

TWO ARMENIAN MANUSCRIPTS IN SWITZERLAND
(WITH AN ANNOTATED TRANSLATION OF A NEWLY-FOUND
ABRIDGEMENT OF THE *COMMENTARY OF CANON TABLES*
ATTRIBUTED TO STEP‘ANOS SIWNEC‘I)*

*For Gēorg Tēr-Vardanean with gratitude
for my knowledge in codicology and paleography*

While many European libraries and collections possess from one to a few thousand Armenian manuscripts, the cumulative number of documented Armenian manuscripts preserved in Switzerland barely reaches a dozen. In the extensive repertory of Armenian manuscript catalogues and collections prepared by Bernard Coulie, four Swiss libraries are mentioned to have five manuscripts in Armenian: one manuscript in the University Library of Fribourg (Cod. L2243), two manuscripts in the University Library of Geneva (fragments of a Lectionary – Cod. Or. 72, and an amulet – Cod. Or. 72a), one manuscript in the Stiftsbibliothek of Saint Gall (No. 1513), and one manuscript in the Bodmeriana Library in Cologne/Geneva (Codex Bodmer 34, hereafter CB 34)¹. The last one is a Gospel book, which, together with two other manuscripts belonging to the Armenian church of Saint Gregory the Enlightener in Troinex (Geneva) – a Commentary on the Catholic Epistles of Sargis Šnorhali (ms. arm. 1) and a Hymnal (ms. arm. 2) – was displayed at the exhibition *Illuminations d’Arménie: Arts du livre et de la pierre dans l’Arménie ancienne et médiévale*, hosted in the museum of the same foundation between September 15 and December 30, 2007. The contents of these three manuscripts became available thanks to detailed descriptions that appeared for the first time in the exhibition catalogue, accompanied with the images of hitherto unpublished folios². The Gospel book of the Bodmeriana Library (CB 34) was

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¹ COULIE, *Répertoire*, p. 74, 78; COULIE, *Répertoire. Supplément IV*, p. 80, 86, 98. One more manuscript from the University Library of Basel (M II 16), which “contains a letter in Armenian”, was earlier listed in PEARSON, *Oriental Manuscripts*, p. 169. For the manuscripts in the University Library of Geneva, see CUENDET, *Notice*.

² CALZOLARI – KOUYMIAN, *Évangile de Constantinople*; see also the Introduction to the same volume by V. Calzolari, p. 16-19; OUTTIER, *Sargis Chmorhali*; OUTTIER, *Hymnaire (Charaknots)*.

also displayed at another exhibition hosted by the Bodmer Foundation in 2009, entitled *Orient-Occident: Racines spirituelles de l'Europe*³.

In 2012 and 2013, two other Armenian manuscripts – both 17th-century hymnals from a private collection – became known thanks to their digitalization by the *e-codices* (Virtual Manuscript Library of Switzerland)⁴.

In 2015 and 2017, the collaboration with the *e-codices* resulted in the digitalization of two more Armenian manuscripts, including the above-mentioned Gospel book of the Bodmeriana Library⁵. On this occasion, a first description was also made for manuscript No. 1513 of the Stiftsbibliothek of Saint Gall (Sankt Gallen), which is an abbreviated copy of Joachim Schröder's *Thesaurus linguae Armenicae*⁶. Although both manuscripts are now available in open access, the aim of this paper is to document their existence by providing their detailed descriptions, colophons and their translations, as well as the text and an annotated translation of a new abridgement of the *Commentary of Canon Tables* attributed to Step'anos Siwnec'i, found in CB 34, which has remained unnoticed in the previous publications dedicated to this manuscript.

I. COLOGNY (GENEVA), MARTIN BODMER FOUNDATION, CB 34

1. *The manuscript*

1.1. *History of the manuscript*

The Gospel manuscript was completed on December 23, 1607⁷ at the church of Surb Nikawłayos, situated in the quarter of Valanka (*Vlanka*

³ CALZOLARI, *Évangéliste arménien*.

⁴ Utopia, armarium codicum bibliophilorum, Cod. 3 <http://e-codices.unifr.ch/en/description/utp/0003/> [last accessed Febr. 1, 2020]; Utopia, armarium codicum bibliophilorum, Cod. 4 <http://e-codices.unifr.ch/en/description/utp/0004/> [last accessed Febr. 1, 2020].

⁵ Genève, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 34 <http://e-codices.unifr.ch/en/description/fmb/cb-0034/Grigoryan> [last accessed Febr. 1, 2020].

⁶ St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 1513 <http://e-codices.unifr.ch/en/description/csg/1513/Grigoryan> [last accessed Febr. 1, 2020].

⁷ In all publications referring to this manuscript, including my own online description for the *e-codices* in 2015, the date of CB 34 – the Armenian Era 1056 – is calculated following the brief description of the Maggs Bros. catalogue (*The Bible in Many Languages*, p. 4) and an explanation provided in the first volume of 17th-century Armenian colophons (HAKOBYAN – HOVHANNISYAN, *Hayeren je'agreri ŽĔ dari hišatakaraner*, p. 210, n. 25), which argues that the date of those Armenian manuscripts that were created between October 18 and December 31 of 1604, 1605, 1606 and 1607 should be calculated by adding 550 and not 551, because the mentioned years started on October 18 (instead of October 22; apparently, the authors take into consideration the system of the Armenian Calendar, which every four years has one day less). In his extensive review of this volume, Levon Khachikian criticizes this approach, convincingly demonstrating that when colophons mention the

in the colophon) in Istanbul, in the present-day district of Fatih⁸. According to an account provided by Simēon Lehac'i, a connoisseur traveller who visited the city in 1611, the church of Surb Nikawłayos Sk'anč'elagorc (Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker) was one of the three Armenian churches that were located in Valanka⁹. This information on the Valanka churches is confirmed by another contemporary author, Grigor Daranac'i¹⁰. We learn from the main colophon of CB 34 that the scribe Mik'ayēl copied the Gospel book from an exemplar, which was lent him by the honorable priests of Surb Nikawłayos, mentioning particularly those from the *Abrahamean* family. Mik'ayēl, also known as Mik'ayēl T'oxatec'i (i.e. from T'oxat/Tokat), was one of the most prolific scribes of his time, active in Istanbul between the years 1606 and 1658¹¹. Thus, the Gospel book in question is one of the first among the known 37 manuscripts that have the signature of Mik'ayēl T'oxatec'i¹².

It is not known how long the manuscript remained in the Surb Nikawłayos church of Istanbul but a later colophon added on fly-leaf 2A, probably in the 20th century, tells us that the manuscript “belongs to the church of

month names according to the Julian calendar (i.e. January ... December), then the beginning of the year is normally considered January 1, even if the year is given in the Armenian Era. Consequently, Khachikian argues that the calculation should follow its traditional way (i.e. by adding 551) also for those manuscripts which were created between October 18 and December 31. In addition, he discusses several 17th-century colophons published in the above-mentioned volume of colophons, the dates of which are surprisingly calculated according to this very system and not by reducing one year, as suggested in the mentioned volume of 17th-century colophons. For Khachikian's review and explanations, see KHACHIKIAN, *Havelvac*, p. 457-461. See also HARUTYUNYAN, *Erku grič'*, p. 15, n. 2. In light of these clarifications, my new calculation of the date of CB 34 follows Khachikian's approach and suggests 1607 instead of 1606.

⁸ Not to be confused with two other homonymous churches of Istanbul, which are located in Beykoz (Armenian Surb Nikawłayos church) and in Heybeliada (Greek Ayios Nikolaos church, also used by the Armenians and Syrians). For the exact place of the Valanka district, which is mentioned by Simēon Lehac'i, see map 2 in *The Travel Accounts of Simēon of Poland*, p. 19.

⁹ The other two, according to Simēon Lehac'i, were Surb Astuacacin and Surb Sargis. A few years later, in 1615, in the same church of Surb Nikawłayos, Lehac'i himself copied a hymnal. See *Simēon dpri Lehac'woy Utegrut'iwon*, p. 7 (for the churches in Valanka), 391-392 (for the colophon of the hymnal copied by Lehac'i); *The Travel Accounts of Simēon of Poland*, p. 32 (for the churches in Valanka).

¹⁰ The three churches of Valanka – Surb Astuacacin, Surb Sargis and Surb Nikawłayos – are mentioned in Grigor Daranac'i's Chronicle on various occasions. See Grigor Daranac'i, *Žamanakagrut'iwon*, p. 452 (Surb Nikawłayos), 462 (Surb Astuacacin), 585 (Surb Sargis and Surb Nikawłayos).

¹¹ Not to be confused with another 17th-century scribe, Mik'ayēl Barłami, who was active in Sebastia (Sivas) and in Tokat (Eudokia). For both scribes and their work, see HARUTYUNYAN, *Erku grič'*.

¹² For the manuscripts copied by Mik'ayēl T'oxatec'i, see HARUTYUNYAN, *Erku grič'*, p. 39-94, tables 1-2.

S. Gēorg of Ewdokia”, which is present-day Tokat. One can suppose that the manuscript was taken from the Surb Nikawłayos church before the great conflagration of 1660, at the latest, from which this and Surb Sargis churches of Valanka considerably suffered¹³.

The further history of the manuscript is clouded in obscurity. In May 1939, it appeared in an auction of the London-based antiquarian bookseller Maggs Bros. at an estimated price of 35 £¹⁴. Shortly after, most probably after being purchased in the mentioned auction, the manuscript became the property of the Bibliotheca Bodmeriana and is currently preserved at the Martin Bodmer Foundation in Cologny under the inventory number Codex Bodmer 34. On the two fly-leaves at the beginning and at the end of the manuscript, some notes in German can be found, written with pencil, which mention “1702”, “M. Ms. I. 1”, “Chr. Rel. T IV / Bibel A II. 1 Armenischen MS,” and “Chr. Rel. T IV, Bibel I. 2, Ms. Armenisch”¹⁵. This might indicate that, before its appearance in the auction of 1939 or before becoming the property of the Bodmeriana Library, the manuscript was registered in a German-speaking library or collection.

After its appearance in the auction catalogue, the manuscript was documented in three different repertories prepared by Erroll Rhodes¹⁶, James Douglas Pearson¹⁷, and Bernard Coulie¹⁸. The two exhibitions held at the Martin Bodmer Museum in 2007¹⁹ and 2009²⁰ presented the manuscript to the wider public, and its digitalization in 2015 made it entirely accessible to everyone²¹, already contributing to a recent study dedicated to the manuscript’s scribe Mik’ayēl²².

1.2. *Description of the manuscript*

Manuscript contents (listed in sequential order as they appear in the manuscript): *Commentary of Canon Tables* attributed to Step’anos Siwnec’i; Four Gospels (main content); The episode of the woman taken in adultery; Apocalypse and Dormition of St John; An index of Gospel readings for repose and healing (added at the end of the volume by another hand).

¹³ On the great fire of Istanbul and the damage caused to the mentioned Armenian churches, see K’ĒŌMIWRĀĀN, *Patmut’iwn hrkizman Kostandnupōlsoy*, p. 77-78; K’ĒŌMIWRĀĀN, *Stampōloy patmut’iwn*, p. 8; ORMANĒAN, *Azgapatum*, § 1740.

¹⁴ *The Bible in Many Languages*, p. 3-4, plate I.

¹⁵ See also below, 1.2.

¹⁶ RHODES, *Annotated List*, p. 79.

¹⁷ PEARSON, *Oriental Manuscripts in Europe and North America*, p. 169.

¹⁸ COULIE, *Répertoire*, p. 78.

¹⁹ CALZOLARI – KOUYMJIAN, *Évangile de Constantinople*.

²⁰ CALZOLARI, *Évangélique arménien*.

²¹ <http://e-codices.unifr.ch/en/description/fmb/cb-0034/Grigoryan> [last accessed Febr. 1, 2020].

²² HARUTYUNYAN, *Erku grič’*.

Place of origin: Stampawl (Istanbul), Valanka district, Armenian church of Surb Nikawlayos.

Date of origin: Armenian Era 1056 (AD 1607), 23th of December²³.

Script: mostly *bolorgir* (minuscule).

Scribe: Mik'ayēl.

Artist: Yovanēs Stampawlc'i (i.e. from Istanbul).

Support: Paper.

Extent: 256+1 (folio 57 repeated), blank folios 1AB-2AB, 3B, 2v-3r, 4v-5r, 6v-7r, 8v-9r, 10v-11r, 174r.

Format: 19×14 cm.

Foliation: It has later pagination with pencil in the upper right corners, 1-255.

Collation: I-XIII x 20 (I 17, XIII 19). The quire numbers given in Armenian letters appear in lower margins at the beginning and at the end of each gathering: 17v-18r, 37v-38r, 57v-58r, 76v-77r, 96v-97r, 116v-117r, 136v-137r, 156v-157r, 176v-177r, 196v-197r, 216v-217r, 236v-237r.

Page layout: double columns, 25 lines, 14×10 (apr.).

Condition: Satisfactory. The lower part of the leather cover flap is cut off. On some pages, there are ink traces and remnants from candle burning. The paper is partly restored. There are small red cloth tabs on the edges of folios 61, 102, 170 and 221, meant to serve as bookmarks. The upper, lower and outer foreedges are discolored. The tear of the lower margin on folio 30 is patched.

Illustrations: Canon tables (1v, 2r, 3v, 4r, 5v, 6r, 7v, 8r, 9v, 10r: fig. 4-13); the four evangelists, portrayed seated and composing their Gospels: Matthew (11v), Mark (64v: fig. 14), Luke (106v), John and his disciple Prochorus (174v). The title folio of each Gospel begins with an illustrated headpiece, a large marginal ornament and an initial letter designed after the corresponding symbol of each evangelist: Գ (G) – angel for Matthew, Ս (S) – lion for Mark, Բ (K') – bull for Luke, and Ի (I) – eagle for John, which appear on the folios 12r, 65r, 107r, and 175r, respectively²⁴.

Marginal ornaments: vegetal (13v, 14v, 15rv, 17r, 18v, 19v, 22r, 23v, 24rv, 25v, 27r, 28r, 29r, 30rv, 32rv, 33v, 34rv, 35r, 36v, 37v, 39rv, 40r, 41v, 42v, 44rv, 45v, 46v, 48r, 49r, 55v, 56rv, 57r, 58r, 61rv, 62v, 66rv, 67v, 69rv, 70r, 71r, 72rv, 74v, 75r, 76rv, 77v, 78r, 79r, 80rv, 81rv, 82v,

²³ For calculation of the date, see above, n. 7.

