



Michał Marciak (Rzeszów, Poland)

THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF GORDYENE* PART 2: ORIENTAL SOURCES

Keywords: Gordyene, Corduena, Korduk', Cudi Dağt

Armenian sources

One may say that classical sources provide us with a great variety of linguistic forms used for Gordyene and the Gordyaeans.¹ However, this trend is also present in Armenian sources² that refer to this region using many forms: *Korduk'*, *Tmorik'*, *Kordik'* (and *Kordrik'* considered as a variant of the former), *Korčēk'*, and *Korčayk'*.

The *Epic Histories* (the abbreviation BP hereinafter), formerly attributed to a certain P'awstos Buzandac'i, is in fact an anonymous work of an Armenian cleric who, probably writing in the 5th century CE, describes 4th-century-CE Armenia.³ As for Gordyene, BP mentions many Armenian districts and dignitaries which rebelled against King Aršak and went over to Šapuh, king of Persia, among others: *the inaccessible district of Tmorik'*, and *the inaccessible realm of Kordik'*, ... *the lord of the district of Korduk'* (BP 4.50 and BP 5.10: the counter-attack by the *sparapet* Mušel).⁴ The *Epic Histories* also know ʃon, Prince of Kor-

* This paper is part of my research project (UMO–2011/03/N/HS3/01159) financed by the National Science Centre in Poland and devoted to three *regna minora* of Northern Mesopotamia – Sophene, Gordyene and Adiabene. The project is being conducted at the University of Rzeszów under the supervision of Prof. M.J. Olbrycht. I have benefited from the insightful comments of anonymous referees.

¹ The terms Gordyene and Gordyaeans are used throughout the paper as the broadest *English* designations of the country and the people under discussion.

² For a brief overview of diversified views on the historical value of Armenian sources, see Traina 2010, 402–405. See also Kettenhofen 1998, 325–353.

³ Garsoïan 1989, 1–22; Andrews 2012; Hannick 2012.

⁴ Garsoïan 1989, 167 and 200; Hewsens 1988–1989, 284.

duk‘ (BP 3.9) who is counted among the most faithful servants of the king [of Armenia] and who was sent against the revolt of Bakur, *vitaxa* of *Aljnik*‘ (BP 3.32).⁵

In *Agat’angelos*, a writing on the conversion of Armenia at the beginning of the 4th century CE, but likely written in the second half of the 5th century CE⁶ (and known from many versions, esp. Armenian and Greek versions – abbreviated as Aa and Ag – as well as Greek and Arabic versions, known as the *Life of St. Gregory* and abbreviated as Vg and Va respectively),⁷ *Korduk*‘ is mentioned as one of the places along the route of St. Gregory from Syria to Media: “he passed along the borders of Syria, the land of Nor-Širakan and *Korduk*‘, to the secure Land of the Medes” (Aa 842).⁸ Again, *Agat’angelos* also knows of the Prince of *Korduk*‘ who took part in the counsel of King Trdat and in the ordination of St. Gregory (Va 795).⁹

Agat’angelos’ *Kodrik*‘ (sic) is in turn described in Vg 98 as bordering on Zarawand-Hēr,¹⁰ which could perhaps be located on the far side of the Zagros Mountains on the north-western shore of Lake Urmia.¹¹ Likewise, in the Arabic version of *Agat’angelos* (Va 86), the districts of Zarawand and Hēr are said to lie next to *Kordik*‘, and *Korduk*‘, called here *qmrδl*, is said to lie adjacent to *Kordik*‘ (the strong *qrδytn*).¹²

The date of Moses Xorenac’i’s *History of the Armenians* (the author himself claims to be a 5th-century CE witness to historical events in Armenia) is disputed. While some scholars accept the 5th century CE, others suggest that the writing was created later, since it contains data typical of 8th- and 9th-century CE Armenia.¹³ MX knows *Korduk*‘, *Korčēk*‘, *Kordrik*‘, and *Tmorik*‘. As for *Korduk*‘, MX 1.14 recalls it as bordering on the Assyrian plain.¹⁴ Next, in describing the provincial organization of King Vałaršak’s kingdom, MX 2.8 mentions some individuals from the principalities of *Mokk*‘, *Korduk*‘, *Anjewac’ik*‘ and *Akē*.¹⁵ In 2.36 MX refers to the trip of the sister of King Abgar of Edessa, Awdē through *Korduk*‘ in winter

⁵ Toumanoff 1963, 181; Garsoïan 1989, 77; Hewsens 1988–1989, 280, 284. According to Hewsens, jon may be the father or grandfather of Iovinianus known from Amm. Marc. 18.6.20 as the satrap of Corduena.

