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ARMENIAN ANONYMOUS SCHOLIA ON PSEUDO-GREGORY OF NYSSA'S CONTRA MANICHAEOS

Abstract. This paper presents the *editio princeps*, alongside an English translation and commentary, of the anonymous Armenian *scholia* on Pseudo-Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Manichaeos*. In Greek sources this work is attributed to Didymus the Blind and John of Caesarea (the Grammarian). In medieval Armenian literary tradition it was attributed to the Neoplatonic philosopher David the Invincible and was considered to be the final chapter of his major philosophical work, *Definitions of Philosophy* (the Armenian version of his *Prolegomena philosophiae*). In Armenian manuscripts it appears without a title, with the incipit “Every evil is punishable” (Ամենայն չար տանջելի / *Amenayn ch'ar tanjeli*). The prominent Armenian author Catholicos Nersēs Shnorhali (1102–1173) wrote a commentary on the *Amenayn ch'ar*, describing it as “very small in quantity, but very great in quality”. In the mid-14th to 15th century, the theologian Arak'el Siwnets'i composed an extensive commentary on the *Definitions*, including the *Amenayn ch'ar*. An anonymous Armenian author wrote *scholia* to both the *Definitions* and the *Contra Manichaeos / Amenayn ch'ar* (the earliest extant example of which dates back to 1489). The *scholia* on the *Amenayn ch'ar* contain concise explanations of individual words and expressions, such as: “every evil is punishable”, “an accident”, “all the contraries”, “the mutable good” etc. The anonymous author made extensive use of the commentaries on the *Amenayn ch'ar* by Nersēs Shnorhali and Arak'el Siwnets'i; however, he also provided examples and considerations that differed from them. These *scholia* most likely served a practical and educational purpose, being used as auxiliary material for studying the *Amenayn ch'ar* and its commentaries.

Keywords: David the Invincible philosopher, Gregory of Nyssa, *scholia*, Armenian manuscripts, pseudepigrapha, commentary, *Contra Manichaeos*, *Definitions of Philosophy*

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АНОНИМНЫЕ АРМЯНСКИЕ СХОЛИИ К ТРУДУ ПСЕВДО-ГРИГОРИЯ НИССКОГО «ПРОТИВ МАНИХЕЕВ»

Аннотация. В статье представлены editio princeps, английский перевод и комментарий к анонимной армянской интерпретации труда Псевдо-Григория Нисского «Против манихеев» (*Contra Manichaeos*). В греческих источниках этот труд приписывается авторству Дидима Слепца и Иоанна Кесарийского (Грамматика). В армянской средневековой литературной традиции он приписывался неоплатоническому философу Давиду Непобедимому и считался заключительной главой его главного философского труда «Определения философии» (т. е. армянской версии «*Prolegomena philosophiae*»). В армянских рукописях работа появляется без названия, с началом «*Всякое зло наказуемо*» (*Միևնիշի չար անխնայի / «Аменайн чар танджели»*). Католикос Нерсес Шнорали (1102–1173) написал комментарий к этой работе, приняв ее за заключительную главу «*Определений философии*» и охарактеризовав этот труд как «очень маленький по объему, но очень значительный по качеству». В середине XIV–XV вв. богослов Аракел Сюнеци составил обширный комментарий к «*Определениям*», включая «*Аменайн чар*». Анонимный армянский автор написал схолии как к «*Определениям*», так и к «*Contra Manichaeos*» / «*Аменайн чар*» (самый ранний из известных экземпляров датируется 1489 г.). Схолии к «*Аменайн чар*» содержат краткие объяснения отдельных слов и выражений, таких как «*всякое зло подлежит наказанию*», «*случайность*», «*все противоположности*», «*изменчивое добро*» и т. д. Анонимный автор широко использовал комментарии к «*Аменайн чар*» Нерсеса Шнорали и Аракела Сюнеци, но также приводил собственные примеры и комментарии. Эти схолии, скорее всего, служили практической и образовательной цели, используя в качестве вспомогательного материала для изучения «*Аменайн чар*» и комментариев к нему.

