The Armenian Version of the τέχνη γραμματική: A Linguistically Uncomfortable Compromise

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1. Introduction[*]

The earliest pieces of Classical Armenian writing, commonly dated to the 5th century CE, can be categorised roughly into two large sets: original compositions, such as Koriwn's *Life of Maštocʻ* and the *History of the Armenians* attributed to Agatʻangełos, and translations from Greek and Syriac. The Greek translations include the New and Old Testaments as well as selections from classical and contemporary philosophy, religious treatises, historiography, and grammatical writing.[1]

This set of translations from Greek is of interest to scholars of Classical Armenian not only for what it says about contemporary education and thought, but also—and indeed primarily, it appears—for its use of the Armenian language. In translating the Greek originals, the Armenian translators have frequently and systematically coined new terms in Armenian or have adhered to Greek syntax more closely than Armenian sentence structure or idiom conventionally permits. The not entirely uniform *modus operandi* of these translations, traditionally referred to as the so-called Hellenising School (Յունաբան Դպրոց [Hunaban Dprocʻ]), has been studied in some depth.[2]

1 For an overview of the translation literature and its idiosyncrasies, see *inter alia* Manandyan, *Hunaban Dprocʻə*; Akinean, 'Yunaban Dprocʻə'; Mercier, 'Lʻécole hellénistique'; Terian, 'Hellenizing School'; Calzolari, 'Lʻécole hellénisante'; Coulie, 'Style et Traduction'; Muradyan, *Grecisms in Ancient Armenian*; Muradyan, 'Hellenizing School'.
2 While the grecising translations were traditionally considered to be the result of a school of (successive generations of) translators at work, the discrepancies in the *modus operandi* of these translations have led more recent scholarship to reject this

The earliest of these translations renders into Armenian the τέχνη γραμματική, or 'Art of Grammar', traditionally attributed to the Alexandrian scholar Dionysios Thrax (*fl*. 2nd–1st c. BCE). While its use of the Armenian language has been analysed in the literature on the Hellenising School, its content and particularly the accuracy of translation have not been studied thus far.

This paper provides a discussion of the Armenian translation of the τέχνη and points out that, in many respects, it is deficient, doing justice neither to the Greek original nor the realities of the Armenian language. This mismatch between translation and original, it is proposed, results from translators striving both to apply then-current grammatical thinking on Greek to Armenian, and to still maintain the linguistic integrity of Armenian; in the end, they achieved neither.

After this introduction, section 2 provides a brief overview of the τέχνη in its historical context and discusses its relevance as a piece of grammatical writing in general. Section 3 deals more specifically with the role of the Armenian version of the τέχνη for the modern understanding of the development of Armenian literature and translations in the earliest phase of its attestation; equally, this section briefly discusses the form of the Armenian language used in the τέχνη. Thereafter follow three sections concerning the Armenian translation of the Greek: section 4 treats of straightforward translations; section 5 problematises instances of extension of Greek grammatical concepts for Armenian data; in turn, section 6 lays out instances of adaptation of Armenian data to Greek grammatical concepts.[3] After a brief exploration of the numerous, but for the present purpose largely irrelevant commentaries on the Armenian τέχνη in section 7, section 8 brings together the extant knowledge concerning the τέχνη with the new-won insights about its content. Section 9 provides a conclusion and suggests avenues for further analysis.

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perspective; these texts, the Bible translation included, are best seen as part of a broader continuum of grecising translations, the specific manner of which depends on multiple factors including time of translation, genre, and content of the original. See Lafontaine and Coulie, *Grégoire de Nazianze*, 123–130; Coulie, 'Style et Traduction', 43; Muradyan, *Grecisms in Ancient Armenian*, 20; Muradyan, 'The Hellenizing School', 324–326; Meyer, 'Syntactical Peculiarities', 76–77.

3 For reasons of space, the discussions in section 5–7 cannot be exhaustive, but exemplarily illustrate the different kinds of approaches to translating the Greek original into Armenian.

2.   Background and Relevance of the τέχνη γραμματική

The eminence of the τέχνη γραμματική and scholarly interest in it are largely due to its status as the oldest grammar to survive in any western European culture.[4] In its twenty sections, the τέχνη discusses Greek accentuation, phonology, the nominal and verbal system and their morphology, as well as other, uninflected word classes such as prepositions and conjunctions. Although it lacks a discussion of syntax, it is otherwise structured not unlike modern descriptive grammars. A rather short treatise overall,[5] the grammatical discussion is systematic and exceeds any previous grammatical or linguistic thinking.[6] While it stands in the tradition of Stoicism, e.g. in its tendency to categorise and subcategorise any grammatical notion,[7] it is the first work to isolate grammar from the field of philosophy and to set it up as a discipline in its own right.[8]

Whether the τέχνη deserves the status it has been accorded is an open question, as a number of problems arise upon closer examination of the text, its structure, and history.[9] Two of those, intimately

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4   For a relativisation of this claim, see the discussion further down in this section, and Law, *History of Linguistics*, 55–58. Sanskrit, of course, has an even older grammatical and linguistic tradition in the form of Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (4th c. BCE), for which see Cardona, *Pāṇini*, and van Bekkum, Houben, Sluiter, and Versteegh, *Emergence of Semantics*, 84–97.

5   The entirety of the τέχνη γραμματική is less than 3,000 words long.

6   For details about linguistic elements in early Greek philosophy, see *inter alia* Allen, 'Origin and Development of Language'; Gentinetta, *Sprachbetrachtung bei den Sophisten*; Ax, *Laut, Stimme und Sprache*; de Jonge and van Ophuijsen, 'Greek Philosophers and Language'.

7   The most prominent example of this occurs in §12 περὶ ὀνόματος (On the Noun), in which the morphological and semantic categories of nouns are outlined, including, e.g., 24 species (εἴδη) of nouns such as proper nouns, homonyms, synonyms, dionyms, etc. All references to paragraphs here and below refer to the edition of Uhlig, *Dionysii Thracis Ars Grammatica*. For the interest of ancient grammarians in semantic categories, see van Bekkum, Houben, Sluiter, and Versteegh, *Emergence of Semantics*; Law, *History of Linguistics*, passim.

