MANUSCRIPTS AND READINGS OF ARMENIAN IV EZRA

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I

The Fourth Book of Ezra has survived in seven more or less complete versions: Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic, two Arabic, Armenian and Georgian. There is also a fragment of a Sahidic text. It seems most likely that all these were made from the Greek translation of a Semitic (probably Hebrew) original. Neither the Greek nor the Hebrew is extant. Thus, as is the case with certain other pseudepigrapha, the daughter versions of the Greek, including the Armenian, are the primary sources of textual information. Now, while Armenian translations of ancient documents are generally faithful, and often even servile in their rendition of their originals, the Armenian version of IV Ezra is notable for its wide divergences from the text witnessed by the other versions, especially from the closely related groups Latin and Syriac, Georgian and Ethiopic.  

There is no critical edition of this version, and this is a serious obstacle to the study of IV Ezra. Most obviously, in order to be able to evaluate the true importance of Armenian for the recovery of the text lying behind all the versions, it is necessary to have a reliable form of it. Beyond this, however, if the Armenian faithfully reflects a variant Greek tradition, naturally this is of very great significance. If, on the other hand, it is a reworking of its Greek Vorlage in Armenian, then this is no less interesting, for it will require a reassessment of the normally accepted assumptions about Armenian translation techniques.

The Armenian text which has served as the basis of previous studies is that of J. Zohrab, published in his Armenian Bible of 1805. This text was reprinted with no discernible changes by S. Hovsep’ianc in his collection of Armenian apocrypha in 1896 and subsequently with an English translation by J. Issaverdens in 1900. It is this text too which forms the basis of Peter-


2 J. Zohrab, Astvacaštunč Matean Hin ew Nor Ktakaranac (Venice 1805); S. Hovsep’ianc, Ankanon Girk’ Hin Ktakaranac (Venice 1896); J. Issaverdens, The Uncanonical Writings of the Old Testament (Venice 1900; 1934). It may be observed that the text of Hovsep’ianc is so close to Zohrab’s that he even reprints the latter’s footnote, cp. Hovsep’ianc, 251, Zohrab, Supplement, 13, col. ii.
mann’s Latin rendering which was first printed by A. Hilgenfeld in his *Messias Judaeorum* in 1869 and was reprinted with indication of some variant readings from the four Venice MSS by Violet. It also, most recently, formed the basis for the presentation of the Armenian evidence in Gry’s edition of IV Ezra.\(^3\)

Now, if the manuscript base of this edition were broad, it might well be a satisfactory text, justifying the wide, indeed universal trust past scholarship has placed in it. In just this connection Gry notes that Zohrab used nineteen MSS for his text, and this number of witnesses would seem to be adequate. Yet, as far as can be ascertained by the writer, this information is incorrect. In the introduction to the Bible, Zohrab lists nine full Biblical MSS which he collated. Of these, however, only three contained IV Ezra and these he identifies as his numbers 4, 5 and 7.\(^4\) On the basis of the information which he provides, 4 is clearly Venice 623 (our F), 7 — Venice 1182 (our C), while his 5 appears to be Venice 229 (our E). There is a difference of two years between the date he gives for this MS (1657) and that recorded by Sarghissian (1655, confirmed by the writer’s personal examination), but the coincidence of other details makes this identification definite, and it is further strengthened by textual considerations, cp. the reading of 3:12b, no. 5 discussed below.

Zohrab also observed that his 4 and 5 were copied from a Polish MS of the year 1619. This MS, which was not available to him, is Erevan 351 (our N). The direct dependence of E and F (4 and 5) on N in IV Ezra is not clear as far as the text is concerned, but the full implications of this must await detailed discussion elsewhere. The result of this situation is that all previous discussions of the Armenian version of IV Ezra have been carried out on the basis of three, or if E and F are copied from N, only two MS witnesses. This is clearly unsatisfactory and a new search among various manuscript collections was undertaken and has produced important additional evidence.