Ключевые слова: Давид Непобедимый философ, Григорий Нисский, схолии, армянские рукописи, псевдоэпиграфика, комментарий, «Против манихеев», «Определения философии»

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Introduction: Pseudo-Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Manichaeos* in medieval Armenian tradition

In medieval Armenian literature, a number of philosophical and theological writings have been attributed to the 5th–6th century philosopher David the Invincible, a representative of the Alexandrian Neoplatonic school.¹ One of these writings is a brief treatise on good and evil,² linked in Greek tradition with the names of the fourth-century Church Fathers Gregory of Nyssa [Gregorius Nyssenus 1863], Didymus the Blind [Didymus Alexandrinus 1858], and the sixth-century author John of Caesarea (the Grammarian) [Richard, Aubineau 1977: liv–lviii (for the text, see 131–133)].³ In Armenian manuscripts it appears without a title,⁴ with the incipit “Every evil is punishable” (Ամենայն չար ստանձելի / *Amenayn ch'ar tanjeli*) (hereafter: *Amenayn ch'ar*),⁵ and is attached to David the Invincible's major philosophical work, *Definitions of Philosophy*.⁶ The *Definitions* is the Armenian translation of David's *Prolegomena philosophiae* — a general introduction to philosophy, similar to the *prolegomena* of other Neoplatonist authors. David provides six definitions of philosophy, presents his reflections on the existence, nature, and distinctive qualities of philosophy. He divides philosophy into the theoretical and the practical.⁷ The *Definitions of Philosophy* was a basic philosophical treatise taught in medieval Armenian schools and universities.⁸ Therefore, the pseudepigraphical writing *Contra Manichaeos/Amenayn ch'ar* became very popular in medieval Armenian literature due to its attribution to David, and, in particular, its position as the final chapter of his *Definitions*.

The prominent medieval Armenian author Catholicos Nersēs Shnorhali (1102–1173) wrote a commentary on the *Amenayn ch'ar* at the request of Bishop Step'anos (see [Melkonyan 2024: 498–501]). Describing the *Amenayn ch'ar* as “very small in quantity, but very great in quality” the author believed it to have

¹ There have been numerous studies written about the life and work of David the Invincible. For a general overview, see [Ch'alyan 1980; Mahé 1990; Contin 2017: 33–57]. For information on the attribution of different writings, see [Melkonyan 2012, Muradyan 2014a].

² “Every evil is punishable. Nothing subjected to suffering/punishment is uncorrupted. 2. Nothing corruptible is uncreated, and as evil is corruptible, then evil is not uncreated. 3. Nothing is evil by nature, and because evil is an accident and no accident is substance, and consequently evil, too, is no substance...” For the English translation of the entire text, see [Contin 2019: 85–86].

³ A thorough lexical and textual analysis has been carried out by Benedetta Contin, who compared the Armenian text with the Greek versions published under the names of Gregory, Didymus and John of Caesarea, see [Contin 2019, 84–97].

⁴ See [Zarbhanalean 1889: 373–374; Muradyan 1993: 50–53]. For more about the manuscript tradition see [Melkonyan 2026, forthcoming].

⁵ All Armenian names and words are transliterated according to the Library of Congress 2022 system <https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsd/romanization/armenian.pdf>. All translations from Classical Armenian are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

⁶ This manuscript tradition is reflected in the *editio princeps* of the *Definitions of Philosophy* in Constantinople in 1731, where the *Definitions* is followed by the *Amenayn ch'ar*, as well as in the Madras edition of 1797, and two editions of David's works in Venice (in 1833 and 1932). The *Amenayn ch'ar* was not included in the critical text edited by Sen Arevshatyan in 1960.

⁷ For more about the Armenian version of David's *Prolegomena Philosophiae* and its relationship with the Greek text, see [Calzolari 2009].

