THE GREEK INSCRIPTION FROM GARNI (ARMENIA) AND KING TIRIDATES THE GREAT

Part II. CRITICAL EDITION

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After showing in the first part of this article that the Greek inscription from the Garni fortress must be attributed to the reign of Tiridates III and not to that of Tiridates I, we provide here the announced new and full critical edition of the text.

Keywords: Armenia, Garni, Tiridates the Great, Christianization, Agathangelos, Moses Khorenatsi

ГРЕЧЕСКАЯ НАДПИСЬ ИЗ ГАРНИ (АРМЕНИЯ) И ЦАРЬ ТИРИДАТ ВЕЛИКИЙ

Часть II. КРИТИЧЕСКОЕ ИЗДАНИЕ

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Данная статья продолжает опубликованное в предыдущем номере журнала исследование, где было продемонстрировано, что греческая надпись из Гарни должна быть отнесена к царствованию Тиридата III, а не Тиридата I. В этой, второй части предлагается новое полное комментированное издание надписи.

Ключевые слова: Армения, Гарни, Тиридат Великий, христианизация, Агафангел, Мовсес Хоренаци

READING AND RESTORING THE TEXT OF THE GARNI INSCRIPTION

The right part of the block being missing, all ends of lines must be restored. The lines referred to below are those of our own text (see page 907).

Lines 1–2: The extreme diversity of the restorations proposed by the various editors for the first two lines (linked to the beginning of line 3 by some editors) illustrates the perplexity the question has aroused. After the name of the king, the following restorations have been proposed:

Lisitsyan 1945a: μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας ἀνα[ξί]|ως δεσπότης; Manandyan 1946 and 1951: [βασιλεὺς] | Μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας, ἀνά[σσων]; Abramyan 1947: [ὁ μέγας] | μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας, ἀνα[κτος]; Trever 1949 and 1953: [ὁ μέγας] | μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας, ἀνά[κτωρ]; Moretti 1955: [βασιλεὺς] | μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας, ἀνα[δειχθείς] or ἀνα[γορευθείς]; Sarkisyan 1956 and 1960, 67–69 (idem Muradyan 1981): [βασιλεὺς] | μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας, ANA[......]; Elnitsky 1958: [βασιλεὺς] | μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας ANA[......], suggesting ἀνά[ρχ]|ως or ἀνά[πλε]|ως in comm.; Bartikyan 1965: [βασιλεὺς] | μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας ἀνά[κτορον]; Feydit 1969 (idem Chaumont 1969 and Ananyan 1994): [Αὐρ]ήλιος Τιριδάτης [...] τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας ἀνα[μφισβητήτ]|ως; Vinogradov 1990 (Canali de Rossi 2004): Ἥλιος Τιριδάτης [ὁ μέγας βασιλεὺς] | μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας ἀνα[χθείσης τῆς πόλε]|ως δεσπότης.

At the end of line 2, some scholars have restored an adverb, ἀνα[ξί|ως], ἀνά[ρχ]|ως, ἀνά[πλε]|ως, or ἀνα[μφισβητήτ]|ως (see respectively Lisitsyan, Elnitsky, Feydit with Chaumont and Ananyan). Others have preferred to restore a substantive, such as ἀνα[κτος] (Abramyan), ἀνά[κτωρ] (Trever), or ἀνά[κτορον] (Bartikyan): doing so, like Lisitsyan with δεσπότης, they were dispensed of restoring βασιλεύς line 1. A third solution has been to restore a participle, such as the present participle ἀνά[σσων] (Manandyan), or an aorist participle, such as ἀνα[δειχθείς] or ἀνα[γορευθείς] (Moretti) or ἀνα[χθείσης τῆς πόλε]|ως (Vinogradov and Canali de Rossi). The solution that was chosen inevitably impacted the understanding of the link with line 3. The scholars who adopted the solution of an adverb saw in /ως/ at the beginning of line 3 the final syllable of this adverb. Vinogradov and Canali de Rossi thought of the final syllable of a substantive. The other scholars saw there the conjunction ὡς. The restoration of the end of line 2 also directly impacted the length of the restorations suggested for the other lines.

Some of the solutions proposed were grammatically impossible and made poor sense. The best suggestion was that of Moretti, who remarked that before the aorist in a personal mode (αἴκτισεν) an aorist participle is expected: hence his suggestions of ἀνα[δειχθείς] or ἀνα[γορευθείς], which, as he rightly noticed, provided a gauge for the length of the lines of the inscription. But given that the sense of Moretti's restorations was not fully convincing, it opened the possibility for Vinogradov to suggest a much longer new restoration, which however is poor Greek.

