

History of Science

Jacob of Karin’s “Beautifully Built City of Karin” in Armenian Manuscripts

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(Presented by Academy Member Zaza Alexidze)

ABSTRACT. The present paper deals with the personality of Armenian Author Jacob from Karin and his heritage preserved in Armenian manuscripts. He lived in one of the monasteries located in Karin (nowadays Erzurum, Turkey) in the 17th century. Among his works “Beautifully Built City of Karin” is especially interesting for us. Four copies of the manuscript containing the work are preserved at the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, in Yerevan: NN 8184, 2995, 6583, 4542. The work was published twice in Armenian, first by K. Kostanyan in Vagharshapat in 1903, and then by V. Hakobyan in the collection of “Small Chronicles” in 1951. The text was translated into French by M. Frederic Macler and published in Paris in 1919 with the commentaries by K. Kostanyan. In “Beautifully Built City of Karin”, the author tells the story of the 7th century, when the Byzantine emperor Heraclius (610-641) defeated Khosrow II, the king of Sasanian Empire, released the True Cross from the Persians and took the relics to Jerusalem through Karin and other regions. The version of this story brought by Jacob was composed and written later. That was the reason why both publishers omitted this text and did not include in their publications. The composition “Beautifully Built City of Karin” contains information not only about Karin, but also about its surrounding regions including the historical regions of Georgia such as Tao-Klarjeti (nowadays Turkey) and Imereti (west part of Georgia). © 2017 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

Key words: Karin, Erzerum, Tao-klarjeti, manuscript

Armenian historical literature gives us many important records about political-economical or socio-cultural life of Georgia. This circumstance drew attention of Georgian society for working on Armenian historical and literary monuments and awakened interest for translating the documents into Georgian. Jacob of Karin's: “Beautifully Built City of Karin, which was called Theodupolis, and later was renamed Erzurum and is called that to the current time”[1: 541-

586], contains information not only about Karin, but also about its surrounding regions, including the historical regions of Georgia such as Tao-Klarjeti (nowadays Turkey) and Imereti (west part of Georgia).

In addition to the above mentioned composition, Jacob wrote three other works: “Chronicles”, “The Story of Robbing the Virgin Mary's Monastery” and “The Biography of his Father - Georg”. In the latter work we find important records about the author.

According to these records, he was born in the pious family of priest Georg and his wife Manana in the city of Karin, in February, 1618. He had two brothers Melkon and Malakia, who were Khojas, the merchants involved in large-scale trading.

Jacob received advanced education in theology and Armenian historiography. With the support of his father, the archbishop of Karin, Jacob went to Vagharshapat, where catholicos Philip I of Aghbak (Aghbaketsi) (1633-1655) ordained him as a priest in 1641. Soon he returned to Karin and continued his activities in the city.

We can find some other details referring to the author's life in the colophons of the manuscripts kept in Matenadaran (The Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Yerevan). For instance, the colophons in manuscript N 6485 [2: 327] (which was written by Jacob) tell us that at a young age he used to write or copy manuscripts. Another colophon written by a copyist Samuel in 1666 in the manuscript N 6972 says: "I wrote... in the city of Karin with the intention of vardapet (highly educated archimandrite in the Armenian church) Sargs and also of Bishop Jacob, who is wise and educated [monk] living in this monastery, and with the help of Vardapet Peter." Armenian scholar V. Hakobyan supposes that the bishop mentioned in this colophon is Jacob of Karin, who was an abbot in Muturk abbey located in Karin in 1666.

We do not have exact records about the death of Jacob of Karin's. The latest event he was an eyewitness and later wrote about it in his "Chronicles" happened in 1672, when catholicos John came back from Istanbul to Echmiadzin. From this we can assume that in 1672 Jacob was alive; moreover, he had a busy life in that period of time.

As mentioned above, Jacob used to write and copy manuscripts. It is well-founded by colophons written in manuscript N 6485:

1) 85r: With the mercy of God do not forget the writer of this [work] priest Jacob. I wrote this in the city of Arzrum, in the monastery of Virgin Mary in

1635. Have mercy on me for my pride and mistakes, because this is the first book [made by me] [3: 62].

2) 134r: Please, while reading this have mercy on us, on [me, who am] a sinner copyist Jacob and on my parent Manana, who is passed away, on my father Ter Georg and on my brothers Melkon and Malakia" [4: 134r].

The manuscript is the collection of different theological and historical works: "The History of Alexander the Great (of Macedon)", "History of the City of Karin" written by another author, "Martyrdom of Smbat Bagratuni", "Riddles by Nerses IV the Gracious (Shnorhali)", "Geography" by Vardan Areveltsi, "Fables by the Biblical King Solomon", "The history of the city of Pghindz", etc. While there are some other records such as inscription on the door of the Bethlehem church, list of the names of cities, colophons on these fables written by Nerses IV the Gracious. The manuscript was written by Jacob and devoted to his father.

