxtanēs and Aristakēs Lastivertc'i (10th/11th century) as well as Mattheos Urhayec'i and Samuēl Anec'i (12th century).

The literary models of Armenian historians were the works of Old Greek historiographers and the Christian chronographers, particularly those of Eusebius of Caesarea. In the Armenian manuscript tradition, Eusebius is regarded as an inventor of a new literary text form, that of the "Chronicle" as well as that of "Tetraevangelia" (*hamabarbar*), i.e. the Synopsis of four Gospels through ten canon tables. This concept of harmonisation of the Gospel was named after him, as the "Eusebian Canon Tables" or "Eusebian Chronographical Canon".

The most frequent epitheta of Eusebius in the manuscript colophons are "The Great Eusebius the Historiographer" (*mec Evsebios Patmagir*) and "Eusebius the Chronographer" (*Ewsebios žamanakagir*). These descriptive terms highlight the importance of Eusebius for Armenians as an expert in Christian universal history and the creator of a new text form, namely the "Chronicle", which is structured not only as a narrative text but also as a sequential record of events. Thus the focus of this new genre was no longer the historical event in itself but the time axes, the timeline in tabular form.

⁴ Pss. 77:5–6.

⁵ Cf. Dt. 6:7, 11:9; Jos. 1:8.

⁶ Kirakos 1961, 4–5.

These denominations are marked by titles “Eusebius the Patriarch” (*Ewsebios hayrapet*), “Eusebius the Bishop of Caesarea” (*Ewsebios episkopos Kesarow*) or Eusebius of Cesarea (*Ewsebios Kesarac’i*) and “Eusebius of Pamphylos” (*Ewsebios Pamp’iwlai*), in honour of his teacher and probably uncle, the Bible commentator Pamphylos.

The usual designations “saint” (*sowrb*) or “blessed” (*eraneli*) are reserved in the Armenian colophons for his namesakes, the church fathers Eusebius of Emessa († 359), Eusebius of Jerusalem and Eusebius of Alexandria (apparently a fictitious name). Eusebius of Cesarea is, for the Armenians, first and foremost the Great Chronographer⁷.

After the annalistic works, the Homily on the Assumption of Christ (*Homilia in assumptionem Christi*) by Eusebius is the most widely copied work in the Armenian liturgical collections (lectionaries, homiliaries and synaxaries, allocated on the 2nd of May). Furthermore, while the *Church History* was translated undoubtedly from the Syriac version into Armenian, as Paul Vetter concluded in his contribution “Über die armenische Übersetzung der Kirchengeschichte von Eusebius” (1881), the *Chronicle* is a translation from the Greek original despite its Syriacisms.

The 5th and the 6th books are lacking in the Syriac version of the Church History translated from the Greek original in the 4th century, and consisting of ten books as a whole. These lost chapters survived in the Armenian version published in Venice in 1877. After this edition many other fragments were discovered in the Armenian liturgical manuscripts, leading to the need for a new edition of this Eusebian work.

In 1782 the Constantinopolitan Armenologist, Orientalist and translator George Dpir Tēr Yovhannisean (1737–1811), also known with the surname Dpir Palatec’i, discovered the Armenian version of the Chronicle of Eusebius; which became a useful source for the study of early Christian history in the orient and the west. This ensured that even though the Greek original is lost, the material remained available in a more genuine form to the following generations.

George Dpir’s biographer, Ayvazean⁸, relates that George’s functions included liaising between the Constantinople Patriarchate and the Armenian Congregation of Mechitharists in Venice, who had emigrated from Constantinople and united with Rome. During the course of such functions, George happened to make a trip to Šamaxi in eastern Armenia, where, after a lavish meal with his

⁷ Cf. Thomson 1995, 50.

⁸ Cf. Ayvazean 1893, 11–73. The German Orientalist Julius Heinrich Petermann speaks about “Lector Georg, a learned Armenian from Constantinople” (Petermann 1865, 457–458).

host, with plenty of the local Madras wine, the guest became thirsty during the night. While searching for a water jug, he found a parchment manuscript with a tight leather cover which served in his host's household as a lid for the water jug. This Codex, via Jerusalem, ultimately arrived in Constantinople and then continued on to Yerevan, where it has been held since 1939 in the Yerevan manuscripts institute, the Matenadaran, under the shelfmark ms. Maten. 1904. The manuscript became the basis for the edition of Mkrtič' Avgerean, 1762–1854 (who is known in Europe under the Latinized form of his name, Baptista Aucher), until recently the only complete publication of the Armenian text⁹. It was copied in 1793 by George Dpir, who has been called the forerunner of Armenian classical studies; the copy was given to the cloister library of the Venetian Mechitharists at San Lazzaro. The manuscript arrived there at Christmas 1794 and was catalogued under the number 931.