⁶ Thomson 1976, XVI.

⁷ Thomson 1976, XVI; Traina 2010, 406–407.

⁸ Thomson 1976, 377; Hewsens 1988–1989, 284.

⁹ Thomson 1976, 335.

¹⁰ Toumanoff 1963, 161.

¹¹ Hewsens 1988–1989, 281.

¹² Toumanoff 1963, 161; Hewsens 1988–1989, 286.

¹³ For a brief overview of different opinions, see Traina 2010, 417–419 and his bibliographical references.

¹⁴ Thomson 1978, 94.

¹⁵ Thomson 1978, 140–141; Hewsens 1988–1989, 285.

(where she encountered a heavy snowfall which scattered the whole company and nearly cost them their lives) on the way to Armenia (in the time of King Sana-truk).¹⁶ Finally, in MX 2.74 *Korduk*‘ is recalled as being on the route of Anak’s escape from Armenia to Assyria.¹⁷ *Korčėk*‘ in turn is recalled by MX (2.64) as a territory under the direct control of the “last Tigran”.¹⁸ MX also recalls *Tmorik*‘ (as Smbat’s temporary abode in 2.53), and says that “*Tmorik*‘ is now called *Kordrik*‘” (2.53), Moses’ *Kordrik*‘ (formerly *Tmorik*‘) in 2.53 was clearly neighbored by Assyria.¹⁹ MX 2.53 also names the main city of *Tmorik*‘ as *Alki*.²⁰

The History of Vardan and *The Armenian War* attributed to Elišė was probably written in the 6th century CE and refers to the Armenian uprising against the Sasanian power in 450/451 CE.²¹ Elišė mentions *Korduk*‘ three times in his long lists of countries. The first list enumerates Armenia, Georgia, Albania, Lp‘ink‘, Čawdk‘, Korduik‘, Aljnik‘ (Chapter 1),²² and the second Armenia, Georgia, Albania, Lp‘ink‘, Aljnik‘, Korduk‘, Čawdk‘, and Dasn (Chapter 2).²³ Further, the third list also knows *Tmorik*‘, *Kordik*‘, along with Arc‘ax, Ałunk‘ (Albania), Virk‘ (Iberia) and Xałtik‘ (Chapter 5).²⁴

The so-called *Geography of Ananias of Širak* (*Asxarhac‘oyc*‘, hereinafter: ASX), probably dated to the 7th century CE,²⁵ speaks of three *Kordik*‘s (Upper, Middle and Lower) and of *Korduk*‘, all of which together, including seven other small districts to the east, constitute one greater territory of *Korčayk*‘ (ASX 1881, 46/34–35).²⁶ In ASX, *Korduk*‘ is the westernmost of the eleven districts of *Korčayk*‘.²⁷

The most recent and extensive interpretation of the aforementioned Armenian toponyms has been made by Robert Hewsen.²⁸ According to Hewsen, the Armenian land *Korčayk*‘, as attested in ASX, is equivalent to Gordyene as the most extensive territorially notion extending from the Tigris as far as the Zag-

¹⁶ Thomson 1978, 177–178; Hewsen 1988–1989, 285.

¹⁷ Thomson 1978, 220; Hewsen 1988–1989, 285.

¹⁸ Thomson 1978, 206; Hewsen 1988–1989, 283.

¹⁹ Hübschmann 1904, 337; Thomson 1978, 192; Hewsen 1988–1989, 286.

²⁰ Hübschmann 1904, 337; Thomson 1978, 192; Hewsen 1988–1989, 286.

²¹ Savvidis 2012.

²² Thomson 1982, 64; Hewsen 1988–1989, 285.

²³ Thomson 1982, 103; Hewsen 1988–1989, 285.

²⁴ Hewsen 1988–1989, 285, n. 33.

²⁵ Hewsen 1979, 77.

²⁶ Hewsen 1988–1989, 281, 283.

²⁷ Hewsen 1988–1989, 281, 283.