In MS 1500 of the Institute of Ancient Manuscripts in Erevan, Armenia, there is preserved a recension of Armenian IV Ezra which differs in significant ways from Zohrab’s text. Here some of the readings of this manuscript are presented and some comments are offered on them. In addition, a further fifteen MSS have been discovered which are of the same basic type as the three used by Zohrab. This considerably broadens the basis for this text-

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3 B. Violet, *Die Ezra-Apokalypse (IV Ezra); Erster Teil, Die Überlieferung* (Leipzig 1910), cp. xi; see also id., *Die Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch in Deutscher Gestalt* (Leipzig 1924), xxiii–xxviii (referred to henceforth as Violet I and II respectively); L. Gry, *Les Dires prophétiques d’Esdras* (Paris 1938), cp. xvi.

4 Gry gives this information on p. xvi. Zohrab discusses the nine MSS in his introduction, see x5x–x7x, and the manuscripts including IV Ezra are mentioned in the *Supplement*, 1, col. i. Zohrab notes that his eighth MS is not a complete Bible. As his ninth MS he reckons the base MS used by Oskan in his printed Bible of the year 1666.
form. Some comments are also made on this recension based on a new collation of all eighteen MSS. Here, in quotation of the Armenian text, an eclectic version is presented and for technical reasons only those variants discussed in detail are indicated.

Some Details of the Manuscripts Here Quoted
H. Erevan 1500, Karenian 924, Rhodes 884. 1271–1288 C.E. (L.S.Kh.) Miscellany including Bible. Written and owned by the eminent Armenian historian, Mechetar of Ayrivank. See further details in Lewy, Rhodes.
C. Venice Mechetarist 1182, Sargsian Bible 7. 1656 C.E. Bible.
E. Venice Mechetarist 229, Sargsian Bible 4, Rhodes 316. 1655 C.E. Bible.
G. Jerusalem 1934. 1643 C.E. Bible. Clark, 1953, p. 37, Rhodes, p. 69, # 481.
K. Erevan 201. 1660 (L.S.Kh. 1610) C.E. Bible.
M. Erevan 205. 17th century. Bible.
N. Erevan 351, Karenian 173, Rhodes 690. 1619 (L.S. Kh. 1616–1619) C.E. Bible.
Q. Jerusalem 1928. 1648 C.E. Bible. Clark, 1953, p 37, Rhodes., p. 69, # 479.
R. British and Foreign Bible Society Armenian Bible. Some time before 1667, perhaps about 1600 C.E. Bible. Rhodes, p. 11, # 71.
S. British Museum Or. 8833. 16th or 17th centuries. Bible.

Bibliographical Note on Manuscripts
The most recent listing of the manuscripts of the Matenadaran, Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Erevan, Armenia, is to be found in C’uc’ak jeragerac’ Maštoc’i Anvar Matenadaranı, Pt. 1 (Erevan 1965), in which, fortunately, all the manuscripts here quoted are described. The numbers given here follow that list. Notes ascribed to L. S. Kh. are drawn from personal communications to the author by Dr. Levon S. Khatchikian, Director of the Institute. The older listing of these manuscripts is J. Karenian, Mayr C’uc’ak jeragir matenic’ Gradaranı Srboy At’oroy Ejmiacni (Tiflis 1863). Some details re MS H are to be found in H. Lewy, The Pseudo-Philonic De Jona, Pt. 1 (London 1936) 4, 7 (his MS A). The rubric Rhodes refers to Erroll F. Rhodes, An Annotated List of Armenian New Testament Manuscripts (Tokyo 1950). It is to be noted that his descriptions are not always accurate, due to the difficult conditions under which his work was carried out. He includes, however, a useful biblio-

II

THE READINGS OF EREVAN 1550 (H)

1. 3:1

All MSS **yamin eresnerordi** in the thirtieth year + H alone **gerut'eann Hreastani** of the captivity of Judaea