⁸ For the teaching and learning of the *Definitions* in the Middle Ages, see [Calzolari 2022: 121–124; Alpi 2022: 166–167].

been written by David as the final chapter of the *Definitions* [Nersēs Shnorhali 2022: 574].⁹ The mid-fourteenth-fifteenth century theologian Arak'el Siwnets'i composed an extensive commentary on the *Definitions*, including the *Amenayn ch'ar*, at the request of his students and spiritual brothers [Arak'el Siwnets'i 1797: 147].¹⁰ In addition to these two commentaries, an anonymous interpretation,¹¹ appended to the *scholia* on the *Definitions*, was identified in the manuscripts. This paper presents the *editio princeps*, an English translation and an analysis of this anonymous interpretation. The manuscript context of the text will be discussed, based on three manuscripts from the Mashtots' Matenadaran. In order to identify the source(s) and method of composition of the anonymous author, some passages will be compared with the relevant sections in the commentaries by Nersēs Shnorhali and Arak'el Siwnets'i.

The manuscript context of the anonymous interpretation

Three manuscripts containing the *scholia* on the *Amenayn ch'ar* have been identified at the Mashtots' Matenadaran.¹² These are M55, M1931 and M2220. M55, the earliest example (copied in 1489, in the Saint Yakob monastery in Erznka), is a collection of commentaries, causes and *scholia* on Basil of Caesarea's, Dionysius of Areopagite's, Gregory of Nyssa's, Nemesius of Emesa's, Pseudo-Aristotle's works.¹³ It also contains *scholia* on grammar.¹⁴ The *scholia* on Gregory of Nyssa's *On Virginity* are followed by an interpretation of David the Invincible's *Definitions of Philosophy* (fol. 369^r–405^r), entitled “Definitions said by David the Philosopher” (Սահմանք սասցեալ ի Դավթէ փիլիսոփայէ, *Sahmank' asats'eal i Dawt'ē p'ilisop'ayē*)¹⁵. In M1931 (15th century, the place of copy is unknown),

⁹ There is also a Latin translation by G. Cappelletti [Nersetis Clajensis 1833: 13–32].

¹⁰ The chapter on the *Amenayn ch'ar* is missing from this edition. There is an Eastern Armenian translation of this work, see [Arak'el Siwnets'i 1996], which includes a Classical Armenian text at the end [Ibid.: 60–91]. However, this is not a scholarly edition, and it lacks a critical apparatus. As the editors mentioned, it was published purely for pastoral purposes. I am currently working on a new edition. In this paper I will refer to Ms M1849 (copied in 1440) for Arak'el Siwnets'i's commentary. The *siglum* M stands for the Matenadaran — Mesrop Mashtots' Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (Yerevan).

¹¹ The title does not specify whether these are *scholia* or a commentary. Generally, a commentary refers to a treatise as a whole, while the *scholia* are usually shorter and only explain some of the more obscure words, phrases and expressions within the treatise. Therefore, in comparison with other similar writings, I have characterised it as *scholia*. The Armenian word for *scholia* is *lutsumk'* (լուծմանք, plural nominative of *lutsumn*, *լուծումն* ‘solution’, ‘dissolution’) and has been used in a variety of senses. The verb *լուծուլտալ* (*lutsanem* ‘untie’, ‘break’, ‘loose’, ‘decide’, ‘analyse’, cf. Greek λύω, διαλύω, Latin *solvo*, *dissolvo*) is also widely used in Armenian medieval literature. As a technical term “to explain”, “to interpret” an issue, the verb is attested already in the 5th century, see [NBHL 1836: 894–895]. For an analysis of the formation and development of the interpretive genre in medieval Armenian literature, see [Shirinian 2005: 132–157].

¹² Further study would unearth more copies.

¹³ For a description of the manuscript see [Eganyan et al. 1984: 211–224].

¹⁴ For the anonymous *scholia* on Grammar see [Sirunyan 2022: 42–53].

¹⁵ M55, 369^r. In the Manuscript Catalogues, as well as in [Muradyan 2014b: 748], this text is conventionally defined as “A Commentary on David's Definitions” (Մեկնութիւն Սահմանացն Դավթի / *Meknut'awn Sahmanats'n Dawt'i*).

which contains causes and *scholia* on grammar, on Porphyry, Pseudo-Aristotle, Philo, Cyril of Alexandria and Gregory of Nazianzus, the *scholia* on the *Definitions* follow the *scholia* on Grammar.¹⁶ M 2220 (copied in 1789–1790, in Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin by Deacon Zak'aria) is a miscellany containing *scholia* and commentaries on biblical pericopes and philosophical works, as well as sermons, homilies, the sayings of philosophers, and ecclesiastical canons.¹⁷ The *scholia* on David's *Definitions* and the *Amenayn ch'ar* follow the commentary on Aristotle's *Analytica* by the 18th-century Armenian theologian, Archbishop Petros Berdumean.