²⁸ Prior to Hewsen’s contribution, important studies of these toponyms can be found in Hübschmann 1904, 255–259 and 333–338; Toumanoff 1963, 181–182 and Adontz, Garsoïan 1970, 323. The main points made by Hewsen 1988–1989 were again summarized in Hewsen 1992, 170–176. See also Hewsen 2001.

ros.²⁹ The same perhaps refers to *Korčēk*‘ of Moses Xorenac‘i (2.64), although it may also be identical only to the eastern part of Gordyene.

In Hewsens’s opinion *Korduk*‘ corresponds linguistically to the Latin *Corduena* (and the Greek Γορδυηνή) and as such may on occasion refer to the whole of Gordyene. At the same time, it may also correspond to the smaller entity – the westernmost district of Gordyene, known from the ASX as *Korduk*‘ and from Ammianus Marcellinus as *Corduena* (as the Romans had more experience with the part of Gordyene directly bordering on the Roman Empire).

As for *Kord(r)ik*‘, Hewsens holds that it “is a distinct area clearly defined by the ASX as comprising three districts – Upper, Middle and Lower *Kord(r)ik*‘ – occupying the corresponding reaches of what can only be the valley of the Eastern Khabur River”.³⁰

Tmorik‘ is identified by Hewsens as the area around the fortress of *T‘man* on the slopes of Mt. Sararad/Ararad, the later Cudi Dağı (and the Turkish Habis Tepesi).³¹ In Hewsens’s view, Strabo’s *Tamonitis* in 11.14.5 (conquered by Artaxias “from the Syrians”) should be emended to **Tamoritis*, and this form would fit the Armenian *Tmorik*‘ well.³²

On the basis of the identifications mentioned above, Hewsens suggests a basic sketch of geopolitical developments in the area between Arzanene and the Zagros Mountains.³³ In his view, a Karduchian kingdom (known to the Armenians as *Korčayk*‘ and to the Greeks as Gordyene) was located east of the Assyrian Khabur River, while west of this kingdom (between the Khabur River and the Tigris) lay the district of *Tmorik*‘ which did not belong to Gordyene.³⁴ *Tmorik*‘ belonged first to the Seleucids, and was seized by Armenia in the mid-2nd century BCE.³⁵ Under Armenian rule the district of *Korduk*‘ developed from the westernmost parts of *Tmorik*‘ (the lowlands along the Assyrian Khabur).³⁶ All these territories were united by the conquests of Tigranes the Great and became known to the Romans as Gordyene (a large territory from the Tigris River to the Zagros).³⁷ In the 2nd century CE this territory was again added by the Romans to Armenia, where it was divided into two administrative parts – the western half, called *Kordruk*‘ and the eastern part, called *Korčēk*‘ (MX 2.64), or alternatively

²⁹ Hewsens 1988–1989, 281–283.

³⁰ Hewsens 1988–1989, 285–286.

³¹ Hewsens 1988–1989, 287.

³² Hewsens 1988–1989, 287. This emendation was also considered possible by Hübschmann 1904, 258.

³³ Hewsens 1988–1989, 289–295.

³⁴ Hewsens 1988–1989, 289–290.

³⁵ Hewsens 1988–1989, 290.

³⁶ Hewsens 1988–1989, 290.

³⁷ Hewsens 1988–1989, 290.

Kordrik', from its three westernmost districts (BP 4.50).³⁸ In the 4th century CE (BP 4.50), we have three distinct regions: *Korduk'*, *Tmorik'*, and *Korčēk'* (which included three *Kordrik'*s, and on this account the whole district was sometimes called *Kordrik'*).³⁹ After circa 387 CE this territory must have been reorganized by the Persians into a single territory as part of the province *Arzōn-Ostan* (Syriac Bēth Qardū and *Korčayk'* of ASX), and at some point of its Persian history, *Tmorik'* was subdued by the Upper and Middle *Kordrik'* (see the lack of *Tmorik'* in ASX and MX 2.53: *Tmorik'* which is now called *Kordrik'*).⁴⁰