²⁴ On the four evangelists' symbols and their meanings, see also (below 2.1) the manuscript's main colophon.

84rv, 86rv, 87v, 89v, 90v, 93r, 97r, 100r, 102rv, 103r, 108v, 111rv, 112r, 113r, 117r, 118v, 119v, 120rv, 121r, 122r, 124v, 126v, 127v, 131r, 132r, 133r, 134rv, 137r, 138r, 139r, 141r, 142r, 144v, 145r, 146r, 147v, 150r, 152r, 153r, 155r, 156r, 158r, 159r, 160v, 164v, 167r, 170v, 171r, 172v, 177r, 178r, 179r, 180rv, 181r, 183v, 185r, 186r, 187r, 189r, 191r, 192r, 194rv, 195r, 198v, 200r, 201r, 204rv, 205v, 207r, 208r, 209r, 210r, 216r, 220r, 221r, 223r, 224r, 225r, 250v), birds (13r, 16v, 20v, 24r, 36r, 47v, 67r, 68r, 70v, 71v, 73r, 75v, 92r, 95v, 109v, 114r, 118r, 125r, 128v, 136r, 143r, 154r, 159v, 161v, 163v, 165v, 170r, 176rv, 177v, 178v, 182r, 184r, 187v, 190v, 192v, 196r, 199v, 203v, 206v, 210v, 218r, 222v, 223r, 226r), vegetal with a cross on the top (12r, 65r, 107r, 175r), temple (51r, 93v), tree (88v).

Ornamented letters: anthropomorphic (12r), zoomorphic (107r), ornithomorphic (13r, 19v, 22r, 23v, 24r, 30r, 33v, 34rv, 36r, 37v, 39v, 44v, 45v, 47v, 51r, 56r, 58r, 61rv, 65r, 66r, 67r, 68r, 70rv, 71r, 72r, 73r, 75v, 77v, 80r, 82v, 86v, 89v, 92r, 102r, 111v, 112r, 118r, 120r, 121r, 125r, 128v, 132r, 133r, 136r, 143r, 156r, 164v, 165v, 170r, 172v, 175r, 177r, 178r, 180rv, 182r, 186r, 188r, 194r, 199v, 201r, 203v, 204v, 205v, 210v, 218r, 220r, 223r, 224r, 250v), nodal (12r, 13v, 14v, 15rv, 16v, 17r, 18v, 20v, 24rv, 25v, 27r, 28r, 29r, 30v, 32rv, 33v, 35r, 36v, 39r, 40r, 41v, 42v, 44r, 46v, 48r, 49r, 55v, 56v, 57r, 61r, 66v, 67v, 69rv, 71rv, 72v, 74v, 75r, 76rv, 78r, 79r, 80v, 81rv, 84rv, 86r, 87v, 88v, 90v, 93rv, 95v, 97r, 100r, 103r, 107r, 108v, 109v, 111r, 112r, 113r, 114r, 117r, 118v, 119v, 120v, 122r, 124v, 126v, 127v, 131r, 134rv, 137r, 138r, 139r, 141r, 142r, 144v, 145r, 146r, 147v, 150r, 152r, 153r, 154r, 155r, 158r, 159rv, 160v, 161v, 163v, 167r, 171r, 172v, 175r, 176rv, 177v, 178v, 179r, 181r, 183v, 184r, 185r, 187rv, 188r, 189r, 190v, 191r, 192rv, 194v, 195r, 196r, 198v, 200r, 204r, 205v, 206v, 207r, 208r, 209r, 210r, 216r, 221r, 222v, 223r, 225r, 226r).

Binding: Bound in dark brown leather over wooden boards, with a flap decorated with stamped rosette-like circles. The leather binding is covered with two richly decorated silver plaques, probably made a century after the manuscript's production. On the front cover, the Ascension scene is carved, above which the enthroned Christ is depicted seated on a tetramorph-throne (fig. 1). The back cover represents the Coronation of the Virgin by the Holy Trinity (fig. 2). The execution and iconography are typical to the Armenian silver binding traditions of the 17th-18th centuries, closely resembling western iconographic types. The latter tendency was in large part due to the well-developed Armenian tradition of bookprinting throughout Europe, from where the craftsmen were importing woodcuts.

The themes, style and iconography of the woodcuts that decorate Armenian printings of this period can often be found on decorations of silver bindings, one of which is the two-plaque binding of CB 34.

Notes:

Fly-leaf 1: on the book-plate, attached on fly-leaf 1 is the short description of the manuscript taken from the sale catalogue of 1939.

Fly-leaf 1: by pencil: “M. MS. I. 1” and “1702”.

By pencil: “Chr. Rel. T IV / Bibel A II. 1 Armenischen MS” (this appears on the same fly-leaf but on the above-mentioned attached paper that contains the printed description).

By pencil, with another hand: “Cod. Bodmer 34”.

Fly-leaf 2A: by pencil: “145”.

Fly-leaf 3A (at the end of the volume): in the lower margin, by pencil: “Chr. Rel. T IV, Bibel I. 2, Ms. Armenisch”.

Fly-leaf 3A (at the end of the volume): by another scribe of the 17th century is an index of Gospel readings for repose and healing²⁵: Աւետարանի հանգստեան / *Gospel readings for repose* – Matthew 11:25; 13:1, 33, 36; 18:1; 13:24; 8:2; 13:44/47; 22:1; Mark 4:1, 10, 21, 26; 10:13, 28; 13:32; Luke 9:57; 10:21; 11:33; 12:32; 13:18, 22; 18:15; 19:11; 21:34; John 3:13; 5:19, 24; 6:39; 9:39; 12:24; 14:25. Աւետարանի բժշկութեան / *Gospel readings for healing* (Mt, Mk, Lk, Jn).

Contents:

Fols. 1r-10r *Commentary of Canon Tables Composed by Step'anos, Bishop of Siwnik*, which occurs in lower margins of canon tables (figs. 3-13)²⁶.

Fols. 1v-2r Letter of Eusebius to Carpianus (figs. 4-5).

Fols. 3v-10r Ten canon tables (figs. 6-13)²⁷.

Fol. 11v Portrait of Matthew.

Fols. 12r-62v Gospel of Matthew.

Fol. 62v Preface of the Gospel of Matthew.

Fol. 63r Preface of Mark's Gospel.

Fols. 63r-64r List of the chapters of the Gospel of Mark.

²⁵ This index comprising the Gospel readings for repose and healing is taken from another Gospel manuscript (or probably copied from a printed book). The numbers (expressed in Armenian letters) that appear in front of each reading seem to indicate the corresponding pages of the original manuscript / printed book.

²⁶ The text and translation of this Commentary are given below (paragraph 4), preceded with a discussion in paragraph 3.

²⁷ The concordance numbers can also be found in the main body of the text, placed in margins.

- Fol. 64v Portrait of Mark (fig. 14).
 Fols. 65r-103v Gospel of Mark.
 Fol. 104r Preface of the Gospel of Luke.
 Fols. 104v-106r List of the chapters of the Gospel of Luke.
 Fol. 106v Portrait of Luke.
 Fols. 107r-173r Gospel of Luke.
 Fol. 173v List of the chapters of the Gospel of John.
 Fol. 174v Portrait of John and Prochorus.
 Fols. 175r-225r Gospel of John.
 Fols. 225r-225v The episode of the woman taken in adultery.
 Fols. 226r-250v Apocalypse of John the Theologian.
 Fols. 250v-254r Dormition of Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist.
 Fols. 254r-255v Main colophon of the scribe.

* Some corrections and additions are inserted in the margins of folios 194v, 228v, 246v, 251r, 253r.

The manuscript also contains three small fragments that are cut out from another manuscript. The script of these fragments is *bolorgir* (minuscule) and may be datable to the 17th century. The fragments were meant to serve as bookmarks. The fragmentary texts found on them read as follows:

1. [Բերսայ]իդ(ա)յ, ի ք[աղաքէ Ան]դրեայ եւ Պե[տ]րոսի (John 1:44).
2. [յ]աբխարհն Գեր[գե]սացոց, որ է յա[յն]կոյս հանդէպ [Գ]ալիլեայ: (Ե)ւ ընդ ելանելն (Luke 8:26-27).
3. [յ]էգիպտոս, եւ անդ էր մինչեւ ցվախնան Հերովդէի: Զի լցցի ասացեալն ի Տեառնէ ի ձեռն մարգարէին, որ ասէ (Matthew 2:14-15).

2. Colophons

2.1. Main colophon by the scribe, fols. 254r-255v

1254ալ Փառք ամենասուրբ Երրորդութեան՝ Հօր եւ Որդւոյ եւ Սուրբ Հոգւոյն՝ գերակատար երից անձնաւորութեան, միոյ բնութեան եւ աստուածութեան՝ յօջա, յայժմուս եւ ապագայն, եւ յանսպառ յաւիտեանն յաւիտենից. ամէն: Որ արարչագործ զօրութեամբն իւրով շարժեալ իսկական բարի յանճառ իսկութենէն գոացոյց գերկինս եւ գերկիր, ստեղծ եւ զգրախտն՝ տեղի տարփային եւ բնակ անմաշութեան, գոյացոյց եւ զմարդն ձեռաւք իւրովք՝ ըստ 1254բ1 պատկերի բարերարութեան իւրոյ, եւ եղ ի դրախտին փափկութեան՝ լինել անախտ եւ մնալ անմաշ: Իսկ ողորմելին այն ունկնդիր չարին եղեալ ի ձեռն մաշաբեր դրախտուն ժառանգեաց գերկիր անիծից, եւ փոխանակ անմաշութեան՝ մաշու եղեալ ժառանգորդ: Վասն որոյ ի լրման

Ժամանակի խանդաղատեալ արարչական բնութիւն՝ տեսնելով զպատկերն իւր անկեալ ընդ աղտիւք՝ ծառայել մեղաց եւ մաշու, լինի Որդին Աստուծոյ, Որդի Կուսի եւ աթոռակիցն Հաւր, Որդի մարդոյ, եւ իւրով աստուածացեալ մարմնովն եբարձ զպարտիսն Ադամա զամենայն կիրս մարդկաին կրելով, զատ եւ որիչ ի մեղաց: Հնազանդեցաւ կամաւորաբար մաշու խաչի եւ եղև պատարագ Հաշտեցուցիչ Հօր, եւ իւրով անապական արեամբն Հաստատեաց զնորս եկեղեցի դրախտ անմաշութեան, եւ բխեցոյց ի սմանէ գետս չորեսին՝ առոգել զերեսս երկրի, այսինքն՝ զաստուածախաւս վարդապետութիւն իւր, զոր յիւրում տնաւրէնութեան խօսեցաւ, եւ ուսոյց աշակերտացն իւրոց, զի ասէ. Ուսարուք յինէն, զի Հեզ եմ եւ խոնարհ [Mt 11:29], վասն որոյ եւ [ի] դասուց առաքեալցն ընտրեցան ավետարանիչք չորք, որք եղեն ձեռն եւ լեզու Աստուծոյ, զի լի արարին զտիեզերս աւետարանաւն Քրիստոսի եւ փոխանակ կառացն աստուածութեան, զոր մարգարէն ի վերա Քոբար գետոյն տեսանէր [Ez 1:1]. սոքա երեւացան ի մէջ եկեղեցւոյ, վասն զի գէմք մարդոյն բերէ զնմանութիւն երջանկին Մատթէոսի, զի մարդկարէն ասէ ծընեալ զԱստուածն Բան ի Մարիամա՝ որդի Աբրահամու եւ Դաւթի [Mt 1:1-16], իսկ գէմք առիւծուն՝ զսրբասնունդն Մարկոս, զի որպէս զառիւծ, ասէ, եղեալ զՅիսուս ի Յորդանանէ, եւ էր ընդ գաւ255ակզանս [Mk 1:9-13], իսկ կերպ զուարակին՝ զքաղցրաբարբառն Ղուկաս, քանզի Հեզաբար ասէ զՔրիստոս զենեալ ի գիւտ անառակին [Lk 15:11-32], իսկ նրմանութիւն արծուոյն՝ զաստուածաբանին Յովնու, զի եղեալ բարձրաթոխի ի վերուստ, որոտաց զԲանն ի սկզբաննէ [Jn 1:1], որում Հետեւեալ այս աւետեաց աւետարանիս իր մարդկաինս բնութենէ: Ոմանք զՀոգին նւիրեցին Աստուծոյ, զի զմարմինն ի խաչ Հանին կարեաւք, ոմանք զոյիւք անցաւորաւք զանապականն ստացան, ըստ այսմ սարասի եղև ցանկացող այսմ պաշտելի եւ աստուածախաւս մատենիս ՀեզաՀոգի, բարի եւ Հաւատարիմ մղտեսի Յակոբ քահանայն եւ զիւր որդին՝ մղտեսի Մինաս սարկաւագն, եւ զիւր կենակիցն՝ զՅուստիանէն, եւ զՀայրն իւր՝ զտէր Յակոբն, եւ զիրիցկինն՝ մղտեսի Երիւնն, եւ զեղբարքն իւր՝ զԵաղուն, զՄինաս եւ զՔրիստոստուրն, եւ զքորքն իւր՝ զԵաղուրն, զՅուստիանէն, զՅաննայն եւ զայլ ամենայն արեան մերձաւորս իւր, եւ ըստացան զսա Հալալ ընչից իւրեանց:

Արդ, աղաչեմ զամենեսեանդ՝ զաւգտեալս ի սուրբ Աւետարանէս, որք զմայլիք յանձարածաւալ ծովէս եւ փարթամանայք յանձախելի գանձուս, յիշեսջի՛ք յաղաւթս ձեր զմղտեսի տէր Յակոբն եւ զմղտեսի Մինաս դպիրն, եւ մեղաց թողութիւն խնդրեցէ՛ք նոցա. եւ որք յիշէ՛ք՝ յիշեալ լիջիք առաջի Աստուծոյ. ամէն:

Արդ, գրեցաւ սուրբ Աւետարանս ի թվականիս Հայոց ՌՄԶ. [1056/1607], զեկտեմբերի ԻԳ. [23], ի զառն եւ ի գիժար Ժամանակին, որ զամենայն երկիր ճալալիքն աւերեցին, եւ մեք վտարեցաք ի յաւտարութիւն եւ եկաք ի յաստուածապաւ Հաղաքս ըՍտամպալ: Գրեցաւ ձեռամբ բազմամեղ եւ անարՀեստ գրչի Միւսայիլի, ի մայրաքաղաքն ըՍտամպալ՝ ի մաշաւան

Լ255բ՝ Վլանկա, ի դուռն Սուրբ Նիկաղայոսին, ի յառաջնորդութեանն Գրիգոր
 քաջ ըաբունապետին: Արդ, աղաչեմ զամենեսեանդ՝ յիշեցէ՛ք ի սուրբ
 աղաւթս ձեր զստացող սորա եւ զամենայն արեան մերձաւորս իւր՝ զկեն-
 դանիսն եւ զՀանգուցեալսն առ Քրիստոս [the next line is unwritten²⁸]:
 Դարձեալ յիշեցէ՛ք զՄիւսայլ գրիչս եւ զծնօղսն իմ եւ զայլ ամենայն արեան
 մերձաւորս [two lines are unwritten]: Դարձեալ յիշեցէ՛ք զՍուրբ Նիկա-
 ղայոսի զպատուելի քաւանայքն՝ զտէր Աբրահամեանքն, եւ զեկեղեցպանն,
 եւ զայլ պաղի սողվածաւորքն, որ զօրինակն շնորհեցին: Նա արարիչն
 Աստուած ձեզ՝ յիշողացդ եւ մեզ՝ յիշեցելոցս առհասարակ ողորմեսցի, եւ
 նմա փառք յաւիտեանս, ամէն:

Translation

[Fol. 254r] *Glory to the Most Holy Trinity of Father and Son and the Holy Spirit, the transcendent Triune Person, one nature and divinity, always, now and forever, and through the endless eternities of eternities, amen. With His creative power, He created the heavens and the earth from the unutterable Essence by mastering (His) essential Goodness; He (then) invented also the Paradise – a desirable place and an immortal dwelling; He also created man with His own hands and according [254v] to His own munificent image; and He put him into the tenderness of Paradise, (and commanded him) to be sinless and to remain immortal. But that miserable (man) obeyed the evil and by means of death-bringing Paradise, inherited the cursed earth, becoming an heir of death instead of immortality. Therefore, at the completion of time, (through His) compassionate and creative nature, seeing that His image had undergone sins and had become a servant to sinners and death, the Son of God came into being, (who is also) Son of the Virgin and consubstantial with the Father, (also) Son of Man; and through his deified body, the debts of Adam were paid by means of his carrying all human passions, thus setting (man) free from sins. He voluntarily submitted to death on a cross and became the Father’s sacrifice of reconciliation; and with his incorruptible blood he established the New Church (which is) paradise of immortality; and from it he poured out the four rivers in order to water the earth’s surface, that is to say – in order to spread his God-spoken teaching, which spoke about his incarnation; and he taught his disciples saying: “Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart” [Mt 11:29].*

²⁸ It is well known that in Armenian colophons a special space is reserved for remembering the family members of the manuscript owner. It is my understanding that, if, during the production of the manuscript, a few lines preserved for the owner’s relatives are deliberately left unwritten, it is done with the intention to fill in that part after the acquisition of the manuscript.

Therefore, from the order of the apostles four evangelists were chosen, who became God's hand and mouth, for they filled the universes with the Gospel of Christ and, instead of the divine chariots which the prophet saw by the river of Chebar [Ez 1:1], these appeared inside the church, because the man's face has a resemblance to the happy Matthew, who says that God's Word was brought out through (the body of) Mary as a human, (who was) son of Abraham and of David [Mt 1:1-16]. And the lion's face resembles the chaste Mark, who says that Jesus came out from (the river) Jordan like a lion, and he was with beasts [Mk 1:9-13] 1255r1. And the appearance of a bull resembles the sweet-tongued Luke, because, as it is said, (like) Christ, (he) meekly went to be slain to return the prodigal [Lk 15:11-32]. And the resemblance to the eagle symbolizes John the Theologian, who soared aloft on high, thundering out "In the beginning was the Word" [Jn 1:1], following which he announced concerning his human nature. Some gave their soul to God through the suffering of their body on a cross; others, through their transient natures, acquired the Incorruptible. Similarly, in such a manner, this adorable book – spoken by God – was desired by gentle, good and faithful m(a)łtesi²⁹ priest Yakob and his son m(a)łtesi Minas the deacon, and his spouse Yustianē, and his father, tēr Yakob, and the wife of the elder, m(a)łtesi Širin, and his brothers Ealu, Minas and K'ristostur, and his sisters Ealuť, Yustianē, Yannay, and his other consanguineous relatives, who acquired this (Gospel) with possessions honestly earned by them.

Now I beseech you all who will use this Holy Gospel, who will be delighted in this endless sea and who will be flourished by this unpurchasable treasure, remember in your prayers m(a)łtesi tēr Yakob and m(a)łtesi Minas the clerk, and ask for forgiveness for their sins! And those of you who remember, may you be remembered before God, Amen.

This Holy Gospel was copied in the Armenian Era 1056 [1607], on the 23th of December³⁰, in a bitter and cruel time, when the whole land was ruined by the čalalis³¹, and we were driven away becoming refugees and

²⁹ *M(a)łtesi* or *mahtesi* was an honorific title among the Armenians, which could be acquired after the fulfillment of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Approaching the word from Armenian etymology, it is translated literally as "someone who has seen the death" (*mah* – death, *tes[nel]* – to see), hinting at the place where Christ was crucified, i.e. the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, the most important destination for Christian pilgrims. The title *mahtesi* is equivalent to Muslim *hadji*, which could be acquired after a pilgrimage to Mecca.

³⁰ See above, n. 7.

³¹ This account on the devastation of the land by the *čalalis* (*jalali*, *calali*, or *celali* according to other transcription systems) is about the bandit movement in the Ottoman Empire started at the end of the 16th century, which initially grew out of the economic strife and population growth within the empire. The activities of *jalalis* included robbery, pillage and abuse, sometimes accompanied by destructive raids, murders, and kidnappings,

came to the city of Stampawl [Istanbul], which is protected by God. It was written by the hand of the sinful and skill-less scribe Mik'ayēl in the capital of Stampawl, in the quarter of 1255v| Vlanka, at the door of Surb Nikawlayos³² under the primacy of the valiant patriarch Grigor³³. Now, I pray you all to remember in your holy prayers the owner of this (Gospel) and all of his consanguineous relatives – those who live and those who passed away in Christ [the next line is unwritten³⁴]. Once more, remember me, scribe Mik'ayēl, and my parents, and all my other consanguineous kinsmen [two lines are unwritten]. Again, remember the honourable priests of Surb Nikawlayos – the priests from the Abrahamean family, and the church keeper, and the other good people, who lent me the model. May He, the Creator God, have mercy on you who remember, and on us who will be remembered, and to Him be glory for ever, Amen.

2.2. Colophons by the artist

164բ (fig. 14)՝ Ո՛Ղ, աղաչեմ զամենեսեան՝ որք օգտիք ի սմանէ տեսանելով եւ կամ օրինակելով, յիշեսցի՛ք վերելեակ աղաւթիւք ձեր նկարողի սորին ըստանպաւլցի Յովանէս աբեղայս, որ անունս ունիմ եւ գործս ոչ. աղաչեմ, աղաչեմ: 165ա՛ խնամող, պաշտող սորին արհուլթիւնն ի յԱստուծոյ անուն:

1106բ՝ Յիշեցէ՛ք ի ճաքրափայլ աղաւթս ձեր նկարագրողի սորին գՅովանէսի, որ եմ ի քաղաքէն Բուզանդիու, եւ աշակերտ բանի եւ տեսոն տէր Յակոբ Ջէրբունեցոյ ըստանոյ: 1107ա՛ Ո՛Ղ, աղաչեմ զձեզ, զի խնամով բռնէք, որ բազում աշխատութեամբ կատարեցի վասն անհմուտութեան իմոյ, զի օրինակ ոչ կայր:

1175ա՛ Եթէ՛ ոք յանդգնաբար ձեռօք ձեռամուխ լինի, պատիժն Կայենի առցէ:

which resulted in population movements within the empire. As reflected in many Armenian sources, including the colophon of CB 34, a part of indigenous Armenian population was forced to leave their lands, mostly giving preference to the western, less threatening, parts of the empire. According to the account of Simēon Lehaç'i, who visited Istanbul in 1611, more than 40 000 households of Armenian refugees (ղարիպ / *tarip* – stranger, refugee) moved to Istanbul, Łalata (Galata) and Skutar (Üsküdar) in order to escape the *ĵalalis*. See *Simēon dpri Lehaç'woy Utegrut'iw*n, p. 8; *The Travel Accounts of Simēon of Poland*, p. 33. For *ĵalalis* and population movements resulted from this phenomenon, see BARKEY, *Bandits and Bureaucrats*, p. 141-188; WHITE, *The Climate of Rebellion*, p. 163-225. For the situation of the Armenian population during this movement, see ZULALYAN, *ĵalalineri šarĵumə*; KOUYMIJIAN, *Sous le joug des Turcomans*, p. 392.

³² On the church of Surb Nikawlayos, see above, notes 8 and 9.

³³ Grigor (Kesarac'i) was the Armenian patriarch of Istanbul, who held this position several times between 1601 and 1636. He hosted Simēon Lehaç'i in 1611, when the latter stayed in the city for half a year. For this sojourn and Lehaç'i's account on patriarch Grigor, see *Simēon dpri Lehaç'woy Utegrut'iw*n, p. 7-9; *The Travel Accounts of Simēon of Poland*, p. 33-34.

³⁴ For an explanation of why a few lines of colophons might be left unwritten, see above, n. 28.

Translation

lFol. 64v (fig. 14) | *O, I plead all those who will make use of this (Gospel) by looking at it or copying it, in your prayers to-be-raised remember me, Yovanēs, a monk from Stampawl, its painter, for which I have the name only, and not the skill. I plead, I plead.* l65r | *May God’s blessing be upon the person who will preserve this Gospel with care.*

lFol. 106v | *Remember in your pure-gleaming prayers Yovanēs from the city of Byzantium, maker of images of this (Gospel) and disciple of tēr Yakob, rabuni [chief-teacher] from Zēyt’un.* l107r | *O, I plead you to hold (this Gospel) carefully, for I worked hard on it by my unskilled self without having a model.*

lFol. 175r | *If someone impudently damages (this Gospel), may Cain’s punishment be upon him.*

2.3. Later colophons

Fol. 236r, in the right margin: “ՌԲՃ. ԷԼ Կ.”

Translation: “[Armenian Era] 1260 [1811]”.

Fly-leaf 2A, in purple ink added sometime in the 20th century: “Կը պատկանի Ս. Գեորգ եկեղեցոյ Եւդոկիոյ.”

Translation: “Belongs to the church of S. Gēorg of Ewdokia”.

3. *The Artist and His Source: Step’anos Siwnec’i’s Commentary of Canon Tables*

The manuscript was illustrated by Yovanēs Stampawlc’i, who, as we learn from one of his three colophons, was a pupil of Yakob from the city of Zeyt’un (present-day Süleymanlı). In the lower margins of the illustrated canon tables (figs. 3-13), there is a hitherto undocumented version of Step’anos Siwnec’i’s *Commentary of Canon Tables*, the text of which was copied by Yovanēs himself (and not by the scribe Mik’ayēl). Commentaries of canon tables, which represent a well-established tradition in the medieval Armenian exegetical genre and often apply number and color symbolism, are theoretical texts comprising detailed interpretations of the images used in canon tables (*xorank’* in Armenian³⁵), becoming thus unique sources for the study of illustrated canon tables.

³⁵ The set of canon tables represents the concordance system of the contents of the four Gospels, which is displayed through their numerical equivalents in tabular form. For main studies on canon tables, see NORDENFALK, *Die spätantiken Kanontafeln*, and, most recently, CRAWFORD, *The Eusebian Canon Tables*.

The Armenian tradition of Gospel illustration has produced an impressive number of specimens that contain canon tables, yet it is not very common for artists, while decorating the canon tables, to mention or reproduce the exact sources they have used, by placing them immediately below the illustrated canon tables. The CB 34 represents one of those few examples, giving us the possibility to explore and comprehend the meanings of the images and motifs, the interpretations of which are placed below each canon table.

On the basis of current knowledge, it seems likely that the tradition of placing these Commentary texts below the canon tables occurred in post-medieval times. Besides the 17th-century manuscript in question, such an approach is applied in two manuscripts kept in the British Museum (now in the British Library) – Or. 2707 and Or. 5737. The first manuscript was created in 1542 in the village of Sołac in Xlat' (present-day Ahlat), while the second one, illustrated by Mesrop of Xizan, was completed in 1608 in Šōš (i.e. Isfahan) after the miniaturist moved to that city³⁶. In his new workplace, Mesrop was not the only artist to include the Commentary text below the canon tables, for this practice appears also in a Gospel manuscript dating from 1607, illustrated by Mesrop's well-known contemporary, Yakob Ĵuļayec'i (i.e. from Ĵuļay/Isfahan)³⁷.

The version of Siwnec'i's Commentary in CB 34, whose text and an annotated translation are given in the following paragraph, represents an abbreviated and revised version of that commentary. It differs not only in its being an abridgment but also in having a number of incongruities in both structure and content with the long version attributed to the same author of the 8th century³⁸. It should be noted that Step'anos Siwnec'i

³⁶ CONYBEARE, *Catalogue*, p. 32-35 (Or. 2707), 42-44 (Or. 5737); NERSESSIAN, *Armenian Illuminated Gospel-Books*, p. 34-35, fig. 24. The same folios of Or. 5737 are also reproduced in NERSESSIAN, *The Bible in the Armenian Tradition*, p. 72-73.

³⁷ Isfahan (Šōš), Surb Sargis church, ms 105/396 (8). Two folios with canon tables and commentaries on them are reproduced in DER NERSESSIAN – MEKHITARIAN, *Armenian Miniatures from Isfahan*, fig. 107, and in DRAMPYAN, *Արտ Դաշտաբազմ*, figs. 107-108. However, in these publications, the Commentary text that occurs below canon tables has remained unnoticed.