Although the verbs he suggested were unconvincing, Moretti's intuition to restore a nominative aorist participle was the right one. There is one verb that fits here perfectly, and all the more so than the suggestion finds a large number of parallels: ἀναστρέφομαι. In the active mode, the verb may have a concrete meaning: to turn upside down, to come back. But in the passive, it refers to the way one conducts oneself. The best guide here is Bauer's *GELNT*, who s.v. ἀναστροφή indicates: "way of life, conduct, behavior," and s.v. ἀναστρέφω, 2. pass.: "always with the kind of behavior more exactly described," that is with an adverb, a prepositional phrase or both. The *LSJ* and *DGE* II.5 give examples from the Classical to the imperial period of constructions with ὡς, ὥσπερ, οὑτωσί, and also with a series of adverbial turns that define the behavior in question[1]. Bauer's *GELNT* gives besides a long series of occurrences, including in Jewish and Christian writers.

The verb also appears frequently in the language of inscriptions, especially in decrees and dedications, from all regions of the Greek world, both in the Hellenistic and imperial periods, used with a personal mode (85 matches in 82 texts for the aorist only in the *PHI* database), with the present participle (68 matches in 63 texts *PHI*) and the aorist participle (78 matches in 73 texts *PHI*). Thus, after 186 BCE, an honorific decree from Camiros (Rhodes) passed by the local people for one of their fellow citizens proclaimed: ἔν τε τᾶι ἱεροποΐαι καλῶς καὶ | φιλοδόξως ἀνεστράφη καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀρχαῖς συμφε|ρόντως Καμιρεῦσι, "in the office of *hieropoios*, he behaved well and with honor, and in the other magistracies in the interest of the Camireans[2]." After 188 BCE, the people of Apollonia Salbake, in Caria, honored one of their fellow citizens, who had participated in various embassies and ἐμ πάσαις δεόντως ἀναστραφείς, "in all of them (had) behaved suitably[3]." In 126/7 CE, in Sardis, the honorific dedication for the priestess Cl. Polla Quintilla thanked her for her merits, ἀναστρα|φεῖσαν πρός τε τὴν θεὸν εὐσεβῶς | καὶ πρὸς τὴν κατοικίαν φιλοτεί|μως, "for having behaved with piety towards the goddess and with generosity towards the village[4]." The examples could be multiplied.

Xenophon (*Anabasis* 2. 5. 14) even provides an exact parallel to the Garni inscription. In the speech that, according to Xenophon, he delivered to Tissaphernes in the aftermath of Cunaxa (401 BCE), Clearchos commented on what it meant to "behave like a master": "Again, take those who dwell around you: if you chose to be a friend to any, you could be the greatest possible friend, while if any were to annoy you, you could play the part of master over them in case you had us for supporters (ὡς δεσπότης ἂν ἀναστρέφοιο ἔχων ἡμᾶς ὑπηρέτας), for we should serve you, not merely for the sake of pay, but also out of the gratitude that we should feel, and rightly feel, toward you, the man who had saved us" (tr. Loeb). Thus, ὡς δεσπότης ἀναστρέφομαι meant having the ability to give orders: this applied perfectly to Tiridates at Garni, who had given the order to build the strong fortress that fitted the great king he wanted to be.

This parallel provides the final argument to show that the correct restoration at the end of line 2 is the nominative participle aorist passive with active sense ἀνα[στραφείς].

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[1] Epict. *Ench*. 29. 3: ὡς τὰ παιδία; Plu. *Fab*. 9. 4: ὥσπερ ἰδιώτης; Arist. *EN* 2. 1. 7 1103b 20: οἳ μὲν ἐκ τοῦ οὑτωσὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς, etc.
[2] *Tit. Camirenses* 110 (Badoud 2015, 369−372, no. 21), l. 7−9.
[3] Robert, *Carie*, 303−312, no. 167, l. 16.
[4] *I. Sardis* I, 7.1 52 I, l. 5−8.