Adolf von Harnack (1851–1930), the head of the Patristic commission of the Royal Prussian Academy of Science in Berlin, acting through his student Karapet Ter-Mkrtč'ean (1866–1915), the discoverer and publisher of the Armenian version of the Proof of the Apostolic Preaching of Irenaeus of Lyons, made a photographic reproduction of the Eusebius-model of Aucher. This copy is stored today in the archive of the Berlin Academy of Science.

Yovhannes Vardapet Zohrabean or Zohrab (1758–1929), also a Mechitharist and the editor of the famous Zohrab Bible – the first attempt at a critical edition of the Armenian Bible, which appeared in 1805 in Venice – brought the copy prepared in 1793 to Venice. Together with Angelo Mai (1782–1854), an Italian Cardinal and philologist, he translated the Armenian text via Italian into Latin and published it for the first time in 1818 in Milan¹⁰, shortly before the appearance of the Armenian-Latin Edition of Aucher. The Orientalist Julius Heinrich Petermann (1801–1876) prepared a new careful critical Latin translation, which appeared in 1875/1876 in the Berlin Eusebius edition of Alfred Schoene (1836–1918). The German translation of the Armenian version by Josef Karst (1871–1962) came out in 1911 in Leipzig.

We will now present some observations on the complete Armenian version of the chronicle, which is found in the above-mentioned ms. Maten. 1904. This manuscript was dated to the 12th century by Mkrtič' Awgerean (Aucher, see above), the editor of the Armenian text, and by the monk and scholar Galust Ter-Mkrtč'ean (1860–1918) who worked partly in Paris and Munich. It seems fairly certain that

⁹ Aucher 1818.

¹⁰ Mai/Zohrab 1818 and Mai 1833, 1–406 as well as in *Patrologia Graeca* 19,99–598.

the Armenian translation of the chronicle dates from the 5th century and was made directly from the Greek.

When Petermann presented a report on the 17 August 1865 in the “Gesamtsitzung der Königlich Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin” concerning the Armenian manuscripts of the chronicle, this itinérant Codex was known under a quite different name. Petermann himself was unable to access the codex, which he was familiar with under the name of the “Jerusalem Codex”; it “was ... highly desirable to examine the codex once again”, we read in his correspondence published in the “Monatsberichten der Berliner Akademie der Wissenschaften”, “this however is still missing, and was probably concealed there in Constantinople out of fear of removal. I too did not succeed in the previous autumn [i.e. 1864] in examining it there”¹¹.

Based on this report Josef Karst also wrote in the introduction to his German translation: “The journey of P[etermann] to C[onstantinople] was unsuccessful; confessional jealousy obstructed liberal sight of the Codex”¹². But neither Petermann nor Karst nor others realised that the “Jerusalem Codex” in 1864 was not “still missing” and not concealed “in Constantinople out of fear of removal”, but was in the monastic library at Etschmiadzin¹³. Its description can be found in the Etschmiadzin library catalogue printed at Tiflis in 1863 (not 1865 as given by Petermann and Karst). Here we read: “Codex no. 1684 [now ms. Maten. 1904]: Chronographical history, or Chronicon ... written 1695”¹⁴.

This date, repeated by Petermann and Karst, is not correct, for, as Theodor Mommsen (1817–1903) also noted, “the statement of the catalogue, that it was written in the year 1144 of the Armenian calendar = 1695 A. D., has reference to n. 1683 [now ms. Maten. 1725], a copy of Eusebius’ Church History, and was transferred by confusion to the following number”¹⁵. Karst himself introduces three Codices in the introduction to his German translation:

- “a Jerusalem ... which probably dates to 1294–1307 A. D.” (which he designates as G, after the owner of the manuscript Grigor, probably the Cilician Catholicos Grigor Pahlavuni, 1113, or the Catholicos Grigor IV. 1173–1190);
- an Etschmiadzin codex ... which is stored at the Etschmiadzin Metropolitan library” (which he designated as E);
- a codex produced in 1696 in Tokat which he designates with N (Nersesian).

¹¹ Petermann 1865, 459 ff.; cf. also Schöne/Petermann 1866–1875, II, XLVIII.

¹² Karst 1911, XVI.