8   The τέχνη 'depart[s] from Stoic tradition in [its] definitions of grammatical categories [e.g. regarding the disregard for (in)completeness in verbal tenses, deemed not strictly relevant], and for [it] grammar is no longer linked with logic, but attains some autonomy' (Kemp, 'Tekhnē Grammatikē', 345).

9   For summaries, see the discussions in Robins, 'Authenticity of the *Technē*', and Law, *History of Linguistics*, 56–57; the question is presented in more detail in di Benedetto, 'Dionisio Trace'; di Benedetto, 'Origins of Greek Grammar'.

connected, it is worth discussing here in brief: the text shape and the age of the text.

In its introduction, the τέχνη suggests that 'grammar is the empirical study of the normal usage of poets and prose writers',[10] and that it has six parts, roughly equal to: reading and prosody; interpretation, esp. of figures of speech; explanation of allusions; etymologies; analogy; and criticism of poetic works. This approach to grammar fits in well with the tradition of the Alexandrian School, to which Dionysios and his teacher (Aristarkhos of Samothrace, *c.* 217–145 BCE) belonged; it does not, however, reflect the structure of the τέχνη. Paragraphs 2–5 do relate to reading and prosody,[11] but the rest of the τέχνη does not discuss any of the other five parts outlined.

This discrepancy suggests that the τέχνη may not be a homogenous text and that paragraphs 6–20 are, in fact, of a later date and likely by another author.[12] This suggestion is given further credence by two additional complications. Firstly, when the grammarian Apollonios Dyskolos (*fl.* 2nd century CE) discusses the τέχνη,[13] he suggests that Dionysios did not make a categorical distinction between article and pronoun; this is, however, not a reflection of the τέχνη as extant, where article and pronouns are discussed separately in §§16 and 17, respectively. Secondly, from the works of another 2nd-c. CE philosopher, Sextus Empiricus, it is evident that another grammatical treatise was attributed to Dionysios Thrax. It seems plausible that there may have been differences between the two works, the τέχνη and the παραγγέλματα ('Precepts'), and that the version of the former in existence now was influenced to some extent by the latter; an alter-

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10   γραμματική ἐστιν ἐμπειρία τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ λεγομένων (§1).

11   These are: §2 περὶ ἀναγνώσεως (On Reading); §3 περὶ τόνου (On Tone); §4 περὶ στιγμῆς (On Punctuation); and §5 περὶ ῥαψῳδίας (On Recitation).

12   This notion is supported by the fact that verbatim quotations from the later parts of the τέχνη do not predate the 4th century CE, and that even ancient sources have voiced doubts concerning its authenticity; see Sch. D. Thrax, G.G. I 3, 124,7–14 and Sch. D. Thrax, G.G. I 3, 160,24–161,8.

13   καὶ Ἀπολλόδωρος ὁ Ἀθηναῖος καὶ ὁ Θρᾷξ Διονύσιος καὶ ἄρθρα δεικτικὰ τὰς ἀντωνυμίας ἐκάλεσαν (A. D. *Pron.* 5, G.G. I 1, 5,18–19), 'Both Apollodoros the Athenian and the Thracian Dionysios also called pronouns demonstrative articles'.

native explanation, proposing that the second part of the τέχνη was written by another author, cannot be excluded, however.[14]

For present purposes, however, the exact textual history of the τέχνη is of limited importance, because the Armenian translation is evidently based on the same version as is extant now, and also because '[th]e *Art of Grammar* that has come down to us under his [Dionysios'] name may or may not be authentic, but it is certainly representative of the grammatical knowledge of the time'.[15] Whether or not the τέχνη actually deserves the designation of the oldest grammar is, in the end, secondary to its *de facto* status as one—if not the—most influential piece of grammatical writing as far as (late) antiquity and the Middle Ages are concerned. In many other language communities, including Armenian and Syriac, the τέχνη was used as the basis for their own forays into grammar writing, and indeed the development of a linguistic meta-language.

3. The Role of the Armenian τέχνη

Within the history and scholarship of Classical Armenian, the τέχνη occupies an even more special position than outlined above: in the view of many scholars, it represents the first in a long line of idiosyncratic translations of Greek philosophical, religious, and literary texts into Armenian.[16] These translations, traditionally referred to collectively as the so-called Hellenising School (Arm. Հունաբան Դպրոց (Hunaban Dproc'), deserve the label 'idiosyncratic' largely because of their tendency to imitate the Greek original in word order, case usage, and word formation even if this resulted in the creation of un-

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14   For more on this matter, see Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus grammaticos* 57, 72, 250, and Schenkeval, 'Dionysius's Παραγγέλματα'.

15   van Bekkum, Houben, Sluiter, and Versteegh, *Emergence of Semantics*, 205.

16   Other examples of Greek texts translated into Armenian include the *Progymnasmata* of Aelius Theon, the *Refutation of the Council of Dvin*, the *Alexander Romance*, and pieces of Philo of Alexandria's works, e.g. the *Quaestiones in Genesin*. On these, see Bolognesi, 'Traduzione armena dei Progymnasmata'; Wolohojian, *Romance of Alexander*, 1–21; Mercier, *Philo Alexandrinus*.

natural words or structures as compared to standard Armenian practice.[17]

This closeness to the Greek original can be illustrated readily on the basis of examples from the τέχνη itself. The Greek ἐνέργεια 'activity; active voice', for instance, might serve as an example of unusual word formation: it is rendered into Armenian morpheme by morpheme, thus as ներգործութիւն (nergorcut'iwn), where the prefix ներ- (ner-) corresponds to Gk. ἐν- 'in, inside' (cp. Arm. ներքո (nerk'o) 'under, in'), whereas the noun գործ (gorc) 'work, action' is taken as the equivalent of Gk. ἔργον 'id.', and the abstract suffix Arm. -ութիւն (-ut'iwn) serves to reflect Gk. -ια. While 'standard' Armenian does not shy away from compounding, it rarely does so by using prefixes such as ներ- (ner-), but rather uses other nominal or verbal elements.[18]

