



The *Miracles of Saint Menas* in the Armenian Tradition¹

Rev. Mirosław Cichon²

Abstract: In this article, I aim to outline the *Miracles of St Menas* in the Armenian tradition. I describe the two available editions prepared by the Mekhitarists in Venice and outline the characteristics of the collection of manuscripts containing the works under study. On this basis, I correct the identification of miracles contained in BHO 748–750, namely *De Agapio* as *Eutropius and the Silver Plates*. In the further part, I provide a translation from Classical Armenian into English, accompanied by a commentary, of three miracles of St Menas preserved in the Armenian tradition: *The Isaurian Pilgrim*, *Eutropius and the Silver Plates*, and *The Jew and the Christian*.

Keywords: St Menas; Armenia; Hagiography

The Armenian Church, according to tradition, dates back to the apostolic times, when St Bartholomew and St Jude Thaddeus visited the territories of Armenia. Researchers of historiographic sources suggest that Christianity reached Armenia from two directions: Greek (Cappadocia) and Syrian³. The baptism of King Trdat III and his court took place in 301 through Gregory the Illuminator (Grigor Lusaworič⁴).

A key event in building and strengthening the Armenian Christian tradition was the invention of the alphabet (405/406 AD) by an Armenian

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² Rev. Mirosław Cichon, PhD, independent researcher, Poland; e-mail: miroslawcichon@gmail.com; ORCID: 0009-0002-2876-681X.

³ Cf. R.W. Thomson, *Syrian Christianity and the Conversion of Armenia*, in: *Die Christianisierung des Kaukasus/The Christianization of Caucasus (Armenia, Georgia, Albania)*, ed. W. Seibt, Wien 2002, p. 159-169.

⁴ Cf. S.J. Voicu, *Gregorio l’Illuminatore*, NDPAC I 2460-2461. Another opinion shifts the traditional date to the year 314; cf. P. Ananian, *La data e le circostanze della consacrazione di s. Gregorio Illuminatore*, “Le Muséon” 74 (1961) p. 43-73, 317-360. I follow the Hübschmann-Meillet-Benveniste transliteration system used in “Revue des Études Arméniennes”.

monk, Mesrop Maštoc⁵. His youngest disciple Koriwn describes this story in the work *Vark' Maštoc'i* (Life of Maštoc'), which, together with *Patmut'iwn Hayoc'* (History of Armenia) by an anonymous author, we should consider the first native works of Armenian literature⁶. Mesrop's alphabet became the beginning of the monumental effort of translating biblical books and the works of the Church Fathers into the Armenian language⁷. In addition to the above-mentioned works, the translation of hagiography from Syriac and Greek into Armenian began at that time.

1. Outline of the Early Armenian Hagiography

Aside from translations of Greek and Syriac hagiographical texts, Armenians also produced other original hagiographic works such as *Passio* of

⁵ Cf. S.J. Voicu, *Mesrob*, NDPAC I 3239-3240.

⁶ Cf. S.J. Voicu, *Koriun*, NDPAC I 2724. The *Life of Maštoc* by Koriwn has two editions referred to as *Koriwn I* and *Koriwn II*. The text of *Koriwn I*, most likely from the first half of the fifth century: *Vark' Maštoc'i* [Life of Maštoc'], ed. M. Abelean, Erevan 1941; reprint edited by: K.H. Maksoudian, *Vark' Mashtots'i, Koriwn. A Photoreproduction of the 1941 Yerevan Edition with a Modern Translation and Concordance and with a New Introduction*, Delmar 1985. The text of *Koriwn II*, from several centuries later: *Patmut'iwn varuc' ew mahuan srboyn Mesropay vardapeti meroy t'argmanč'i* [History of the Life and Death of Saint Mesrop Vardapet, Our Translator], Venezia 1894. A recent critical edition appeared in *Matenagirk' Hayoc' (Armenian Classical Authors)*, v. 1, ed. Z. Ekawean, Ant'lias 2003, p. 225-272. German translation of both editions: G. Winkler, *Koriwns Biographie des Mesrop Maštoc' . Übersetzung und Kommentar*, OCA 245, Roma 1994. English translation of *Koriwn I*: B. Norehad, *Koriwn. The Life of Mashtots*, New York 1964. French translation based on *Koriwn I*: J.-P. Mahé, *L'alphabet arménien dans l'histoire et dans la mémoire. Vie de Machtots par Korioun. Panégyrique des saints traducteurs par Vardan Areveltsi*, Paris 2018. For a description of the alphabet's invention and Bible translation, see especially *Koriwn I*, § VI, VIII, XI, and XIX. Vardapet, a title characteristic of the Armenian tradition, now means a monk-teacher, proficient in theology; in an earlier period, it meant a missionary monk teaching pagan peoples. Cf. R.W. Thomson, *Vardapet in the Early Armenian Church*, "Le Muséon" 75 (1962) p. 367-384.