¹³ Others have written on the “concealing” of the manuscript, cf. Rozanov 1881, 16.

¹⁴ Mommsen 1895, 322.

¹⁵ Mommsen 1895, 321.

Karst believes that the codices G (Jerusalem) and E (Ējmiacin) derive from an older archetype, while N (Tokat ms.) represents a “partial entirely neglected copy of E”¹⁶. Karst even used the 1898 photographic reproduction ordered by the “Berliner Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften” (ms. E).

By 1895 Theodor Mommsen had already compared all these manuscripts and had concluded that the chronicle was transmitted via the manuscript E (= ms. Maten. 1904) and that both N (Tokat ms. = Venice, ms. 302) and G (Jerusalem ms. = Venice, ms. 931, the copy made by Dpir in the year 1793) were copied from this¹⁷. Unlike Karst, Mommsen designates by “G” not a “Jerusalem codex”, but rather “the manuscript copy prepared ca. 1790 on behalf of the Venetian Mechitharists. Nominally from Jerusalem, it had been brought to the library of the Armenian seminary in Constantinople”; now in “Venice, in the Mechitharist monastery”, it was “carefully compared there by Petermann”¹⁸. Mommsen noted that the so-called “Jerusalem Codex” (ms. “G” in Karst) was at that time in Etschmiadzin (today in Yerevan) and is the same one that was in Tokat in 1696¹⁹.

16 Karst 1911, X and XIII. According to Karst, manuscript N was acquired in 1856 by father Nerses Sargislean for the Venetian Mechitharist library (p. XIII) and represents a copy of E. According to Mommsen, manuscript E was in Tokat in 1696 (Mommsen 1895, 335). For Mommsen, there was only one ms. (E), of which Georg’s copy (G) and the Tokat copy (N) were merely apographa. For Karst on the other hand, E and G (Jerusalem) are two different mss., independent of one another, which both derive (Karst 1911, XIII) from an earlier archetype (Urtext).

17 Mommsen 1895, 335f. Ms. no. 931 (G in Mommsen, copied by Lector Georg), in the manuscripts catalogue of the Venice Mechitharists by Čemčemean 1998, is itemized under catalogue number 1548. According to Petermann, a second copy of the chronicle arrived in Venice (probably N), in 1855, No. 302. According to the manuscript itself, it was a gift from the Archbishop of Amid, Minas, who was later the patriarch of Jerusalem, to Archbishop Sahak of Tigranakert, and it was transmitted via the “Superior of the cloister of Johannes of the Täufer, Vardapet Zacharias” through Father Nerses to Venice. The scribe of the manuscript was Michael of Tokat. According to Petermann this manuscript (Ms. N in Mommsen and Karst) is similar as regards the number of lines on the page (36), the number of pages (230) and the type of bookhand (minuscule/bolorgir), to the “Jerusalem” Codex (E in Mommsen, E + G in Karst). See Petermann 1865, 461.

18 Mommsen 1895, 321. Mommsen uses the same sigla as Karst (E, N, G); however, he argues that G is not the original Jerusalem codex, which was copied twice by Georg Dpir in 1790 and 1793 (thus Karst 1911, XIV), but rather the copy of E made by Georg Dpir (according to Karst and Mommsen), the single original manuscript, and sent to Venice (Mommsen 1895, 335).

19 Mommsen 1895, 335. Unfortunately Karst did not know of Mommsen’s valuable investigation. Both Karst and Mommsen believed that N represents a copy of E. But according to Mommsen, E is the manuscript from which G was copied. According to Mommsen, G and N are not merely “closely related” (335). They are two different copies of the same ms. E. Unlike Karst (p. XIII), Mommsen suggests that N is an older and E a more recent copy. In addition, Manandyan 1905 escaped the attention of the author of the German translation.

The exciting odyssey of the Armenian chronicle manuscript causes confusion even today. Faulty statements about the manuscripts are also found in recent research. For example, this is shown by the title page of the 1970 monograph by Molly Miller, *The Sicilian Colony Dates: Studies in Chronography*, which includes a page from the Armenian chronicle-manuscript. The manuscript's number (now 1904) and the date of the translation (5/6th century) of the chronicle are not in line with the latest research²⁰.

This means that the future edition of the Armenian text of the chronicle should be based only on the ms. Maten. 1904. Naturally the critical apparatus should also indicate next to this the complete or fragmentary copies in the different libraries. These codices are also to be used in the future edition of the Armenian text of the chronicle as auxiliary materials.