What are we to make of Hewsens's interpretation of the abovementioned Armenian toponyms? First and foremost, it has to be stressed that *Korčēk'* and *Korčayk'* are not linguistically akin to the root Qardū⁴¹ (in Καρδοῦχοι, *Cordu-eni*, *Cordu-ena*, Γορδου-ηνή, Γορδου-αία, Γορδου-αῖοι, etc.).⁴² *Kordik'* is also doubtful as a parallel to *Qardū* – it can also be derived from the same root as the Κύρτιοι.⁴³ In this light, the Armenian sources with information about *Korčēk'* and *Korčayk'* (and perhaps *Kordrik'*) rather mirror the expansion of the post-Cyrti or proto-Kurdish tribes than contribute directly to our study on Gordyene.⁴⁴ Further, since we can locate the Karduchoi's settlement in the mountains south of the Bohtan River and north of modern Cizre, it is the Upper Tigris valley west of the Khabur (and not east of it as Hewsens suggests) which was the most natural stretch of the Tigris valley for the expansion of the Karduchoi. Consequently, the core of the country of Γορδουαῖοι / Γορδουηνοί (= Καρδοῦχοι) has to be located west of the

³⁸ Hewsens 1988–1989, 290.

³⁹ Hewsens 1988–1989, 291–293.

⁴⁰ Hewsens 1988–1989, 293.

⁴¹ On the root and its different transformations in ancient sources, see a thorough discussion in Nöldeke 1898.

⁴² Andreas 1894, 1493; Adontz, Garsoïan 1970, 323. According to Andreas, *Korčayk'* may be derived from **korti-ayk'*, and the palatalization is the result of the following transformation: **kurti-* > **korti-* > **korč*. In turn, Adontz suggests that *Korčayk'* comes from **kortic-ayk'* (like the parallel formations: *atr-pat-ič* or *bayhas-ič-k'*). See Andreas 1894, 1490–1493; Adontz, Garsoïan 1970, 323; Asatrian 2009, 26 and n. 32.

⁴³ Andreas 1894, 1493; Hartmann 1897, 96; Hübschmann 1904, 335; Minorsky 1940, 150–151. Indeed, *Kordik'* lacks the essential element, *v*. One may wonder if the appearance of *i* in place of *v* cannot be attributed to phonetic changes like those present in the Greek form used by Plutarch, *Luc.* 26: Γορδουηνοί. According to Nöldeke 1898, 74: this form is “ohne Belang”. At any rate, Hewsens's clear picture of the geographical location of *Kordik'* is heavily dependent on the ASX, whose geohistorical accuracy in general has been judged very harshly on a different occasion (Hewsens 1979, 79): “it did not depict the realities of Armenia either in the author's time or before, but only those divisions as the author misinterpreted them by projecting the situation which existed in his own time in some parts of Armenia back into the past onto the rest of the country where this situation simply did not apply”.

⁴⁴ Likewise Minorsky 1940, 150–151. On the very complicated process of how the Kurds took their name from the Κύρτιοι, see Asatrian 2001, 41–74 and Asatrian 2009.

Khabur. Next, the location of *Tmorik'* is problematic. Hewsens connects it with the fortress *T'man*, and this location would put *Tmorik'* on the mountain slopes overlooking the Upper Tigris valley as marked by the Bohtan River to the west and the Assyrian Khabur River to the east.⁴⁵ This would actually be the heart of ancient Gordyene. Consequently, Hewsens treats *Tamoritis/Tmorik'* as an alternative name for the same district as Strabo's Γορδυηνή and Ammianus' *Corduena*.⁴⁶ However, MX 2.53 gives us a precise clue as to the location of *Tmorik'* when he points to Alki, as the main city of *Tmorik'*. Alki can most likely be identified as the modern Elki on the east bank of the Khabur, and this means that the ancient *Tmorik'* was a mountainous region in the upper Khabur region,⁴⁷ and therefore we cannot see *Tmorik'* as corresponding to Gordyene as a whole in any period as Hewsens does.⁴⁸ If *Tmorik'* extended out of Elki further east and not south-west to the Tigris river bed, we could well understand its capture by Tigranes the Great as an inclusion in the Upper Tigris valley in the general vicinity of Adiabene (Strabo's Syrians in 11.14.5), and see the Armenian expansion into this region as coming from Armenia along the south-eastern border of Lake Van into the Upper Tigris valley.

Jewish-postbiblical, Syriac and Arabic sources

Gordyene also appears in ancient literature with regard to Noah's Ark. In the Hebrew Bible and the LXX, Noah's Ark is said to have rested on the mountains of Arārāt (the Hebrew Gen 8.4: על הרי אררט and the LXX: ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη τὰ Ἀραρατ). However, the location of Noah's Ark was reinterpreted in subsequent traditions.

