

Philology

Mashtots in the Armenian Manuscripts

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ABSTRACT. The work by Koriwn (5th c.) “The Life of Mashtots” reached us in later manuscripts with some changes. The material, which preserves some information about Mashtots, can be divided into two parts - ecclesiastical and historical manuscripts. In the Liturgical collections (Lectionaries, Synaxarions, Menologiums, hymnographic collections (Treasures), Homiliaries) Mashtots is mentioned with Catholicos Sahak and his activity as a translator is highlighted. In the historical works many different details can be found. By comparing and analyzing Koriwn’s long and short versions a number of common and distinctive details are revealed. Despite the actual differences between long and short versions, in both works Mashtots’s role is properly represented as the preacher of Christianity and the inventor of the alphabets. However, in this case Mashtots’s appearance in the arena and his merit in front of Armenian Nation is associated with the name of Catholicos Sahak. In both versions Mashtots is the fellow of Catholicos Sahak Partev and Sahak’s role in the spread of literacy is emphasized. The differences in Koriwn’s work have been gradually changing during the centuries. If in the manuscripts of the 14th century (Mat. Mat. 3787, Mat. 3797) Mashtots is only a priest and a preacher of Christianity, in the 17th and later centuries (Mat. 2639), his role increased and nowadays Mashtots is considered to be a preacher of Christianity. There is the third group of manuscripts where Mashtots’s role is limited; he is considered only as the reformer of Armenian alphabet. © 2017 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

Key words: Koriwn, Mashtots, Georgian alphabet

Armenian figure Mashtots’s life and literary activities were described by his pupil Koriwn (Armenian author in the 5th c.). In this work Koriwn particularly highlights Mashtots’s merit as a preacher of Christianity and inventor of Armenian, Georgian and Albanian alphabets. In the Armenian literature the narration of Koriwn is accepted as the most important and reliable source and most of Armenian scholars share this idea. They agree to the consideration proposed by Koriwn - eyewitness and the youngest student of Mashtots.

According to the sources, Mashtots (approx. 362-440) lived and spent his youth in the acute political conditions of Armenian Kingdom ruled by Arsacid dynasty. In 387 this process was finally over and Armenia was divided between the Byzantine and Sassanid Empires. The Kingdom of Great Armenia ceased to exist independently. Situation was hard and inconsolable for Armenian national culture and identity. Armenians had no alphabet and literature of their own. In this situation only the Armenian Apostolic Church had the strongest and inviolable force

to keep spiritual independence. Catholicos Sahak, a son of Catholicos Nerses I (353-373), who was the last Gregorian Patriarch, foresaw this factor. He gathered a group of progressive people around him and together with them he tried to raise the Armenians spiritually. In this case Mashtots became Sahak's companion. As a result of Sahak's and Mashtots's educational and patriotic activities, a spiritual renaissance, a revival of intellectual era began in Armenia.

Koriwn's work "The Life of Mashtots" reached us in later manuscripts with some changes. This is evident from the editorial differences between the manuscripts containing the text of Koriwn.

Our research aims to show what kind of Armenian manuscripts are preserved and from what time the information about Mashtots is kept in above-mentioned sources. We will try to present the data about Mashtots and his role in the political and intellectual life of Armenian people.

The material, which includes some information about Mashtots, can be divided into two parts - ecclesiastical and historical manuscripts. Lectionaries, Synaxarions, Menologiums, Treasures (hymnographic collections), Homiliaries are considered as ecclesiastical manuscripts.

As it is known, the ancient Lectionary is a Jerusalem Liturgical Year-book that contains biblical readings and hymns appointed for a given day or occasion during the whole year. The ancient Lectionary did not include the National Saints' commemoration days. In the late Liturgical Year-books Mashtots's commemoration is closely related to Catholicos Sahak.

The Armenian Lectionary (Mat.832, copied in 1154) is preserved at the depositories of Matenadaran – The Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Yerevan. Manuscript Mat.832 is important and distinguished from the previous period of liturgical collections by the fact that this Lectionary includes the National Armenian Saints' holidays.

In this Lectionary (Mat.832) the Day of Mashtots is celebrated on November 25th with Catholicos Sahak and the other translators. The holiday is known as

"Celebration of Sahak and Mesrop and other translators" [1: 519-520]. Late period Armenian Lectionaries (Mat.936 (12th -13th c.); Mat.979 (copied in 1286); Mat.982 (copied in 1460) are preserved in Matenadaran. Like Mat.832 Lectionary, aforesaid manuscripts contain the commemorations of the Armenian figures, including the celebration of translators on November 25th. These Lectionaries with their nature and structure are close to the Armenian Synaxarions.