In addition, Aucher's edition was not correctly assessed by his European colleagues. The distinguished Armenian scholar Aucher/Avgerean, an outstanding connoisseur of ancient Armenian, Latin and Greek, created an edition which endured for a prolonged period of time; it contains simultaneously the original Armenian text, a Latin translation of the Armenian text and the Greek fragments (Syncellos etc). Unfortunately the introduction to the German translation does not express a corresponding appreciation. Josef Karst writes: "the first and previously only original edition, that of Aucher in 1818 ... was published, [but] cannot be considered a true critical edition, because it did not consider ... the better codex E. As a result of this, the work of Aucher suffers from ... unfortunate weaknesses ..., so that its translation by the Armenologist Saint-Martin (1791–1832) and later by Niebuhr (1776–1831) must bear the reproach of superficiality and unreliability"²¹. This unfavourable judgment of the Aucher edition is unfair since it does indeed also use codex E (= ms. Maten. No. 1904).

As regards the Latin translation, the judgements of Saint-Martin and Niebuhr²² are unconvincing. Niebuhr reviews the edition of Aucher without being able to compare the translation with the text. The Armenologist Saint-Martin, intending to surpass one of the most thorough connoisseurs of the Armenian language, who

²⁰ Miller 1970, 12. Geworg Abgaryan showed definitively that the Eusebian chronicle in the Armenian version is transmitted through a *codex unicus* (ms. Maten. 1904, formerly no. 1724 in the cloister library of Etschmiadzin; in Mommsen E, in Karst E + G), reproduced in the copies in Venice from Constantinople (2 copies by Georg Dpir, of which the most exact and diplomatic copy is numbered 931) and Tokat (N). Apparently this codex of Jerusalem arrived in Etschmiadzin after travelling via Tokat, Şamaxi and Constantinople.

²¹ Karst 1911, XIV.

²² Karst refers to the "attacks" of St. Martin 1820, 97–112 and Niebuhr 1822 and 1828, 179–304, especially 180 (Karst 1911, XIV).

had himself committed various gross sins of grammar, did not recognise that a principle of translation was at stake. The Latin translation of Zohrab-Mai was made from an Italian translation of the Armenian by Zohrab, and polished; i.e. the Italian text was wrapped in a good form of Latin, while for Aucher the language of the source text was decisive. He thus sought to represent the Armenian text as closely as possible, without consideration of the style of the Latinity. A comparison of Aucher edition with the Yerevan ms. Maten. 1904 shows only a couple of small lacunae which Karst filled in the German translation.

Now let me turn to the promised new discovery. As mentioned above, Gevorg Abgaryan discovered, about 30 years ago, that in the famous oldest paper manuscript of the Matenadaran, whose millennium was celebrated in 1981 (ms. Maten. 2679), there is a compilation from the Eusebius-chronicle. This manuscript of the cloister library of Etschmiadzin was known to German philology as ms. Etschmiadzin 102, through the description in the introduction of the chronicle of Hippolytus, found in Etschmiadzin until the removal of this library to the Yerevan Matenadaran. In Yerevan, it was then given the inventory number 2679. As well as the chronicle-compilation, this manuscript contains works of Armenian and Greek and Christian Oriental authors and church fathers, as well as Philo of Alexandria, Hippolytus, Eusebius of Caesarea, Epiphanius, Ephrem the Syrian, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Timothy of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory the Great, Eusebius of Emesa and others.

It is not known by whom and when the compilation was assembled. Based on the character of the orthographical mistakes, one can assume that the compiler used an old, and almost indecipherable manuscript. Especially distorted are the names of people and places unknown to the scribe. Nevertheless some passages that are missing in the complete version of the chronicle are found in the compilation. That these passages do genuinely belong to the Eusebian chronicle can be shown by comparison with authentic passages in the Latin translation of Jerome and in the chronicle of Samuël Anec'i (12th century). For example, Aucher supplements a section of the chronicle missing in Ms. 1904 by using the corresponding passages from the Latin translation of Hieronymus²³ and from the chronicle of Samuël Anec'i. This passage is also available in the 300 years older compilation in Ms. 2679, pp. 201ab-202a (however Josef Karst has not translated this addition of Aucher's). Therefore, at one and the same time, the gap in the Armenian version can be filled and the authenticity of the corresponding passages in Jerome is proven.