By contrast, however, the concept of Gk. συλλαβή 'syllable' is not expressed by only one translation, but can be rendered as վանգ [vang] 'sound, voice; syllable', փաղառութիւն [p'ałaṙut'iwn] or շաղաշար [šałašar] 'entwined, united; syllable', where no semantic

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17   The concept of the Hellenising School goes back to Manandyan, *Hunaban Dproc'ə*, who devised a chronological stratification of the texts pertaining to it. This stratification is, overall, rather impressionistic, and has been abandoned for a number of reasons: it does not take into account the whole gamut of texts, which stretch well beyond the originally stipulated end date of the 8th century; texts from roughly the same time period exhibit rather different linguistic tendencies concerning the *modus operandi* of translation; the manner of translation seems to differ by genre and not just time. In addition, the whole notion of a 'school' of translators has been called into question repeatedly over the course of the past thirty years, with more and more evidence pointing at a more extensive continuum of translation strategies for Greek texts, including the original Bible translation. Similarly, the influence of Greek is not limited to translated texts, but equally can be found in original compositions by some of the translators (e.g. Eznik Kołbac'i) and in later authors (e.g. Movsēs Xorenac'i). See Muradyan, *Grecisms in Ancient Armenian*, 1–25.

18   An example of this practice is Arm. ձեռբակալ (jeṙbakal) 'captive, prisoner', which is composed of the roots ձեռն (jeṙn) 'hand' and -կալ (-kal), the aorist stem of ունիմ (unim) 'to have, hold'. This word and many like it are, in turn, calques on West Middle Iranian forms, but have been normalised by the time of Classical Armenian; for an overview of interactions between Armenian and West Middle Iranian, see Schmitt, 'Iranisches Lehngut im Armenischen'; Meyer, 'Iranian-Armenian Language Contact'; Meyer, 'Languages in Contact'.

distinction in the Greek or Armenian can be made;[19] the translations of this word also make it patent that, next to calquing, semantic extension is the other main means of translating Greek terms which have no immediate counterpart in Armenian, thus enabling the creation of an Armenian technical vocabulary and a linguistic metalanguage.

As far as the lexicon is concerned, this kind of translation is not typologically uncommon and can indeed be found almost ubiquitously even in modernity;[20] given that it serves a specific purpose—the creation of a technical vocabulary—this is hardly surprising.

Some other tendencies of the Armenian translators, however, are less readily explained along these lines. To give but one example, consider the following phrase from the section about the common, viz. ambivalent, syllable:

(1) … τὸ δὲ ἡγούμενον καθ᾽ ἕν
ἄφωνόν ἐστιν

…իսկ առաձնորդն ըստ եզ
անձայն

…while the former is by itself voiceless (§10)

Setting aside for the moment the form եզ (ez) 'one' used here in place of Classical մի (mi),[21] the question arises why the translator follows Greek case usage. Gk. κατά 'down; according to; by' governs the accusative, thus ἕν, but Arm. ըստ (əst) 'according to; by' traditionally governs the dative or genitive, wherefore not եզ (ez) (or մի (mi)), but եզոյ (ezoy) (or միոյ (mioy)) would be expected. In contrast to the case of the lexicon mentioned above, this instance of proximity to the Greek original has no obvious purpose or advantage.

A similar case of unusual case usage can be found in the description of the sound system in general; here, vowels are differentiated according to quantity and the translation states:

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19   For more examples and a more detailed discussion, see Terian, 'Syntactical Peculiarities', 198; Terian, *Philonis Alexandrini de Animalibus*, 10-13; Clackson, 'Technē in Armenian', 122-130; Muradyan, 'Hellenizing School', 335–336.

20   To give just two examples: consider English *television*, borrowed from French *télévision,* but created on the basis of a Greek and a Latin root (Gk. τῆλε 'far off' and Lat. *visio* 'sight'); the same word is calqued in German as *Fernsehen*, where *fern* 'far' and *sehen* 'sight; to see'. Similarly, Russian полуостров [poluostrov] 'peninsula' calques German *Halbinsel*, where полу- [polu-] and *halb-* mean 'half' and остров [ostrov] and *Insel* 'island'.

21   See also the discussion of nonce forms in section 6 below.

(2) τῶν δὲ φωνηέντων μακρὰ μέν   Եւ ձայնաւորացն երկայնք են
      ἐςτι δύο   երկու
      Of the vowels, two are long (§6)

The partitive genitive in Greek is expected and common usage; in Armenian, however, expressions relating the part of a whole ordinarily require the preposition ի [i] (prevocalic յ- [y-]), which governs the ablative case. This is true not only of works originally composed in Armenian, but also of many literary translations.[22]

These contraventions of Armenian grammar in favour of Greek patterns and many more like them in a great number of pieces of Armenian translation literature have been categorised, analysed, and listed by Muradyan, based on whose compendious work arises the question what the purpose of these decidedly grecising translations might have been. It is evident, after all, that not all translations into Armenian follow this *modus operandi*, or at least not to the same extent. The Bible translation, for instance, cannot be said to be entirely free from Greek influence,[23] but it is readily comprehensible in its own right; the same is not true for all grecising translations.[24]

Even on the surface and without the testimony of—unfortunately absent—native speakers of Classical Armenian, the obscurity of translations, and particularly of the Armenian τέχνη is made patent by the existence of a wordlist (բառք քերականին [baṙkʿ kʿerakanin]), which is intended to help the reader,[25] and through the

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22   Such partitive ablatives can be found, for instance, in Matt. 5:29 where the original Greek ἓν τῶν μελῶν ϲου 'one of your limbs' is rendered as մի յանդամոց քոց (mi yandamocʿ kʿocʿ); a similar construction occurs in Koriwn's *Life of Maštocʿ* 6, where it reads: եւ յորժամ բազումք ի նոցանէ տեղեկանային (ew yoržam bazumkʿ i nocʿanē tełekanayin), 'and when many of them had been instructed'.