It is highly unlikely that another word was engraved afterwards. It follows, that, as indicated by Moretti, this restoration provides us the surest indication for the length of the lines, which was thus inevitably around 26 letters. Accordingly, at the end of line 1 one can only restore [ὁ βασιλεύς], with a line of 23 letters, not [ὁ μέγας βασιλεύς], with a line of 30 letters, for the letters in line 1 are wider than in the other lines. On this, there is no parallel with the inscription of Aparan, which has Τιριδάτης [ὁ] | μέγας μεγάλ[ης] | Ἀρμενίας βα[σι]λεύς. But in his Rome inscription King Pakoros also did not use the title μέγας[5]. We must admit that the titulature of King Tiridates could vary from one document to the other.

Line 3: Lisitsyan 1945a ναό[ν]; Manandyan 1946: να[όν]; Trever 1949: ἀγ[ροικίαν]; Abramyan 1947: ναί[διον]; Manandyan 1951: να[ΐσκον]; Trever 1953: ἀγ[άρακον]; Sarkisyan 1956 and 1960, 67−69: Ἀγ[......]; Elnitsky 1958: Ναι[άδι]; Bartikyan 1965 (idem Feydit 1969; Chaumont 1969): AI[......]; Muradyan 1981: αἱ[κ θεμελίων]; Ananyan 1994: ΝΑΙ[ΔΙΟΝΤΕ]; Vinogradov 1990 (Canali de Rossi 2004): αἱ[αυτοῦ ἀδελφῇ].

The restorations ναό[ν], ναί[διον, and να[ΐσκον] were suggested by the presence of the temple of Garni, to which, it was thought, this text was to be linked. Trever's ἀγ[ροικίαν], "country estate", then ἀγ[άρακον], based on the Armenian word *agarak*, more or less with the same meaning, were solutions that are challenging to accept. The same could be said of Elnitsky's Ναι[άδι], supposedly a reference to the goddess Naias, "queen" being here the *epiclesis* of the goddess. Vinogradov did not justify his restoration αἱ[αυτοῦ ἀδελφῇ]. In his logic that the king of the inscription was Tiridates I, he may have thought of a parallel with Hellenistic Seleucid and Ptolemaic queens, or with the Artaxiad queen of Armenia Erato, who was thought to have initially reigned with her brother-husband Tigranes IV[6]. But no source seems to mention that Tiridates I spoused his sister. Furthermore, we know that the king of the inscription was Tiridates III. The sister of Tiridates III, Khosrovidukht, played a very important role along her brother in the Christianization of Armenia. But this king had a legitimate wife, Ashkhen. It was her, and nobody else, who deserved to be called a queen[7]. There is thus no reason to see here a reference to the king's sister. Besides, Vinogradov rejected Muradyan's αἱ[κ θεμελίων] with the argument that αι for ε "is to be found always in open syllables". In fact, we have examples of αἱκ as preposition[8]. With a line of 30 letters, the restoration αἱ[κ θεμελίων] might seem to make sense in the context, although most of the time the turn accompanies the verbs κατασκευάζω or ἐπισκευάζω and is barely attested with κτίζω[9].

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[5] *IGUR* 415; *I. Estremo Oriente* 22; on this text, see in the previous part of the article.

[6] For Erato, see Chaumont 1976, 76−77; Bedoukian 1978, 38−39; Garsoïan 1997, 61−62. Note however that according to Arakelian and Yenadian (2021) Erato did not marry her brother.

[7] Agathangelos (Aa 766, 791, 817, 800 and 832: Thomson 1976) presents explicitly Ashkhen as Tiridates' spouse and queen, and Khosrovidukht as his sister, the latter being furthermore defined as a princess in 800 and 832.

[8] All occurrences from Thessalonike: *IG* X.2 1493 (2nd-3rd c. CE); *ibid.* 857/858 (2nd−3rd c. CE); *ibid.* 779 (4th c. CE?).

[9] Restoration [ἔκ]τισαν in Bean, Mitford 1970, 29, no. 11, l. 3, for a tower (early Antonine period); the three other occurrences are from the early Byzantine periods: *IGLS* 2 (Syrian Chalkidike), 334 (Christian period) and 348−349 (6th c.).

However, even αἱ[κ θεμελίων] cannot be accepted for this would leave βασιλίσα without the article. One should rather read αἱ[αυτῷ καὶ τῇ] | βασιλίσα. The king made the construction for himself and for the queen, which makes perfect sense. The restoration finds hundreds of parallels in dedicatory funerary inscriptions in formulas such as ἐαυτῷ καὶ τῇ συμβίῳ or ἐαυτῷ καὶ τῇ γυναικί[10]. Despite the difference of social rank, the formula applied also well to the royal couple of Armenia. The line has 30 letters (including a *vacat*), close to the previously defined template and line 3 has smaller letters than the other ones[11].