The *scholia* on *Definitions* contain brief explanations of individual words and expressions from the *Definitions*, sometimes with the chapter number in the margins.¹⁸ First, the anonymous commentator provides the corresponding lemma (a word or a phrase), and then presents his explanation, often using the conjunction “that is” (սպինք, *aysink'n*) to introduce it. Sometimes, he just rephrases the reference in simpler terms. Thus, the first expression explained in the *scholia* on *Definitions* is “sane ecstasy”¹⁹ (ողջախոհ մոլութիւն / *oghjakhoh molut'ivn*) — from the incipit:

Those who have once been fired with love for philosophical discourse, even if they have savoured its sweet delights with but the tip of a finger, are impelled towards them by *sane ecstasy* and bid farewell to all earthly cares [Arevshatyan 1960: 2].²⁰

The following passages explain and annotate other words, expressions and even proper names from the *Definitions*, for example: *eghjiwrak'agh* (եղջիւրաքաղ), and *aralez* (արալէզ) from the following phrase:

For some things, the *goat-deer* and *aralez*, for example, have no existence (except) so far as they are the product of our thought, while other things do have existence [Ibid.: 2].²¹

To explain the meaning of the word *aralez* (արալէզ), the commentator recounts the famous legend of King Ara Geghetsik (the Beautiful) and the legendary Assyrian queen Shamiram (the Semiramis of Greco-Roman sources), known from the *History of Armenia* by Movsēs Khorenats'i [2003: 1793–1795]. According to the legend, when Shamiram mourns her beloved Ara's death, the gods gather and inform her that they know of an animal that can lick him and bring him back to life. This animal was said to constantly lick the earth's soil. However, ultimately,

¹⁶ For the description see [Tēr-Vardanean 2012a: 607–616].

¹⁷ For the description see [Tēr-Vardanean 2012b: 479–488].

¹⁸ See also the introductory note in [Muradyan 2014a: 623]. As Muradyan mentions, the work contains some elements of Middle Armenian; however, a linguistic analysis of the treatise is beyond the scope of this paper.

¹⁹ In [Muradyan 2014b: 748] the expression “sane ecstasy” (ողջախոհ մոլութիւն / *oghjakhoh molut'ivn*) is included in the title. I suggest that this is the first phrase to be interpreted.

²⁰ Engl. trans.: [Kendall, Thomson 1983: 3].

²¹ Engl. trans.: [Kendall, Thomson 1983: 3].

the commentator reveals that this is a myth: the animal only existed in name, not in reality [Muradyan 2014b: 748].

The final term to be explained in this section is “imagination” (երեւակայութիւն / *erewakayut'ivn*) from the 24th chapter of *Definitions*: “Reason, reflection and opinion are rational, and sensation and imagination are irrational” [Arevshatyan 1960: 156].²² This term has been described as:

Imagination bears in mind what has been forgotten, and makes it reappear in the mind, which in irrational animals exists as anger or desire [Muradyan 2014b: 759].

At the very end, the expression “Thrice great David” (երասման Դավիթ / *erametsn Dawit'*) from the final section of the *Definitions* (“Thus end the prolegomena of philosophy by the *thrice great* and invincible philosopher David...” [Arevshatyan 1960: 158]²³) is explained as follows:

The thrice great David, who had the natural, the acquired and the God-given grace: [all] three. The natural grace was one he had from childhood, and the acquired [grace] was that he worked hard, suffered and studied philosophy very well, and then God gave him another grace and made him successful, so he won everyone over [Muradyan 2014b: 759] (cf. M55, fol. 45^v).