23   For a detailed discussion and references, see Meyer, 'Syntactical Peculiarities'.

24   This is most concisely stated by Terian, 'Syntactical Peculiarities', 201, in his discussion of grecising compounds and syntax in Armenian: 'some of these artificial compounds are meaningless—in spite of the inherent meanings of the parts of which they are composed. The same is true of the broader syntax of these translations in spite of the inherent meanings of words which, to the Armenian reader, seem in disarray. Even when the meanings of the individual words are known, the overall meaning remains elusive'.

25   See Adontz, *Denys de Thrace*, 57–66. This wordlist provides brief explanations or simpler translations of the terms used in the τέχνη; the Greek vocative case (κλητική), for example, is rendered in the τέχνη as հոշական (hošakan), and in the

explanatory commentaries which seek to add insight.[26] It is reasonable to assume, then, that these texts were in all likelihood not meant to be used on their own, but rather in conjunction with the Greek originals; especially for students of the *trivium* whose native tongue was not Greek (and certainly not Classical Greek), these 'crib sheets' may have provided inestimable as *aide-mémoires* or vocabulary tools.[27]

Keeping in mind the very early date of translation of the Armenian τέχνη, the morphological and syntactical idiosyncrasies of grecising translations, and their likely purpose, it is understandable that scholarship has thus far focused on the language of the text, which—as has been illustrated briefly—is very instructive. Yet, there is a related perspective that has not been given sufficient attention: the Armenian τέχνη as a translation and its quality, or rather fidelity. Does a translation that so closely adheres to the original in word formation and syntax reflect the content with equal accuracy? The short answer is: no.

4.   Straightforward Translations

But it is not that easy. In a great number of instances, that is in the least problematic translations in the Armenian τέχνη, the answer is: yes; those translations may be called straightforward. Here, there is a reasonable match between the content of the Greek and the Armenian, and neither Greek grammar nor the Armenian language are altered in these translations. The following passage serves as an example of this type of translation:

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wordlist is further described as կոչական (koč'akan), an adjective appropriately derived from կոչեմ (koč'em) 'to call, shout'.

26   For a relativisation of the notion of 'insight', see the example and discussion in section 7 below.

27   This notion goes back to Akinean, 'Yunaban Dproc'ə', 285, but only gained widespread popularity with Terian, 'Hellenizing School', 183, who proposes: 'Along with the grammar of Dionysius Thrax, these works [select works of Plato, Aristotle, and Philo], even in part, cover all that was essential for the *Trivium* in this late classical period: grammar (which, as the Art of letters, included literature), rhetoric, and dialectic [...] the translations of the [Hellenising] School would represent the kind of texts used for certain structured courses of learning'.

(3) τόνος ἐςτὶν ἀπήχηςις φωνῆς ἐναρμονίου, ἡ κατὰ ἀνάτασιν ἐν τῇ ὀξείᾳ, ἡ κατὰ ὁμαλισμὸν ἐν τῇ βαρείᾳ, ἡ κατὰ περίκλασιν ἐν τῇ περισπωμένῃ.

Ոլորակ է բացագանչութիւն պատկանաւոր ձայնի, թե ըստ վերասատութեան շեշտիւն, թե ըստ հարթութեան բթիւն, թե ըստ պարբեկութեան պարուկաւն:

Tone is the resonance of a voice endowed with harmony. It is heightened in the acute, balanced in the grave, and broken in the circumflex. (§3)

The Armenian version is an accurate reflection of the Greek. As would be expected from an ordinary translation, the three different accents (acute, grave, and circumflex) are discussed without any reference to or interference from the fact that Armenian has a fixed word-final accent.[28] Greek technical vocabulary is rendered into Armenian either via morpheme-by-morpheme calquing or semantic extension (see section 3 above): բացագանչութիւն (bac'aganč'utiwn), for instance, is readily broken down into բաց- (bac'-) 'away, far' corresponding to Gk. ἀπό(-) 'away from', գանչ (ganč')[29] 'cry, scream' for Gk. ἦχος 'sound (of words)', and the abstract nominal endings -ութիւն (-ut'iwn) and -ςις. The word ոլորակ (olorak), in turn, originally means 'inflection (of voice)' in a more general sense, derived from the noun ոլոր (olor) 'twisting, contortion'; in this context, it is extended to include the specific meaning 'pitch; word accent'.

Also included in this paragraph is a true neologism: պարոյկ (paroyk) (here in the instrumental singular պարուկաւ (parukaw) + determiner -ն (-n)) 'circumflex accent' renders Gk. περιςπωμένη 'id.', but can only be analysed as consisting of the innovative prefix պար- 'around', corresponding to Gk. περί, and the nominal suffix -ոյկ (-oyk).[30]

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28   This is a slight simplification. Historically, Armenian in all likelihood stressed the penultimate syllable, but owing to word-final apocope ended up with word-final stress. A small set of words, largely interrogatives, still exhibit different stress patterns. For details, see Vaux, *Phonology of Armenian*, 132–136.

29   The noun does not seem to be attested, but there is a verb գանչեմ (ganč'em) 'to cry, scream'.

30   Also compare ըստ պարբեկութեան (əst parbekut'ean) rendering κατὰ περίκλαςιν ('twisting; breaking; circumflex accent') in the same passage.

Word order and syntax in this passage—and others like it—are un-problematic. It is noteworthy, however, how Armenian copes with constructions it cannot easily replicate, e.g. nominalised preposition-al clauses (Gk. ἡ κατὰ …), which are here rendered as prepositional clauses loosely joined by the disjunction թէ (tʻe)'either, or'.[31]

Yet, even in cases of unproblematic translations, it is difficult to de-termine whether a competent reader would have been able to un-derstand this passage on its own, without access to the Greek origi-nal, or whether it could only have served as a study tool.

5.   Extension of Greek Grammatical Concepts for Armenian Data

Next to instances of direct, unremarkable translations, there are also a number of cases in which the Armenian τέχνη makes an attempt at fitting elements of the Armenian language into the linguistic and grammatical categories preset by the Greek original, altering or ex-tending them.