The Day of Mashtots with Catholicos Sahak and the other translators is celebrated also in the Armenian Treasures (collections of hymnography works): Saint Translators Sahak's and Mesrop's chant] The Armenian Treasures are kept in Matenadaran and they are dated to 15th -18th centuries (Mat.474 (1474); Mat. 428 (1489); Mat. 423 (1742).

Catholicos Sahak and Mashtots, as translators are mentioned in the Armenian Menologium preserved in the Medieval Armenian Manuscripts at the University of California: Fol. 50v. Hori 8 (September 17): Another feast of the Holy Cross, and Commemoration of the Holy Translators Sahak and Mesrop and their disciples (Arm. MS 18. Menologium, 17th c.); Fols. 20v-24. Canticles of the Holy Translators Sahak and Mesrop (Arm. MS 62. Collection of Canticles, 17th c.) [2].

In addition, it is very interesting how Mashtots is represented in the Armenian Synaxarions. From the 13th c. the national Synaxarion was used in Armenian reality. There are four versions of Armenian Synaxarion collections: The Armenian Synaxarion of Ter Israel (died 1249 AC.); The Armenian Synaxarion of Kirakos Arevelts'i (c. 1201/1203 -1271); The Armenian Synaxarion of Grigor Anavarzets'i (1293-1307 AD.); The Armenian Synaxarion of Grigor Khlatets'i (1349 - 1425 AD).

Unlike the other ecclesiastical collections, Armenian Synaxarions include the days of Armenian martyrs and the readings concerning these days - their Synaxarion lives. According to the Synaxarions, the Day of Mashtots was celebrated three times a year:

19th of February (the day of Mashtots's death), 17th of September (it is a date of Catholicos Sahak's death), 25th of November (the church celebrates the holiday of Sahak, Mashtots, the other translators and the creation of Armenian Alphabet) [3].

It is interesting that the compilers of the Armenian Synaxarions, who used the lives of Armenian saints preserved in the Homiliaries, gave advantage to "The history of Armenia" by Movses Khorenats'i for Mashtots's Synaxarion life and they did not use the saint's hagiographical work – Koriwn's "The life of Mashtots" as a source [4: 291-312].

The material shows that in the ecclesiastical manuscripts the so-called Liturgical collections the activities of Mashtots as a translator are highlighted and his merit as the inventor of the alphabets has a secondary significance.

In another group of manuscripts, we unite the historical collections where Koriwn's work "The Life of Mashtots" is kept. The oldest and complete text of Koriwn's work is considered to be manuscript 2639, which is preserved in Matenadaran and was copied in Baghesh, in Amrdol Monastery in 1672. Scribes are: Poghos Gavrets'i (4v-359r), Grigor Erets'i (364r-548r), Anonymous (549r-562r); binder of manuscript is Sahak Vanets'i, donator - Vardan Baghishets'i; manuscript 2639 is written in bolorgir script.

By its nature, the manuscript is a collection of historical works. The collection contains the Letter of Concord, Agatangelos' and Movses Khorenats'i's Histories, The life of St. Nerses, The Vision of Sahak and the history of Yeghishe (scribe – Poghos Gavrets'i), the Histories of Ghazar Parpets'i and Sebeos (scribe – Grigor Erets'i). The last work in this manuscript is Koriwn's "The Life of Mashtots" (p. 549-562), scribe is unknown. By its technical description Koriwn's work is different from the previous compositions.

In A. Matevosyan's opinion, Koriwn's work should have been a part of the other manuscript and then have been combined to the collection (Mat.2639); it is obvious from the binding of the manu-

script. The work ends on page 562r and it has very interesting colophon: "Remember the brave Vardan Vardapet (Rabunapet) and before Christ say mercy also for poor scribe".

A. Matevosyan believes that Koriwn's work was added to the manuscript (Mat.2639) by the order of Vardan Baghishets'i. This should have happened after 1675 until Vardan's death (1703 sec.).