In the three manuscripts under consideration (M55, M1931 and M2220) the *scholia* on the *Amenayn ch'ar*²⁴ follow immediately after this explanation, without a separate title. The first phrase, the introductory part, in all three manuscripts is marked in red.²⁵

The anonymous *scholia* and the commentaries on the *Amenayn ch'ar* by Nersēs Shnorhali and Aṙak'el Siwnets'i

As mentioned above, there are two other commentaries on the *Amenayn ch'ar*, by Nersēs Shnorhali and Aṙak'el Siwnets'i, in medieval Armenian literature.²⁶ In the preface to his commentary, Nersēs Shnorhali raised two questions.

1. Why did the philosopher write about good and evil?
2. What are good and evil and whence is their cause?

Nersēs provides the following explanation in answer to these questions:

For in ancient times a certain sophist named Pyrrho and those who followed him, said that philosophy, which is a divine gift down from heaven to humans, does not exist. Moreover, some have written that

²² Engl. trans.: [Kendall, Thomson 1983: 159].

²³ Engl. trans.: [Kendall, Thomson 1983: 159].

²⁴ The 2014 edition does not include the *scholia* on the *Amenayn ch'ar*.

²⁵ In the manuscript catalogues [Eganean et al. 1984: 218; Tēr-Vardanean 2012a: 611; 2012b: 481], the interpretation on the *Amenayn ch'ar* is appropriately presented as a separate work, with the incipit serving as the title.

²⁶ I am not aware of any interpretations in other languages.

evil is uncreated [lit: an uncreated state] and is inherent in those who possess it. But the most wicked ones said that both good and evil are influenced by God in people's hearts. For this reason, the true-thinking philosopher, who was Armenian by nationality and homeland, and was like the Greeks by education, felt compelled to write this work against this issue, so that people would not be misled by this terrible deception of Satan and believe that evil is uncreated or created by the uncreated God [Nersēs Shnorhali 2022: 575].

The introduction by the anonymous author reads as follows:

Some people said that evil is uncreated and inherent in those who possess it. They also said that both good and evil are influenced by God in the people's hearts. For this reason, the philosopher David was compelled to demonstrate that evil is not uncreated, inherent in or imposed upon man, nor is it given to people by God.²⁷

Clearly, the anonymous author based his introduction on Nersēs Shnorhali's preface. It should be noted that Aṙak'el Siwnets'i himself followed Nersēs, but he added some details. Of particular importance was his mention of Mani, the Persian founder of Manichaeism:

Secondly, [he wrote] against those who said that evil is an uncreated state and the nature of those who possess it — that is, against Manik'os (= Mani. — *A. M.*) — who said that the world has two beginnings: one good-uncreated, which is God; and one evil-uncreated, as if there were another evil god... (M1849, fol. 114^v).

I suppose that the anonymous author had both the commentaries by Nersēs and Aṙak'el at his disposal. For instance, when he is explaining the expression “all the contraries”, he follows Aṙak'el's examples rather than Nersēs's. In his commentary, Nersēs provides the following explanation:

This is according to nature, because cold and heat, humidity and dryness are opposite to each other and destroy each other [Nersēs Shnorhali 2022: 581].

The anonymous commentator provides different examples for the things to be opposite: “life to death, darkness to light, white to black, good to evil”. These examples, therefore, are more similar to those provided by Aṙak'el Siwnets'i:

What does it mean when he says that all contraries destroy each other? Answer: things such as illness and health, death and life, evil and good, corruption and incorruptibility, light and darkness, warmth and cold, humidity and dryness, and so on (M1849, fol. 117^v).