A clear and almost self-explanatory example is the description of the alphabet and the sounds which it represents. Instead of translat-ing the passage verbatim, the Armenian version refers not to the Greek alphabet, but to the Armenian one instead.

(4) γράμματά ἐστιν εἰκοσιτέσσαρα ἀπὸ τοῦ α μέχρι τοῦ ω. [...] τούτων φωνήεντα μέν ἐστιν ἑπτά· α ε η ι ο υ ω.

Գիր է երեսուն եւ վեց յայբէ մինչեւ քէ: [...] Եւ նոցա ձայնաւորք են ութ. ա, ե, է, (ը), ի, ո, ւ, ω:

There are twenty-four [thirty-six] letters from alpha [ayb] to omega [kʻē]. [...] Of these, seven [eight] are vocalic: a e ē i o u ō [a e ē ə i o w ō].[32] (§6)

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31   Armenian has a set of enclitic determiners -ս, -դ, -ն (-s, -d, -n) which can take on some of the functions of Greek articles, e.g. differentiating between definite and indefinite entities (e.g. էշ (ēš) 'a donkey' vs էշն (ēšn) 'the donkey'); it cannot, however, nominalise prepositional phrases as in, e.g., οἱ ἐκ τῶν ἄλλων σκηνωμάτων (Xenophon, *Anabasis* 7.4.16), 'those from the other soldier's quar-ters'.

32   Translations reflect the Greek original; changes occurring in the Armenian are given in square brackets where possible and necessary.

Setting aside minor textual issues, [33] the Armenian version is otherwise unproblematic if it can be accepted that the translator has chosen not to translate the Greek *sensu stricto* but rather to adapt it by expansion to the linguistic facts of Armenian; in essence, the structure of this Greek grammar is accepted as a compatible blueprint on the basis of which a grammar of Armenian may be written.

This assumption is, however, challenged almost immediately by a passage further along in the same paragraph:

(5) ἔτι δὲ τῶν συμφώνων διπλᾶ μέν ἐστι τρία· ζ ξ ψ. διπλᾶ δὲ εἴρηται, ὅτι ἓν ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἐκ δύο συμφώνων σύγκειται, τὸ μὲν ζ ἐκ τοῦ σ καὶ δ, τὸ δὲ ξ ἐκ τοῦ κ καὶ σ, τὸ δὲ ψ ἐκ τοῦ π καὶ σ.

Եւ կրկնակք են ի սոցանէ ութ. զ, լ, խ, ջ, չ, ջ, ռ, ց։ Եւ կրկնակք աւն, վասն զի մի մի իւրաքանչիւր որք ի սոցանէ յերկուց ձայնակցաց բաղկանայ՝ զայն ի սէէ եւ դայէ եւ խէն յերկուց քմակից քէից եւ շայն յերկուց սէից եւ ռայն յերկուց րէից։ Նոյնպէս եւ այլքն մու մու յերկուց բարբառակցաց շարակացեալ են:

Of the consonants, three [eight] are double: zeta, xi, and psi [za, liwn, xē, ša, čʻa, jē, ṙa, cʻo]. They are called 'double' because each one of them is composed of two consonants, because zeta is composed of sigma and delta, ksi of kappa and sigma, and psi of pi and sigma [za from sē and da, xē from adjoining kē, ša from to sē, and ṙa from two rē. In the same way the others are each composed from two consonants.] (§6)

This passage, and others like it, are problematic not because the category of 'double consonants' is alien to Armenian, but because the translator has populated it with unexpected material. While

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33 Adontz, *Denys de Thrace*, 5, brackets ը (ə), as he does not believe it to be an appropriate reading, and notes a *varia lectio* for Arm. ω as ու (ov). The bracketing is difficult to understand, as ը (ə) is a plausible vowel sound and indeed required to make up eight vowels; the latter reading is obviously to be rejected as representing neither a letter nor a vowel or diphthong in Classical Armenian. The sign ω, not remarked upon in Adontz, seems hardly justifiable in Armenian other than as a precursor of ο (ō); judging by the commentary on this passage by David the Invincible, however, it may be possible to explain this *varia lectio* as the name of the vowel rather than its alphabetic character. See Adontz, *Denys de Thrace*, 94, and n. 46 below.

equations like խ (x) = ք (k') + ք (k') or ռ (r̄) = ր (r) + ր (r) could con-
ceivably be explained as late antique attempts at phonological ra-
tionalisation, it is doubtful whether Arm. զ (z) ever represented a
sound like Greek ζ.[34] Even if it did, questions concerning the other
letter-sound-correspondences remain: firstly, why are the com-
pounding members of լ (l), չ (č'), ջ (ǰ), and ց (c') not clarified? Second-
ly, even in cases where two sounds are clearly co-articulated, it re-
mains unclear why, e.g., the palato-alveolar affricates չ (č' [tʃʰ]) and ջ
(ǰ [dʒ]) are recognised and listed as complex consonants, but the oth-
er existing member of this phonological group, ճ (č [tʃ]), is omitted.[35]
Knowledge of Classical Armenian phonology and its developments is,
inevitably, imperfect, but it seems implausible that the sounds in
question should have been radically different from their modern
equivalents. Discounting negligence on part of the translator, this set
of double consonants remains puzzling, but at least conceivably re-
flects a contemporary understanding of the composition of Armenian
sounds.[36]

   A different example provides rather more difficulty. In the discus-
sion of nominal case, the Greek original lists—and in turn explains

