

## THREE APOCRYPHAL FRAGMENTS FROM ARMENIAN MANUSCRIPTS

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It is my pleasure to dedicate this modest paper to James C. VanderKam, whose sustained, careful and insightful scholarship has indelibly marked the field of Second Temple Judaism and particularly of the Dead Sea Scrolls for coming generations.

In this paper I have gathered three short Armenian fragments, unidentified by source but intriguing, and provided them with brief introductions and translations. The study of the pseudepigrapha has come to a point where the reception history and influence of this literature interest scholars not only concerned with placing such texts in the first centuries B.C.E. and C.E. Medievalists have known of aspects of this reception history for many years but usually without intimate familiarity with the antique context. Now the time is ripe to combine the expertise that has grown about the pseudepigrapha of late antiquity with medieval interests. I table these fragments in the hope that colleagues and students will find them intriguing enough to follow-up.

### I. THE FALLEN ANGELS

This brief text is part of Armenian *elenchic* (“questions and answers”) literature. It is extant in a late copy, as many significant Armenian texts are. I chose to publish it both because of its inherent interest and because, by its content, it can serve as a tribute to James C. VanderKam, who has taught us all so much about fallen angels, Enoch and associated topics.

It should be remarked that this text reflects the view that the fallen angels are associated with creation and not, as in the Enoch literature, with Genesis 6. This is a common variant of the tradition found quite early and widespread later, still living on in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*.<sup>1</sup> It

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<sup>1</sup> On Milton’s sources, see J. M. Evans, *Paradise Lost and the Genesis Traditions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968). On the medieval Adam literature, see, for example,

occurs in manuscript no. M2126 of the Maštoc' Matenadaran (Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Erevan, Armenia) fols. 96r–v. I transcribed it by hand some years ago.<sup>2</sup> The manuscript is a *Miscellany* copied in the Church of S. Karapet (Prodromos) in 1697. It is written on paper and is 298 folios long. According to the *Short Catalogue*, it contains various works of potential apocryphal interest such as *The Stories of Abel, Gog and Magog, Seth, Joseph and Asenath, Mary Magdalene, The Dormition of John, The Vision of Paul, The Testament of Joseph* and a number of other patristic and associated writings.<sup>3</sup>

The subject of the fall of Satan is discussed also in the most famous of Armenian religious and theological compendia, *The Book of Questions* by Gregory of Tat'ew (1344?–1409) in section 1.3.7 but the present document has no obvious literary connection with Gregory's text.<sup>4</sup>

Հարցումն հրեշտակապետից.

Զի նչ պատճառ է որ հրեշտակք մեղանչեցին. Աստուած գմարդն փրկեաց հրեշտակն ոչ.

Պատասխանի.

Նախ վասն զի հրեշտակք յորժամ ըստեղծան յական թօթափելն. ճանաչեցին զփառսն իւրեաց եւ զԱստուած. թէ որպէս է մեծ եւ ամենայկարող յայնժամ առանց միջնորդի. յապրստամբեցան յաստուծոյ որ ոչ ով չխափեաց զնոսա.

Եւ մարդն յորժամ ըստեղծաւ ոչ ջանաչեաց զինքն. եւ իմացաւ հաստատութեան վասն այս մեղացս արտաքս է Աստուած եւ միջնորդ եղեւ օճն եւ կինն եւ խափեցին. վասն այն պարտ էր մարդոյն փրկիլ. զի բազում պատճառ ունէր խափէութեանն.

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Brian Murdoch, *Adam's Grace: Fall and Redemption in Medieval Literature* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000) and *The Apocryphal Adam and Eve in Medieval Europe: Vernacular Translations and Adaptations of the Vita Adae et Evae* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). See also M. E. Stone, "The Fall of Satan and Adam's Penance: Three Notes on the Books of Adam and Eve," *JTS* 44 (1993): 143–56; repr. in *Literature on Adam and Eve: Collected Essays* (ed. G. Anderson, Stone and J. Tromp; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 43–56; Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve* (SBLEJL 3; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992); A. A. Orlov, *From Apocalypticism to Merkabah Mysticism: Studies on the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha* (JSJSup 114; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 170 and notes there.

<sup>2</sup> The support and cooperation of Prof. Sen Arevšatyan, former Director of the Matenadaran, is here acknowledged.

<sup>3</sup> Ծ. Էգանյան, Ա. Շեյտանյան և Ք. Անտ'աբյան, Յուցակ ձեռագրաց Մաշտոցի անվան մատենադարանի (*Catalogue of Manuscripts of the Maštoc' Matenadaran*) (Erevan: Academy of Sciences, 1965), 1: col. 726.

<sup>4</sup> Grigor Tat'ewac'i, *Գիրք Հարցմանց Book of Questions* (Jerusalem: St. James, 1993), 152.