While it is possible that the anonymous commentator simply provided his own examples independently, it seems that in this passage he followed Aṙak'el's logic

²⁷ See the text below, paragraph 1.

rather than that of Nersēs.²⁸ This does not mean that the *scholia* are merely a compilation of previous commentaries. In some passages, the anonymous author also developed his own ideas and used terms and explanations that differ from those of the two commentators. For example, for explaining the expression “the mutable good” (վիճիմիւնի բարին / *p’op’okheli barin*), the author uses the term “dissembling/false good” (կեղծաւոր բարին / *keghtsawor barin*) to describe the good that humans possess, as opposed to God’s good. He compares this to a short garment. Nersēs Shnorhali offered a different interpretation of “the mutable good”. According to him, since created beings are mutable, the good in them is also mutable. The mutable good is defeated by evil not because evil is powerful and good is weak, but because the person with good gives way to evil of his own free will and choice. In this way, good flees from evil and is defeated, just as light is driven out by darkness [Nersēs Shnorhali 2022: 581]. Arak’el Siwnets’i also discusses how good can be defeated by evil. However, he does not focus on the term “mutable good”, as Nersēs and the anonymous commentator did.

In conclusion, in the three manuscripts studied, which are collections of interpretations, *scholia*, causes on theological, philosophical and grammatical works, the anonymous *scholia* on Pseudo-Gregory of Nyssa’s *Contra Manichaeos / Amenayn ch’ar* continue the *scholia* on the *Definitions of Philosophy* by the philosopher David the Invincible. This reflects the medieval Armenian tradition, according to which the *Contra Manichaeos / Amenayn ch’ar* was attributed to David and attached to his *Definitions*. The *scholia* on *Amenayan* contain concise explanations of individual words and expressions, such as: “Every evil is punishable”, “an accident”, “all the contraries”, “the mutable good” etc. A comparison of some passages shows that the anonymous author made extensive use of the commentaries on the *Definitions / Amenayn ch’ar* by Nersēs Shnorhali and Arak’el Siwnets’i. However, the author also provided examples and considerations that differed from them. The *scholia* in question most likely served a practical and educational purpose, being used as auxiliary material for studying the *Amenayn ch’ar* and its commentaries. A more complete understanding of this writing and its anonymous author can be achieved by considering it alongside the *scholia* on the *Definitions* — that is the first part of the text — just as these two works were perceived in medieval Armenian tradition. More broadly, examining the *scholia* and the medieval collections in which they appear would deepen our understanding of the interpretative genre, particularly with regard to the supplementary materials and methods employed in the study of philosophical, theological, and grammatical writings.

The edition below is based on M55, fol. 405^{rv} (A) in comparison with M1931, fol. 97^{rv} (B) and M2220, fol. 63^{rv} (C). The complete syllogisms from which the interpreted phrases are derived are presented in the footnotes and are marked with an asterisk (*). English translation: [Contin 2019: 85–86].

²⁸ Sirunyan [2022: 52] concludes that the anonymous author of the *scholia* on Grammar mainly used Arak’el Siwnets’i’s grammatical commentary. It is possible that this author is the same one who created the *scholia* on the *Amenayn ch’ar*.

[Լուծմունք Ամենայն չար տանջելիի]

Ոմանք զչարն անեղ ասացին և բնութիւն ունողացն գրեցին, և յԱստուծոյ ասացին ազդել²⁹ ի սիրտս մարդկան զչարն որպէս զբարին: Վասն այսորիկ հարկ եղև իմաստասիրին³⁰ Դաւթի, որ ցուցանէ, թէ ոչ է անեղ և ոչ բնութիւն և ոչ³¹ հարկ մարդոյ և ոչ յԱստուծոյ տուեալ մարդկան:

«Ամենայն չար տանջելի», այսինքն չարն³² սատանայ է և չարին գործողքն, իսկ բարին Աստուած է: Սատանայ, և որ զչարն գործէ, պիտի տանջի և ապականի: Նա զիտացիր, որ չարն ի սատանայէ է և չարագործ մարդիքն³³ որ անզեղջ են: Այլ եկամուտ առարկութիւն գործն է՝ թէ չար գործեն³⁴, թէ բարի:

«Առարկութիւն է», այսինքն գործ չար կամ բարի և ոչ³⁶ բուն գոյացութիւն:

«Ամենայն ընդդիմակք³⁸», այսինքն³⁹ մահու կեանք, լուսոյ՝ խաւար, սևոյ⁴⁰ սպիտակ, չարի⁴¹ բարի, որ հակառակ ընդդիմակք են, զիրար ապականեն: Նոյնպէս սատանայ և չարն է ներհակ⁴², հակառակ և ապականացու: Իսկ անեղծն⁴³ Աստուած և բարին անփոփոխելի է:

[Scholia on Every evil is punishable]

Some people said that evil is uncreated and inherent in those who possess it. They also said that both good and evil are influenced by God in the people's hearts. For this reason, the philosopher David was compelled to demonstrate that evil is not uncreated, inherent in or imposed upon man, nor is it given to people by God.