The word “destruction”, reflected in all the other versions except Ar² which reads “building”, clearly lies behind “captivity” here. The reading “Judaea” for the “city” of the other versions is not directly paralleled. The phrase lacks in all other Armenian manuscripts. In Latin MS L (Cod. Legionensis) the addition *ihrim et iudaea* is found. It is clear that in the final analysis, H is based on the text presupposed by the other versions. The question whether there is any common basis for H and Latin L or for Arm. in general and Latin L can only be determined after an exhaustive study of the whole book. It is of interest, however, to note some common points in the first chapter.

a) 3:29

**aha ays l’am ē**

H: behold this thirty years it is, *i.e.* behold it is 30 years that

The other Arm. MSS reverse *ays* and *aha* and omit ē. Latin: *hoc tricesimo anno*, but L: *hoc ecce tricesimo anno est*

*Ecce* is common to Latin L and Arm. alone. The verb “to be” is found only in H, Latin L and Georg.

b) 3:24

**Yet nora yaruc’er zordi nora zSolomon orum hramayec’er šinel ztačarn i tesil giseroyen ew i nma arnel amenayn žolovrdeann zalawi’s ew matur’anel zpatarags.**
After him you raised up his son, Solomon whom you commanded, in a night vision, to build the Temple. And (you commanded) all the people to give prayers and offer sacrifices in it.

This passage occurs after the text of 3:24 and is found in all MSS of Arm. It is not found in any other version. Violet considers it original to IV Ezra, especially in light of 10:46 which speaks of Solomon, not David, making offerings. In this latter case Box emends Solomon to David.5 This additional sentence bears some verbal resemblance to the first part of v. 24, and a direct Biblical or other source is not evident. The tradition that Solomon received the command to build the Temple in a night vision seems peculiar to Arm. In 2 Chr. 7:12, cp. 1 Ki. 9:2, he is told about the sanctification of the Temple in a night vision and this is doubtless the direct or indirect source of the formulation here (cp. also 1 Ki. 6:11 f., 2 Bar. 61:1–2). It is conceivable, as Violet thinks, that Armenian is superior to all other versions here. The omission of this sentence might then well be explained by homoioarkton of the word sacrifices in the Greek, for this word occurs at the end of both halves of this verse. It is significant that in Latin MS L the following addition is found to 3:24. After oblationes it reads:

\[ \text{et construxit salomon filius eius domum nominis tui et aram sacrificiorum erexit in ea in qua sacerdotes munera tibi deferebant sicut precepisti moysi famulo tuo.}^6 \]

This appears to be related, at least in content, to the addition in Arm. Both introduce the same major subjects, Solomon’s building of the Temple and the offering of sacrifices. The textual relationship between them is not clear and, in the final analysis the relationship posited will depend on other readings. Yet, in spite of this, the common features of these two additions are such that mere coincidence would be surprising.

c) 3:4

\[ \text{du ararer zerkins ew zerkir ew zamenayn or i nosa} \]

you made the heavens and the earth and everything which is in them

This phrase of Arm. is an expansion of the text of the other versions which read “you made the earth” or the like. Ar2 om. The phrase is also introduced

5 See Violet, II, ad loc., G. H. Box, The Ezra-Apocalypse (London 1912) 238, n. m.

6 Gry, Direes prophétiques..., 15, notes this text, but considers Latin L and Arm. to be completely unrelated developments. In view of the other resemblances in these sources noted here, it seems that the possibility of some original relationship should not be foreclosed.
into Arm. 6: 38, indicating its formulaic character. The Latin offers the following readings:

SAM (best): quando plasmasti terram et hoc solus  
Variants: fiat terra et solem hec: C; fiat terra et solu hoc N; fiat terra et sol: hoc V; fiat celum et terram et lux et sol? hoc L

As Violet I comments *ad loc.* the readings of C, N and V are best understood as a corruption of a text of the type S, A, M. He also rightly includes L in this category. L is, as often, analogous to V. In spite of this, and in spite of the formulaic nature of the phrase in Arm., the coincidence of the expansion in these two texts is striking. Both read “heaven and earth” and it is precisely at the point of this common reading with Arm. that L is unique among the Latin MSS. Arm. has nothing comparable to the *lux et sol* of L.

d) 3:6  
Arm: draxtn p’ap’kut’can — “paradise of delight”

Here all versions read “paradise” alone, except for Latin L, which reads *paradisum voluptatis*. Contrast with 7:36 where all (except Ar2) read “paradise of delight”.

e) 3:13  
Latin L and Arm. both omit *coram te*.