³⁸ The first publication of Step'anos Siwnec'i's *Commentary of Canon Tables*, though somewhat incomplete, was done by Garegin Sruanjteanc' (SRUANJTEANC', *T'oros Ałbar*, p. 192-194). Later, when preparing the catalogue of Armenian manuscripts kept in the Freer Gallery of Art (Washington), Sirarpie Der Nersessian reproduced the Commentary text that was found in the 12th-century Gospel manuscript FGA 50.3 (DER NERSESSIAN, *Armenian Manuscripts in the Freer Gallery of Art*, p. 103-104, mentioned as *Symbolic interpretation of the canon tables*). This text was translated into English by James R. Russell (RUSSELL, *Step'anos Siwnec'i*). During the last decades, an important contribution to the subject was made by Vigen Ghazaryan, who prepared critical texts of thirteen different commentaries of canon tables, including the one by Step'anos Siwnec'i, which is based on twenty manuscripts

appears to be the first author to have composed a commentary of canon tables (at least the first one whose name is indicated as such)³⁹. Not surprisingly, the analogous commentaries created during the next centuries are largely influenced by Siwnec'i. Already in medieval times, the similarities between the texts of different authors resulted in incorrect (or partially incorrect) attributions of these texts. Thus, different parts of Step'anos Siwnec'i's Commentary appear elsewhere under the authorship of both Siwnec'i and Nersēs Šnorhali, although the earliest extant manuscript dating from the 11th century (Matenadaran 7737) excludes Šnorhali from being the original author of this text. As will be demonstrated below, the version of CB 34, whose title clearly mentions the authorship of Step'anos Siwnec'i, also has a number of convergences with the texts attributed to other authors.

Besides Step'anos Siwnec'i and Nersēs Šnorhali, commentaries of canon tables were composed by Vanakan vardapet, Grigor Tat'ewac'i, Grigor Xlat'ec'i Cerenc', Step'anos Zig Ĵulayec'i and several anonymous authors active in different centuries. Notwithstanding the absence of commentaries of canon tables in other languages, these exegetical texts can probably serve for the study of non-Armenian illustrated canon tables as well, especially if one takes into consideration that these texts were composed on the basis of early church fathers' writings. This can be seen, for instance, in Nersēs Šnorhali's *Commentary of Canon Tables* – the largest and the most detailed text among those known⁴⁰ – in which the 12th-century theologian refers to the origins of this tradition, writing specifically that the interpretations of canon tables resulted from earlier studies that were undertaken by “the learned holy fathers and our brothers”, who were conscious “that the first fathers did not depict the ten canon tables with floriform and colorful images in vain, but created them with spiritual wisdom.”⁴¹

dating from the 11th to the 18th centuries. See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut'iwnek' xoranac'*, p. 255-262, also p. 81-91. This edition is almost identically reproduced in *Step'anosi Siwnec' episkoposi Meknut'iwnek' xoranac'n*. In the present analysis, while referring to commentaries of canon tables, I will use Ghazaryan's publication and Russell's English translation, if applicable.

³⁹ For a discussion on Step'anos Siwnec'i's being the earliest or among the earliest author(s) of commentaries of canon tables, see K'IRWTEAN, *Meknut'iwnek' xoranac'*, p. 426-427.

⁴⁰ For the critical text of the *Commentary of Canon tables* attributed to Šnorhali, based on 26 manuscripts, see GHAZARYAN, *Meknut'iwnek' xoranac'*, p. 266-299. For earlier publications of Šnorhali's *Commentary* (sometimes attributed to both Šnorhali and Yovhannēs Erznkac'i), see *Meknut'iwnek' saks tash xoranac'n*, p. 5-12; XAC'ATUREAN, *Manrankernerə gatap'arapatkerner*, p. 290-296; K'IRWTEAN, *Meknut'iwnek' xoranac'*. For English translation, see RUSSELL, *Nersēs Klayec'i*.

⁴¹ Այստիկ սրբազան ուսումնասիրաց հարց և եղբարց մերոց սակաւ ինչ պատճառ հանճարոյ և հիմն սկսման բանակիս աւետեաց, զի զիտասցուք, եթէ ոչ վայրապար և առանց

While interpretations of various symbols are in general in accordance with the majority of the commentary texts, the location of these motifs (both in miniature and in text) often vary from one canon table to the other. This deviation can be observed not only in the commentaries attributed to different authors but also in various versions of one commentary, as is the case of CB 34. Another point worth emphasizing is that, while the number of illustrated canon tables can vary, the interpretations of certain symbols found in various commentaries usually remain constant, which can be explained by the relative conservativeness in this concordance system tradition. The latter is associated with Eusebius of Caesarea, who invented the system of ten canons and who is also considered to be the most probable source for how canon tables had to be shaped and decorated, so that they would match perfectly the contents of the ten canons. However, although the majority of the earliest survived illustrated canon tables related to the so-called Eusebian archetype (including notably the 10th-century Ējmiacin Gospel, which is considered to be the closest example to this archetype⁴²) has ten canon tables on ten pages, deviations from this ‘standard’ can also be observed. Indeed, when analyzing images used in canon tables through the help of the Armenian commentaries of canon tables, one can face difficulties not only in various incongruities between the texts and images but also in the number of canon tables, as sometimes they can be more than ten or less than ten. With its ten canon tables, the Gospel of the Bodmer Foundation belongs to the aforesaid ‘archaic’ system.

In the following passages, using the example of CB 34, I will analyze the illustrations of the ten canon tables as they are interpreted in the accompanying *Commentary* attributed to Step’anos Siwnec’i. The folios in parentheses indicate the *Commentary* text and its translation that follow this discussion (paragraph 4).

Before beginning the analysis of the text and illustrations, a few words should be said about the inscribed legends that appear inside, on, and below the arches, within the large rectangles of each canon table. These legends indicate the exact number of parallels in each canon. As can be seen in the first canon table and as it is written inside its two arches, the first canon has four parallels and, consequently, four columns below each of the two arches (fol. 3v, fig. 6). Each column corresponds to one Gospel, which means that, in the first canon, all four Gospels have parallels with

Խորհրդոյ են նկարեալ զճաղկածն քանդուածս զոյնագոյն երանգոց Խորհրդական Խորանացս տասանց հարֆն առաջինք, այլ հոգեւորժ իմաստիւք տեսեալ գասացեալս՝ յաւրինեցին զայս... See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut'iwkn' xoranac'*, p. 294.

⁴² NORDENFALK, *Die spätantiken Kanontafeln*, p. 65-72 (esp. 71-72), 109, 111-112, etc.

each other. Similarly, in the second canon, only three Gospels (Mt, Mk, Lk) correspond to each other, consequently, there are three columns under each arch (fol. 4r, fig. 7). The reason of having such a clear system of concordance is explicately explained in the *Commentary of Canon Tables* edited by Grigor Xlat'ec'i Cerenc', who explains this by referring to the Letter of Eusebius addressed to Carpianos⁴³:

*The reason why the ten canon tables were created is first of all because a certain bishop Carpianos from Mediterranean asked Eusebius, the church philosopher, "to stamp for us a faultless concordance of the Gospels, which would indicate where exactly all four (Gospels) are in accord with each other, where only three of them, where two and where only one. (Then) list the chapter numbers, so that the heretics will not be able to steal it and that we can easily follow each chapter, without getting lost!"*⁴⁴

The final passages of Xlat'ec'i's *Commentary* further discloses the origins and reasons for illustrated canon tables:

Now, all these [commentaries of canon tables] were written by the holy fathers on account of studious people, so that the unlearned ones would not be able to say that the canon tables and columns, the trees and birds are depicted in vain. Although my writing [i.e. the commentary] is just an example, in reality we recognize the Intelligible through our senses and only after that are we able to perceive it more or less, because first it is seen through our physical eyes and only after can it have an effect on the spiritual eye. And this is the very reason for (illustrating) the ten canon tables.

*Carpianos the Egyptian asked Eusebius, the history writer and the church scholar, for the table of contents of Gospels because of the heretics, so that they would be unable to add or to reduce the Words of the Holy Gospel and thus unable to infect the Holy Writing. Having seen the work of Ammonius of Alexandria, he [Eusebius] strengthened further and clarified the already-prepared table of contents and invented the index because of the followers of Sabianos, and prepared the ten canon tables and put the concordances inside them.*⁴⁵

⁴³ As a rule, the set of canon tables begins with the Letter of Eusebius addressed to Carpianos, in which the concordance system is explained. This Letter is ideologically inseparable from the entire set of canon tables, which is also confirmed by commentaries of canon tables.

⁴⁴ Իսկ ժ խորանաց պատճառ նախ այն է, որ գրեալն է, թէ Կարպիանոս ոմն Միջերկրեայ եպիսկոպոսի խնդրեաց յԵւսեբեայ եկեղեցական իմաստասիրէ, երէ դրոճմեա մեզ անսխալ զհամաձայնութիւն Աւետարանացն, թէ ո՞ր միաբանին չորսն, կամ ու՞ր երեքն եւ կամ յորո՞ւմ տեղոջ երկուսն, եւ ու՞ր յատուկ առանձնացեալք, եւ զհամարս տանցն ցանկեացես, զի մի գոյացին ի հերեսիտացն, եւ զի դիրաւ կացցուք իւրաքանչիւրոցն ի վերայ առանց մոլորութեան: See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut'iwkn' xoranac'*, p. 308-309. A similar explanation is also found in Nersēs Šnorhali's version of *Commentary of Canon Tables*. See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut'iwkn' xoranac'*, p. 272-273.

⁴⁵ Արդ, ի պատճառ ուսումնասիրաց գրեցին զայսոսիկ սուրբ հարքն, որ չատեն անգէտքն, թէ վայրապար է նկարած խորանքս եւ սիւներս, ծառերս եւ հաւերս: Թէպէտ արիւնակ է գրեալս, բայց զգալեաւս նանաչեմք զիմանալին եւ ապա փոքրիւստէ զիտեճալ կարեմք, զի մարմնոյ աչօխ նախ տեսեալ եւ ապա ի հոգոյն ակն ազդեալ: Արդ, այս է պատճառ ժ խորանացս:

In the *Commentary* text of CB 34, the interpretations of only the first two canon tables almost entirely correspond to the known version of Step'anos Siwnec'i's *Commentary*, and among these two, the reference to the second canon table is more explicit. The rest of the abridgment coincides with the long version only partly. These deviating parts can mostly be found in the large version but in reference to different canon tables.

According to both – long and abbreviated – versions, the peacocks of the first two canon tables (figs. 4-5) symbolize the Old Law⁴⁶. The peacocks which appear on the top of the first two canon tables (which often correspond to the Letter of Eusebius⁴⁷) are the most constant symbols in the illustrations of canon tables in general. Siwnec'i refers to the Old Testament as 'belonging' to "the prophets and sages", who are "not speaking in the New church", that is to say, have no active presence in the New Testament (fol. 1v)⁴⁸. Similarly, in the manuscript in question, on the top of the first two canon tables, two peacocks are depicted with open mouths, indicating thus the "speaking" prophets and sages of the Old Testament. The *Commentary* text of our manuscript also tells us that the columns of the first two tables are painted purple and that they symbolize "the essential establishment of the thrones of outer elements" (fol. 1v). The passage then finishes with a mention of the color blue which "is painted in the middle", although without specifying in the middle of what. This ambiguity can be clarified through other commentaries, but also through the painting of the same folio, in which the *table*⁴⁹, i.e. the upper rectangular part, is filled in with blue floral ornaments. The long version provides us with some more details about the colors and meanings of that rectangular part, particularly the circles of various colors that frame the images of Eusebius and Carpianos⁵⁰:

Կարպիանոս Եզրիպտացիին խնդրեաց յԵւսեբեայ պատմագրէ եւ յԵկեղեցւոյ վարդապետէ զցանկ Աւետարանիս վասն հերետիկոսացն հերձուածողաց, որ ոչ յաւելուին եւ կամ պակսեցրնէին ի Բանից Սուրբ Աւետարանիս եւ ապականէին զՍուրբ Գրիս: Զոր տեսեալ Ամոնի Արեւսանդրացւոյ, այլ ամբացոյց եւ պարզեալ զժողովեալ ցանկն եւ արար զցրրուացանկն՝ վասն սաբիանոսացն, եւ արարեալ գտան խորանսն եւ զհամարաբառս ի մէջ խորանացն: See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut'iwink' xoranac*, p. 316-317.

⁴⁶ In fact, the peacocks are mentioned in reference to the first canon table only, but, while describing the second canon table, the text refers to it as being equal to the first canon table. This is also confirmed by the illustrations of the first and second canon tables, which both contain images of peacocks (figs. 4-5).

⁴⁷ See above, n. 43.

⁴⁸ As said, here and below, the folio in parentheses indicates the text and its translation that follow this discussion (paragraph 4).

⁴⁹ In Classical Armenian, the word *xoran* translates as both 'table' and 'altar', which were not very different in their original meanings. As mentioned above, in commentaries of canon tables, *xoran* is the word used for *canon table*.

⁵⁰ զի ի ներքս ունելով զսեաւաղեղսն, զիսկական գոյութիւնն ցուցանէ, եւ նրբագոյն վասն առջին տեսաւղացն, յորոյ վերայ զկարմիրն կամարածեալ վասն արեան գոհիցն պատարագաց՝

Inside (the canon table), the black color symbolizes the true existence, which has a subtle coloring on account of those who were able to contemplate first, and the red, painted above it, in a vaulted form, represents the blood of the sacrifice as an entreaty to God. And the blue, which is painted in the middle, represents physical substances when assigning the priesthood.

In the Bodmeriana manuscript, only the last sentence about the color blue can be found (fol. 1v), although all other colors explained above are also reproduced in the corresponding canon table (fig. 4).

According to the *Commentary* of CB 34, the decorations of the third and fourth canon tables “transmit the mystery of the arrival of the Theophany, taking its beginning from the first canon” (fol. 3v)⁵¹. This last notion referring to the first canon illustrates the ideological connectivity within the set of canon tables, which is also reflected in other canon tables. Continuing to stress the appearance of God, Siwnec’i employs number symbolism, writing particularly that the third canon table is on the account of “the three faces of the united Godhead” (fol. 3v), i.e. Holy Trinity.