Line 4: The early restorations of Lisistyan 1945a and Manandyan 1946 and 1951 did not hold sway long. Trever (1949 and 1953) rightly recognized here the beginning of the name of a building, and she restored κάσ[τρον]. She was followed by Bartikyan 1965, Feydit 1965, Chaumont 1969 and Ananyan 1994. Independently from one another, Moretti 1955, Elnitsky 1958 (referring to the *castellum Gorneas* of Tacitus 12. 45. 3), as well as Sarkisyan 1956 and 1960, 67–69, suggested κάσ[τελλον]. They were followed by Muradyan 1981, Vinogradov 1990 (who added κάσ[τελλον τοῦτον?], to fit with the long lines he suggested; he was followed by Canali de Rossi 2004), and Kettenhofen 1995.

Feydit 1969 accepted the restoration τὸν ἀνίκητον κάσ[τρον], but rightly observed that it supposed to assume a solecism (κάστρον is neuter). In fact, we do not need this hypothesis. Garni was a fortress, κάστελλος, not a camp, κάστρον. Moreover, building on Moretti's suggestion to check epigraphic usage, one can observe that, beyond the title μήτηρ κάστρων applied to Roman empresses, κάστρον is commonly found only in post-imperial times[12]. By contrast, κάστελλος appears already in Shapur's Ka'ba-i Zarduŝt's victory inscription from Naqŝ-e Rostam of 260–262 CE[13]. The restoration κάσ[τελλον] is certain.

Line 5: Like with line 4, the earliest readings (Lisitsyan 1945a; 1945b, Manandyan 1946; 1951) were justifiably soon set aside. Trever 1949 and 1953, followed by Sarkisyan 1956 and 1960, 67–69, read τῆς βασιλεί[ας] only; Elnitsky 1958 restored τῆς βασιλεί[ας εὐ]|μένιεας; Bartikyan 1965, followed by Ananyan 1994: τῆς βασιλεί[ας αὐτοῦ]; Muradyan 1981: τῆς βασιλεί[ας ἐαυτοῦ ...], also [αὐτοῦ] in his comm.; Feydit 1969 (followed by Chaumont 1969): τῆς βασιλεί[ας μεγάλης Ἀρ]|μενίεας; Vinogradov 1990: τῆς βασιλεί[ας ἐπὶ σωτηρία *vel sim*.]; Canali de Rossi 2004: τῆς βασιλεί[ας ἐπὶ φυλακῇ].

In her 1949 edition, Trever showed that the beginning of the line referred to a date, αἴτους αι′. Because of her restoration of line 2, she was compelled to adopt a short line length and she did not feel it necessary to restore something after τῆς βασιλεί[ας]. Among the several restorations proposed, only one fits with dating: that of Bartikyan 1965 (Muradyan 1981 introduces a non-appropriate reflexive). The reference to a βασιλεία with the name of the king in the genitive or with αὐτοῦ is found very frequently, whether

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[10] The *PHI* database provides 540 matches in 539 texts, mostly from Asia Minor and from the imperial period.

[11] Up to the *sigma* of Τιριδάτης, line 1 has 14 letters. At the corresponding position of the *sigma* of αἴκτισεν, line 3 has already 17 letter-spaces (including the *vacat* after δεσπότης). This makes it perfectly credible to have, line 3, 30 letter spaces, including the *vacat*.

[12] See the *PHI* datase: 17 occurrences, one 5–6th c. CE, the rest significantly later.

[13] Huyse 1999 (*I. Estremo Oriente* 261; Merkelbach, Stauber, *Jenseits des Euphrat*, no. 803), vol. I, § 10, l. 12: Ῥωμαίων καστέλλους τε καὶ πόλει[ς], with comm. vol. II, 160; see also vol. I, § 47, l. 63, the mention of a καστελλοφύλαξ, with comm. vol. II, 58.

the word has a geographic, political, or chronological sense. To stick to the chronological sense only, many occurrences can be found in the *Septuagint* and later sources, for instance 2 Kin. 24: 12: ἔλαβεν αὐτὸν βασιλεὺς Βαβυλῶνος ἐν ἔτει ὀγδόῳ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ[14]. The same structure is met in the language of the papyri in the imperial period[15]. The restoration τῆς βασιλεί[ας αὐτοῦ] is beyond doubt.