In retelling the Biblical story about Noah and the flood,⁴⁹ Josephus (Ant. 1.90) tells us that Noah's Ark rested on a certain mountain in Armenia (περὶ ἄκραν τινα ὄρους σταθείσης κατὰ τὴν Ἀρμενίαν), but then quotes other Hellenistic historians to back up the historicity of the Biblical episode. For instance, Berossos the Chaldean is reported by Josephus (Ant. 1.93) to claim that there is still some part of Noah's Ark in Armenia, at the mountain of the Gordyaeans (ἐν τῇ Ἀρμενίᾳ πρὸς τῷ ὄρει τῶν Καρδουαίων).⁵⁰ On a different occasion (Ant. 20.24–25), Josephus reports that the remains of Noah's Ark are still shown to visitors in the country called Καρρῶν, which bares amomum in great plenty. The otherwise unattested Καρρῶν can easily be emendated as Καρδῶν, as somewhere in the

⁴⁵ Hewsens 1984, 354–355; Hewsens 1988–1989, 287.

⁴⁶ Hewsens 1984, 354–355; Hewsens 1988–1989, 287.

⁴⁷ Hübschmann 1904, 258, 336.

⁴⁸ See Hewsens 1988–1989, 289–290.

⁴⁹ Feldman 1988, 31–57 (esp. 47).

⁵⁰ See also a different view attributed to Nikolaos Damaskenos and preserved by Josephus in Ant. 1.94–95.

Semitic transmission the Aramaic dalet must have been confused with resh (קרדו > *קרדון > קררון) – a very common paleographical phenomenon.⁵¹

Biblical Arārāt is widely identified as Qardū in Rabbinic and Syriac traditions.⁵² Both Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and Onqelos (Gen. 8.4) locate the ark on the mountains of Qardū (Tg. Ps.-J.: על טורי קרדו, Tg. Onq.: על טוורי קרדון), and Tg. Onq. adds that “the name of one mountain is Qardonia [קרדוניה], and the name of the other mountain is Armenia [ארמניה]”.⁵³ Targums Isaiah 37.38 and Jeremiah 51.27 also equate Ararat (אררט ארץ and ארעא מלכות respectively) with Qardū. Similarly, the Midrash Genesis Rabbah quotes the Biblical verse: “and the ark came to rest ... in the mountains of Ararat”, and immediately adds – “on the mountains of Qardunya” (different spellings: קרדניא, קורדונייה, קרדוניה).⁵⁴ This identification is also present in the Syriac Pešītā, where Noah’s Ark does not rest on the mountains of Arārāt, but on the mountains of Qardū. The same phenomenon of replacing Arārāt with Qardū can be found in Syriac sources in the story of St. Eugene.⁵⁵ The story features St. Eugene’s pilgrimage through Syria and northern Mesopotamia in the 4th century CE.⁵⁶ At some point, when St. Eugene was preaching in the villages of Qardū, the narrative recalls a Biblical episode about the assassination of the Assyrian king, Sennacherib, by his sons (2 Kgs 19.36–37; Isa 37.36–38; 2 Chr 32.21–22; Tob 1.21) and adds a previously unknown detail – one of the assassins found refuge in Sargūgā, one of the Qardū villages at the foot of the mountain not too far from the ark. This location does not really fit the Biblical version, where the assassin found refuge in the land of Arārāt. It is evident that Syriac traditions no longer know Arārāt, and the area once inhabited by the ancient Urartu became Qardū for Syriac sources.⁵⁷

In Jewish, Syriac and Islamic traditions, the mountain in Qardū on which Noah’s Ark was believed to have rested was identified with the Arabic al-Jūdī⁵⁸ (modern Cudi Dağı).⁵⁹ This identification is attested as early as the 5th century

⁵¹ Bochart 1651, 22; Markwart 1903, 289–291, n. 4; Barish 1983, 69–70; Harrak 2001, 170–171. This emendation is accepted by Debevoise 1938, 165; Kahrstedt 1950, 66; Feldman 1965, 402, n. “b”; Kahle 1959, 270, n. 4; Marciak 2011b, 192, n. 84.