The next sentence of Siwnec’i’s *Commentary* in CB 34 deviates from its long version. Instead of roosters and dove-like birds, the text and images of the third and fourth canon tables represent fish-hunting birds (ձկնախաղ) ⁵². These are depicted as two open-mouthed birds, with a headless fish between them (figs. 6-7), and are described as “fishing in the water” (fol. 3v). Apparently, this refers to Mt 4:19, 21, Mk 1:17 and Lk 5:10, in which Christ calls fishermen – the apostles-to-be – to follow him and to “fish/hunt for people”. More detailed interpretations for the images of fish-hunting birds are given in three other commentaries of canon tables, composed by Nersēs Šnorhali, Grigor Tat’ewac’i and Grigor Xlat’ec’i. While speaking of why fish-eating birds are depicted above canon tables, all three authors explain this as symbolizing “the apostles-fishermen”, who were hunting men by the command of the Lord⁵³.

Ի խնդիր Աստուծոյ էլաւոցն: Իսկ միջոցն կապուտակ նկարէն երփնեալ՝ վասն մարմնաւոր գնացիւք զհոգեւորն կարգելով: See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut’iwkn’ xoranic’*, p. 256-257.

⁵¹ This interpretation is in complete accordance with the description of the third canon table found in the large version. See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut’iwkn’ xoranic’*, p. 257.

⁵² Images of these water birds are sometimes associated with either pelicans or herons. The known texts however never specify the type of birds, stressing only on their capacity of hunting fishes.

In the larger version attributed to Siwnec’i, these fish-hunting birds appear in the fifth canon table. See Ghazaryan, *Meknut’iwkn’ xoranic’*, p. 261.

⁵³ (Šnorhali) ...կան հաւքն ձկնախաղ, որք գառաբէլոցն ձկնորսացն բացայայտեն մեզ զխորհուրդ, որք եղեն որսորդք մարդկան հրամանաւ Տեառն’ ի մահուանէ ի կեանս որսալով զհաւատացեալս Աւետարանին: / ...are the herons, which reveal the meaning of the apostles, (who were) fishermen. They by the command of the Lord became hunters of men, hunting the faithful of the Gospel from death into life.

Also in his *Brief Commentary on Four Gospels*, Step'anos Siwnec'i associates fishermen's role with that of the apostles, calling them "hunters of men's souls, who are hunting them with their magisterial (fishing) nets, thus saving them from the recalcitrant dragon that wants to hunt everyone with its own nets in order to cast them into the eternal fire."⁵⁴

Once again, Siwnec'i's *Commentary* – as all commentaries of canon tables in general – demonstrates the continuity and connectivity within the set of the canon tables, by bringing together the Old and New Testament episodes. This idea is expressed through the symbols of the prophets (peacocks of the first and second canon tables) and those of the apostles (fish-hunting birds in the third and fourth canon tables). Correlations between prophets and apostles can also be found in the preface of Šnorhali's *Commentary on Matthew*:

*Upon the appearance of Christ on the earth, the order of the apostles was chosen after that of the prophets; and [Christ] ordered the apostles to be hunters of men, bestowing upon them power and the wisdom of the Spirit, so that they would be able to gather into the treasuries of the heavenly kingdom the seed that was produced by the prophets.*⁵⁵

The decorations of the fourth canon table are explained as manifesting "the faces of the church, having the red blood of Christ inside its arches" (fol. 4r, fig. 7). In the large version, by "the faces of the church" are meant the four colors, which stand for the four Gospels⁵⁶, so each Gospel

(Tat'ewac'i) ...նոյնպէս ձկնաբաղի են առաքելքն: / ...also fish-hunting birds, which are the apostles.

(Cerenc') Էւ կան ի սմա հաւ ձկնաբաղի՝ հանդէպ աբաղաղացն, որ օրինակ են առաքելոցն ձկնորսաց: / And on this (canon table), opposite the cocks, there are fish-hunting birds which are models for apostles-fishermen.

For the original texts in Armenian, see GHAZARYAN, *Meknut' iwnk' xoranac'*, p. 289 (for the text of Šnorhali), 336 (for the text of Tat'ewac'i), 315 (for the text of Cerenc'). The English translation of Šnorhali's text is from RUSSELL, *Nersēs Klayec'i*, p. 210.

⁵⁴ Արկանէին զգործիս իւրեանց ուղկան կոչեցեալ ի ծովս յալէկոծութեան կենցաղոյս, իսկ յործամ արծանաւորեցան տեսանել զանկոծելի գլոյսն եւ լուսաւորիլ նովաւ, յայնծամ բողեալ զգործ զանցանել ի լուսոյն հետեւեցան ի մեծն յիմանալի եւ յանանցանելի լոյսն, յազգս աշխարհիկ որսորդի ոգւոց մարդկան, որսալով զնոսս եւ կորզելով ցանցաւ իւրեանց վարդապետութեամբն ի ժանեաց եւ ի բերանոյ կամակոր վիճապին, որ կամի զամենայն մարդ որսալ եւ արկանել յիւր ի ցանցան, ի հուրն յախտենական: See *Step'anos meknut' iwn*, p. 163-164.

⁵⁵ Որոյ [i.e. Քրիստոս] եկեալ յաշխարհ եւ ընտրեալ զդասս առաքելոցն՝ յետ մարգարէիցն՝ հրամայեաց լինել որսորդս մարդկան՝ տալով նրանց զօրութիւն եւ զՀոգւոյն իմաստութիւն, որպէս զի գառ ի մարգարէիցն արդիւնաւորեալ հասկս ժողովեցեն յրօտեմարանս արաբալորեան երկնից: See Nersēs Šnorhali, *Meknut' iwn Matt'ēosi*, p. 17 (in Preface, which represents Šnorhali's letter addressed to Catholicos Grigor III, by whose order he composed the *Commentary on Matthew*, later to be completed by Yovhannēs Erzncac'i), also p. 82-83.

⁵⁶ Իսկ ապա չորրորդն յայտնէ գդէմս եկեղեցւոյ չորս դեղաւին: See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut' iwnk' xoranac'*, p. 258. For the English translation, see RUSSELL, *Step'anos Siwnec'i*, p. 207.

represents one face of the church. Here again, number symbolism is applied, by placing the church's four faces/Gospels in the fourth canon table. As for the red color, which appears inside the arches, it symbolizes Christ's blood, hinting thus at his incarnation. The palm-trees depicted in both the third and fourth canon tables are described as growing up from the earth to reach the superior orders, which echoes Ps 84:12/85:11: "Truth sprouts from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven."

The fifth canon table has a meaning similar to the previous one, but here, the shadow is gradually diminished by the red color (of Christ's blood), which shines brighter (fol. 5v, fig. 8). Lily blossoms are also depicted here meaning that "the Cross has come near", through which, it says, the pagans' salvation will come. On the arches of the fifth canon table, there are also images of two dove-like birds, "which received the Holy Spirit" (fol. 5v)⁵⁷.

The sixth canon table is said to be equally honorable to the fifth one, and indeed, they are depicted alike. However, the sixth canon table highlights the unity and "mystery of Old and New Testaments", which is visually expressed through the interlocked necks of two birds, depicted above that canon table (fol. 6r, fig. 9). Here too, the sequence deviates from the large version of Siwnec'i's *Commentary*, in which these birds appear in the fourth canon table, accompanied with a similar, but more detailed interpretation: "And the two birds with red beaks and red breasts, like the servants of the first canon table, (are shown thus) because even though in body they were separate from the new mysteries [i.e. New Testament], still with their voices and with their mouths they convey the same mystery"⁵⁸.

In the seventh canon table, according to the text, the red color (of Christ's blood) "becomes more intense, (and) priesthood enters underneath the arch" (fol. 7v). The meaning of the latter can be disclosed by the help of an anonymous *Commentary of Canon Tables*, in which it is said that "the new priesthood [i.e. the priesthood of the New Testament] was inserted inside the church through arches."⁵⁹

⁵⁷ The large version attributed to Siwnec'i represents the dove-like birds not in the fifth but in the fourth canon table. See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut'iwkn' xoranac'*, p. 258-259. For the English translation, see RUSSELL, *Step'anos Siwnec'i*, p. 206.

⁵⁸ The English translation is from RUSSELL, *Step'anos Siwnec'i*, p. 207. For the original text in Armenian, see GHAZARYAN, *Meknut'iwkn' xoranac'*, p. 260.

⁵⁹ Իսկ թ խորանն նրբագոյն է կամարածե կարմիր, որ է ցոյց գալստեան Տեան մերո ժամանակին, որ իննեակ երանութեամբն նուրբ շախլս յարիւնեաց **նորոյ քահանայութեանս, գորս ընդ կամարով եկեղեցո եմուծ'** կառուցեալ արեան եւ մարմնոյ իւրո սպասաւորս: See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut'iwkn' xoranac'*, p. 351.

The next part related to the seventh canon table has a series of deviations from the known long version. Here, there are images of partridges (fig. 10), which, according to the CB 34 version, “represent the prostitute Rahab, who was the foremother of Christ” (fol. 7v), as well as Mary, who appears shortly after (“And again, there are partridges, which represent Mary the prostitute.” fol. 8r). This part about Rahab and Mary’s being Christ’s foremothers is missing from the seventh canon table of the long version, but is present in its fifth canon table⁶⁰. A closer and somewhat more explicit reference is also to be found in the above-mentioned anonymous *Commentary*, which represents the partridges as symbolizing “the prostitutes Rahab and T’amar, who, purifying themselves, became the foremothers of the Savior.”⁶¹ I would like to pause here to consider another meaning of partridges accounted in illustrations of Armenian Gospel books. In a Gospel manuscript dating from the 14th century (Matenadaran 4820), a symbolic temple is depicted, labeled as “the temple of Solomon” and showing an unusual Presentation of Christ in the Temple (fig. 15). What is of interest to us is the depiction of twelve partridges on the roof of the temple with an accompanying inscription “Կախաւն ժԲ. առաքելոցն աւրինակ է” (“The partridges are samples of the twelve apostles”), i.e. they symbolize the apostles.

The next symbol mentioned and depicted in the seventh canon table of CB 34 refers to candle-holding monkeys, which “represent the apostles, who were dispersed to illuminate the indolent human race by the power of Christ” (fol. 8r, fig. 11). Monkeys are missing in the large version of Siwnec’i’s *Commentary*, and for their other meanings, I will follow again the explanations provided by other authors. An illustrative interpretation for monkeys is given in another anonymous commentary, dating from the 17th century (Matenadaran 9857): “Monkeys which hold candles symbolize the martyrs, who burned themselves for the sake of Christ’s love.”⁶²

And finally, the seventh canon table includes the text and images of double horns, each of them symbolizing the five Laws of Moses (fol. 8r, fig. 11)⁶³, most probably hinting at the horns mentioned in Hab 3:4.

⁶⁰ Եւ կախաւն առ պրոնիկն Մարիամ եւ առ Ռախաբն: See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut’iwnk’ xoranac’*, p. 261.

⁶¹ Ըստ որում, հաւս այս խորանի կախաւ ի վերայ կամարացն, որք են նշանակք պողոնիկ կանացն՝ Ռախաբու եւ Ռամարա, որք, մաքրեալք, նախամայրք փրկչին անուանեցան յաւտարանչացն, որ թարգմանի՝ հարսնացեալ եկեղեցի հերանոսաց: See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut’iwnk’ xoranac’*, p. 350.

⁶² Մայմունքն, որք ըմբռնեալք կան զմոմքն, նշանակեն զմարտիրոսքն, որք վասն սիրոյն Քրիստոսի այրեցան հրով: See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut’iwnk’ xoranac’*, p. 344, also p. 158.

⁶³ In the large version of Siwnec’i’s *Commentary*, the mention about the Tablets of the Law is found in the fourth and not the seventh canon table. Compare with GHAZARYAN, *Meknut’iwnk’ xoranac’*, p. 259.

The CB 34 text omits commentary of the eighth canon table probably because it repeats the previous one (figs. 10-11). These are depicted alike, and the text of the commentary appears on both folios (fols. 7v-8r). Indeed, while speaking of the horns depicted inside the canon tables, the author uses the plural form for *canon table* (խորանաղն), thus most likely hinting at both the seventh and eighth canon tables.

The last two canon tables, according to the *Commentary* text, “have the meanings of the New church” (fol. 9v). Their arches are decorated with the images of roosters with golden feathers (figs. 12-13), which are said to “represent those who were worthy of the Spirit, for they purified themselves first” (fol. 9v)⁶⁴. A more precise interpretation for roosters depicted in canon tables is given in another anonymous commentary, dating from the 11th-12th centuries (Matenadaran 2952), in which the role of roosters is associated with that of the prophets: “...as roosters foretell the coming of the morning, so did the prophets predict the coming of Christ.”⁶⁵

After roosters, the version of CB 34 explains the meaning of “the red, which has the color of wine” and symbolizes “Melchizedek’s bringing out the mystery in the face of Christ” (fol. 9v)⁶⁶. Thus, once again the red hints at Christ’s blood, but here this association has a specific connotation with Gen. 14:18, in which Melchizedek, the king of (Jeru)Salem and priest of God Most High, is said to have brought out bread and wine. Hence, (bread and) wine offered by Melchizedek prefigure the Eucharistic (bread and) wine, i.e. Christ’s (body and) blood. Similarly, Siwnec’i’s *Commentary* apparently hints at the interconnection of these two episodes. The ideological transmission from the Old to the New Testament is further expressed through the images of pomegranate trees and horns, which appear in the ninth and tenth canon tables. The pomegranate trees are characterized as “spreading out in one bunch, symbolizing in this way the passing on from the Old canon tables and (Old) testament to the New one” (fol. 9v-10r)⁶⁷, while the pair of horns depicted inside the rectangular on

⁶⁴ In the large version of Siwnec’i’s *Commentary*, this part related to roosters appears in the fifth canon table. See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut’iwnk’ xoranac’*, p. 261. For English translation, see RUSSELL, *Step’anos Siwnec’i*, p. 207.