23 E.g. Eus. *Chron.* 2.62–88 Aucher; cf. Hieron. *Chron.* 20–33 Helm; Karst 1911, XL.

The compilation is not in tabular form, but rather is written consecutively. It begins with the information on the ten Chaldaean kings (in Aucher, I, 14–16) and ends with the Romans (Aucher, I, 392), whereby the compiler, excerptor or epitomator simultaneously uses both the first, narrative part of the chronicle and the second, tabular part (Chronicon-canon) for his abridged version. This summary is important to supplement the gaps in the previously known Armenian version and for the correction of some numerals, persons and place names.

Josef Karst was obliged to create a hypothesis for the defective reproduction of names occurring in the Armenian translation, which would not have been necessary if he had had the text of the new discovery available to him. In the introduction of his German translation, he wrote: “Also there is an attempt throughout in the transcription of the proper names to make the strange sounding words form in bite-sized pieces, to adjust them to the laws of sound of Armenian, to a certain extent to Armenianize it”²⁴. As an example of the Armenization he adduces the surname dictator, that is represented in Aucher edition as “Dikator” and sees therein a “dissimilation or removal of sound”²⁵. But this example emphasized by Karst is only a mistake in simple transliteration of the name, as it is given correctly (“Diktator”) in the new find. Moreover the form “Dikator” also appears in the Greek in Syncellos and Hesychios²⁶.

Furthermore, the new discovery gives us criteria to determine the date when the Armenian version of the chronicle was made, and to address the question of which language was the source from which the Armenian version was translated. Petermann gave the opinion, “that the Armenian translation of the Eusebian chronicle, and consequently also the second part of it ... without doubt comes from the 5th century A. D.”. This, he wrote, is supported by “both editors, Zohrab and Aucher, and the evidence itself from the same century. Both scholars agree that the Armenian version was translated directly from the Greek text and represented the original text usually so literally that, wherever this is lost, it can easily be recreated from the Armenian”²⁷.

Josef Karst disagreed because he dated the two first authors who quote the Eusebius-chronicle, Movsēs Xorenac‘i and Lazar P‘arpec‘i, to the 7–8th century. Therefore he was certain that “the age of the Armenian version is not much older than the VIIth century” and supposed the last decades of the 6th century as a

²⁴ Karst 1911, XL.

²⁵ Karst 1911, XL.

²⁶ For this reference I would like to thank Prof. William Adler who approached me after my presentation at the conference and placed at my disposal the “Dikator”-passages in Syncellos: cf. Sync. 284.22; 298.4; 301.22; 310.21 Mosshammer.

²⁷ Petermann 1865, 458 ff.

terminus post quem for the origin of the translation²⁸. While there are still some doubts as to the date of Movsēs Xorenac‘i (usually 5th century), no-one today doubts the date of Lazar P‘arpec‘i. This historian lived in the 5th century AD and knew the Armenian translation of the chronicle.

As for the Syriacisms, which are especially noticeable in the second part of the chronicle (in the canon), it should not be forgotten that many Syriacisms in the old Armenian translations had become rooted in and a component part of the Armenian language itself. The presence of these cannot be used as a specific feature of the translation of the chronicle²⁹.

In my opinion the new, updated Eusebius edition in the GCS series should be presented as a parallel German-Armenian edition, with the updated Armenian critical text of the chronicle and the revised translation of Josef Karst. In the critical apparatus of the Armenian text, the witness of the new discovery and the fragments in other Armenian authors should be included.

Gevorg Abgaryan located further traces of the Eusebius transmission in Armenian manuscripts: in the theologian, philosopher and educator Esayi Nēc‘i, chancellor of Glajor-university (13th century, mss. Maten. 1241, 5566), in Vanakan Vardapet (Codices Maten. 3074, 1254) as well as in a further anonymous compilation (ms. Maten. 5254), whose chronicle is ascribed to Philo of Alexandria, and which is identical to that found in ms. 2679, in addition to the new discovery of our Eusebius compilation.

This chronicle was partly published in 1929 in Leipzig and in 1944 in Yerevan as the work of the universal 7th century scholar, Ananias of Shirak³⁰. In the meantime Gevorg Abgaryan also determined that the real chronicle of Ananias, which he himself mentioned in his work on Easter and which is also referred to in later sources, is lost. The author of the work published under this name is another historian of the 7th century. This is the third early historian, after Lazar P‘arpec‘i and Movsēs Xorenac‘i, known to have used Eusebius.