Lines 6–9: These lines have proved very challenging to most previous editors, but given that their meaning has finally been clarified, it is unnecessary to mention the various hypotheses to which they have given rise. It will suffice to recall the various phases of the process of discovery. In 1949, Trever read correctly the name Μεννέας. Then Moretti 1955 (λιτουργὸς for λιθουργὸς) and Elnitsky 1958 (λιτουργὸς and ματη|τοῦ respectively for λιθουργὸς and μαθη|τοῦ) understood the replacement of the aspirated occlusives by the unaspirated ones[16]. However, Eltnitsky missed the meaning of these lines. The other editions disagreed significantly, sometimes not even following Trever's reading for Μεννέας. It was Vinogradov 1990 who first provided the complete correct solution and translated: "Menneas the stonecutter, with his pupil Martyrios", identifying Martyrios as a personal name[17]. The co-signature of a work by the master and the pupil (*discipulus*, μαθητής) was perfectly normal in this period and the Garni inscription brings a most welcome addition to the dossier[18].

Line 10: Lisitsyan 1945a: ὑπὸ θεούσι ἀστεῖαν; Manandyan 1946 and 1951 (followed by Abramyan 1947): ὑπὸ ἐξουσίᾳ στε[γ]αν[οῦ]; Trever 1949 and 1953: ὑπὸ ἐξουσίας τειαρί[ου]; Sarkisyan 1956 and 1960, 67–69: ὑπὸ ἐξουσιαστεῖ ἀρι[θμεῖ? ὡς?]; Elnitsky 1958 (apparently without knowledge of Sarkisyan 1956): ὑπὸ ἐξουσιαστέι ἀρ[ήρει]; Feydit 1969 (apparently without knowledge of Sarkisyan 1956 and Elnitsky 1958, and followed by Chaumont 1969): ὑπὸ ἐξουσιαστε {ι} Ἀρι[στάκου]; Muradyan 1981: ὑπὸ ἐξουσίας τειαρι[... ὡς?] | λιτουργός; Vinogradov 1990 (followed by Canali de Rossi 2004): ὑπὸ ἐξουσίας τειαρι[φόρου κυρίου (?)]; Ananyan 1994: ὑπὸ ἐξουσιαστε {ι} Ἀρ[χίας].

Scholars have mainly considered two restorations: *1)* ἐξουσία in the dative or genitive, which led to think of the words τειαρί[ου] (Trever, who saw here the Hellenized form of the Armenian *ter*, "clan's head") or τειαρι[φόρου κυρίου (?)] (Vinogradov, in relation with the Armenian royal tiara); *2)* ἐξουσιαστὴς in the dative (Sarkisyan and Elnitsky; it is difficult to understand the morphology and syntax of Feydit, who produced a text in capital letters only; he rejected the ι, supposedly as an error of the writer of the inscription; after him Chaumont and Ananyan reproduced his mistake).

The reading ὑπὸ ἐξουσιαστεῖ, with -εῖ for -ῇ (we do not know whether there was the same mistake for the two other datives ll. 10–11), fits perfectly with the sense. For the

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[14] Date with τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ: 2 Kin. 25: 1; 25: 27; 1 Chron. 26: 31; 2 Chron. 3: 2; 16: 12–13, 17: 7; 34: 3; 34: 8; Ezra 5: 6; Esther 2: 16; Jer. 28: 59; 52: 4; Dan. 9: 2. See also Joseph *Ap.* 1: 150 and Luke 1: 33, with the characteristic καὶ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔσται τέλος.

[15] *DGE* examples for the language of the papyri of the 3rd c. CE: τῷ ε′ (ἔτει) τῆς Αὐρηλιανοῦ βασιλείας *SB* 4426.5, with *BGU* 2086.14, *P. Oxy.* 2711.8. Muradyan 1981, 87, provides also useful parallels.

[16] This correction rendered obsolete all the previous interpretations of λιτουργὸς as λειτουργὸς in a pagan (civic) or Christian context.

[17] We only prefer to translate "stonemason" rather than "stonecutter".

[18] Freu 2016, 187–189, for the significance of the master-pupil relationship.

preposition ὑπὸ in the dative, the *LSJ* dictionary mentions that it applies to a relation of power or authority under whom a task is performed. The word ἐξουσιαστὴς does not appear in our Greek sources before the fourth century CE, in authors such as Gregory of Nyssa, Basil of Caesarea, or John Chrysostom, where it is very frequently used[19]. It is then commonly used in Byzantine texts with the sense of ruler or governor, which gives here also an acceptable sense[20]. Interestingly, we thus have with the Garni inscription possibly the first mention of the word, before it was frequently used in fourth century, then Byzantine Greek[21].