⁶⁵ Ձի որպէս ափաղաղն ի մէջ մարեացն հրամանատուք էւ սհարկուք, առաքելական շնորհիւն զանագանեալ, էւ որպէս ափաղաղն զուսակեն զառաւառն, նոյնպէս էւ մարգարէքն՝ զգալուստ Քրիստոսի. մարգարէքն՝ առ ի Երուսաղէմ, առաքելքն՝ ի հերթնուս: See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut’iwnk’ xoranac’*, p. 264, also p. 92.

⁶⁶ In the large version of the *Commentary*, the part referring to Melchizedek appears in the second canon table. See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut’iwnk’ xoranac’*, p. 257. For English translation, see RUSSELL, *Step’anos Siwnec’i*, p. 206.

⁶⁷ In the large version of the *Commentary*, the pomegranate trees/branches are found in the fifth canon table. See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut’iwnk’ xoranac’*, p. 260-261. For English translation, see RUSSELL, *Step’anos Siwnec’i*, p. 207.

its either end transmit the mysteries of both Old and New testaments (fol. 10r). Between these double horns, there is an ornate cross painted on blue background, which represents “the crucified one” (fol. 10r) (figs. 12-13).

4. *Text and translation of the Commentary of Canon Tables, fols. 1r-10r*

Ստեփանոսի Սիւնեաց եպիսկոպոսի արարեալ

Fol. 1r Չառաւել հրաւից արժանի սոսկալի գերապանծութեան բանից, գեղեցկազարդեալ պիտանացուածս գառ ի չորից աւետարանչեացն մեզ պիտակառութիւն՝ արտայայտելով վսեմական բանիւ, տասնեցունց կանոնացը նկարակերպ խորանայարկ գունակ-գունակ դեղոցն երփն-երփն երանկմունքն, որոց հիգան գերկնային մարմն[ոյն]⁶⁸ մետաղբուն բացատրելով պարտականապէս, այնպէս համագոյց բանիւ մի առ մի շարաւարեալ զ[ը]նթերցակայիցն հոլովան յարտակալեալ վասն Յիսուսի վկայութեան բանք: Ուստի եւ խորանացն դեղոցն նկարագրութիւնք:

Fol. 1v Արդ առաջին խորանն զանագան դեղովք նկարեալ: Սիւնքն ծիրանիք գիաստատութիւն էական արոտոյն արտաբոյ տարերց: Հաւն ի վերա կամարացն սիրամարգ՝ զՀին օրինացն մարգարէական եւ զընտրողականն **fol. 2r**՝ արտաբոյ յեկեղեցոյ մարմնաւոր պանոնիւք չխօսելով ի նոր յեկեղեցիս:

Ապա երկրորդ խորանն համապատիւ նմին: Իսկ միջօք կապուտակն վասն մարմնաւոր գոյացիւք ի հոգեւորն կարգելով:

Fol. 3v Իսկ երրորդ եւ չորրորդ խորանս զարդարեալ խորհուրդ *աստուածայայտ* եկեալ, սկ[ի]զբն առնու առաջին կանոնէն: Երեք միմիք⁶⁹ միասնական աստուածութեան, որոյ վերա կամարացն հօւք⁷⁰ ձկնաբաղձ ձայնիւ որսորդութեամբ ի ջուրն Հոգոյն առեալ տեսութեամբ մարգարէիցն **fol. 4r**՝ յոտս աւետարան[չ]ացն աւելով [Isa 52:7]⁷¹: Իսկ չորրորդն յայտնէ գղէմս եկեղեցոյ՝ ունելով ի մէջ կամարացն կարմիր արեամբն Քրիստոսի⁷²: Իսկ արմաւենիք ներքուստ ի վեր բուսեալ, քանզի երկրէ աստի համարտութիւն բուսաւ մերնենալով⁷³ առ վերին կարգսն [Ps 84:12/85:11]:

⁶⁸ The word is abbreviated. It can be reconstructed either as մարմնոյն (of the body) or մարմնոցն (of the bodies). In analogous commentaries, both versions can be found.

⁶⁹ The correct writing would be դիմիք.

⁷⁰ The correct writing would be հուք or հոք.

⁷¹ The larger version, in which this part appears in reference to the fifth canon table, represents it as “յոտս աւետարանչացն նայելով” (looking at the feet of the evangelists). See GHAZARYAN, *Meknut' iwnk' xoranac'*, p. 261. For the English translation, see RUSSELL, *Step'anos Siwnec' i*, p. 207.

⁷² For Քրիստոս (Christ), x-like sign is used.

⁷³ The correct writing would be մերձենալով.

Fol. 5v Իսկ հինգերորդ խորանին զնոյնս բերէ խորհուրդ, որ ստուերն պակասի, եւ կարմիրն պայծառանայ, եւ շուշանն ծաղկէ, քանզի խաչն մերձեցաւ՝ յայտնել Քրիստոսի⁷⁴ արեամբն փրկութիւն հերանոսաց: Այլ դեռեւս ստուերանման քաւոյն ի վերա կայ, զի մարգարէակ[ա]ն դեռեւս նշանակէ զխորհուրդս: Իսկ ի վերա կամարացն Բ. աղանակերպ հաւք ի նմա նայելով, վասն զի որք առին Հոգին Սուրբ եւ եղէն ընդունակ Հոգւոյն Սրբոյ:

Fol. 6r Իսկ վեցերորդ խորանն համապատիւ նմին: Եւ ի վերա խորանացն կարմրակտուցք եւ կարմրատոք պարանոցան իրուր փաթթելով Հնոց եւ Նորոց կտակարանաց բերէ զխորհուրդն:

Fol. 7v Իսկ եւթներորդ խորանն սեան նուագեալ եւ կարմիրն հարստացեալ, քահանայութիւն⁷⁵ ընդ կամարաւ եմուտ: Եւ ի վերա խորանացն Բ. կրկին հաւք կախաւ առ Ռախաբ պոռնիկն, որ եղեւ նախամայր Քրիստոսի: Եւ ի մերձ սեանն **fol. 8r** մայմունս բաժան առաքեալս ունի խորհուրդ, որ Քրիստոսի զօրութեամբ լուսաւորեցին զանբանացեալ զազգս մարդկան: Իսկ ի մէջ խորանացն եղջիւրք Ժ. բանիսն օրինացն Մովսէսի՝ Ե. առանձնական եւ Ե.ն հրաժարական: Եւ կրկին կախաւ առ պոռնիկ Մարիամն. նորոց ազատութեան է խորհուրդ:

Fol. 9v Իսկ իններորդ եւ տասներորդ խորանն նորոց եկեղեցոյս է խորհուրդ: Ի վերա սեղանոյն աքաղաղն ոսկէզգեստ փետրաւք, վասն զի Հոգոյն արժանաւորքն նախ զանձինս իւրեանց մաքրէին: Կարմիրն զինէզոյն եզր խորանին զիբնէզոյ⁷⁶ վասն Մեղիսեթեկի բերելով զխորհուրդն [Gen 14:18] վասն ի դէմս Քրիստոսի: Իսկ նոնենիքն ստեղծուցն ի մի փնջի ելեալ՝ օրինակ բերելով զՀին ի **fol. 10r**՝ Նոր խորանաւն եւ կտակարանաւն, դառն եւ լեղի կեղեւովն եւ քաղցրութիւն պտղոյն ի ներս ամանելով: Իսկ եղջիւրք համազոյգ միմեանց եւ համազարդեալք Հնովն եւ Նորովն, ի խաչն եւ ի խաչեալն, առաքեալս եւ մարգարէս:

(COMMENTARY OF CANON TABLES) COMPOSED BY STEP'ANOS,
BISHOP OF SIWNIK⁷⁷

Fol. 1r Worthy of great admiration is the mighty magnificence of the words, which are beautifully adorned in order to express the sublime word spoken by the four evangelists through the ten canons, which are painted as vaulted tables with different colors and variegated hues, for [these canon tables] properly explain the material substances of celestial

⁷⁴ For Քրիստոս (Christ), x-like sign is used.

⁷⁵ For քահանայութիւն (priesthood), “xh” sign is used.

⁷⁶ Reproduced as it appears on the folio.

⁷⁷ Commentaries are placed on folio 1r and below each of the illustrated canon tables (fols. 1v, 2r-3v, 4r-5v, 6r-7v, 8r-9v, 10r – figs. 3-13).

bodies⁷⁸, faithfully transmitting the readings of the testimonies about Jesus. Therefore, here are the descriptions of the paints used in the canon tables.

Fol. 1v Now, the first canon table is painted in different colors. The purple columns are the essential establishment of the thrones of outer elements. The birds on the top of the arches are peacock[s], which represent the Old Law of the prophets and sages, **lfol. 2r** standing outside the church with bodily adornments and not speaking in the New church.

Now, the second canon table is equally honorable to this [i.e. the first canon table]. And the blue, which is painted in the middle, represents physical substances when assigning the priesthood.

Fol. 3v And the third and fourth canon tables are decorated to transmit the mystery of the arrival of the Theophany, taking its beginning from the first canon. (The third canon table expresses) the three faces of the united Godhead, above whose arches there are fish-hunting birds, which are fishing in the water with a hunting voice, (looking) **lfol. 4r** at the feet of the evangelists [Isa 52:7], as it is said in the prophets' vision that was given by the Spirit. And the fourth canon table manifests the faces of the church, having the red blood of Christ inside its arches. And the palm-trees grow up from below, because the truth grew up from this earth and approached the superior orders [Ps 84:12/85:11].

Fol. 5v And the fifth canon table has the same meaning, but the shadow becomes less, and the red becomes brighter, and the lily blossoms, because the cross has come near, announcing the salvation of pagans through the blood of Christ. But there is still the shadowy veil over it, for it still symbolizes the prophetic mysteries. And above the arches there are two birds in the form of dove looking at it; (these are the birds) which received the Holy Spirit and became receptacle of the Holy Spirit.

Fol. 6r And the sixth canon table is equally honorable to this [i.e. the fifth canon table]. And above the canon tables there are (birds) with red beaks and red feet and with interlocked necks, symbolizing the mystery of Old and New Testaments.

Fol. 7v And in the seventh canon table, the black becomes less and the red becomes more intense, and priesthood enters underneath the arch. And the two birds above the canon tables are partridges, which represent the prostitute Rahab, who was the foremother of Christ. And monkeys standing near the column **lfol. 8r** represent the apostles, who were dispersed to illuminate the indolent human race by the power of Christ. And inside the canon tables there are horns, which symbolize the Ten Words

⁷⁸ See above, n. 68.

of the Laws of Moses – five proper and five detached. And again there are partridges, which represent Mary the prostitute: it has the meaning of their liberation.

Fol. 9v And the ninth and tenth canon tables have the meanings of the New church. Above the (altar) table there are roosters dressed in golden feathers, which represent those who were worthy to the Spirit, for they purified themselves first. The red, which has the color of wine, decorates the edges of the canon table, symbolizing Melchizedek's bringing out the mystery [Gen 14:18] in the face of Christ. And the pomegranate branches that are spreading out in one bunch symbolize in this way the passing on from the Old **fol. 10r** canon tables and (Old) testament to the New one, reassembling the sweetness of the fruit through the bitter and bile-tasting peel. And there are identical horns (in these canon tables), which, in a similar way, are adorned with (the mysteries of) the Old and the New (Testaments), in order to represent the cross and the crucified one, the apostles and the prophets.

II. SAINT GALL (SANKT GALLEN), STIFTSBIBLIOTHEK, CODEX 1513

The manuscript was copied in 1775 by Fr. Romano (Romanus) Fromenwiller for the prince-abott Beda Angehrn of Saint Gall most probably at the Abbey of Saint Gall (fig. 16). It is an abbreviated handwritten copy of the two parts of the *Thesaurus linguae Armenicae* (Արամեան լեզուի գրված) by Joachim Schröder, published in 1711 in Amsterdam. The main content of the manuscript is the *Ecclesiae armenicae confessio* (Part 3 of the *Thesaurus linguae Armenicae*), which is followed by an alphabetical table, accompanied by a transliteration of the Armenian letters into Latin characters, copied from Part 2 of the *Thesaurus linguae Armenicae*⁷⁹.

On folio V, there is a full-page depiction of the coat of arms of Beda Angehrn, the manuscript's owner (fig. 17)⁸⁰. The manuscript was apparently copied to satisfy the educational needs of local monks and represents an unusual practice of being reproduced from a printed book and not the other way around.

The first documentation of the manuscript appeared in 1875, when Gustav Scherrer, a scholar in Saint Gall, included it in his *Verzeichniss*

⁷⁹ For the publications of the *Confessio fidei Armenicae ecclesiae* by Joachim Schröder, see SCHRÖDER, *Aramean lezuin ganj*, Part 3: *Confessio Ecclesiae Armenicae Latine reddita, & necessariis notis illustrata*, p. 249/251-298; SCHRÖDER, *Davanut' iwn hawatoy eketec' eac' Hayastaneayc'*, p. 3-48. On significance of Schröder's work and further bibliography, see MAHÉ, *Sur l'alphabet arménien*, p. 46; KOUYMIJIAN, *Un essai de linguistique comparée*.

⁸⁰ *Archives héraldiques suisses*, p. 151-152, figs. 119-120.

*der Handschriften der Stiftsbibliothek von St. Gallen*⁸¹. It is also listed in the *Oriental Manuscripts in Europe and North America* and in the *Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits arméniens*⁸².

Manuscript title: *Confessio fidei Armenicæ ecclesiæ* in Armenian and Latin.

Place of origin: Abbey of Saint Gall.

Date of origin: 1775.

Support: Paper.

Extent: XLV+131, blank folios I-IV, VI, VIII, X, XXIV, 124-131.

Format: 43.8×31 cm.

Foliation: The pagination of the manuscript's main content appears at the upper corners, 1-118. Before the main content, there is a later pagination with pencil, I-XLV.

Page layout: single column, 34×16.5 cm (apr.).

Condition: Good. The edges of the binding are slightly scuffed, but the binding is in an overall good condition. The folios are complete, in fine and clean condition.

Scribe and owner: copied by Fr. Romano (Romanus) Fromenwiler for the prince-abbot Beda Angehrn of Saint Gall.

Decoration:

Ornamented letters: Armenian (120, 121, 122, 123, IX, XXXVI, XXXVIII, XL, XLII, XLIV), Latin (XXXVII, XXXIX, XLI, XLIII, XLIV, XLV).

Ornamented frames: XXXVI, XXXVII, XXXVIII, XL, XLI, XLII, XLIII, XLIV, XLV.