⁵² Neusner 1964, 230–240 (esp. 233); Harrak 2001, 168–189.

⁵³ Clarke 1984, 9; Harrak 2001, 171.

⁵⁴ Oppenheimer 1983, 374, n. 10.

⁵⁵ Harrak 2001, 169–175.

⁵⁶ Harrak 2001, 168–189.

⁵⁷ Harrak 2001, 170, 173.

⁵⁸ It seems that there are two options (see Harrak 2001, 171–172) – either the Quranic name al-Jūdī (*sūrat al-hūd* 44), once denoting a mountain in Arabia, was simply applied to Mount Qardū at the beginning of the Arabic conquest on the account of the similar sound, or the Quranic story is dependent on the Biblical story in its Syriac version and consequently al-Jūdī itself is a misrepresentation of Qardū or Qardī (so Obermeyer 1929, 132; Harrak 2001, 172).

⁵⁹ Syme 1995, 35; Harrak 2001, 175–176.

CE (when the East Syrian Catholikos Dādīšō' sought refuge on Cudi Daḡt in the monastery devoted to the cult of Noah's Ark) and persisted throughout later centuries in Christian, Muslim and Jewish writers (Eutychius of Alexandria, at-Ṭabarī, Benjamin of Tudela).⁶⁰ The remains of an East-Syriac sanctuary devoted to Noah's Ark on the Cudi Daḡt were described by G.L. Bell,⁶¹ and the early medieval data of these remains, if correct, could reinforce the identification of the Cudi Daḡt with late ancient traditions on Mount Qardū.⁶²

All in all, the tradition locating Noah's Ark on Cudi Daḡt above modern Cizre goes back to ancient times, at least to the 5th century CE. Therefore, it appears to be old enough to allow a connection between Mount Qardū and Cudi Daḡt.⁶³ This in turn almost gives us a fixed point for the location of Josephus' Καρρῶν, and consequently allows us to precisely locate the 1st century CE expansion of Adiabene into Gordyene: it reached at least as far as Cizre.⁶⁴

What is more, four references to Qardū can be found in Talmud.⁶⁵ Namely, according to *Baba Batra* 91a, the biblical Abraham was imprisoned in Qardū for seven years and in Kūtha for three years.⁶⁶ Next, y. *Yebamot* 16a mentions the Qarduans and Qartuans in the course of the discussion as to members of which nations (e.g. Ammonites, Moabites, and Tarmodans) are permitted to convert.⁶⁷ While some rabbis ask whether the two peoples are not identical, the majority opinion holds that the Qarduans and Qartuans are distinct from each other, and the former are permitted to convert, while the latter are disqualified.⁶⁸ Next, in the discussion as to when the betrothal cannot take place, *Pesaḥim* 7a, 21b states that betrothal on the eve of Pesach is not valid "even with the wheat of Qardu".⁶⁹

Generally speaking, the fact that the Babylonian rabbis talk about possible conversions from the Qarduans implies at least contact between Jews and Qarduans, and further could tentatively suggest the presence of Jews in Gordyene, although there is no other evidence at present to further enhance this suggestion.⁷⁰ Although one is tempted to interpret the rabbis' distinction between Qarduans and Qartuans as reflecting some regional diversity (Gordyaeans and Κύρτιοι, or Gordyaeans and Kurds), the linguistic difference between ק and כ is

⁶⁰ See Harrak 2001, 175–176.

⁶¹ Bell 1911, 289–294.

⁶² Syme 1995, 35; Harrak 2001, 176.

⁶³ I owe this idea to Dr. J. Reade.

⁶⁴ See Marciak 2011b, 192–193 (discussing Jos. *Ant.* 20.24) and 195 (about Cass. Dio, 68.26.1–4).

⁶⁵ Oppenheimer 1983, 373–375.

⁶⁶ Oppenheimer 1983, 373.

⁶⁷ Oppenheimer 1983, 374.

⁶⁸ Oppenheimer 1983, 374.

⁶⁹ Oppenheimer 1983, 374–375.

⁷⁰ For similar thoughts on the presence of Jews in Armenia, see Neusner 1964, 233.

so irrelevant that both terms can be seen as common variants of one ethnonym.⁷¹ Lastly, a small detail about the wheat of Qardū corresponds well to Xenophon's, Strabo's, Plutarch's and Ammianus' remarks (*uber regio* in 25.7.9) on the considerable wealth of this region. This shows that we can speak of a continuous record of the prosperity of Gordyene from Xenophon's times (401 BCE) up to Late Antiquity.

