Gabriella Uluhogian

Bibliography of Armenian Dictionaries

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To Anahid Sinan, Dear Aunt and Friend.
In memoriam.
ABBREVIATIONS

A - Armenian
ed(s) - edition(s)
enl - enlarged
fasc - fascicle
repr - reprinted
rev - revised
t - terms
transl - translated
v - volume
w - words
HSSR (or HSSH) GA - Haykakan SSR (or SSH) Gitut’yunneri Akademiayi
Hratarakč’ut’yun
Foreword

The reason why I decided to resume and update this work which publishing misadventures obliged me to shelve some years ago is that I am quite convinced that a bibliography of Armenian dictionaries can serve at least two very interesting purposes.

Firstly it is a technical instrument to provide for the needs of academics, steadily increasing in number even in the West, in various fields of study of Armenian, who feel a necessity for a direct linguistic initiation, whatever their field of research.

Secondly this brief work represents an emblematic synthesis of the recent history of the Armenian people. Anyone who has the patience to peruse the following pages, taking account of all the data on one after the other: authors, languages, places and year of publication, will find himself taken through the most significant Armenian cultural and political episodes of the recent centuries.

Starting with the first Armenian-Latin dictionary by the Milanese scholar Rivola (1621), the editions of the XVII and XVIII centuries show, on the one hand, the importance given by European linguists (cf. for this aspect also the work by J. Schroeder, Amsterdam, 1711) to the study of the Armenian language; and on the other hand the interest of the Church of Rome for the Christian Orient in view of the diffusion of the Catholic faith (cf. the editions of Propaganda Fide). The small dictionary of Armenian-Italian/Venetian dialect, for instance - a unicum I believe, ignored until now - reveals instead, like others of the same kind published towards the end of the same XVII century, another type of relationship between the Armenians and Europe: the dictionary served the practical needs of communication of the Armenian merchants who had in Venice a gateway for their commercial activity in the West.

Dictionaries edited in Russia in the XVIII and XIX centuries reflect a cultural re-awakening which animated the Armenian colonies of St Petersburg, Moscow and Tiflis and are evidently a prelude to the abundant and varied production of Armenian-Russian lexicography which characterizes this century, after the constitution of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia (the dictionaries concerning the two languages amount to almost one hundred).
Once again in the XIX century the most impressive production of lexicons, an evident sign of a precise situation of historical contact, is in Armenian-Turkish, but this production suffered a distinct decline after the First World War, when Armenians had to leave Turkey.

I could list more examples, but perhaps those already mentioned sufficiently show the type of information which can be read between the lines of this work.

The present bibliography contains records of all printed dictionaries and, among glossaries, of the ones that it has been possible to identify in works more specifically dealing with linguistics and grammar. It is the fruit of research in specialized western publications (which only occasionally provide useful information) and, more often, works published in the Armenia SSR, one of the fundamental works among these being the study by G.K. Gasparyan entitled *Hay haravanagratyan patmut'yun* (History of Armenian Lexicography), Erevan, 1968, along with a good deal of personal research work in some of the most important libraries in Europe and in the East.

My warm thanks go to the Mekhitarist Fathers in Venice (especially Father Nerses Der Nersessian and Father Sahak Gemgemian) and in Vienna.

G.U.

Bologna, September 1986

Note

The names of Armenian authors and dictionary titles in Armenian are printed with transliteration according to the Hübschmann-Meillet-Benveniste system, in use in the «Revue des Etudes Arméniennes», with absolute respect for the original orthography of the frontispiece of the book in question: from this comes the alternation of the classical orthography (kept in the Diaspora) with the reformed version (adopted in Soviet Armenia from the 1920s). This results in irregularities, but with the advantage that these irregularities reveal immediately the place and data of publication.

In each section of this bibliography the names of Armenian authors and works, ordered according to the Armenian alphabet, appear first, followed by the others ordered according to the Latin alphabet.

The numerous indexes: of authors, of languages, of subject, of place and time and a chronology of editions up to 1914, should facilitate the consultation of this work.