It is difficult to say in which manuscript Koriwn's work was inserted and when it was copied. One thing is clear: nowadays Koriwn's work "The Life of Mashtots" preserved in this manuscript (Mat.2639) is the most complete text. M. Abeghyan used Mat.2639 manuscript in his critical publication. Apart from this, he used the manuscripts (1891 (1774), 131 (18th c.) 3143 (1827-1828), 3787 (1347-1350), 3797 (1347) kept in Matenadaran and the publications in Venice (1894) and Tbilisi (1913).

These manuscripts are considered as the long version of Koriwn's work.

The oldest manuscript 178 of Koriwn's work so called short version is preserved at the National Library of France. The manuscript is a festival collection, and it is written by Poghos in the 12th century. The Manuscript is not complete and does not have main colophon. According to the additional colophons it is obvious that Poghos copied the manuscript for himself and he had purpose to create a festive collection with rich content. For this reason, he found lives and martyrdoms and added them to this collection [5].

Besides the collection, the Latin translation of Koriwn's work (Latin 2083) is kept at the National library of France. The work was translated by Voskan Yerevants'i (till 1644).

Nowadays, in the scholarly literature it is considered that the long version is Koriwn's true work (N. Biuzandats'i, Gr. Khalatyan, M. Abeghyan, Iv. Javakhishvili) and short version is created later in the 11th-12th centuries [6].

In the Armenian historiography, existending data about Mashtots in some cases follows the long ver-

sion (Ghazar Parpets'i) [7: 351-369], but in some cases – the short one (Movses Khorenats'i).

By comparing and analyzing Koriwn's long and short versions a number of common and distinctive details are revealed. The authors of both versions have common aim – to present Mashtots as the preacher of Christianity and the inventor of Armenian, Georgian and Albanian alphabets. It is interesting that in these two versions exactly this main point is represented differently: In the long version Mashtots himself is the creator of the Armenian letters, but according to the short version the invention of the Armenian alphabet is attributed to the divine vision.

As for Mashtots' travelling to Georgia and Albania and creation the alphabets for their languages is narrated differently: In the long version the story is extensively described, there are mentioned the names of Georgian kings and Bishops who met Mashtots and helped him to realize his aim. In the short edition this story is briefly narrated. Unlike the long version, the short one does not suggest the names of Georgian Kings, Bishops and the assisting people. We have such impression that the fact of the creation of Georgian and Albanian alphabets is not so important for the author of the short version. Generally, the short version does not mean to shorten facts, by size it is almost similar to the longer version, in most cases the difference is revealed to express the information in a different way. The author of the short version is familiar with Koriwn's long version; it is obvious from the common facts: sometimes the narration exactly follows the long text, so that vocabulary, even biblical quotations are identical.

Despite the actual differences between long and short versions, in both works Mashtots's role is properly represented, as the preacher of Christianity and the inventor of the alphabets. However, in this case Mashtots's appearance in the arena and his merit in front of Armenian Nation is associated with the name of Catholicos Sahak. In both versions Mashtots is

the fellow of Catholicos Sahak Partev and Sahak's role in the spread of literacy is emphasized.

According to the work, the main goal of the creation of the Armenian alphabet was to translate Bible and in this way spread Christianity among the Armenian people. It is interesting that Armenian historians Ghazar Parpets'i, Movses Khorenats'i and also Mashtots's biographer Koriwn represent Catholicos Sahak as main figure in this affair. Finally, Koriwn who has a main purpose to describe the life of Mashtots and glorify him, Mashtots's death is narrated in connection with the story of Catholicos Sahak's death.

Two manuscripts (Mat.3787 (1347-1350); Mat.3797 (1347) are kept in Matenadaran. Both are especially interesting for us. The two manuscripts are festival collections and they are very important according to source criticism. M. Abeghyan used the manuscripts as the versions and did not grant them the independent value.

In Festive collections, the life of Mashtots has such headline: "Meheki 13, the history of Saint Mesrob Vardapet's life, narrated by St. Koriwn"; and "For the death of St. Mesrop".

"The Life of Mashtots" preserved in those collections literally follows to the long version of Koriwn's work, the difference is reflected in the narrative after the creation of Armenian alphabet, the author continues the narration about Mashtots's preaching activity and ends the history with the death of Catholicos Sahak and Mashtots. Nothing is mentioned about the creation of Georgian and Albanian alphabets by Mashtots. These "Lives" are free of the excessive facts and biblical stories. By its nature, it can be said, these are true hagiographical works.