⁷ There are several stages and related separate methods of translating the text. Cf. L. Ter Petrosian, *Ancient Armenian Translations*, tr. K. Maksoudian, New York City 1992; S.J. Voicu, *La patristica nella letteratura armena (V-X sec.)*, in: *Complementi interdisciplinari di patrologia*, ed. A. Quacquarelli, Roma 1989, p. 657-696; G. Muradyan, *The Hellenizing School*, in: *Armenian Philology in the Modern Era: From Manuscript to Digital Text*, ed. V. Calzolari – M.E. Stone, Leiden 2014, p. 321-348; E.G. Mathews, *Syriac into Armenian: The Translations and Their Translators*, "Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies" 10 (2010) p. 20-44.

Vahan Gołnac'i (BHO 1235) from the time of the revolt against the Muslims (705) and *Passio* of Hamazasp and Sahak Arcruni (BHO 544) under the Arab rule (785/786). An important work is the homiliary compiled by Solomon of Mak'enoc⁸, which became a model for the well-known *Homiliary of Muš* (twelfth century)⁹. Interestingly, none of them mentions St Menas.

Another document that played an important role was Armenian *Synaxarion*, referred to as *Yaysmawurk'*, lit. 'on this day', from the incipit of almost every description for a given day¹⁰. We know the different stages of its formation: (1) In the tenth century, Yovsēp' of Constantinople (991)¹¹ undertook the translation of the Greek *Menologion*. (2) The thirteenth and fifteenth centuries saw the creation of several recensions of the Armenian *Synaxarion*, ascribed to Tēr Israēl (ca. 1240), Kirakos (1269), *catholicos* Grigor Anavarzec'i (ca. 1300), and Grigor Xlat'ec'i (fifteenth century)¹². I should also mention Grigor II V kayaser (Martyrophile), *catholicos* of the Armenian Church (1066-1105), who received the epithet 'Martyrophile' for his translation of martyrologies from Greek, Syriac, and Latin into Armenian¹³.

2. Armenian tradition of the *Miracles of St Menas*

The Armenian version of *Martyrdom of St Menas* (BHO 745) precedes the cycle of miracles¹⁴. We find basic information about the Armenian

⁸ M. van Esbroeck, *Salomon de Makenoc, vardapet du VIIIe siècle*, in: *Armeniaca. Mélanges d'études arméniennes*, Venezia 1969, p. 33-44.

⁹ M. van Esbroeck, *Description de répertoire de l'homélaire de Muš*, REArm NS 18 (1984) p. 237-280.

¹⁰ G. Bayan, *Le synaxaire arménien de Ter Israel*, PO 21/1, Paris 1930. Actually, Bayan published the recension of Kirakos and not of Tēr Israēl; see below.

¹¹ Cf. N. Akinean, *Yovsēp' Kostandnupolsec'i, t'argmanič' Yaysmawurk'i (991)* [Yovsēp' of Constantinople, the Translator of *Yaysmawurk'*], "Handēs Amsōreay" 71/1-2 (1957) p. 1-13.

¹² Cf. J. Mécérian, *Bulletin arménologique, deuxième cahier: II. Introduction à l'étude des synaxaires arméniens* (Տոյսմաւրկ), "Mélanges de l'Université saint Joseph" 30 (1953) p. 99-154; U. Zanetti, *Apophtegmes et histoires édifiantes dans le synaxaire arménien*, AnBol 105 (1987) p. 168-170.

¹³ Basic information on Armenian hagiography appears in P. Cowe, *Armenian Hagiography*, in: *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, v. 1: *Periods and Places*, ed. S. Efthymiadis, London – New York 2016, p. 299-322.