Եւ հրեշտակք ոչ զոք ունէին պատճառ ոչ զօց եւ ոչ կին. այլ ինքն ընդ ինքն ապրատամբեցաւ Աստուծոյ. երկու պատճառ վասն զի մարդկային սէռս մի մարդ էր. ըստեղծեալ թէ ոչ փրկեալ բնութիւնն եւ բազում խափանեալ էր. բայց հրեշտակաց սէռն բոլոր ըստեղծեալ էր. թէ կէսն անկաւ կէսն ճասցին վասն այն հրեշտակք ոչ փրկեցան:

Question of Archangels:

What reason is there that the angels sinned (and that) God saved the man and not the angel?

Answer:

First, because the angels, when they were created, in the blink of an eye recognized their own glory and how great God is and omnipotent. Then, without a mediator (agent), they rebelled against God, they whom no one deceived.

And man, when he was created did not recognize himself, and he discerned that, on account of this sin, God is outside the firmament. And the serpent and the woman were mediators (agents) and they deceived (him). Therefore it was necessary for man to be saved, for he had many reasons (or: causes) for the deception.

And the angels did not have anyone as an excuse, not a serpent and not a woman. But they on their own rebelled against God.

Two reasons: (first) because humankind was created as one man, if his nature (body) was not saved, many also would have been prevented (from being saved). But the angelic kind were created as one. If part fell, part remained. Because of that the angels were not saved.

## II. TWO MORAL EXAMPLES ABOUT DEPOSITS

The text appears in Ms Matendaran no. M5690 as a filler at end of fol. 105v. It is written in different hand to the body of the manuscript. The writing is in the *notrgir* style. The manuscript is of the nineteenth century; it contains a number of texts of angelological character, added to the *Commentary on Revelation* of Andrew of Cappadocia.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Ēganyan, Zeyt'unyan and Ant'abyan, *Catalogue of Manuscripts of the Maštoc' Matenadaran*, 2: col. 165. This text is not mentioned in the catalogue.

The text is poetic in character, though one wonders whether its publication can be described as a great accession to the Armenian poetic heritage. It is composed in rhyming couplets and the lines are made up of four feet of two syllables followed by one of three syllables. It seems to me most likely that it is a fragment of a longer poem, though I have not been able to identify its immediate source. The Achan story (see below) is not widely used, which indicates that these four stanzas are probably drawn from a more extensive and learned poem, which, as I have said, remains unidentified.

The first two verses refer to the story of Tobit. It is paradigmatic of the faithful preservation of a deposit. The third couplet draws the moral from the incident: to betray a trust is to forfeit life. The fourth tells the story of Achan who stole dedicated objects, a robe together with gold and silver, and was stoned, an incident related in Joshua 7. His action is the reverse of Gabael's faithfulness and his fate the proof of the moral drawn in verse three. Since the poem contains a reference to the traditions known from the books of Tobit and Joshua, it forms a small example of how such traditions penetrated into Armenian literature. The language is Classical Armenian, without any notable signs of medieval or modern dialects.

Տասն քանքարն որ էր պահեստ առ Գաբայէլ.  
ընդ սօրիայ գնաց առնուլ Սափայէլ

պարտ է լինիլ աւանդից իսկ մըտերիմ.  
եւ ոչ ասել թէ չէ այլոց. այլ իսկ իմ:

թէ աւանդից որ յանդգնեալ աստենգէ.  
գնուտ կենաց անդէն ձեռամբ իւր փակէ.

աքար առեալ զամդանն ի գաղտ յեսուայ.  
քարկոծեցաւ քարամբք ձորոյն աքովրայ:

The ten talents which were in safe-keeping with Gabael,  
Sap'ayēl went with Tobias to receive.<sup>6</sup>

One must be truly faithful with deposits  
and not say, 'It is not someone else's but mine.'

<sup>6</sup> Sap'ayel is surely corrupt for Raphael and in the Armenian spelling only the first letter is corrupt.

If someone dares make a deposit wander,  
he immediately closes the door of life with his (own) hands.

Ak'ar having taken the coat secretly from Joshua,<sup>7</sup> was stoned by rocks  
of the valley of Ak'or.

### III. TEN PLAGUES OF EGYPT

This text is published from two manuscripts, Matenadaran M605, fol. 25v and M268, fol. 150v. It is a list in the genre of lists of biblically related objects. A famous Greek example is the *de gemmis* of Epiphanius of Salamis.<sup>8</sup> This genre is quite widespread in Armenian literature and often includes lists of apocryphal nature or lists that incorporate apocryphal material. Thus, W. Lowndes Lipscomb, thirty years ago, published a list of names of Matriarchs with many connections to *Jubilees*.<sup>9</sup>

Ms M286 was copied in 1697 in the Monastery of Matthew and Andrew.<sup>10</sup> It contains a number of texts of interest to students of the apocryphal and associated literature, of which I publish one here. The other texts include: *Concerning the 12 Gems on Aaron's breastplate; The 7 Punishments of Cain; The 72 Languages; Concerning the Names of the Angels; Concerning the Praise of the Angels; The Names of the 24 Prophets; The Names of the 12 Apostles of Christ, etc.* These titles give an idea of the sort of interest that this scholastic list literature encompasses.<sup>11</sup> Ms M605 is also a seventeenth century Miscellany, including a range of texts chiefly of theological interest. It does contain *Concerning the 4 Rivers, Concerning the 72 Languages*, and some chronological and genealogical texts.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Ak'ar is corrupt for Ak'an; i.e. Achan.