Latin L is described well by Violet, and he characterizes it as a “stark redigierter Text”\(^7\). The readings noted as common to Arm. and L in ch. 3 represent a minority of the unique variants of both texts, even in that chapter. It seems unlikely *prima facie* that there is a direct relationship between them. Indeed, it is quite possible that they are independent in their peculiarities, that both are expansionist and both expand at certain suggestive points. Yet the coincidence of readings given above may indicate that more than pure chance is at work here, and the possibility must be borne in mind that they depend on common materials. Further study of the relationship between Arm. and L may help to clarify this point and this factor may require a re-evaluation of the special material of both Arm. and L, indeed, of the present understanding of the Greek *Vorlage* of the versions.

In spite of the common reading of H and Latin L in 3:1, it seems unlikely that a special kinship of the two manuscripts can be posited, beyond the general relationship of Arm. and L already noted. The preservation of the reading of H is to be regarded as an inner-Armenian phenomenon. We may also contrast in 3:29 (*a* above) the following:

\(^7\) Violet, I, xxi–xxiv.
In the phrase 1-1, the other Armenian MSS are closest to the Latin, which is followed by Syr etc. H shows the influence of Gen. 2:7 which is, in the Armenian ie p'ec'er yeress nora... It is impossible to determine from the text of H whether the influence is of the Hebrew, Greek or Armenian Bible, although the last is most likely on other grounds.

In the second part of the verse H reads elev for e of the other manuscripts. Most probably H is original, cp. Latin factum est, etc. This is also the verb in the corresponding verse, in Gen. 2:7, but H is not to be regarded as a revision of the e of the other MSS towards the Biblical text. It is clear that in both forms of Armenian the sentence is incomplete and that the nominative complement following the verb “to be” has fallen out. On the basis of the other versions of IV Ezra and of Gen. 2:7 which is the source of the verse in IV Ezra, we can, I believe, confidently reconstruct kendani “living, alive” here. Elev has the same force as koi egeveto translating Hebrew יְיָ and is clearly in agreement with the text presupposed by the other versions. E can therefore be regarded as an inner-Armenian development, an attempt to smooth the sentence out after the loss of kendani. The original text of Armenian might be reconstructed as: ie p'ec'er i na huni kendani. elev kendani araj k' o — “And you breathed into him the breath of life, and he became alive before you”. Thus, in one verse, we may observe one reading in which H is superior to the other MSS of Armenian, and another showing evidence of a recension towards the Biblical text.

3. 3:7a

To whom you gave a command that
H: canic'ë ztërd  he know the Lord
Other: canic'en t'e k' o gore e  they know that he is your work

The singular verb of H is clearly correct, since both the relative pronoun orum and the following verb èanc' are singular. Neither the phrase in H nor the phrase in the other MSS is found in any other version. Both make good sense in context and there is no evident way of judging between them.
and he transgressed it and H: partec'aw he was vanquished
other: patrec'aw he was deceived

One of these readings is secondary and arises from a transposition of r and t. Since the word is unique to Arm. there is no way of judging between these two readings. It is important to observe here a difference of reading between H and the other MSS in text which is unique to Arm.

4. 3:11
k'anzi haçoy elew araji k'o
H: because he was pleasing before you

This phrase, which occurs at the end of the verse, is found only in H. It reflects the Armenian translation of the Greek rendering of Gen. 6:9, εἰς τὸν ἄνδρα ἡμῶν γινέσθαι. Two possibilities offer themselves. It may be original in Arm. and have survived in H and been omitted by the other versions by homoioarkton of araji k'o ... araji k'o with the end of the preceding clause. In favour of this hypothesis it should be noted that the preceding phrase (also unique to Arm.) is drawn almost verbatim from Gen. 6:8, and thus expansion at this point is already to be found in Arm. The second possibility is that it is an expansion in H alone, of the type noted above, on the basis of the Biblical text and building on the expansion already embedded in Arm.