From the content of the manuscript it is clear in what kinds of compositions the author was interested. Now for the decoration of the manuscript: Some works are written in one column, while others are in two columns. Subchapters beginning with capital letters are written in red ink. In many cases a head of a man is drawn in the capital letter Z (2v, 9v, 18r), in one case in letter Y 43v. There are decorated small red crosses (28r, 35r), decorated graphemes (70r), and ornaments (77v). For the addition of omitted words the writer uses asterisks. Often used words are abbreviated. Regarding the headpiece decoration, nothing is mentioned about the decorator. That gives us cause to suppose, that even the decoration was made by Jacob [4: 134r]. While working on the manuscripts we shared the knowledge of description of Armenian and Georgian manuscripts and up-to-date principles regarding this subject [5].

The manuscript shows that Jacob of Karin had excellent education not only in theology and historiography, but also, he knew how to write and decorate a book manuscript at a high level.

Four copies of the manuscripts containing the work "Beautifully Built City of Karin" are preserved at the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, in Yerevan: NN 8184 (in 17th-18th c), 2995 (in 1752), 6583 (in 1757), 4542 (in 1826) [6: 917; 7: 327, 690].

The copies are dated by late 17th and early 19th centuries. Apparently, copying of the original manuscript started soon after it was completed. This fact shows that the composition was popular in educational-cultural centers in Karin and in its near regions.

The work "Beautifully Built City of Karin" was published twice in Armenian, first by K. Kostanyan in Vagharshapat, in 1903, and then by V. Hakobyan in the collection of "Small Chronicles" in 1951. The text was translated in French by M. Frederic Macler and published in Paris in 1919, with the commentaries to the text by K. Kostanyan [8: 1-159].

The exact headline of the composition has not survived to this day, because the beginning part of the original manuscript is lost. The headline of the text given in all four copies "Beautifully Built City of Karin, which was called Teodopolis, which was changed and at the current time is called Arzrum", is descriptive, written in the later period. The work begins with the history of building the city of Karin. This story is taken from the composition "The history of Armenia" written by Armenian historian Movses Khorenatsi, therefore, this descriptive headline was added to the composition later. The first publisher of the composition K. Kostanyan, published the text without its beginning part (building of Karin city) and with the following headline: "Description of Upper Armenia". As Kostanyan explains: "In the manuscript "The life of John Chrysostom" kept at the Matenadaran, with a different calligraphy there was written the headline and composition "A word of a priest Jacob about Upper Armenia." The author mentions the term "Upper Armenia", because the main subject of the composition is a political, geographical and socio-economical description of one of the regions of Armenia "Bardzr Hayk" (the same "Upper

Armenia", nowadays Erzurum province). It gives us records about life and activity of the inhabitants of Karin province of those days.

K. Kostanyan deserves credit for drawing others' attention to this work and for publishing the text for the first time. Nevertheless, this publication has a big defect: either in the prologue, or in the commentaries K. Kostanyan does not mention the manuscript he used for the publication. We compared the publication with the four other existing manuscripts, which showed differences. Therefore, we suppose that K. Kostanyan had another different manuscript.

V. Hakobyan, who is the second publisher of the composition, published the critical text based on all of the four manuscripts, plus the above mentioned publication. The question of the manuscript K. Kostanyan used was also unclear for V. Hakobyan, therefore, he refers the manuscript as "Kostanyan's Manuscripts."

V. Hakobyan used manuscript N 4542 as the main text for his publication because, as he explained, this text differed from the other ones by its variants and notes. According to their characteristics and similarity he classified the manuscripts in two groups: NN 8184 and 2995 are in one group and NN 6483 and "Kostanyan's manuscript" in the other group. After studying all these copies we can assume, that the text in N 4542 is more extensive than the others and often has additions in the text, which are not shown in other manuscripts. This manuscript has two copyists: priest Baghdasar and priest Abraam.

"This story was written in the city of Arzrum, by the hand of the sinner priest Baghdasar in 1758. Also it is written in Karmir Vanq (red monastery) by the [hand] of the sinner Abraam Abegha, [the one] who does not have any knowledge in theology. Please, bless us. March 12, 1826" [9: 35r].

Besides the story of the Karin city, the manuscript contains another composition "The history of the capital Tabriz" and a riddle on the last page.

Let us examine the other three manuscripts too. Manuscript N 8184 does not have a colophon; there-

fore, we do not know anything about the copyist. This collection of works consists of the following works: "The Biography of Jacob of Karin's Father - Georg", "Chronicles", "Beautifully Built City of Karin". These three compositions are written by Jacob. There are also compositions written by Michael the Syrian, "Catholicos of all Armenians from Barsegh to Hakob of Jugha". The manuscript is incomplete. There is space left for the capital letter; therefore we suppose that a decorator could not manage to complete the manuscript.

Manuscript N 2995 is copied by priest Minas and Melkon in Bayazet (nowadays Dogubayazit, in Turkey) in 1707, 1752. It was made for the lord Amir and for the priest Markos. This collection consists of the following works: "Preachments", "Beautifully Built City of Karin", "The History of Robbing the Virgin Mary's monastery in Karin" and riddles.