¹⁴ For the life of St Menas, see E. Wipszycka, *The Birth of the Cult of St Menas*, VoxP 94 (2025) p. 9-34.

tradition regarding the miracles of St Menas in BHO 748-750. There are three miracles attributed to him, identified as: *De mercatore peregrino*¹⁵, *De Agapio*¹⁶, and *De Iudaeo Alexandrino*¹⁷. BHO cites one publication containing the works in question, namely *Vark' ew vkayabanut' iwnk' srboc'* (The Life and Martyrdom of Saints)¹⁸. This edition, published by Mekhitarists, unfortunately contains no information about manuscripts on which the publication relies, nor a critical apparatus¹⁹.

In addition, it was possible to find another, earlier publication prepared by the Mekhitarists, not mentioned by the BHO editor. Entitled *Liakatar vark' ew vkayabanut' iwn srboc'* (Complete Lives and Martyrdoms of Saints), this work contains the same three miracles in a slightly different recension with annotations. Similarly to the previous document, this one also lacks critical apparatus and precise information about manuscripts²⁰.

During the research, I managed to isolate some manuscripts containing the miracles of St Menas, with a plan to draft a more detailed report. The identified manuscripts come from the Matenadaran in Yerevan²¹, the Mekhitarian libraries in Venice and Vienna (V201, W10),

¹⁵ The miracle entitled *The Isaurian Pilgrim*.

¹⁶ An analysis of the Armenian texts allowed me to identify the miracle entitled *De Agapio* as *Eutropius and the Silver Plates* (BHG 1258).

¹⁷ The miracle entitled *The Jew and the Christian*.

¹⁸ *Vark' ew vkayabanut' iwnk' srboc'* [The Life and Martyrdom of Saints], v. 2, Venice 1874, p. 67-73.

¹⁹ The Mekhitarist editions rely on the manuscripts available to them, not always on the most reliable. Also, they sometimes made changes without indicating them. Therefore, it would seem useful to prepare a future critical edition of the Armenian version of the *Miracles of St Menas*. Interestingly, the catalogue of the collection of Venetian Mekhitarist manuscripts at codex V201 notes that the text of the miracles of St. Menas is different from that included in the *Vark' ew vkayabanut' iwnk' srboc'* edition; cf. B. Sargisean, *Mayr c'uc'ak hayerēn jeragrac' matenadaranin Mxit'ar-eanc' i Venetik* [Main Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts of the Mekhitarist Library in Venice], v. 2, Venice 1924, c. 51.

²⁰ *Liakatar vark' ew vkayabanut' iwn srboc'* [Complete Lives and Martyrdoms of Saints], v. 9, ed. M. Awgerian, Venice 1813, p. 341-357 (the martyrdom), p. 357-367 (the text of miracles), p. 368-370 (footnotes). The footnotes related to the miracles of St Menas mention two manuscripts called *Č'arəntir A* and *Č'arəntir B*, most probably to be identified as V200 from 1224 and V201 from the twelfth-thirteenth century; however, these codices do not form the basis for this edition.

²¹ The following manuscripts seem particularly interesting: M7441 (Selection of Homilies) from 1322, M639 (Miscellany) from 1409 (ff. 285v-293r), and M1511 (Armenian

and the National Library in Paris (P118)²². They cover the period of the thirteenth-seventeenth centuries and mainly include *Yaysmawurk*‘ (*Synaxarion*) and *Č‘arəntir* (Selection of Homilies). A preliminary analysis does not allow us to conclude that any of the manuscripts contains miracles from outside the list of three miracles mentioned in BHO 748-750.

The Greek tradition of the *Miracles* has received a thorough study by Luigi Silvano and Paolo Varalda, who have distinguished four recensions (α , β , γ , δ), where α is the most ancient²³. As shown below, the Armenian version of the miracles contained in *Liakatar vark*‘ *ew vkayabanut*‘ *iwn srboc*‘ most probably follows the β tradition.

3. Translation of the Armenian Miracles of St Menas

This translation relies on the text contained in *Liakatar vark*‘ *ew vkayabanut*‘ *iwn srboc*‘. I omit the part that apparently forms an editor’s comment (p. 357-358)²⁴. In some cases, I refer to the text published in the *Vark*‘ *ew vkayabanut*‘ *iwnk*‘ *srboc*‘ to show the fundamental differences. In the translation, I made effort to preserve the Armenian syntax as much as possible, sometimes at the expense of English fluency.