Bibliography

A. Texts, translations, commentaries

- Clarke, E.G. 1984: Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch: Text and Concordance, Hoboken, NJ.
- Feldman, L.H. 1965: Josephus Jewish Antiquities, with an English Translation by L.H.Feldman, Vol. IX, Books XVIII-XX, the Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts – London.
- Garsoïan, N.G. 1989: The Epic Histories Attributed to P'awstos Buzand, "Buzandaran Patmut'iwnc", trans. and comm. by N.G. Garsoïan, Cambridge, Mass.
- Hewsen, R.H. 1992: The Geography of Ananias of Širak: Ašxarhac'oyc', the Long and the Short Recensions, trans. and comm. by R.H. Hewsen, Wiesbaden.
- Thomson, R.W. 1976: Agathangelos, History of the Armenians, transl. and comm. by R.W. Thomson, Albany, NY.
- Thomson, R.W. 1978: Moses Khorenats'i: History of the Armenians, transl. and comm. by R.W. Thomson, Cambridge, Mass.-London.
- Thomson, R.W. 1982: Elishē, History of Vardan and the Armenian War, transl. and comm. by R.W. Thomson, Cambridge, Mass.-London.

B. Literature

- Adontz, N., Garsoïan, N.G. 1970: *Armenia in the Period of Justinian: the Political Conditions based on the Īaxarar' System*, transl. with partial revisions by N.G. Garsoïan, Lisbon.
- Aly, W. 1957: *Strabon von Amaseia: Untersuchungen über Text, Aufbau und Quellen der Geographika*, B. 4, Bonn.
- Andreas, F. C. 1894: 'Alinza' in *RE* I.2, 1490–1494.
- Andrews, T.L. 2012: 'P'awstos Buzand' in *DNP* (online edition).
- Asatrian, G. 2001: 'Die Ethnogenese der Kurden und frühe kurdisch-armenische Kontakte' *Iran and the Caucasus* 5, 41–74.
- Asatrian, G. 2009: 'Prolegomena to the Study of the Kurds' *Iran and the Caucasus* 13, 1–58.
- Barish, D. 1983: *Adiabene: Royal Converts to Judaism in the First Century C.E.: A Study of Sources* (unpublished doctoral dissertation), Cincinnati.
- Bell, G.L. 1911: *Amurath to Amurath*, London.
- Bochart, S. 1651: *Geographia sacra. Phaleg, seu de dispersione gentium et terrarum divisione, facta in aedificatione turris Babel*, Cadomi.
- Debevoise, N.C. 1938: *A Political History of Parthia*, Chicago.
- Dillemann, L. 1962: *Haute Mésopotamie orientale et pays adjacents. Contribution à la géographie historique de la région du Ve siècle avant l'ère chrétienne au VIe siècle de cette ère*, Paris.

⁷¹ Nöldeke 1898, 90.