5. 3:12b-13a
ew nok'a noynbès araji k'o ambaršteīn
H: 2aweli k'an zharœ nixeanc'3 ey xaçex' an igors anrawênut'eann7
Others: 4ew elin anawrênut' iwnk'5 iweranc'6 ey zhet gnac' in anawrênut'eann8
And they likewise acted unlawfully before you1
H: 2more than their fathers3 and they were constant in acts of injustice7
Others: 4and their transgressions5 went forth6 and they pursued injustice8

In general, H runs parallel to the other versions. The following should be noted in detail. Numbers refer to the indices.
1. The phrase “before you” is found in Arm. alone. It may be displaced from v. 13 where it occurs in the other versions but not in Arm. In both cases it is in close connection with the word ambaršteīn.
2-3. H is closest to the other versions, but expansionist. The others read, with minor differences, like Latin: plus quam priores.
5. Zohrab, followed by Hovsep'ianc and Issaverdens, reads with MS E alone anawrênut'b''k', i.e. an instrumental plural. The text is then translated
by Issaverdens “they were born in ungodliness”, which is a forced translation to say the least. However, this can scarcely be accepted as the original reading of the MSS of this type. All of the seventeen other manuscripts, i.e. all families and subfamilies of this type, read the nominative plural. This in turn demands a translation like that offered here.

4–6. At some point this and the following phrase, 6–8, may have been doublets, as Violet suggests (I, ad loc.). If so, it was at a stage of the textual history which cannot be recovered. What seems very probable is that this phrase represents a corruption of the text of H. Graphically ew elin could well derive from awel. Iwecom is common to both. The middle words of the phrases remain problematic, and no immediate solution is evident from this point of view.

3–7. Again H is closer to the text preserved in the other versions, although by no means identical with it.

In this verse, then, are two cases where the text of H is signalbly better than that of all other MSS. Yet, H at the same time exhibits the expansionary and other tendencies which characterize Armenian in general.8

6. 3: 14

\begin{align*}
    \text{zor sirec'er ew} & \quad \text{H: } c'uc'er nma miayno \\
    \text{whom you loved and} & \quad \text{Others: } hačec'ar ond na miayn \\
    \text{H: you showed him alone} & \quad \text{Others: you were gracious to him alone}
\end{align*}

H is here distinctly better, in exact agreement with Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic and Georgian. The text of the other Armenian manuscripts bears no relation to this and may somehow be a doublet of the preceding. The rest of the verse, found only in H, the other MSS omitting it, reads:

\begin{align*}
    \text{ar anjinn zvaxčan žamanakac'} \\
    \text{by himself the end of times}
\end{align*}

“By himself”: Latin secrete, thus most Ethiopic MSS. The other Ethiopic MSS, Syriac and Ar² read a text which goes back to something like “between you and him.” Georgian omits the end of the verse, as does the second Armenian tradition. Latin, Syriac and Ethiopic also read “by night” not found in H. Cp. Gen. 15: 9ff. “Times” is to be found in the plural elsewhere only in Syriac. Here, again the text of H is substantially in agreement with the other versions. No immediate explanation for the omission in the other Armenian manuscripts is evident.

8 Some of the general features of the Armenian version are dealt with in the writer’s papers referred to in n. 1.
Conclusions

On the basis of the readings here discussed, the following tentative conclusions may be reached.

1) MS H presents two tendencies: The first is expansion and variation under the influence of the Biblical text. This is to be observed in examples 2 (3:5), 4 (3:11). Second and more striking is the preservation of more original readings than those of the other Armenian MSS. Such are to be observed in example 6 (3:14), which agrees exactly with the other versions, and examples 1 (3:1), the second part of 2 (3:5), and 5 (3:12b–13a), which coincide substantially with them.