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34   While Greek ζ originally likely reflected a consonant cluster [zd] and in the history
     of Greek may have come to represent the affricate [dz] through metathesis, at the
     time of composition of the τέχνη—and most certainly by the time of its translation
     into Armenian—ζ had been simplified to [z]; see Allen, *Vox Graeca*, 53–56.
35   The same point could be made concerning the pure alveolar affricates, viz. inclu-
     sion of ց (c', [tsʰ]) but not ծ (c [ts]) and ձ (j [dz]).
36   Similar confusion arises in the translation of a passage dealing with long and short
     vowels, which Greek differentiates but Armenian does not. Armenian supposedly
     has two long vowels (է (ē) and ո, corresponding to Greek η and ω), three short
     vowels (ե (e), ո (o), ւ (w), cp. Greek ε and o) and three ambivalent vowels (ա (a), ը
     (ə), ի (i), cp. Greek α, ι, υ). It may be possible to explain this constellation, howev-
     er: the long vowel է (ē) is best matched with η owing to its articulation (more open
     than ե (e) just as η is more open than ε); the ω sound needs no discussion. The
     short vowels follow the same logic; ւ (w) may well be included here by default as
     having no Greek match. In the ambivalent vowels, ա (a) and ի (i) are the obvious
     counterparts of α and ι; the match of ը (ə) and υ is, in all likelihood, again due to
     relative phonetic proximity, since Classical and Koine υ is a close front rounded
     vowel [y] and Armenian ը (ə) in all likelihood a mid or close-mid central unround-
     ed vowel, [ə] or [ɘ]. This, then, is not an attempt at introducing the concept of
     vowel quantity into Armenian, but at matching Greek and Armenian data as close-
     ly as possible.

the function of—the five Greek cases. As in the case of the letters of the alphabet and sounds of Armenian, the number of cases in the Armenian version is adjusted:

(6) πτώσεις ὀνομάτων εἰσὶ πέντε· ὀρθή, γενική, δοτική, αἰτιατική, κλητική.

Հոլովք են անուանց վեց. ուղղական, սեռական, տրական, առաքական, հայցական, հոշական:

There are five [six] cases: nominative, genitive, dative, [instrumental,] accusative, vocative. (§12)

Once more, the translator has extended the Greek structure for the use of Armenian material. Equally, however, he has again made choices concerning the number and indeed name (or function) of the Armenian cases which are difficult to justify.

Firstly, Armenian does not commonly have a separate vocative case.[37] Secondly, next to the cases named, Armenian usually also differentiates an ablative and locative case. It is true that not all nominal paradigms have morphologically distinctive forms for each case, while others do and others yet show significant differences in the form–function-match of various cases.

In all instances mentioned here, the translator has accepted the grammatical category postulated in the Greek (letters, complex consonants, grammatical cases) and expanded them to fit the Armenian data; in the latter two instances discussed, however, this expansion is both incomplete (not all complex consonants, cases are mentioned) and uses problematic data (composite nature of լ (l); retention of vocative, lack of other cases). Deviations from the Greek original could be readily explained as an attempt at writing a grammar of Armenian on the basis of the τέχνη; the omission and misrepresentative of significant Armenian data, however, make it difficult to defend this as the only explanation, barring any drastic, unknown changes in the history of Armenian.

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37 Greek names, or translations of Greek names, do on occasion retain vocative forms, so for instance in Թէոփիլէ (Tʻēopʻilē) for Θεόφιλε in Luke 1:3; see Jensen, *Altarmenische Grammatik*, §132.

6. Adaptation of Armenian Data to Greek Grammatical Concepts

Next to populating Greek grammatical categories with Armenian data and, where necessary, expanding these categories, the translator of the τέχνη has also seen fit to adapt Armenian data to fit such categories as do not naturally exist in Classical Armenian. Again, this is best understood with the help of concrete examples.

One of the clearest differences between Armenian and Greek is the lack of grammatical gender[38] in the former, while the latter has a threefold distinction. This lack of congruity is not transmitted in the Armenian version, which here opts for a straightforward translation:

(7) γένη μὲν οὖν εἰσι τρία·   Եւ սերք են երեք. արական,
     ἀρσενικόν, θηλυκόν, οὐδέτερον   իգական, եւ չեզոք
     There are three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter (§12)

This difference only becomes problematic when gendered words are discussed, as is the case, for instance, with the Greek article. Here difficulties compound since, unlike Greek, Armenian does not have a preposed article but rather a determinative (and deictic) enclitic; nor, indeed, does it have a dual number.[39] Accordingly, the rendition of the paragraph about the article is rather taxing:

(8) γένη μὲν οὖν εἰσι τρία· ὁ   Եւ են սերք, որգոն արարաւդ,
     ποιητής, ἡ ποίησις, τὸ ποίημα.   արարած, արարուած:
     ἀριθμοὶ τρεῖς· ἑνικός, δυϊκός,   Թիւք երեք. եզական՝ այս, այդ,
     πληθυντικός· ἑνικὸς μὲν ὁ ἡ τό,   այն. երկուորական՝ այսու,
     δυϊκὸς δὲ τώ τά , πληθυντικὸς   այդու, այնով. եւ յոգնական՝
     δὲ οἱ αἱ τά.   այնք, այդք, այնք:
     πτώσεις δὲ ὁ τοῦ τῷ τόν ὦ, ἡ   Եւ հոլովք՝ այս, այսր, այսմ,
     τῆς τῇ τήν ὦ.   այսու, զայս, ով, այսք:

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38 There are, of course, ways of expressing natural gender, but these are largely restricted to differences made by lexical choice or suffixes; consider, for instance, այր (ayr) 'man' vs կին (kin) 'woman', or թագաւոր (t'agawor) 'king' vs թագուհի (t'aguhi) 'queen'. From a grammatical perspective, e.g. in terms of morphosyntactic agreement, gender is irrelevant.

39 Greek historically has a dual number, which is, however, largely restricted to natural pairs (eyes, ears, etc.) and stock phrases. It is not commonly used in Classical Attic prose, and virtually absent in other dialects and in the Koine; see Cuny, *Duel en grec*; Meillet, 'L'emploi du duel'; Viti, 'Use of the Dual'.