Feydit suggested to restore at the end of the line the name of Aristakes, the son of Gregory the Illuminator and his successor as the head of the Armenian church, a figure who obviously belonged to the Armenian elite of the time. We have only few names of Armenian historical figures in this period, and Aristakes is one of them. We know not only from Agathangelos but also from the lists of the council that he participated in the Council of Nicaea in 325, a rare independent confirmation of the indications of the historian[22]. From the restoration of the following line (see below), we would have apparently to conclude that before serving the church the same character was also a general in the Armenian army, even perhaps its commander in chief.

The religious role of Aristakes may seem however difficult to reconcile with a military one, although this might well be only our modern view on the question. Furthermore, the Greek recension (Vg) of Agathangelos (§ 98, 124, 172 Garitte) insists that at the time when Tiridates summoned his vassals before he installed Gregory as the head of the Armenian church, it was the Mamikonians who held the office of *sparapet*, commander in chief of the armies of Armenia (see also below for the function of *sparapet*). The name of this Mamikonian *sparapet*, Asparasdos (§ 124), is even explicitly mentioned. Admittedly, however, there is always the possibility that the insistence on the role of the Mamikonians was only a late reconstruction. Thus, the uncertainty remains. We keep the restoration Ἀρι[στάκη?], but it should be taken with the greatest caution.

Line 11: Lisitsyan 1945a: τῷ μεγάλῳ σπ[ῆι]; Manandyan 1946 and 1951: σ[έμνῳ]; Trever 1949: σπ[αιαπέτ]|ῳ; Trever 1953: σπ[αραπέτ]|ῳ καὶ εὐχάριστος; Sarkisyan 1956 and 1960: σπ[ουδασμ]|ῷ; Elnitsky 1958: σπ[ουδαί]|ῳ; Bartikyan 1965: σπ[......]; Feydit 1969: σπ[...]; Muradyan 1981: σπ[ασκαπέτει] or σπ[αραπέτῳ]; Vinogradov 1990

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[19] See *PGL*, s.v.

[20] When it provides the list of all the vassals that Tiridates III summons at the time before he designates Gregory as the leader of his church, the Greek recension (Vg) of Agathangelos uses it to designate the governor of Sophene, ὁ δὲ ἕβδομος ἐξουσιαστὴς τῆς Μεγάλης Σοφανηνῆς. But the text was itself translated from an Armenian original, probably by a Greek speaker who knew Armenian, no earlier than the fifth century. For this reason, it cannot be used as a direct parallel to the Garni inscription (Garitte 1946, pp. 72−73, Vg § 98, with pp. 314−317 on the passage and 336−356 on the status and date of the text).

[21] The references s.v. in *GLRBP* and *LSJ* for *Sept.* Is. 9: 6 seem to be ghosts.

[22] Agathangelos Aa 884: Thomson 1976 (see also the Greek recension Vg § 168 Garitte, with comm. Garitte 1946, 331). Council lists: Gelzer *et al.* 1898, 29, 65, 88−89, 105, 129, 199, for the various languages in which the lists are kept. Only the Arab version (*ibid.*, 181) gives Gregory as the representative of Armenia Major.

(followed by Canali de Rossi 2004 without the name of a god): τῷ μεγάλῳ σε[μνῷ θεῷ Ἡλίῳ *vel sim.*]; Ananyan 1994: σπ[αραπέτῳ].

There has been hesitation on the reading of the final letter, of which we see only the left part of a square letter. Some, like Manandyan and Vinogradov, have seen here an *epsilon*, which is unlikely, for in this inscription − apart from line 6 for Μεννέας, but clearly to separate this portion of the rest of the text (see in Part I) − all the *epsilons* have a lunate shape. The letter could be a *gamma* or a *pi*. The number of Greek words beginning with σγ- is close to nil. Indeed, beyond Manandyan and Vinogradov, all other editors have opted for reading here a *pi*. There are many Greek common words in σπ-, but none of them would make sense in the context. Also, starting from Trever, several editors have restored under various forms the famous term referring to a chief general in the Armenian army, *sparapet*, from Parthian *spādapat* and Middle Persian, *spāhbed*, "chief of the army"[23].