<sup>8</sup> For the Armenian of this, see Stone, "An Armenian Epitome of Epiphanius' De Gemmis," *HTR* 82 (1989): 467–76.

<sup>9</sup> W. L. Lipscomb, "A Tradition from the *Book of Jubilees* in Armenian," *JJS* 29 (1978): 149–63.

<sup>10</sup> Ēganyan, Zeyt'unyan and Ant'abyan, *Մայր ցուցակ հայերէն ձեռագրաց Մաշտոցի Անուան մատենադարանի General Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts of the Maštoc' Matenadaran* (Erevan: Academy of Sciences, 1984), 1: cols. 1131–34.

<sup>11</sup> Stone, *Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha and Armenian Studies: Collected Papers* (OLA 144–145; Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 1:132–137.

<sup>12</sup> *Concerning the 4 Rivers* has been edited from a number of manuscripts by the writer and will be published in a volume in honor of Hanan Eshel. Ēganyan, *Մայր ցուցակ հայերէն ձեռագրաց Մաշտոցի անուան Մատենադարանի General*

The texts of the two manuscripts are quite similar but different enough to be printed separately. M605 uses Armenian numerals, while M286 writes out the ordinal forms. M605 commences with the attempt to mark the number of days for each plague, but eventually abandons it. It is more expansive than M286. We have put the relevant verses of Exodus into the notes to M605.

## M605

Վասն Ժ հարուածոցն եգիպտացոց ձեռամբ մովսիս:

ա Նախ զէտ արիիւն փոխեալ Զ ար:

բ Գորտն եռաց յամենայն տունս եւ տեղիս եգիպտացոցն. Գ ար:

գ Մունն շար արուրք:

դ Շանա ճանճն. Բ ար:

ե Մահ անասնացն եւ խաշանց

զ Կեղտն եւ խաղաւարին.

է Կարկուտն սաստիկ.

ը Խաւարն շաւշափելի:

ժ Մահ անդրանկացն: Ի փոքունց կարգօ. Ի խաւարագոյնս...

Concerning the ten plagues of the Egyptians at the hand of Moses:

1. First the river is turned into blood for six days.<sup>13</sup>
2. Frogs crawled in all the houses and places of the Egyptians for three days.<sup>14</sup>
3. The gnats, a number of days.<sup>15</sup>
4. The ticks for two days.<sup>16</sup>
5. Death of the beasts and sheep.<sup>17</sup>
6. Ulcers and abscesses.<sup>18</sup>
7. Terrible hail.<sup>19</sup>
8. Locusts.<sup>20</sup>

*Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts of the Maštoc' Matenadaran* (Erevan: Magalat, 2007), 3: cols. 23–34.

<sup>13</sup> Exod 7:19–24.

<sup>14</sup> Exod 8:2–14.

<sup>15</sup> Exod 8:16–17.

<sup>16</sup> Exod 8:21–24.

<sup>17</sup> Exod 9:3–6.

<sup>18</sup> Exod 9:9–11.

<sup>19</sup> Exod 9:18–26.

<sup>20</sup> Exod 10:4–15.

9. The palpable darkness.<sup>21</sup>  
 10. Death of the first-born.<sup>22</sup>

M286

fol. 150v

Այս է .Ժ. հարուածն Եգիպտացոց:

Առաջին. գետ արին փոխիլն:

Երկրորդն. գորտն:

Երրորդն. մունն:

Չորրորդն. շանաճաճն:

Ե.երրորդն. մահ անասնոցն:

Ջ.երրորդն. կեղ եւ խաղաւարտն:

Եօթներրորդն. կարկուտն:

Ութերրորդն. Մարախն:

Իններրորդն. խաւարն շօշափելի:

Տասներրորդն. մահ անդրանկացն:

These are the ten plagues of the Egyptians

The first, the changing of the river into blood.

The second, the frogs.

The third, the gnats.

The fourth, the ticks.

The fifth, death of the cattle.

The sixth, ulcers and the abscesses.

The seventh, the hail.

The eighth, the locusts.

The ninth, the palpable darkness.

The tenth, death of the first-born.

<sup>21</sup> Exod 10:21–23.

<sup>22</sup> Exod 11:5–12:29.