- Feldman, L.H. 1988: 'Josephus' Portrait of Noah and Its Parallels in Philo, Pseudo-Philo's "Biblical Antiquities", and Rabbinic Midrashim' *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 55, 31–35.
- Hannick, Ch. 2012: 'Faustus of Byzantium' in *DNP* (online edition).
- Harrak, A. 2001: 'Tales about Sennacherib: The Contribution of the Syriac Sources' in P.M. Michèle Daviau, J.W. Wevers. M. Weigl (eds.), *The World of the Aramaeans, vol. 3: Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of Paul-Eugène Dion*, Sheffield, 168–189.
- Hartmann, M. 1897: 'Bohtan: Eine topographisch-historische Studie' *Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft* 2, 90–105.
- Hewsen, R.H. 1978–1979: 'Introduction to Armenian Historical Geography' *REArm* 13, 77–97.
- Hewsen, R.H. 1982: 'Ptolemy's Chapter on Armenia. An Investigation of his Toponyms' *REArm* 16, 111–150.
- Hewsen, R.H. 1983: 'Introduction to Armenian Historical Geography II: The Boundaries of Achaemenid "Arminia"' *REArm* 17, 123–143.
- Hewsen, R.H. 1984: 'Introduction to Armenian Historical Geography III: The Boundaries of Orontid Armenia' *REArm* 18, 347–366.
- Hewsen, R.H. 1985: 'Introduction to Armenian Historical Geography IV: The Boundaries of Artaxiad Armenia' *REArm* 19, 55–84.
- Hewsen, R.H. 1988–89: 'Introduction to Armenian Historical Geography IV: The *Vitaxates* of Arsacid Armenia. A Reexamination of the Territorial Aspects of the Institution (Part One)' *REArm* 21, 271–319.
- Hewsen, R.H. 2001: *Armenia. A Historical Atlas*, London-Chicago.
- Hübschmann, H. 1904: *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen*, Strassburg (Nachdruck: Amsterdam 1969).
- Kahle, P. 1959: *The Cairo Geniza*, Oxford.
- Kahrstedt, U. 1950: *Artabanos III. und seine Erben*, Dissertationes Bernenses I.2, Berlin.
- Kettenhofen, E. 1998: 'Die Arsakiden in den Armenischen Quellen' in J. Wiesehöfer (Hg.), *Das Partherreich und seine Zeugnisse. Beiträge des Internationalen Colloquiums, Eutin (27.–30. Juni 1996)*, Stuttgart, 325–353.
- Marciak, M. 2011: 'Seleucid-Parthian Adiabene in the Light of Ancient Geographical and Ethnographical Texts' *Anabasis. Studia Classica et Orientalia* 2, 179–208.
- Markwart, J. 1903: *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge: ethnologische und historisch-topografische Studien zur Geschichte des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts (ca. 840–940)*, Leipzig.
- Minorsky, V. 1940: 'Les origines des Kurdes' in *Actes du XXe Congrès international des orientalistes, Bruxelles 5–10 Septembre 1938*, Louvain, 143–152.
- Neusner, J. 1964: 'The Jews in Pagan Armenia' *JAOS* 84: 230–240.
- Nöldeke, Th. 1898: 'Kardū und Kurden' in O. Benndorf (Hrsg.), *Beiträge zur alten Geschichte und Geographie: Festschrift für Heinrich Kiepert*, Berlin, 71–81.
- Obermeyer, J. 1929: *Die Landschaft Babylonien im Zeitalter des Talmuds und des Gaonats*, Frankfurt am Main.
- Olbrycht, M.J. 2004: *Aleksander Wielki i świat irański [Alexander the Great and the Iranian World]*, Rzeszów.
- Oppenheimer, A. 1983: *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period*, B TAVO, B. 47, Wiesbaden.
- Savvidis, K. 2012: 'Elishē' in *DNP* (online edition).
- Syme, R. 1995: *Anatolica: Studies in Strabo*, Oxford.
- Toumanoff, C. 1963: *Studies in Christian Caucasian History*, Washington.
- Traina, G. 2010: 'Armenische Quellen' in U. Hackl, B. Jacobs, D. Weber (eds.), *Quellen zur Geschichte des Partherreiches: Textsammlung mit Übersetzungen und Kommentaren, Bd. 3: Keilschriftliche Texte, Aramäische Texte, Armenische Texte, Arabische Texte, Chinesische Texte (Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus 85)*, Göttingen, 402–454.

Abstract

This article discusses Oriental sources containing geographical and ethnographical information about Gordyene. The study makes the case (following great linguists such as F.C. Andreas, T. Nöldeke, V. Minorsky) that the forms *Korčēk*‘, *Korčayk*‘ and *Kordik*‘ are not linguistically akin to the root Qardū. As a result, the Armenian sources with information about *Korčēk*‘, *Korčayk*‘, *Kordrik*‘ rather mirror the expansion of the post-Cyrti or proto-Kurdish tribes than directly contribute to our knowledge about Gordyene (*Korduk*‘). Furthermore, it is argued that the location of Noah’s Ark in the mountains of Qardū (modern Cudi Dağ) known to Jewish, Syriac and Islamic traditions can be used to interpret the data from Josephus’ Ant. 20:24, and consequently to precisely locate the first century CE expansion of Adiabene into Gordyene: it reached at least as far as Cizre. Literary evidence obtained from Oriental sources supplements our knowledge on Gordyene’s culture – it included Iranian, Armenian, Semitic and Greek elements. What is more, in the light of Talmudic references, Gordyene again appears to have been a “proverbially wealthy” country.