The name of a specifically Iranian / Armenian office in a text in Greek language can be paralleled by the series of inscriptions from the Caucasus region making mention of a *pitiax*, πιτιάξης in the Hellenized form[24]. Shapur's victory inscription also refers to the same function and does so under two forms, one in code-switching, βιδιξ, the other in Hellenized form, πιτιάξης[25]. The question for the Garni inscription is to determine the form of the word corresponding to the function of *sparapet*. Trever 1949 thought of the dative σπαιαπέτῳ (she did not say whether the nominative should be in -ης or -ος). In 1953, she opted for σπαράπετος. Muradyan hesitated between σπασκαπέτης and σπαράπετος. Ananyan chose σπαράπετος.

It has not been noticed that Shapur's victory inscription provided the form σπαπίτης[26]. Later, the Greek recension of Agathangelos (Vg § 98, 124, 172, see above) used the form ἀσπαραπέτης. While a perfect certitude cannot be reached (the presence of the two forms βιδιξ and πιτιάξης in the Shapur inscription illustrates enough this point), it seems better for now to restore the word σπαπίτης, which is attested in a text of the same period as that of the Garni inscription and which does not imply any creation of a new, for now unparalleled word.

A detail is worth stressing: the qualification "great" of the *spapitēs* in the Garni inscription, an adjective very frequently attached to the members of the high nobility or main office holders in later period Armenia, μέγας corresponding to *awag*, *mecamec* in Armenian language[27]. Interestingly, it appears also in the Greek recension of Agathangelos

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[23] Gyselen 2001 and 2004 on the Iranian *spāhbed*. The Armenian language has borrowed the word *pet*, "chief", from the Iranian and it has made a large usage of it; in Armenian, the words in -*pet* correspond to the Greek words in ἀρχι- and -αρχος: see Benveniste 1961.

[24] *I. Georgien*³ 232, l. 2 and 4−5, 242, 261; cup of Pakoros from Maikop (*I. Estremo Oriente* 21); Ousas' intaglio (Preud'homme 2018); see above already for these texts. See also Preud'homme 2019 for the *piṭaḫš* Šargas of Iberia, in 72−75 CE, in an Armazic-Aramean inscription from Iberia.

[25] See respectively Huyse 1999, vol. I, § 42, l. 56, and vol. I, § 45, l. 61, with comm. vol. II, 132−133, for both occurrences. See also Metzger 1968, 39−41, and Huyse 2014, 171.

[26] Huyse 1999, vol. I, § 42, l. 57, with comm. 138−139. Note the difference with the ἀσπαπίδης, "chief of the cavalry", Huyse 1999, vol. I, § 45, l. 61, with comm. vol. II, 155 (see also Gyselen 2001).

[27] Toumanoff 1959, 60, n. 133. It was also present in the titles of the Sasanian generals, see Gyselen 2001.

when it is stressed that the members of the Mamikonian family were the hereditary own-ers of the function of *sparapet*, τοῦ μεγάλου στρατηγοῦ καὶ ἀσπαραπέτου (§ 124, see above). The history told by Agathangelos and by its Greek recension may be in large part later reconstructions, but, as for the form of the title they mention, the recension came back to actual models of the time of Tiridates, as proved by the Garni inscription.

Line 12: Here again, many suggestions have been made, which need not be recalled. J. and L. Robert (1956), followed by Vinogradov 1990 and Canali de Rossi 2004, sug-gested ᾧ καὶ εὐχαριστ[εῖ], a solution that makes perfect sense for the syntax and finds many parallels[28]. The plural is preferred here, admitting that Menneas wanted to fully associate his pupil Martyrios in the homage to their patron (there is enough space on the stone and the singular would suppose a long *vacat*).

<div align="center">CONCLUSION</div>

The text can now be established the following way:

1	Ἥλιος Τιριδάτης, [ὁ βασιλεὺς]	23 (14+9 in the lacuna)
2	μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας, ἀνα[στραφεὶς]	26 (18+8)
3	ὡς δεσπότης *v.* αἴκτισεν αἰ[αυτῷ καὶ τῇ]	30 (21, including the *v.*, +9)
4	βασιλίσᾳ τὸν ἀνίκητον κάσ[τελλον]	28 (22+6)
5	αἴτους *v.* αι' *v.* τῆς βασιλεί[ας αὐτοῦ]	27 (20, including 2 *v.*, +7)
6	Μεννέας ¹⁰ὑπὸ ἐξουσιαστεῖ Ἀρι[στάκη?]	
7	λιτουργὸς ¹¹τῷ μεγάλῳ σπ[απίτῃ]	
8	μετὰ ματη- ¹²ᾧ καὶ εὐχαριστ[οῦσιν].	
9	τοῦ Μαρτυρίου	

Helius Tiridates, the king of Greater Armenia, who behaved as a master, erected for himself and for the queen this invincible castle, the 11ᵗʰ year of his reign. Menneas, the stonemason, with his pupil Martyrios, under the authority of Governor Ari[stakes] (?), the grand *sparapet*, to whom they also are grateful.