3.1. (The Isaurian Pilgrim)²⁵

There was a certain man very rich²⁶ at that time and he came from the country of the Isaurians²⁷ to Alexandria for the purpose of trade. And having heard there in the city about all the miracles and healings that

Synaxarion in a recension by Grigor Xlat‘ec‘i) from 1471 (ff. 210r-213r).

²² To indicate Armenian manuscripts, I follow the acronym system of the Association Internationale des Études Arméniennes (AIEA); cf. B. Coulie, *Armenian Manuscripts. Catalogues, Collections, Libraries*, Corpus Christianorum, Turnhout 2020, p. 450-462.

²³ L. Silvano – P. Varalda, *Per l’edizione dei Miracula sancti Menae (BHG 1256-1269)*, “Philologia Antiqua” 12 (2019) p. 56-59.

²⁴ This comment contains general reflections about the author of the miracle cycle and the feast day of Saint Menas (11 November).

²⁵ I use parentheses because the edition does not contain the titles of individual miracles.

²⁶ We could also translate Arm. մեծաւոր (mecatun) as ‘noble’.

²⁷ The recension in the *Vark*‘ *ew vkayabanut*‘ *iwnk*‘ *srboc*‘ edition does not mention the merchant’s country of origin.

Saint Menas²⁸ had performed, he said, “I would also like to go and pray in the shrine²⁹ of Saint Menas and worship his holy relics and make there a small gift from my property, so that God will help me through the intercession of the saint”.

And rising, he took with him a purse³⁰ of gold, and went by boat through the gulf of the sea or through the lake³¹, and came to a place called Loxoneta³². Having gone down to a certain inn³³, he said to the innkeeper, “Friend, do me a favour and welcome me into your house, for it is almost evening and I do not dare to go on my way alone”. And the innkeeper said, “Brother, come in until the morning”, and brought the table and set it before him. After supper, when the man wanted to sleep, the innkeeper saw the purse, for at that hour Satan entered his heart, as he daily fights with mankind.

While the merchant was sleeping, the innkeeper arose, and took a sword, and killed him, and took his purse with all the treasure. And he said to himself, “What shall I do with his body, so that no one sees it and brings danger upon me? Now I will arise and cut up all his limbs, and throw them into a basket³⁴, and with it into the lake”. And when he had cut that [body] up and hung it up in a basket to find time to throw it into the depths

²⁸ The spelling in Classical Armenian is Minas and not Menas.

²⁹ Arm. տաճար (*tačar*); this corresponds to the following Greek terms: ναός, νέως, νηός, ιερόν; Lat. *templum*, *sacrarium*. Cf. NBHL II 841.

³⁰ Arm. քսակ (*k'sak*); according to NBHL, the term is an equivalent of the Greek μαρσέππιον, βάλαντιον, σακκος; cf. NBHL II 1013. The Greek text uses the term βάλαντιον; cf. *Zhitie prepodobnago Paisiia Velikago i Timofeja patriarkha Aleksandriiskago poviestvovanie o chudesakh* sv. Velikomuchenika Miny, ed. I. Pomialovskii, Saint Petersburg 1900, p. 63, l. 18.

³¹ Here, we find a literal translation of two terms: sea (Arm. *cov*) and lake (Arm. *lič*). An interesting question is whether this is a translation of two different terms found in the text, or whether the translator was unsure whether the Greek term referred to a sea or a lake and thus opted for a double translation. The recension in *Vark' ew vkayabanut 'iwnk' srboc* edition only mentions that the merchant ‘sailed to the other side of the sea’.

³² The same name of the place appears in the Greek version of the miracle; cf. *Zhitie prepodobnago Paisiia Velikago*, p. 63, l. 19. Silvano and Varalda consider Pomialovskii's manuscript to represent the β tradition, which indicates that the Armenian text follows this version; cf. L. Silvano – P. Varalda, *Per l'edizione dei Miracula sancti Menae (BHG 1256-1269)*, “Philologia Antiqua” 12 (2019) p. 58.

