

Greece in Armenian



Armenian Publications of Greek Texts from Antiquity to the Modern Era



The exhibition showcases translations from Ancient and Modern Greek into Grabar (Classical Armenian), as well as Western and Eastern Armenian, spanning various time periods.

During the early years of Armenian literature, from the fifth to eighth centuries, a variety of works were translated into Classical Armenian, including theological, historical, philosophical, grammatical, and rhetorical texts, as well as the semi-fictional *History of Alexander the Great (the Alexander Romance)*. The works of the Church Fathers are among the most significant. In the 10th century, the *Dialectica* of John of Damascus, considered the father of the Orthodox Church, was translated from Greek. Some of these translations have recently been published, taking into account the advances in philology.

Although the Armenian literature began with the translation of the Bible, this is not on display here. This is because of the complicated history of its translation, which took place during the first three decades of the fifth century. Fifth-century historians attest that it was initially translated from Syriac and subsequently revised based on select Greek manuscripts. Studying different parts of the Scriptures partly corroborates this information.

A significant period in the history of translation was the work of the Mkhitarist Fathers from Venice in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In their cultural creation, they did not overlook the masterpieces of Greco-Roman literature. They translated and published Homer's poems and several tragedies, as well as other works. They primarily translated from the originals into Classical Armenian, a language they mastered. Later, translations into Western Armenian were produced. Thus, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were translated into Grabar and into Western Armenian. Father Arsen Bagratuni is especially notable among the Mkhitarists for his original works in splendid Grabar.

We have included a translation of Sophocles' *Antigone* into Eastern Armenian, created from Bagratuni's Grabar and Russian translations. This translation was published in Baku in 1917.

The academic editions of ancient Greek and Byzantine sources are historiographic works, or parts thereof, containing information on Armenian history. Originally written in Ancient Greek — the language of literature and learning in the Byzantine period — they have been translated into Eastern Armenian by the distinguished historians Hrach Bartikyan and Simon Krkasharyan. Most of these translations are included in the *Foreign Sources on Armenia and Armenians* book series, particularly the *Ancient Greek Sources* and *Byzantine Sources* volumes, which were published by the Armenian Academy of Sciences.

Recent translations have focused on ancient, Byzantine, and modern literary works, as well as historical sources such as the writings of Herodotus, Xenophon, and Plutarch. Simon Krkasharyan has translated many books from both ancient and modern Greek. Two of the books belong to Hrach Bartikyan. Another translator is Hamazasp Hambardzumyan, who has translated several tragedies and the *Iliad*. Aram Topchyan, who translated some works in the 90s (Aeschylus, Pindarus, Euripides, Aristophanes), has been very active for the past one and a half decades, translating both independently (Sophocles) and collaboratively with Gohar Muradyan (Longus, Apollodorus, Marcus Aurelius, Euripides, Homer, Aristophanes, Aristotle and Ancient Greek poetry of the 7th-5th cc. BC). Shamrik Khachatryan, who lives in Greece, has translated novels by Nikos Kazantzakis. Meanwhile, young translators Shushan Karapetyan and Tatevik Stepanyan have translated books by Odysseas Elytis, Nikos Chrysos and Maro Vamvunaki.