“Every evil is punishable”³⁵ — that is to say, evil is Satan and those who do evil, while good is God. Satan and anyone who does evil shall be punished and corrupted. Also be aware that evil comes from Satan, as do the people who commit evil deeds and remain unrepentant. However, the deed [itself] is an external incident, whether good or bad.

“An accident”³⁷ — that is to say, an act of good or evil, and not a natural substance.

“All the contraries”⁴⁴ — that is, life to death, darkness to light, white to black, good to evil, which are opposites and contraries, corrupt each other. Likewise, Satan who is evil, is an opposite, is incompatible and corruptible. But God, who is incorruptible and good, is immutable.

²⁹ C ազդեալ.

³⁰ C իմաստասիրիս.

³¹ B կամ > և ոչ.

³² B + ի C չար.

³³ C մարդիկքն.

³⁴ B գործես.

³⁵ * “Every evil is punishable. Nothing subjected to suffering/punishment is uncorrupted.”

³⁶ C om.

³⁷ * “Nothing is evil by nature, and because evil is an accident and no accident is substance, and consequently evil, too, is no substance”.

³⁸ B ընդդիմակ.

³⁹ B որպէս.

⁴⁰ B սևու.

⁴¹ B չարու.

⁴² B om.

⁴³ B անեղն.

⁴⁴ * “All the contraries are destructive of each other. Then, contraries are not incorruptible”.

«Իսկ փոփոխելի բարին», այսինքն կեղծաւոր բարին, որ⁴⁵ մարդ⁴⁶ ունենայ, պիտի պարտուի, յաղթի⁴⁷ ի չարէն, այսինքն ի սատանայէ: Այս ցեղ կեղծաւոր և պարտած⁴⁸ բարիս, ուրե՛մ և ստոյգ չէ անեղ, այլ կեղծիք, որպէս կարճ հանդերձ: Զի անեղծն Աստուած և ճշմարիտ բարեգործ մարդկան⁴⁹ ոչ ցանկան ապականացու գործոյ կամ փառաց որպէս սատանայ չարիս ցանկացաւ⁵⁰:

Աստուածային գիրք ամենայն, ասէ, որ առնէ զմեղս ծառայ է մեղաց և տանջանաց⁵²: Մատանայ և չար մարդիկ⁵³ տանջանաց մատնեալ⁵⁴: Մատանայ այլայլելի է. որ բարի էր և չար եղև: Մատանայ և չար գործք⁵⁵ ոչ է⁵⁶ անեղ:

«Բոլոր ընդդիմակ⁵⁹» և հակառակ: Մահ և կեանք, որ իսկի հաւասարութիւն և միաբանութիւն չունին: Ի հարկէ յորժամ մեռած է կենդանի չէ, նոյնպէս⁶⁰ ի հարկէ, թէ կենդանի է մեռած չէ⁶¹: Եւ կամ հարկ է, որ Աստուած գոյ լինի և բարի և անեղ, իսկ⁶² սատանայ ոչ ինչ յայսցանէ:

“But the mutable good”⁵¹, that is, the dissembling good that man possesses, shall be vanquished and defeated by evil — that is, by Satan. This kind of dissembling and defeated goodness is therefore not truly uncreated, but false, like a short garment. Because the incorruptible God and truly benevolent people do not desire corruptible deeds or glory, unlike Satan who desired evil.

The divine Scriptures say that anyone who commits a sin is a slave to sin⁵⁷ and suffering. Satan and evil people are condemned to suffering. Satan is alterable. He was once good, but he became evil. Satan and evil deeds are not uncreated.⁵⁸

“Wholly opposite”⁶³ and contrary. Death and life have no equality or unanimity at all. Necessarily, if someone is dead, he cannot be alive; likewise, if someone is alive, he cannot be dead. God is necessarily a substance; [he is] good and uncreated, whereas Satan is none of these.