2) MS H does not appear to represent a late recension of Armenian towards a text-type represented by the other versions on the basis either of an unknown Armenian version, such as that posited by Blake as an explanation of the Georgian, or of a version in Greek, Latin, etc. It shows the major unique features of all Armenian MSS such as the long additional passages, omissions and recasting of verses, etc. Further, as shown in example 3 (3:7a) it shows its typical variations in text unique to Arm. All this indicates that H must be understood within the extant Armenian tradition.

3) There are many smaller variations in H, in some of which it concurs with individual MSS of the other text-type. No other MS examined so far, however, shows any of its major special readings. No pattern of clear relationship has yet emerged with respect to the minor readings referred to.

4) It may therefore be concluded that, while H shows a significant number of superior readings, it is not consistently or necessarily always better than the type of text represented in the other MSS. Original readings may be found in both text types.

5) The evidence of H does not bring us any closer to an explanation of the unique features of Arm. The study of its variants does, however, help in the delimitation of the problem.

III

Some Readings of the Other Manuscripts

In this section some of the types of variant found within the second text form, that represented by all MSS except H, will be discussed. The striking feature of all these MSS is the close relationship between them. Scarcey any major variant traditions are offered, such as readings which extend beyond haplo-
graphy, dittoedgraphy, scribal error and other such phenomena. While the MSS do fall into certain related groups, as is evident from common haplographies or corruptions, the differences are minor, compared with the readings of H discussed above. This offers a good opportunity to examine some of the phenomena of transmission to be observed in these MSS, and a selection of examples will be offered. This is important since relatively little has been written on Armenian scribal habits in manuscripts of this type. For present purposes orthographic variants and such differences as can be attributed to the influence of mediaeval Armenian morphology, phonology and spelling will be ignored. This is done in spite of the importance of such variants for the study of the development of the manuscript tradition. Likewise, the very interesting subject of the forms of abbreviation will be omitted from the present list of examples. Both these subjects require fuller treatment than can be given them here.

1.  Corruption

3: 3

ENQC*: aseloc' barjrealn
Others: asel c'barjrealn, correct reading

Here incorrect division may have led to something like asel c'barjrealn > aseloc' barjrealn*, perhaps read as an abbreviation or else corrected to > aseloc' barjrealn (cp. D which shows a correction and might be the source of the reading but cannot be firmly dated since the correction is in a second hand). An example of the wrong resolution of an abbreviation may be exhibited by R's reading in 4: 7, k'anzi for k'ani if this is not simply a corruption. Conceivably a middle stage might be the abbreviation k'ni, wrongly interpreted.

2.  Dittoedgraphy

3: 7

R: azgê êin for azg êin

This is an evident dittoedgraphy. The text is problematic, and it would appear that azg should be in the plural, if the interpretation of Issaverdens "and upon all of his seed" or of Violet's omnibus, quae ex illo gentes erant is correct. The difficult text has perhaps led to the plural noc'anê = illis in MS E. This is no improvement, however, and the nmanê = illo of the other MSS is to be preferred. R could be translated ex illo gente. Issaverdens' English translation avoids the difficulty, and Violet's gentes is in fact an emendation. A literal translation would read omnibus, quae ex illo gens erant, and the difficulty of
Latin here reflects the difficulty of Arm. The sense is clear, and the sing. of azg for the pl. may also be observed elsewhere. Thus, in the following sentence HE read azg sing. in a list of pl. nouns, but the other MSS show a plural.

5: 11
kam gorcēr zardarut'īwn. kam atēr zardarut'īwn. kam atēr zanrawēnut'īwn
or has done justice, or has hated justice, or has hated injustice

This is a much clearer example of dittography, found in R. The italicized phrase resulted from the scribe's having been misled by the similar endings of the two verbs. It is needless to add that the reading makes no sense in context.

4: 17
The word mndēm is repeated. The scribe has seen the error and marked the second word ×, a common means of erasure.