Decorations at the end of folios: XXXVII, XXXVIII, XXXIX, XL, XLI, XLII, XLIII, XLIV, 119, 123.

The decoration at the end of folio 123 comprises the legend "Ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus," which is a citation from chapter 57 of the Benedictine Rule⁸³.

Binding: Red leather richly decorated with golden flower decorations. The spine decoration comprises seven gilt parts that are formed while binding the gatherings on the spine side. The head, the tail and the foredge are partially painted blue, accompanied with ornamental patterns. The front and back gilt endpapers are decorated with flowered engravings.

⁸¹ SCHERRER, *Verzeichniss*, p. 491.

⁸² PEARSON, *Oriental Manuscripts*, p. 169; COULIE, *Répertoire. Supplément IV*, p. 98.

⁸³ *The Rule of Our Most Holy Father St. Benedict*, p. 234.

Note: A small paper label, printed and attached to the front endpaper: “Stiftsbibliothek 1513 St. Gallen.”

Contents:

- VII Title page 1: *Ecclesiae Armenicae Confessio Fidei Catholica ad Grammaticae Doctrinalis Intelligentiam per Analysim et Annotationes Explicata.*
- IX Title page 2 (fig. 16): *Celsissimo, ac Reverend[issi]mo S. R. I. Principi, Domino Domino BEDÆ Exemptorum, ac Sedi Apostolicæ im[m]ediatè subjector[um] Monasteriorum S. Galli & Joannis in Valle Thuræ ABBATI Comiti in Doggenburg Regii Ordinis An[n]untiatae Virginis EQUITI in Sanctissimi Patris nostri Galli festiuitate. Abs devote Filio Fratre Juniore Romano Fromenwiler. Dedicata 1775.*
- XI-XXIII *Celsissime Princeps Reverend[issi]me Pater, Domine Domine Gratos[issi]me* (Dedication by the scribe).
- XXV-XXXV *Præfatio* (Preface).
- XXXVI-XLV (figs. 18-19) Դաւանութիւն Հաւատոյ եկեղեցեաց Հայաստանեայց ս(ուր)բ – *Confessio fidei armenicae ecclesiae sanctae* (each word in the title is written on a separate page in both Armenian and Latin).
- 1-118 *Confessio fidei Armenicae ecclesiae* (in Armenian and Latin, accompanied with analysis). *Compare with: Joachim Schröder, *Thesaurus linguae Armenicae, Antiquae et hodiernae, Cum varia Praxios materia, cujus elenchum sequens pagella exhibet* (Amstelodami 1711), Part 3: *Confessio Ecclesiae Armenicae Latine reddita, & necessariis notis illustrata*, 251-254.
- 1-3 Ինստուիանիւմք եւ Հաւատամք... – *Confitemur et credimus.*
- 3-10 *Analysis.*
- 11-14 Հաւատամք զԲանն Աստուած... – *Credimus Verbum illud Deum.*
- 15-20 *Analysis.*
- 21-23 Հաւատամք զՍուրբ Հոգի... – *Credimus Sanctum illum Spiritum.*
- 23-30 *Analysis.*
- 31-33 Հաւատամք զԵրրորդութիւնն Սուրբ... – *Credimus Trinitatem illum Sanctam.*
- 33-38 *Analysis.*
- 38-40 Հաւատամք յԵկեղեցի Սուրբ... – *Credimus in Ecclesiam Sanctam.*
- 41-44 *Analysis.*
- 45-49 Հաւատամք զԺինն յԵրկու անձանց... – *Credimus unum illum ex tribus Personis.*
- 49-64 *Analysis.*
- 65-67 Աստուածն մարդացեալ առանց փոփոխման... – *Deus ille homo factus est sine mutatione.*

- 67-72 *Analysis*.
- 73-81 Հաւատածք զՏէրն մեր Յիսուս Քրիստոս շրջեալ ի վերայ երկրի...
– *Credimus Dominum Jesum Christum, postquam ambulasset supra terram.*
- 81-102 *Analysis*.
- 103-106 Հաւատածք զՏէրն մեր Յիսուս Քրիստոս նովին մարմնովն Համբարձեալ յերկինս... – *Credimus Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum eodem corpore sublatum esse in coelos.*
- 107-112 *Analysis*.
- 113-114 Հաւատածք եւ զՀատուցումն գործոց... – *Credimus etiam retributionem operum.*
- 114-118 *Analysis*.
- 119-123 *Figurae XXXVIII litterarū linguæ armenicæ* (38 letters of the Armenian alphabet, accompanied by a transliteration into Latin characters). *Compare with: Joachim Schröder, *Thesaurus linguæ Armenicæ, Antiquæ et hodiernæ, Cum varia Praxios materia, cujus elenchum sequens pagella exhibet* (Amstelodami 1711), Part 2: *Grammatica & Prosodia Antiquæ Linguæ*, 1-4.

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Abstract — This paper provides the detailed descriptions of two Armenian manuscripts kept in two Swiss collections – Martin Bodmer Foundation in Cologne (Codex Bodmer 34) and Stiftsbibliothek of Saint Gall (No. 1513). The manuscript of the Bodmer Foundation is a 17th-century Gospel manuscript, which also comprises a hitherto unpublished version of Step'anos Siwnec'i's *Commentary of Canon Tables*, whose text and an annotated translation are given in the present article. Given the theological and historical importance of this manuscript's colophon, its complete translation is also provided. The second manuscript is a handwritten copy of Joachim Schröder's *Thesaurus linguæ Armenicæ*, copied in 1775 by a local monk at the Abbey of Saint Gall, where it continues to be preserved.



Fig. 1. Cologne, Martin Bodmer Foundation, Codex Bodmer 34 (CB 34), front cover, Ascension.



Fig. 2. CB 34, back cover, Coronation of the Virgin.

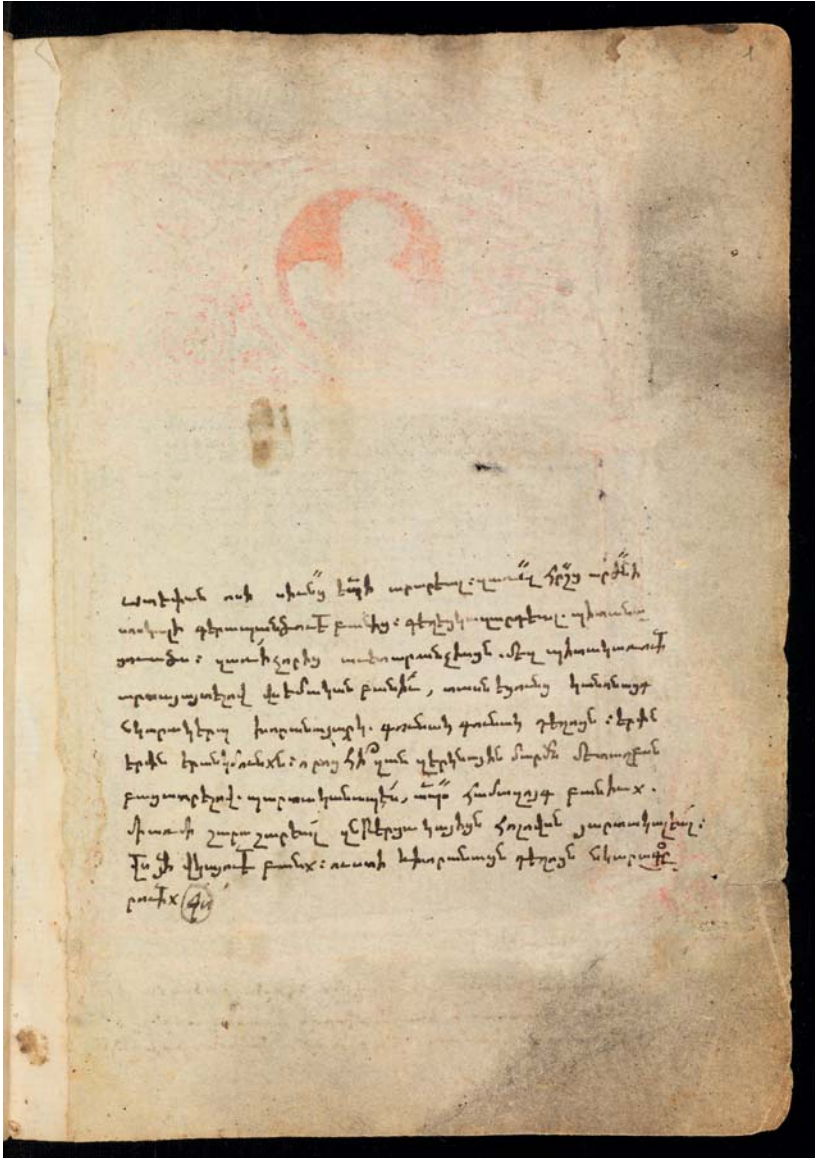


Fig. 3. CB 34, fol. 1r, *Commentary of Canon Tables* attributed to Step'anos Siwnec'i (1r-10r).



Fig. 5. CB 34, fol. 2r, Letter of Eusebius to Carpianus.



Fig. 6. CB 34, fol. 3v.



Fig. 8. CB 34, fol. 5v.



Fig. 9. CB 34, fol. 6r.

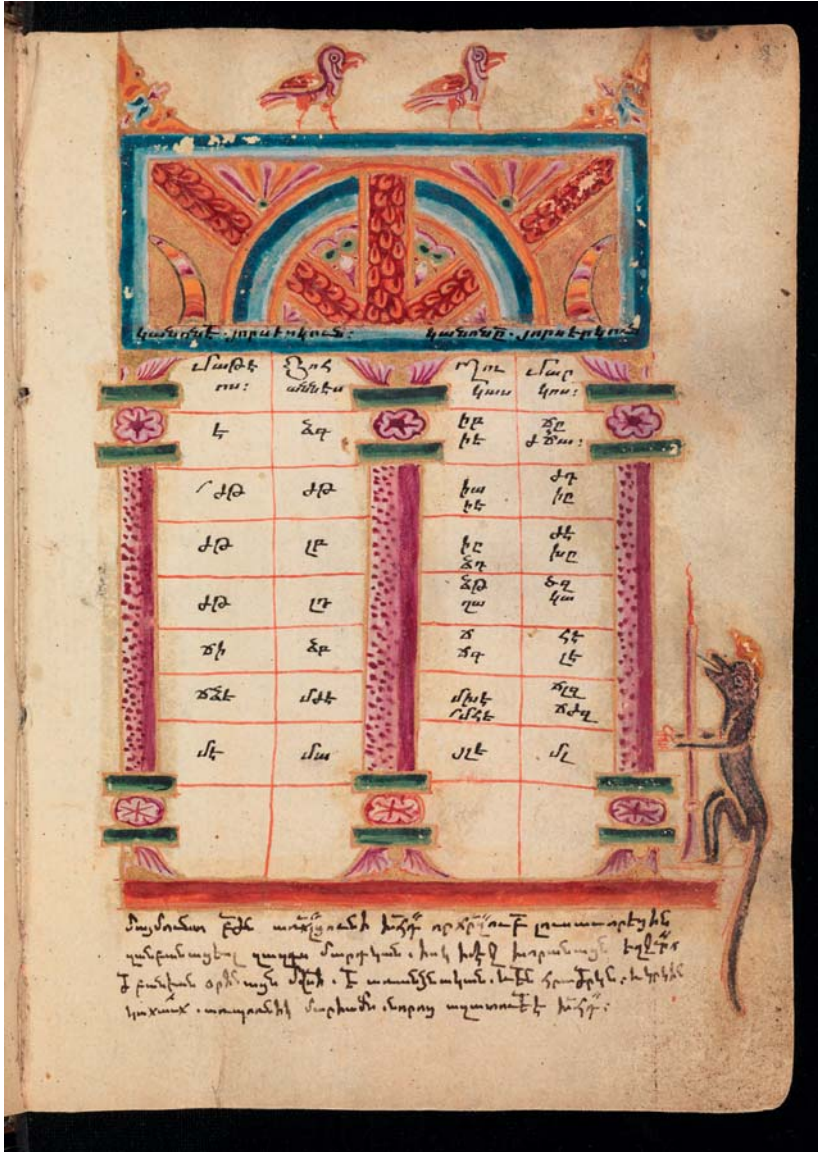


Fig. 11. CB 34, fol. 8r.



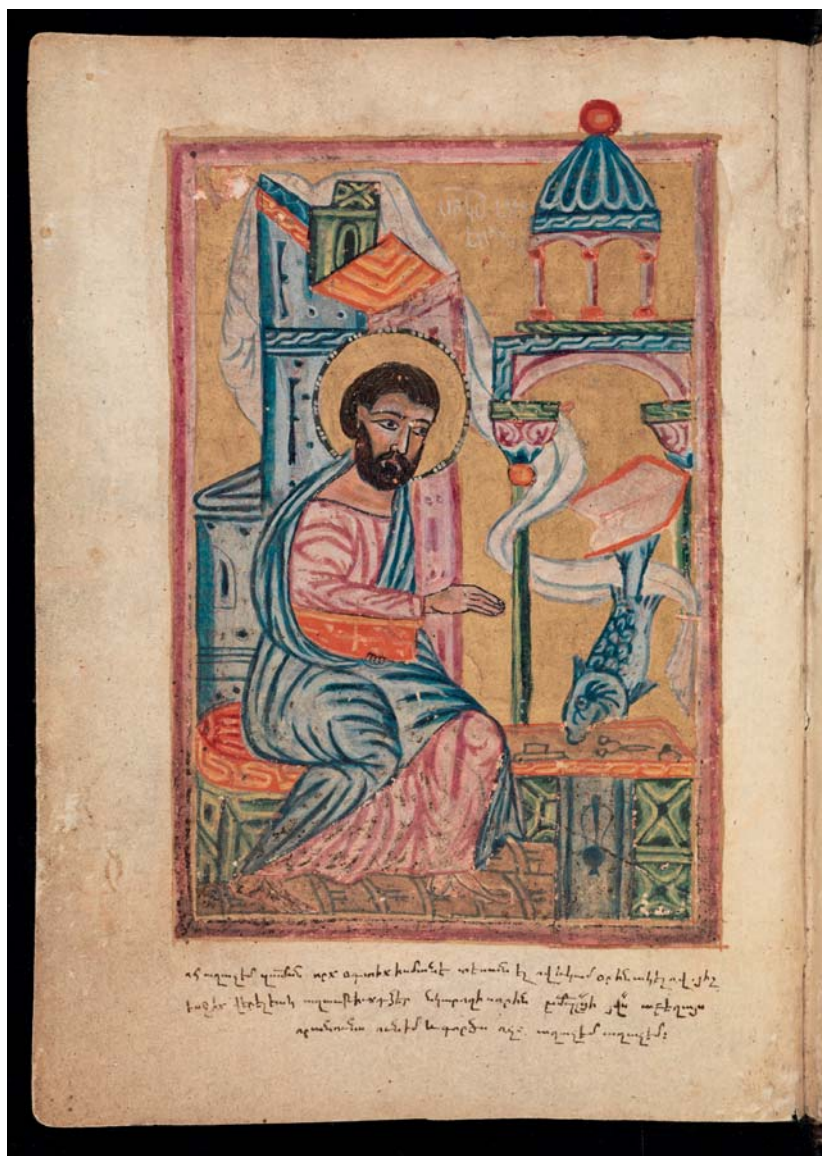


Fig. 14. CB 34, fol. 64v, St Mark the Evangelist.