³³ Arm. պանդոկ (*pandok*), Greek πανδοχεῖον, πανδοκειον, Lat. *diversorium publicum*, *taberna*, *stabulum*, *cauponium*; cf. NBHL II 595-596. This term quite clearly refers to an inn, a tavern.

³⁴ Arm. սակաւի (*sakari*), Greek κόφινος, Lat. *cophinus*, *corbis*, *qualus*; cf. NBHL II 684.

of the sea, the day dawned, and he was afraid to do what he wanted, and he took the head and wanted to smash it to make it invisible.

And behold, Saint Menas came galloping with many men as if sent by a king. The innkeeper, seeing this through the window, hastened and hung his – namely the rich man’s – head with the other limbs inside the inn, [for] he did not know what to do from fear. But Saint Menas opened the door of the house and seized the innkeeper and said to him, “Tell me the truth! Where is the man who was staying with you?”. He denied it and said, “No one was staying here”. The saint said, “If you do not wish to speak about the man, I will find him”. And immediately the saint took the basket and found the head with the limbs in it.

At that moment the innkeeper began to implore him and cried out, “I have sinned, for I see – he said – the graces of God towards you, and I confess my transgressions, that when I saw the man’s purse, the heart of this unfortunate man was filled with madness, and I rose and killed him, and here, my lord, [is] his purse full of treasure. I give [it] to you, and from my treasure a hundred coins³⁵, only free me from this murder of mine”. The saint answered him and said, “Repent, and I will forgive you your trespasses”. And he said, “My Lord, I will do as you command, in order to be saved by the king, I will go to the shrine of Saint Menas and I will do penance and take monastic habit”³⁶. When the saint saw his repentance, he said to him, “Pull out the basket which contains the limbs of the man, so that the glory of Christ may be revealed in his saints”. And falling on his knees, Saint Menas prayed for a long time, and then said to the dead man, “I say to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, who has made me the rock of his confession, stand up immediately and with all your limbs strong. Let heretics and pagans know through your hands the glory of Christ my God, so that you may also know that I, Menas, am the servant of God”.

And immediately he arose as he was before, and falling on his knees he worshiped the holy martyr and the multitude that [were] with him. And he said, “Thanks be to the Lord God who has shown me mercy through your coming, O holy one of God, for I was overcome with sleep and you, O Lord, came with great power and resurrected me”. For the man

³⁵ Arm. դաիւկան (*dahekan*), Greek δηνάριον, νόμισμα, δραχμή, χρύσεος, Lat. *denarium*, *nummus*; cf. NBHL I 592.

³⁶ Arm. սքեմ կրօնաւորութեան (*sk'em krōnaworut'ean*); this means entering a monastery and putting on the monastic habit. Doing penance in a monastery was a common practice.

did not know what had been done to him, and the innkeeper had not told him. And the holy martyr blessed the slain man and became invisible to them. And the innkeeper, having taken the hundred coins which he had promised to the saint, and the merchant his purse, went to the shrine of Saint Menas and fulfilled their vows. At that time the innkeeper confessed before everyone what had been done by him to the merchant, and how the saint had resurrected him; and all praised God. And the merchant was amazed when he heard that he had truly been killed and had resurrected, and he gave glory to God, and went about declaring to all the glory of God. And the innkeeper became a monk³⁷ and lived five years and died with accepted penance, always preaching the power of saint Menas through whom many pagans and heretics came to the true faith.

3.2. (Eutropius and the Silver Plates)

Again, a certain man named Eutropius in Alexandria decided to have two silver plates made³⁸, to give one to the shrine of Saint Menas and the other to serve at his table. He called a certain silversmith³⁹ to him and said to him, “Take from me the best silver and make two plates similar to each other, and write my name on one and the name of Saint Menas on the other”. And so he did. And [the bowl] of Saint Menas was found to be more beautiful than the other, and when the man saw it, he envied the saint’s vessel. And he said to himself, “I will go to the holy martyr and give him the bowl on which the silversmith has written my name, and I will have the saint’s [bowl] with me for my needs, and after my death I will give this to the holy one’s shrine”.

When he had sailed out in the boat with this thought, it was time for supper, and the servant, having set the table, brought the holy bowl to serve his master, according to his commandment; and the servant, having

³⁷ According to the *Vark’ ew vkayabanut’ iwnk’ srboc’* edition, the innkeeper lived ‘in great mortification and a virtuous life’. In both recensions, the penitential period was five years.