The Genders are three, as ὁ ποιητής [the creator, masculine], ἡ ποίησις [the act of creation, feminine], τὸ ποίημα [the creature/creation, neuter].[40]
The Numbers are three: Singular, Dual, and Plural - Singular, as ὁ, ἡ, τό [this, that, yonder]; Dual, as τώ, τά [?]; Plural, as οἱ, αἱ, τά [these, those, yonder].
The Cases are - ὁ, τοῦ, τῷ, τόν, ὦ; ἡ, τῆς, τῇ, τήν, ὦ; τό, τοῦ, τῷ, τό, ὦ [this, of this, to/at this, with this, this (object), oh!, these]. (§16)

When the Greek lists the gendered articles ὁ, ἡ, τό, the Armenian version misses the point entirely[41] and indeed does not employ its native counterpart to the article, the enclitic determiners -ս, -դ, -ն (-s, -d, -n). As the discussion proceeds to the grammatical number, however, the Armenian provides plausible counterparts to the article in form of the demonstrative pronouns այս, այդ, այն (ays, ayd, ayn); the threefold differentiation of the pronouns is, however, not a reflection of grammatical gender, but of deixis (proximal, medial, and distal, respectively); the plural works analogically. The dual forms, in turn, are not attested in Classical Armenian, nor indeed is there a dual number; it stands to reason that the translator has created these forms to populate an otherwise empty grammatical category.[42] Coming to the different cases, the Armenian version is rather difficult to interpret: the first five forms are, in order, the nominative, genitive, dative-locative-ablative, instrumental, and accusative of the demonstrative pronoun; ով (ov) is an exclamatory particle (cp. Gk. ὦ), and

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40   The distinction between 'act of creation' and 'creation/creature' is not as explicit in Armenian: the suffix -ած (-ac) denotes the result of an action, here of առնեմ (aṙnem) 'to make'. The added infix -ու- (-u-), prefiguring Middle and Modern Armenian -վ- (-v-), may here already mark a passive state, thus 'having been made'; see Dum-Tragut, *Modern Eastern Armenian*, 175–177, 334–338.

41   The translation provided does not illustrate different articles accompanying gendered nouns, and in its translation is generally is somewhat ambiguous; see the above note.

42   It is worth noting that the supposed dual forms այսու (aysu) and այդու (aydu) are identical to the instrumental singular forms; the form այնով (aynov) is similarly reminiscent of an instrumental, but in this instance that of o-stem nominals. Further of note is the creation of artificial dual forms also in other paradigms, for instance in the verb (§13), where the Greek triple τύπτω, τύπτετον, τύπτομεν 'I, the two of us, we beat' is rendered as գանեմ, գանոմ, գանեմք (ganem, ganom, ganemk'), with գանոմ (ganom) and other forms like it being otherwise unattested.

այսք (aysk') is the nominative plural. The translator has not followed the Greek practice of giving the relevant forms for the singular in each gender (or deixis, in Armenian), and adds to the Armenian paradigm the beginning only of the plural paradigm next to a, presumably Greek-inspired, exclamation.

It should be noted that the invention of forms, in the above example the dual, is not unprecedented in grecising Armenian. The category of gender may have been replaced by references to deixis in this text, but artificially created, non-*echtsprachliche* forms with grammatical gender do occur elsewhere, for instance սէ (sē) as the feminine form of սա (sa) (nominative singular of the third person proximal pronoun), նէմա (nēma) for նմա (nma) (dative-locative of the third person distal pronoun), or սացա (sac'a) for սոցա (soc'a) (genitive-dative-ablative of the third person distal pronoun), all of which reflect forms of Gk. αὕτη; similarly, the triple reflex էզ, մու, մի (ēz, mu, mi) (masculine, feminine, neuter) is occasionally used instead of just մի (mi), reflecting Gk. εἷς, μία, ἕν.[43]

Once more, the question arises: what is the purpose or function of this translation? It is not a grammatically faithful reflection of the Greek, nor does it represent the linguistic reality of Classical Armenian so far as it is known. What is more, the changes (deixis for gender; addition of plural forms; etc.) are not made explicit so that the unaware reader would not be able to make heads or tails of this text. If the intention was to reflect Armenian usage, why were passages from the Greek inapplicable to Armenian not simply left out? In earlier parts of the Armenian τέχνη, for instance, the translator has omitted a number of quotes from Homeric epic illustrating assimilatory processes in Greek which do not occur in Armenian.[44] The reader's last hope to understand the Armenian τέχνη—whether in its own

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43   For a list of other occurrences and references, see Muradyan, *Grecisms in Ancient Armenian*, 91–93.

44   This is most notable in §6, where the Greek original quotes, for instance, the Odyssey—ἀλλά μοι εἴφ᾿ ὅπη ἔσχες ἰὼν ἐυεργέα νῆα (Hom. *Od.* 9.279), 'But tell me, where did you moor your well-made ships upon your arrival'—to illustrate the partial anticipatory assimilation of π [p] to φ [pʰ] before an aspirated vowel under elision. Similarly, later in the same passage, the explanation of what are ἀμετάβολα ('unchangeable') consonants—λ, μ, ν, ρ, so the nasals and liquids—is left untranslated.

right or in comparison with the Greek original—lies in later commentaries, it would appear.

7.   The Commentaries

In view of the different approaches presented in sections 4–6, and the examples discussed, the question arises whether late antique or medieval commentaries on the Armenian translation of the τέχνη are able to shed any light on these idiosyncrasies.

In his edition of the Armenian version, Adontz provides the texts of six commentaries, penned by David the Invincible, Movses Kerdoł, Step'anos Siwnec'i, Grigor Magistros, and Hamam Arewelc'i; one commentary remains unattributed. The explanations provided in these commentaries, however, do little to elucidate the issues detailed above, helpful though they may have been for contemporary readers.

Concerning the accent (see section 4), David the Invincible comments:

(9)   Իսկ ողորակն միայն բանակա̄ս առ ի պատկանաւոր ունելոյ ձայն, եւ ոմանց ծաննաւթ լեալ առ ի կրթութենէ, որպէս ի յունական լեզուին, իսկ այլ ազգացն ոչ եւս:
        Tone, however, is comprehensible only on the basis of its having a suitable sound; in some [languages] it is can be learnt through instruction, like in Greek, but in [the languages] of other people not even that.[45]

Thereafter the author proceeds to explain the pitch of the Greek accents in more detail.