⁴⁵ C գոր.

⁴⁶ BC մարդն.

⁴⁷ B յաղթուի.

⁴⁸ C պարտուած.

⁴⁹ BC մարդիք

⁵⁰ B ցանկաց

⁵¹ * “No uncreated being is mutable, and the good which is defeated by evil is liable to be changed. Good, then, is not uncreated”.

⁵² B + այսինքն.

⁵³ B մարդիք C մարդիկք.

⁵⁴ C մատնել.

⁵⁵ C չարագործք.

⁵⁶ C են.

⁵⁷ See John 8:34.

⁵⁸ This is not an interpretation of a specific phrase / word, but rather a rephrasing of the following syllogism: * “Then, the Divine Writings condemn to the sufferings not only what is evil, but also the liar himself. (They say that) everything which is subjected to suffering is also alterable [and] nothing which is alterable is uncreated. Consequently, nothing coming from what is evil is uncreated”.

⁵⁹ C ընդդիմակք.

⁶⁰ B + և ընդդիմակ.

⁶¹ C om. ի հարկէ, թէ կենդանի է մեռած չէ.

⁶² B + միսն.

⁶³ * “Realities which are wholly opposite, have no equality, because what exists by necessity in one, does not exist in the other”.

«Թէ որ իրաւացի իրաց փափաքէ⁶⁴»,
այսինքն Աստուծոյ և բարի գործոց,
նա դիրքաւ գտանէ:

“If someone duly desires something”⁶⁵,
that is God and good deeds, he will easily
find [them].

Գիտացաք որ սատանայ, որ⁶⁶ չարն,
անեղ չէ, այլ ապականացու: Թէ
չարն անեղ էր, նայ բնութիւն էր
չարն ի սատանայ կամ ի մարդն, զի
բնութեան լուծն⁶⁷ չէ մեղք որպէս հաց
ուտելն, ջուր խմելն և այլն: Ապա⁶⁸ ոչ
անեղ է և ոչ բնութեամբ կամ հարկ ի
մարդն: Իսկ ով զչարն գործէ, մեղք է
նմա և ընդ բամբասանաւք, որպէս
սատանայ:

We have learnt that Satan, who is evil, is
not uncreated, but is corruptible. If evil
were uncreated, it would be Satan's nature
or that of a man, because the yoke of nature
is not a sin, such as eating bread or drinking
water, etc. Therefore, evil is neither
uncreated nor natural, nor is it a necessity
for humans. But, if someone commits an
evil act, it becomes a sin and [that person]
is subject to reprehension, like Satan.⁶⁹

Abbreviations

NBHL = Awetik'eian, G., Siwrmēlean, Kh., & Awgerean, M. (1836). *Nor Baḡgirk' Haykazean lezui* [New Dictionary of the Armenian Language] (Vol. 1). I Tparani Srboyn Ghazaru.

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⁶⁴ C փափաքէ.

⁶⁵ * “Everything which duly desires something, adapts its own desire to the [desired] thing, if it desires reasonably”.

⁶⁶ B և.

⁶⁷ B գործն.

⁶⁸ C + ուրեմն.

⁶⁹ * “So, if evil was uncreated, evil should subsist in it by nature. Nothing that acts according to nature, commits sins. What does not commit sins, is not subjected to reprehension, but Satan is subjected to reprehension. Therefore, Satan, too, is not uncreated”.

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- losopher, which are at the end of his book on the Definitions of Philosophy, said by the Lord Nersēs the Catholicos of the Armenians at the request of a certain Step'annos, a lover of philosophy] (A. Melkonyan, Ed.). In G. Gasparean (Ed.). *Matenagirk' Hayots' IB. hator, ZhB dar, Nersēs Shnorhali, Girk' B = Armenian classical authors, Vol. 22: 12th century, Nersēs Shnorhali, Book 2* (pp. 574–592). Zangak. (In Ancient Armenian).
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