In addition to the ecclesiastical and historical works, there are manuscripts kept in Matenadaran in which Mashtots is represented not as the inventor of the Armenian alphabet, but as the reformer of existing alphabet. These manuscripts are the collections which include variety of works. In the manuscript Mat.594 (dated to the 17th c.) are written the

letters which Mashtots added to the Armenian alphabet: “These vowels were found by Mesrop Translator... A, E, , Յ, I, O, W”. The collection Mat.599 is copied in Khlat Monastery in 1413. The addition of vowels by Mashtots is mentioned also: “A, E, , Յ, I, O, W – these letters were added by Great Vardapet Mesrop”. Both, manuscript Mat.2618 (17th c.) and Manuscript Mat.599, give explanation about the Armenian letters – the addition of vowels by Mashtots: “Who invented the Armenian alphabet? – When Catholicos of Armenia St. Sahak spread the Armenian literacy”.

The data of manuscripts show that on the one hand, there are the Liturgical collections in which Mashtots is mentioned with Catholicos Sahak and his activity is highlighted as a translator. On the other hand, in the historical collections Mashtots is represented as the preacher of Christianity and the inventor of Armenian, Georgian and Albanian alphabets.

In the historical works, with a lot of variety of materials, many different details may be found. These differences were gradually changing during the centuries. If in the manuscripts of the 14th century Mashtots is only a priest and a preacher of Christianity, in the 17th and later centuries, his role is increased and nowadays Mashtots is considered not only a preacher of Christianity, but also the inventor of Armenian, Georgian and Albanian alphabets. According to the data of the third group of manuscripts, Mashtots’s role is limited, he is considered only as the reformer of Armenian alphabet.

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ფილოლოგია

მამტოცი სომხურ ხელნაწერებში

ხ. გაფრინდაშვილი

კორნელი კეკელიძის სახელობის ხელნაწერთა ეროვნული ცენტრი, საქართველოს განათლებისა და მეცნიერების სამინისტრო, თბილისი, საქართველო

(წარმოდგენილია აკადემიის წევრის ზ. ალექსიძის მიერ)

კორიუნის (V ს.) თხზულებამ „მამტოცის ცხოვრება“ გვიანდელი ხელნაწერებით და გარკვეული ცვლილებებით მოადწია ჩვენამდე. მამტოცის შესახებ არსებული მასალა იყოფა საეკლესიო და საისტორიო ხასიათის ხელნაწერებად. საეკლესიო ხასიათის ლიტურგიკულ კრებულებში (ლექციონარი, სვინაქსარი, თვენი, საუნჯე, მრავალთავი) მამტოცი მოიხსენიება საპაპ კათალიკოსთან ერთად და ყურადღება მის მთარგმნელობით საქმიანობაზეა გამახვილებული. საისტორიო თემატიკის ხელნაწერები ერთმანეთისაგან განსხვავებულ ცნობებს გვაწვდიან. კორიუნის თხზულების ვრცელი და მოკლე რედაქციების შედარებამ და ანალიზმა მსგავსი და განსხვავებული დეტალები გამოავლინა.

მიუხედავად რედაქციებს შორის არსებული ფაქტობრივი განსხვავებებისა, ორივე ნაშრომში მამტოცი წარმოდგენილია ქრისტიანობის მქადაგებლად და ანბანების შემქმნელად. ამ შემთხვევაშიც მამტოცის გამოსვლა სამოღვაწეო ასპარეზზე და მისი დეაწლი სომეხი ხალხის წინაშე საპაპო კათალიკოსთანაა დაკავშირებული. ორივე რედაქციაში მამტოცი საპაპოს თანამოღვაწედ გვევლინება და აქცენტები საპაპოს ლიტერატურულ საქმიანობაზეა გაკეთებული. კორიუნის ნაწარმოები საუკუნეების მანძილზე იცვლებოდა. თუ XIV საუკუნის ხელნაწერებში მამტოცი მხოლოდ მოძღვარი და ქრისტიანობის მქადაგებელია, XVII და შემდგომ საუკუნეებში მისი როლი საკმაოდ იზრდება და იგი ითვლება ქრისტიანობის გამავრცელებლად. ხელნაწერების მესამე ჯგუფის მონაცემთა მიხედვით კი, მამტოცის როლი მხოლოდ სომხური ანბანის რეფორმატორობით შემოიფარგლება.

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