The chronicle of Eusebius served Armenian authors as an original source from the 5th until the 17th century. Sometimes these authors used more complete copies of the chronicle than we have today. The codex Matenadaran 5254, mentioned above for the year 1280, states: “and after him his son Asardon – 8 years”. In the published Armenian version the name of Asardon is missing (Karst 1911, 14). Moreover, the Armenians not only used the tabular form of the Eusebian chronicle and the label “Chronographical canon”, but also, in Cilician-Armenian

²⁸ Karst 1911, XXXVII.

²⁹ See Lyonnet 1950, 111–114; Leloir 1972, 302–304; Ter-Petrosian 1981, 42–48.

³⁰ Bauer/Helm 1929, 394–396 (not in the 2nd ed. 1955); Abrahamyan 1944.

of the 12th century, they placed relevant excerpts from Eusebius at the top of each book of the Old Testament. These Eusebius excerpts should be used in the new complete edition. This was and remains the long-term program of the edition.

In the short-term we have decided, together with the editorship council of the GCS-series, to publish first of all a German-Armenian edition of the new discovery (the compilation or shorter edition of the chronicle) including the updated introduction and commentaries of Gevorg Abgaryan, in order to disseminate knowledge on the research into the new discovery.

2 The Canon Tables of Eusebius in the Armenian book art: origins of the art form “Khoran”

The principle of tabular synchronisation was applied as mentioned above in the genre of Tetraevangelia.

In the Armenian manuscript illuminations, the canon tables and the *Epistula ad Carpianum* (explaining the use of these) are shaped as tempiettos or portals introducing the recipients into a literary sacred space in order to enable them to participate in the Word/Logos of God and his good news as well as his plan of salvation, *oikonomia*. This new art form, which was highly productive in Armenian miniature painting, experienced a remarkable phase of development in shaping the Eusebian tables. The *terminus technicus* denominating this new design is Khoran (Xoran).

The tradition of naming the Gospels and other liturgical books as a memory book (Hypomnema), a place which preserves remembrance of the good deeds of God and their confession by the first witnesses, clearly highlights the in-depth comprehension of sacred and profane history as a compendium of data to be perpetuated through the generations. Not only did the historians have a responsibility to save this collective memory, but each Christian family was also called upon to continue the preservation of memory by inscribing their own family history and the important events in the life of the family in the family Bibles (dates of births, marriages and deaths). Thus they could partake in the universal history of Christianity and extend it *via* Eusebian tables. Each family history was considered as a part of the commemoration of the life of Christ³¹.

A series of Armenian Commentaries of Canon Tables (Step'anos Siwnec'i, Nersēs Šnorhali, Grigor Tat'ewac'i, Vanakan Vardapet, Grigor Xlat'ec'i) inter-

31 Drost-Abgarjan 2012, 95–110.

preted the symbolic and iconographic aspects of the canon-tables, mentioning the meanings of colours, of the floral, animal and anthropomorphic figures and motifs as well as the special symbolism of numbers³². For example, there are many interpretations on the Pythagorean number 10, a total of the numbers one to four, in the Armenian colophons which symbolize the universe in connection with the systematization of Gospels as a unity that promotes the healing and redemption of mankind. Another example is a fine metric colophon in a 14th century New Julfa Gospel created in Tatev monastery (1300 / no. 35), interpreting the symbolic character of illuminations (tempiettos) of Eusebian canon tables. The cock, for example, symbolizes the prophets who announce the light of God, Christ. The intertwined necks of the birds designate the unity of the Old and the New Testaments³³.

3 Codex Ejmiacin as a model of the Greek Gospel Book that Eusebios was commissioned to draw up by Emperor Costantine the Great

The famous Codex Ējmiacin (989, Noravank/Blēn, scribe Yovhannēs) with a luxurious ivory cover is an outstanding example of a classical Bible text and the oldest version of an Eusebian synopsis of the Gospels. It belongs to the genre of Tetraevangelia containing the four Gospels for the lections in the Armenian church service. The prototype of this Gospel is presumed to have been composed in the 5th century in the circle of Mesrop and Sahak. This Gospel is not only the oldest Armenian text of a Tetraevangelia attributed to the Holy Translators but also the oldest version of the Greek Prototype of the Gospel that was created by Eusebius in the 4th century by order of Emperor Constantine³⁴.

* * *

The reception of Eusebius in the Armenian tradition has not been systematically studied. A *Corpus Eusebianus* comparable to the *Corpus Nazianzenus* in Louvain-la-Neuve or the *Corpus Athanasianus* in Erlangen remains a *desideratum*.

³² Lazaryan 1995 and 2004.

³³ Ter-Awetisean 1970, 54–56.

³⁴ Buschhausen 2001.

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