Manuscript N 6483 is copied by priest Baghdasar in Karin in 1757. It has the following colophon:

275r: "This history was written by the hand of the sinner priest Baghdasar in Arzrum in February 13, 1757."

This collection is formatted as a quite large volume and basically maintains historical compositions and some other chronicles or records. For instance, Michael the Syrian's colophon, the list of kings compiled by Movses from Erznka according to Movses Khorenatsi, Bagratuni kings in Cilicia, "Chronicles from Adam to Alexander the Great (of Macedon)", "Riddles by Nerses IV the Gracious (Shnorhali)", some part from the "History" by Thomas of Metsoph, collection of different historian's works compiled by Samuel Anetsi, the list of the Patriarchs of Rome, Jerusalem, Alexandria and Antioch, the list of the kings from Romans to Hebrews, Persians and Armenians; "On the twelve gems" written by Epiphanius of Salamis (Cyprus), "The life of Nerses IV the Gracious (Shnorhali)", "The religious confession of the Armenian Church", "The History of the Big City of Pharezi (Tabriz)"; "Beautifully Built City of Karin" and "The

history of the Virgin Mary's church in Karin" written by Jacob of Karin, etc. V. Hakobyan in his publication (in 1951) put paragraphs and chapters in order according to the manuscript.

After studying all the manuscripts it became clear that all of the copies have similarity with the content of the manuscript written by Jacob of Karin. For instance, the history of Alexander the Great (of Macedon), histories of the cities: Karin, Tabriz, Pghindz; martyrdoms of saints; Bagratunis; Nerses IV the Gracious (Shnorhali) and his riddles; Historical geography; fables written by the biblical king Solomon.

It is worth mentioning that two compositions of Jacob of Karin "Chronicles" and "The Biography of the Father Georg" are remained only in one copy (N 8184), while "The History of Robbing the Virgin Mary's monastery in Karin" is kept in two manuscripts (NN 2995, 6483).

There is another important detail. In the composition "Beautifully Built City of Karin" the author writes the story as happening in the 7th century, when the Byzantine emperor Heraclius (610-641) defeated Khosrow II king of Sasanian Empire, released the True Cross from the Persians, took the relics to Jerusalem through Karin and other regions. The version of this story brought by Jacob was composed in the late period. That was the reason why both publishers omitted this text and did not publish it [10: 227-251].

The fact that Jacob of Karin mainly tells us about the events he was eyewitness or studied from the very near past increases the value of the work, while the author sometimes brings some records from historians or uses Armenian folklore.

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მეცნიერების ისტორია

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၈. နေဂြာက်စီအဖွဲ့

საქართველოს განათლებისა და მეცნიერების სამინისტრო, კორპუსი კეცილიძის ხელნაწერთა ეროვნული ცენტრი, თბილისი, საქართველო

(წარმოდგენილია აკადემიის წევრის ბ. ალექსიძის მიერ)

წინამდებარე ნაშრომში განხილულია მე-17 საუკუნის სომქით ავტორის იაკობ კარინელის ვინაობა და მისი მეტკვიდრეობა, რაც შემოგვიახვა სომხურმა ხელნაწერებმა. იაკობი ცხოვრობდა კარინის (დღვევანდელი არზრუმი) ერთ-ერთ მონასტერში, მე-17 საუკუნეში. მისი თხზულებებიდან ჩვენთვის განსაკუთრებით საინტერესოა „ეპთილად ნაგები ქალაქი კარინი“, რომელიც ინფორმაციას გვაწვდის არა მხოლოდ კარინის, არამედ მეზობელი რუგიონების შესახებაც. მათ შორის არის საქართველოს ისტორიული რეგიონი ტაო-კლარჯეთი (დღესდღეობით თურქეთი) და იმერეთი. აღნიშვნული ტექსტის შემცველი ოთხი ხელნაწერი ინახება ერუვნის მესრობი მაშტოცის სახელობის ძეველ ხელნაწერთა ინსტიტუტში, მატერალარანში NN: 8184, 2995, 6583, 4542. თხზულება პირველად გამოიცა 1903 წელს ვალარშაპატში კ-კონსტანიანცის მიერ, მეორედ კი მისი კრიტიკულად დადგენილი ტექსტი გამოსცა კ. პაკობიანმა „მცირე ქრონიკების“ კრებულში 1951 წელს. 1919 წელს, პარიზში იმავე კ. კონსტანიანცმა მ. ფრედერიკ მაკლერის დახმარებით ტექსტი ფრანგულადაც გამოსცა. ნაწარმოებში ავტორი მოგვითხრობს მე-7 საუკუნის ისტორიას, რომელიც ბიზანტიის კეიისრის პერაკლეს (610-641 წწ.). მიერ სპარსეთის მეფის ხოსრო II-გან წმ. ჯვრის დახსნისა და სომხეთის გავლით ჯვრის იერუსალიმში მიტანის ტრადიციას უკავშირდება. აღნიშვნული ამბის გამოქვეყნებას ორივე გამომცემელმა თავი აარიდა, რადგან ტექსტი რედაქციულად მოგვიანო პერიოდს განეკუთვნებოდა.

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