³⁸ Arm. սկուտէղ (*skutel*). According to NBHL, the term is an equivalent of Greek σκυτάλη, πύναξ, Lat. *scutella*, which means a plate, bowl, or vessel; cf. NBHL II 722. According to the *Vark’ ew vkayabanut’ iwnk’ srboc’* edition, the man ordered the making of two cups (Arm. *skih*).

³⁹ Arm. արծաթագործ (*arcat’agorc*), Greek ἀργυροκόπος, Lat. *conflator argenti*, clearly indicating a craftsman working in silver; cf. NBHL I 361.

taken the vessel after supper, went to wash it by the side of the boat, and the waves broke and took the bowl from his hands. The servant, terrified that he would be punished by his master, threw himself into the sea after the sunken bowl. When the man learned what had happened, he said, “Woe is me! For I have sinned against God by envying the holy vessel⁴⁰, and therefore I have lost my servant. And if people learn that I had a holy vessel to serve, what disgrace will not offend me? If I had known this earlier, it would have been better to give three to the holy martyr instead of one bowl, and not enter into such misfortunes and the bitter shame of death”. Then he made a vow and said, “If I am worthy to bury the body of the deceased, I will give two chalices or plates to the shrine of the holy martyr Menas and the price of the lost vessel”. When he reached the harbour on the third day, he looked at the seashore, to this side and to that, wondering whether the waves would perhaps throw the dead man onto dry land. The sailors said, “What is this madness of yours? For after two days of our voyage you are looking for his body”. The man said to them, “I hope in the Lord God, through the intercession of Saint Menas, who resurrected the man who was cut apart with his limbs, as if from a dream⁴¹, that at least he will show me his body before my death”. And as he was speaking these things, behold, his servant came swimming, and came with a vessel in his hand over the sea, and inquired after his master’s ship. And when the sailors saw the servant, they cast noose, and took hold of him, and went out upon dry land. When his master saw him, he embraced him and kissed him with tears, and asked, “How were you saved from the sea?”. And he said, “As I fell into the depths, I saw a brilliant man who said to the two men who were with him, ‘Hold this man, lest he drown’. And from that time on they did not depart from me until I came to this place”. When the man and the whole multitude heard this, they gave glory to God and testified that the holy martyr Menas had quickly come to his aid. And the man went into the holy shrine and donated two plates and other abundant gifts there, installing the servant to serve the holy shrine. And he himself returned to his house, praising and blessing God.

⁴⁰ Arm. ւնօթ (anōt’), Greek αγγεῖον, σκεῦος, Lat. vas; cf. NBHL I 256.

⁴¹ A reference to the miracle *The Isaurian Pilgrim*.

3.3. (The Jew and the Christian)

There was a certain Jew, a merchant in Alexandria, who lived near a certain Christian, and the Jew and the Christian were very fond of each other. When the Jew was getting ready to go somewhere on business, he came to the Christian's house, gave him his purse sealed with his ring, and gave it to him as a deposit until he returned. The merchant went away, and when he returned from his journey, he sent presents to the Christian. But he laughed to himself and said, "I have received presents, and if he asks for things, he will take nothing", for he had brainstormed with his wife, saying, "O woman, if it is possible, we will deny the Jew's purse, and if he binds us to an oath, we will swear, and nothing will hurt us, because we swear to a Jew, and not to a Christian". So by the counsel of the Adversary the man denied the purse when the Jew asked for it from him until the multitude gathered around them, and a great conflict arose, because there was no witness between them.

Then the Jew had an idea and said to the Christian, "I have heard, brother, about Saint Menas, how great his glory is, and that he puts to shame those who swear falsely by him. Now arise, and let us go there, so that you may swear by his glory. And if you have received nothing from me, depart in peace". The Christian said, "How will this be, since a Jew does not enter the church⁴² of a Christian?". The Jew said, "If I am not allowed to enter, I will remain outside the vestibule⁴³, and when you enter, you will swear before the others". But the Christian, disregarding his oath, said to himself, "Saint Menas will forgive my oath". And so, rising, they went to the door of the shrine of Saint Menas. There, the Jew said to the Christian, "Tremble, friend, before God and may he have mercy on your soul! Take from the treasure as much as you want, and give the rest

⁴² Arm. եկեղեցի (*ekelec'i*), which means 'church' as a community, as well as a building.