It is now clear that the Garni inscription corresponds to the reign of Tiridates the Great, the king who christianized Armenia. However, this does not mean that this is the inscription referred to by Moses Khorenatsi[29]. For Vinogradov and Canali de Rossi, Tiridates in the first five lines of the text would himself speak of his work: "I, Tiridates, I have built, etc." But this translation cannot be accepted: the verb αἴκτισεν is at the third person. The real author of the text is Menneas, who speaks both of the king and of himself and his assistant (if the restoration εὐχαριστ[οῦσιν] is correct) in the third per-son. Naturally, Menneas took care to mention his sponsors, first the king and the queen (we know from Agathangelos and Moses the role of Queen Ashkhen by the side of Tiri-dates), then the *sparapet* under the direct authority of whom he had performed his task.

This inscription, dedicated with his pupil Martyrios, was in fact a kind of artist's sig-nature. As such, it was a form of self-celebration. An invincible fortress suited a great

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[28] Many inscriptions mention the verb εὐχαριστεῖν at various modes. For examples with the third-person present indicative εὐχαριστεῖ of thanks from a city: *I. Cret.* I xvi 2, l. 19; 15, l. 21 (Lato, 201 BCE); *I. Stratonikeia* 1101, l. 6 (Stratonikeia, late Hellenistic); from an individual: *SEG* 37 1000, l. 9 (Lydia Katakekaumene, 166 CE); *SEG* 38 1172, l. 32 (Tralles 250−300 CE), etc.

[29] Hewsen 1985−1986, 31, and 1986, 329, thought that this was the case, but he had at his disposal only a very poorly established text, which explains the opinion he formulated.

king like Tiridates. But the cryptic message was it would owe this quality to the talent of the stonemason Menneas, who was careful enough to write his own name and that of his pupil in smaller characters (and possibly with letters painted in a different color), but who nevertheless was proud to advertise his achievement. The mediocre quality of the spelling and engraving of the inscription fits with its status. As for the royal inscription of Tiridates, it has still to be found. It remains however that Menneas' inscription reinforces the credibility of Moses' testimony on the existence of a Greek inscription dedicated by the king in memory of his sister Khosrovidukht[30].

The date of the inscription depends on the years of reign of Tiridates the Great, a question heavily debated in the literature. It suffices here to observe that if we accept that the king came to power in 298, the date of the inscription, in the eleventh year of the reign, would be 308/309[31]. The Diocletianic years of persecution of Tiridates were over. Then, it was perfectly admissible for Martyrios, the Christian assistant of Menneas, to have his name engraved on the wall of the fortress. Moses (2. 90) mentions that the fortress and the summer palace for Khosrovidukht were completed sometime after the council of Nicaea of 325. This does not formally contradict the text of the inscription, which says that the king "erected" the fortress in 308/309, which may mean that the program of construction began at that date with the building of the fortress wall[32]. Its completion, including that of the finely decorated summer palace, would have taken place after 325. Clearly, a date in 308/309 would fit well with the content of the inscription and context in Armenia in the early fourth century.

In any case, it remains certain that the Greek inscription from Garni must be attributed to Tiridates III and that it cannot be used to analyze the cultic history of the early imperial period local temple. This "founding stone" in the history of Armenia has now hopefully found its correct place.

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[30] As mentioned, there was also a Greek inscription on the mosaic of the bath. Tiridates' inscription in honor of his sister may have been a metric one, as is so frequently the case with late antique elite dedications.

[31] Hewsen 1986; Weber 2016.

[32] As noticed by Muradyan 1981, 85, $\varkappa\tau i\zeta\omega$, "to found", may also mean "to build".

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Abbreviations

Epigraphic abbreviations follow those recommended by the AIEGL (URL: https://aiegl.org/grepiabbr.html; accessed on: 01.12.2022). Other abbreviations used:

DGE   −   Rodríguez Adrados, F. (ed.), *Diccionario Griego-Español.* Madrid, 1989−now

GELNT   −   Bauer, W. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.* 2nd ed. Chicago, 1979

GLRBP   −   Sophocles, E.A. *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods.* Cambridge (MA), 1914

PGL   −   Lampe, G.W.H. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon.* Cambridge, 1961