David does provide an explanation concerning the long vowels mentioned above (see section 5), but once again it does not explain the difference between the Greek and Armenian versions.[46] The oth-

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45   Adontz, *Denys de Thrace*, 90–91.

46   The commentary on this passage outlines that vowels like է (ē) and o (ō) are long by nature, just like ե (e), ո (o), and ւ (w) are short by nature; only ա (a), ը (ə), and ի (i) are prone to stretching (ձգել (jgel)) and condensing (ամփոփել (amp'op'el)); see Adontz, *Denys de Thrace*, 94. From a phonetic point of view, there are, however, no particular commonalities between these groups of sounds which might explain such behaviour.

er commentaries provide different insights and further approaches to the interpretation of the Armenian translation, but do not address any of the questions this paper seeks to address.[47]

8.   Synthesis

From all the above, it emerges quite clearly that the Armenian translator of the τέχνη did not produce a mere translation, but something more complex. While the default approach was to translate Greek into Armenian in a grecising fashion, other considerations could supersede this default: where the Armenian language differs from Greek in the extent in which a grammatical category is populated, the translator expands, inserting relevant elements from the Armenian inventory (§5 above); where a grammatical category does not exist in Armenian, it is either filled with nonce words or is entirely omitted (§6 above). As the discussion has shown, however, even where Greek and Armenian share grammatical categories (e.g. complex consonants), the inventory listed and the explanations provided are not always comprehensible. In like fashion, not all pieces of the text fall neatly into one or the other category. The list of long, short, and ambivalent vowels is largely a straightforward translation of the Greek; the addition of certain Armenian vowels into particular categories, as has been discussed, requires further explanation, however.

Since the commentaries do not provide further elucidation of these discrepancies between the Greek and Armenian version, nor indeed between Armenian linguistic reality and the data provided, it is difficult if not impossible to speculate as to the precise meaning or intentions of such a 'translation'. It is evidently not a translation *verbum pro verbo* as is common in other grecising texts, nor is it a grammar of Classical Armenian on the basis of a grammar of Greek. There remains the possibility that it is a crib, an *aide-mémoire* serving Armenian students of the *trivium*, who require help with the Greek original. Given the inconsistencies listed and analysed above, and the

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47   As the present focus does not lie on the commentaries on the Armenian τέχνη nor on the Armenian grammatical tradition as a whole, this brief account must suffice. The commentaries are, however, in much need of further research, if only to paint a clearer picture of Armenian linguistic and metalinguistic thought across time.

fact that there are multiple different 'translation' strategies at work here, it is difficult to imagine how the Armenian τέχνη would have helped its users to understand in detail either Greek or Armenian from a grammatical perspective. Even if the purpose of studying the τέχνη was to gain insight into grammar and linguistic thought more abstractly, with the Greek and Armenian data serving merely as examples, the inconsistencies in the Armenian data remain and would make comprehension difficult, though perhaps not impossible.

It would appear, therefore, that at least for the moment, the Armenian version of the τέχνη eludes satisfactory explanation as concerns the rationale informing that translator's choices. In view of the centrality of this text not only in Armenian, but in Byzantine thought as well, certain speculative and *ad hoc* explanations need not even be entertained: barring any evidence to the contrary, the translation of the text is unlikely to have been rushed, nor does it seem plausible that a collective of translators—making different choices regarding the *modus operandi* of their translation—should have collaborated without a final editorial review. Until it is afforded a more extensive study, the Armenian τέχνη remains an uncomfortable compromise between translation, extension, and adaptation of Greek grammar for an Armenian audience.

9.   Conclusions

This paper has aimed to show two things: first, that next to the language of late antique and medieval translations of Greek sources into Armenian, it is well worth extending scholarly investigations to the content of these translations; secondly, that the Armenian translation of the τέχνη γραμματική is neither an entirely faithful translation, nor indeed a successful attempt at producing a grammar of Armenian on the basis of a Greek grammar. Owing to the inevitable deficiencies of a discussion that can only rest on illustrative examples, the preliminary conclusion to be drawn from the content of this translation and its way of dealing with the Greek original relies largely on negatives. The Armenian τέχνη cannot serve as a translation *sensu stricto*, nor is it likely to be a useful *aide-mémoire* for an Armenian student of Greek texts. To get to the bottom of this unusual text,

a more thorough study is required, which must take into account the entirety of the text as well as its commentaries, cataloguing and categorising all deviations from the original in the translation.

As an historical document, this 'translation' is an indicator of the intellectual crossroads at which the late 5th-c. Armenian intelligentsia has arrived: they are caught between the 'Self' and the 'Other', between their (proto-national) self-identity and a (quasi-)Byzantine cultural identity. Following the invention of an alphabet suited to their native language and the translation of the Bible, these grecising translations represent the first Armenian forays into philosophy and science, and thus also first steps in developing a suitable metalanguage. The scholars involved in these translations, all trained in the bastions of Byzantine learning, evidently sought to enrich their language and culture not only through translations and the creation of a technical vocabulary, but also by adapting the object of their study to their own linguistic needs. The resulting amalgam of Greek, Armenian, and pseudo-Armenian is difficult to interpret for the modern reader, and may have posed comparable challenges to its contemporaries. Since it is the first known example of this kind of translation,[48] however, it may not be unreasonable—though perhaps overly simplistic or naïve—to view it as just that: an imperfect work, somewhat inconsistently trying to combine Greek scholarship, thinking, and linguistic categories with Armenian language material. After all, it is not for nothing that it is called the τέχνη γραμματική, the 'art', 'skill', or 'craft' of grammar, which cannot be mastered without practice.

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48   The τέχνη is often assumed to be the first non-Biblical text to have been translated from Greek into Armenian; this assumption is commonly, but not universally, accepted, but debates concerning the date of this translation are ongoing; see Terian, 'Hellenizing School'; Calzolari, 'L'école hellénisante', Muradyan, *Grecisms in Ancient Armenian*; Muradyan, 'Hellenizing School'.

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