⁴³ Arm. գաւիթ (*gawit'*), Greek αὐλή, Lat. *atrium*; cf. NBHL I 533. According to the *Vark' ew vkayabanut' iwkn' srboc'* edition, the Jew was praying in the space referred to in Armenian as *urpuh (srah)* and in Greek as αὐλή, περίβοος, πρόθυρον. From approximately the eleventh century, the term *gawit'* in Armenian architecture described a four-column structure intended for the tombs of the nobles, as well as a space for penitents and catechumens; cf. E. Vardanyan, *The Žamatun of Hořomos and the Žamatun/Gawit' Structures in Armenian Architecture*, in: *Hořomos Monastery: Art and History*, Paris 2015, p. 207-236. In the fifth century, the term referred to the open courtyard in front of the sanctuary rather than to the enclosed structure; cf. N. Garsoïan, *The Epic Histories Attributed to P'awstos Buzand (Buzandaran Patmut' iwkn')*, Cambridge 1989, p. 526-527.

to me, only do not swear!". And when the Christian did not want to listen, the Jew appealed to the saint in his vestibule and said, "Saint Menas, although I am not worthy to call upon your name, show your miracles today, so that I may praise you". The Christian went in, having no fear of God in his heart, and swore an oath; and the Jew looked to see if there would be a sign for the sake of the oath, but the saint was patient with him.

When he had finished his oath, they both returned and rode away, and when they had ridden three miles, suddenly the Christian's horse reared up, threw him to the ground, and he lost the key to the chest in which there was the Jew's purse, together with the ring. He searched and did not find it, and was very glad at his fall and at rising in health, considering this to be the punishment for his oath. When they came to a certain place and sat down to eat, the Jew became sorrowful and said, "Why did I believe in Saint Menas as a miracle-worker? I have not seen a single sign that I have heard of. And if the Christian had not been bound by me to an oath, after a few days he would have surely given me back what is mine". He said this and wept and said again, "I commit my life to the Lord and to his holy martyr Menas". Now while they were sitting together, behold, a servant of the Christian came, holding a purse full of treasure.

And when they saw him, they were both amazed. And the master of the servant was greatly afraid, and said to the servant, "Where do you come from, and what is this you are holding?". He answered and said, "I came because you sent me, my master, to fulfil your command". His master said to him, "Whom have I sent, and what command have you come to fulfil?". The servant said, "My lord, today, there came a certain rider, tall and very fierce, to my mistress, and he had your ring and the key to the chest⁴⁴ in which you put your treasures, and he said to my mistress, 'Do you recognize this?', and she said, 'Yes'. The rider said, 'Your husband asked me and sent me to you, saying, 'Open the Jew's purse for me through my servant, for I am terribly tormented by the holy martyr'. So I ran and brought your purse. Here is your ring and the key to your treasure, which that rider brought to my mistress". At that moment the Jew arose and took the purse with the seal, and cried out with joy, saying, "Great is the God of the Christians, and great is his holy martyr Menas! The faith of Christians is wonderful, because no one who

⁴⁴ Arm. արկի (arkel), Greek κυβωτός, γλωσσόκομον, Lat. *arca*, *arcula*, *theca*; cf. NBHL I 363.

trusts in You, Lord, and in the intercession of Saint Menas, will return in shame. Behold, Lord, I too become a Christian because of the miracles of the holy martyr Menas". And coming again to the shrine of the saint, he gave there the third part of the purse, which was calculated on the scale to be 1,000 coins, and said, "You know, O holy one of God, that before you I said to the man, 'Take as much as you want for you, and give the rest to me', but he did not want to. Now I give it to your sanctuary". Leaving the service of the Jews, he and his entire house were baptized, and their house was counted among the believers in Christ, and with piety and sincerity they blessed God and his holy martyr Menas. And from that day on, no one dared to swear in the holy shrine, neither lie nor truth.

But the Christian went to his home filled with shame and sorrow, and then, taking half of his wealth, he gave it as an offering to the shrine of the holy martyr, and there he repented his sins, and did not leave it until his penance was revealed to be accepted, and from that time he blessed God and the holy martyr Menas until the day of his death.

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