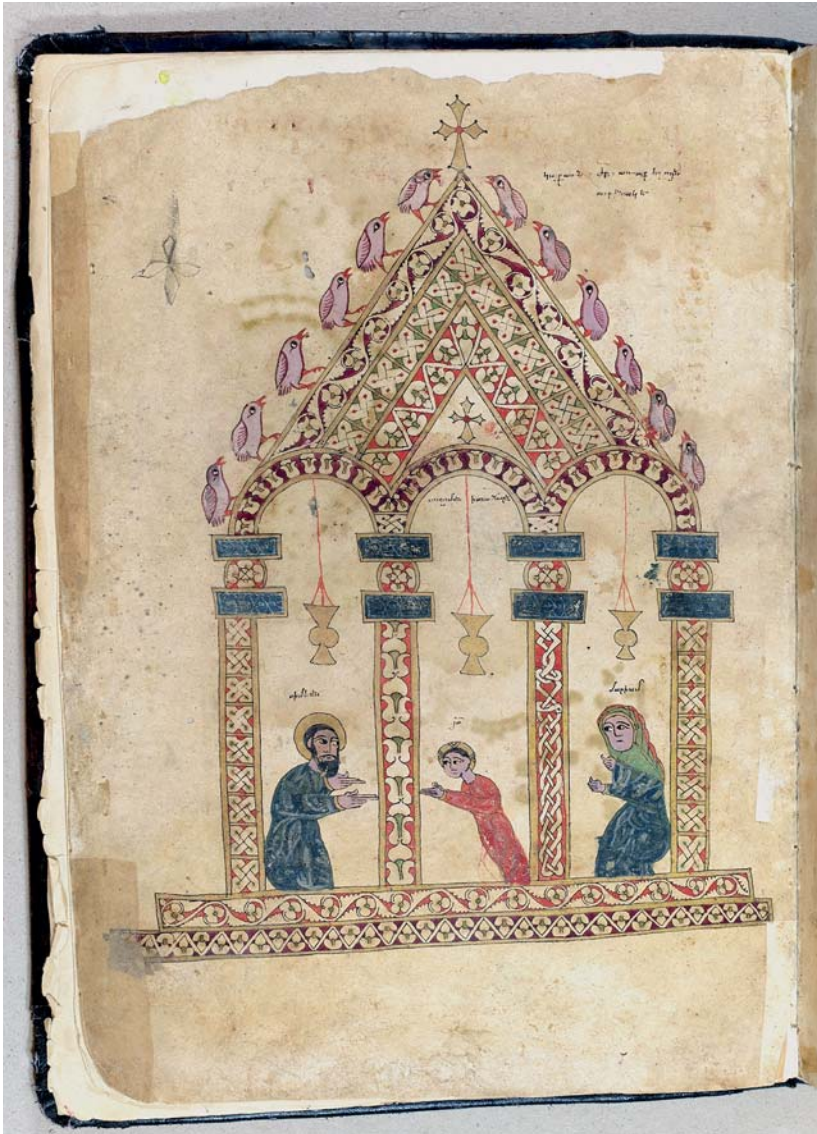


Fig. 15. Yerevan, Matenadaran 4820, fol. 1v, Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

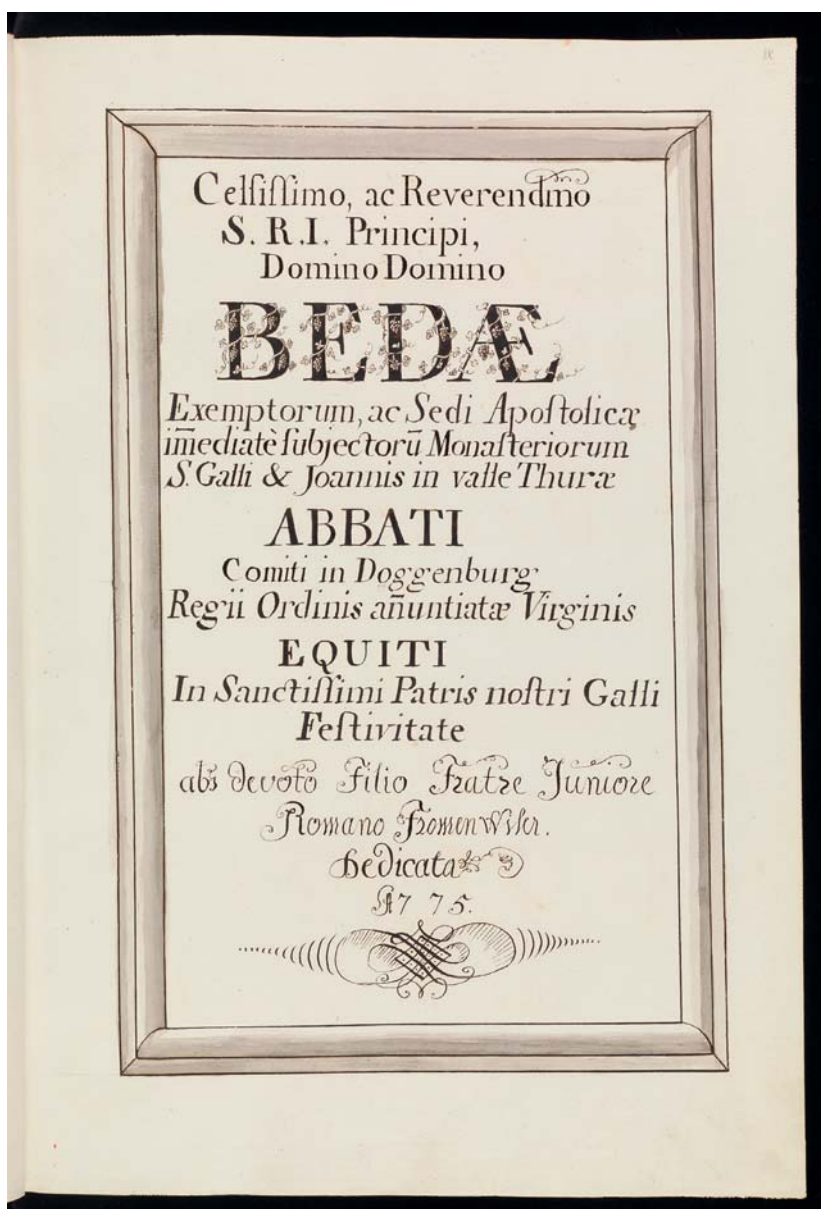


Fig. 16. Saint Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, cod. 1513, title page.



Fig. 17. Saint Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, cod. 1513, fol. V,
Coat of arms of Beda Angehrn.

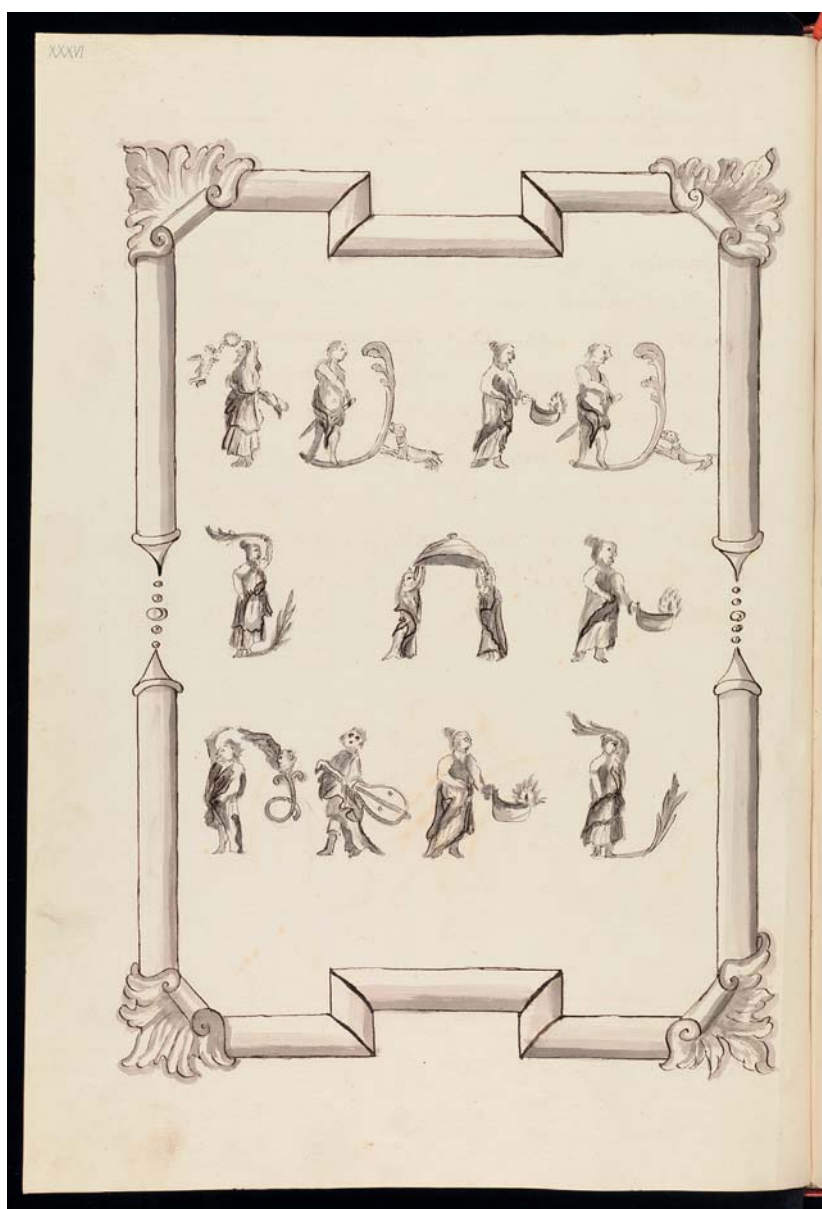


Fig. 18. Saint Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, cod. 1513, fol. XXXVI.

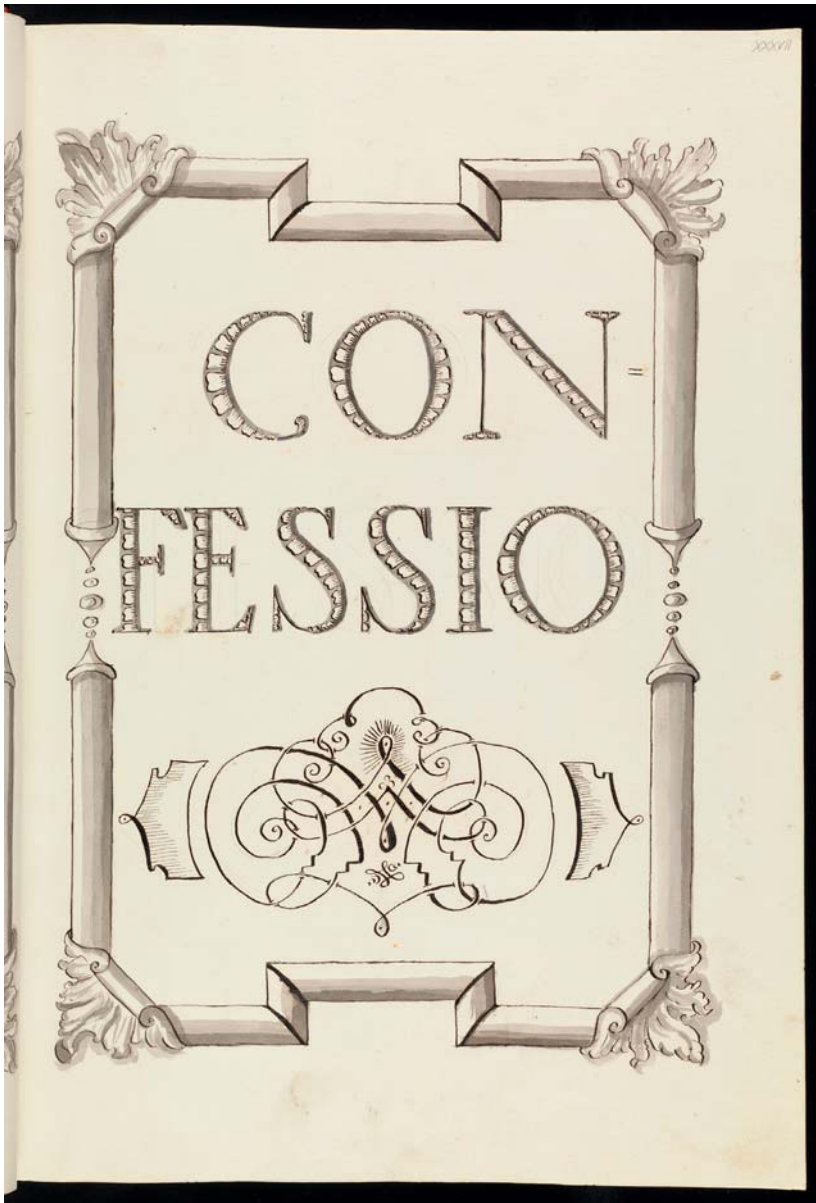


Fig. 19. Saint Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, cod. 1513, fol. XXXVII.