3. Variants
a. Some variants appear to be graphic. Thus there is a frequent alternation of aysorik and aynorik, both nom. plur. forms of the demonstrative adjective. E.g., in 3: 5 HIPR read aynorik and all other MSS read aysorik. S'ū and n'ū are very close in the uncial script.

b. A similar phenomenon is the alternation of the sing. and pl. genitive-dative forms of -o- type noun declension endings. This is particularly common with the relative pronoun, but also occurs with other words and is due to graphic confusion of y and g c'.

4: 4 ISM oroy, others oroc*
4: 9 EH holmoy, others, holmoc*

Many further examples could be adduced.

c. In 4: 3 in MS P the words ar k'e z are introduced following the word arak'ec'ay "I have been sent". They are either a correction p.m. (this seems most likely) or by a later hand. This issue cannot clearly be decided from the photograph available. The reading is supported by both Arabic versions. It is quite possible that it is a genuine variant. The orthographic similarity of arak'ec'ay and ar k'ez should not be ignored, however, especially when the frequent confusion of q and c' g is brought into account. Thus it might well be the correction of a dittography of arak'ec'ay. It is surprising, though, that such a correction would coincide with the text presupposed by the Arabic versions, especially in light of the relationship between Ar² and Armenian.  

4. *Homoioarkton*

The major type of variant within these MSS, however, is *homoioarkton*. This occurs in virtually all manuscripts. Thus in 3:15 a case of *homoioarkton*, *ibrew . . . ibrew* results in S and M in the omission of the whole phrase “the stars of the heaven for multitude, and like” (five words). This type of error seems to occur with particular frequency in the major group BMPCIS. Thus, in 3:19 the whole group by a *homoioarkton* of *noc’a . . . noc’a* omits “laws and they did not observe (them) and you gave them” (six words). In 5:6b the same group omits “and the birds of heaven shall change their habitation” (four or five words), by *homoioarkton* between *p’oxesc’en* (MSS BMS) or *p’op’oxesc’en* (MSS PIC) and the last word of the omitted phrase. Incidentally, the divergence of readings within this group is an indication of the relative antiquity of its special readings. The last word of the omitted phrase is in some doubt, but the best reading appears to be *telap’oxesc’in*. It may be that the MS in which the *homoioarkton* occurred even read *telap’oxesc’en*. Many further examples of this phenomenon can be adduced.

It will be observed that the readings which have been discussed in this section do not witness to major variation of the textual tradition. This, as already remarked, is typical of all the MSS of this textual type. Beyond the importance of the study of these, seemingly minor variants, for understanding Armenian scribal practice and the phenomena of transmission in MSS of this type, the study of the variants can, at many small points, throw light on important readings and lead to a more realistic reconstruction of the Armenian tradition. As in the variant in MS P 4:3 discussed above, it is quite possible that by means of marginal notation, corrections in other MSS, and other such phenomena, a given MS or group of MSS preserve a better reading, although overwhelmed on numerical grounds.

Thus too, in 3:7b all MSS read *or oç goy t’iw* — “which there is no number”. MS K alone reads “to which” *oroc’, in the dat. pl., not the nom. sing. This is a much easier reading: the relative agrees with its antecedents in number; moreover, it is best suited to its own clause in case, and is to be understood as a dative of possession. It is admittedly difficult to make any sense of the nom. sing. of the other MSS. Yet, one might be tempted to see *or*, the nom. sing. of the other MSS as an original reading, corrected by the scribe of K to *oroc’. But, here the reading of K is supported by the other tradition of H. Thus it would appear that K preserves a better reading.

In light of such examples, it is clearly unjustified to treat isolated readings of MSS as if they represent mere aberrations. Naturally, a good deal more needs to be done before it will be possible to reach hard and fast conclusions
about the questions of manuscript relationships and relative values. Enough has been said here, it is hoped, to show that the study of the manuscript tradition of the Armenian version of IV Ezra can improve considerably the reliability of the texts presently at the disposal of scholars as well as throw light on Armenian scribal tendencies and practices. In books where neither a Semitic nor a Greek text is extant, the daughter versions of the Greek are all of great importance. In far too many cases the available texts of these daughter versions are not satisfactory, but are either "vulgates" or are based on too narrow a manuscript base.