

# Classical Armenian Deixis Issues of Translation

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**Abstract** This paper explores the use of deixis in the Armenian translation of the Greek New Testament, with a focus on the medial deictic forms in the gospel of Matthew. Against the two-way deictic distinction in New Testament Greek with proximal οὗτος and distal ἐκεῖνος, the three-way system in Armenian based on the proximal *-s-*, medial *-d-* and distal *-n-* raises questions of how and why the Armenian medial forms are used. Through comparison with Latin, which also has a three-way system (proximal *hic*, medial *iste*, and distal *ille*), and close analysis of key passages, this paper highlights both the semantic values of the Armenian medial forms and the issues of translation that arise as a result of their employment.

**Keywords** Armenian Bible. Translation. Deixis. Gospel of Matthew. New Testament. Greek. Latin. Armenian.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 2 Medial Deixis in Armenian. – 3 Medial Deictic Forms in Matthew. – 3.1 Data. – 3.2 Analysis. – 4 Conclusions.



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## 1 Introduction

The Classical Armenian system of deixis is famously complex. Like the *hic*, *iste*, and *ille* of Latin, Armenian utilises a threefold deictic distinction. However, the Armenian system is richer, including not only pronouns, various adverbs, and pronominal adjectives, but also articles. This elaborate system of deixis heavily relies on physical and metaphorical distances, with often personal or emotional values attached to each. The deictic forms are based on the elements *-s-*, *-d-*, and *-n-*, signifying proximal, medial, and distal deixis, respectively.

Many grammar books describe a three-way system in classical Greek: ὅδε, οὗτος, and ἐκεῖνος, corresponding to proximal, medial, and distal deixis, respectively. Οὗτος and ὅδε can take on both deictic and anaphoric or cataphoric values: the distinction often made is that οὗτος as a deictic refers to something in the sphere of the addressee and as an anaphor refers to something already mentioned, whereas ὅδε as a deictic refers to something in the sphere of the speaker and as a cataphor refers to something subsequent.<sup>1</sup> As seen below, however, the language of Matthew utilises a two-way system, wherein οὗτος has assumed the semantic values of ὅδε.<sup>2</sup> Ὅδε only appears in its adverbial form ὧδε. When comparing the deictic systems of New Testament Greek, Vulgate Latin, and Classical Armenian then, the correspondences we would expect at the most basic level are the following (illustrated in [tab. 1]): Greek οὗτος corresponds to Latin *hic* and Armenian *-s-*, Greek ἐκεῖνος corresponds to Latin *ille* and Armenian *-n-*, and Latin *iste* corresponds to Armenian *-d-*.

<sup>1</sup> Smyth 1956, §§ 333, 1238-61; Schwyzer 1939, 611-12; Hadley, Allen 1884, §§ 695-8.

<sup>2</sup> We should also note the demonstrative properties of the Greek article. The article was originally a demonstrative pronoun, as seen in Homer (e.g. ἀλλὰ τὸ θαυάζω ‘but I marvel at this’, *Od.* 4.655), but it was gradually weakened to serve as the definite article, as already seen in Homer as well (e.g. αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσι γέρων ὄδδον ἠγεμόνευεν ‘but he, the old man, led the way for them’, *Od.* 24.255, where the noun γέρων ‘old man’ can be interpreted as either standing in apposition to the pronoun ὁ or already being defined by the definite article ὁ). Cf. Smyth 1956, §§ 1099-102; Schwyzer 1939, 610-11; Hadley, Allen 1884, §§ 653-5. The demonstrative force of the article later only survives with contrastive particles such as μέν, δέ, γέ etc. and in the nominative after καί (see Hadley 1884, §§ 654-5 for demonstrative uses in Attic prose). By the time of the New Testament, the demonstrative article is only found in ὁ μὲν...ὁ δέ, ὁ δέ, and ὁ μὲν οὖν constructions, the ὁ μὲν...ὁ δέ construction is found only once in Matthew: οἱ δὲ ἀμελήσαντες ἀπηλθον, ὁ μὲν εἰς τὸν ἴδιον ἀγρόν, ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ τὴν ἐμπορίαν αὐτοῦ ‘but they went away, not paying attention, this one to his field, that one to his business’ (22:5). Otherwise, there are no examples of the article as a demonstrative in the NT (Moulton 1998, 1: 81); see Peters 2014 for a comprehensive study of the article in the NT, ultimately arguing that the article “has moved further from this demonstrative origin than has historically been recognised and is in fact closer in function to the relative pronoun” (Peters 2014, 67).

**Table 1** Greek, Latin, and Armenian correspondences of deictic forms

Types of deixis		Greek	Latin	Armenian
Proximal	in the sphere of the speaker (first person)	οὗτος	<i>hic</i>	(-)s(-)
Medial	in the sphere of the addressee (second person)	—	<i>iste</i>	(-)d(-)
Distal	removed from both speech-act participants (third person)	ἐκεῖνος	<i>ille</i>	(-)n(-)

Two immediate observations from these correspondences point to 1) the lack of a medial deictic form in Greek, and 2) the apparent similarities between the Latin and Armenian systems. Therefore, we might hypothesise that a) the appearance of the Armenian medial forms in a translation of a Greek original might raise issues of fidelity, and that b) Latin and Armenian translations of the same Greek text might show similarities in their employment of deictic forms.

In order to address these hypotheses, this paper narrows its focus to the usage of medial deixis in the Armenian translation of the Gospel of Matthew. Focusing on the medial forms allows us to examine not only the semantics of the Armenian forms themselves, but also their relationship to their Latin counterparts, as well as the nature of their employment despite the nonexistence of an equivalent in the Greek original.<sup>3</sup> Key passages are analysed in order to highlight the fact that the psychological and emotional values ascribed to medial deictic forms may raise issues of translation ideology and expectations. In the absence of any study of this kind,<sup>4</sup> this short case study serves to initiate the discussion and highlight the importance of studying Armenian deixis and their semantics along with their implications for theories of translation.

<sup>3</sup> Edmunds also writes, “deixis, in general, sets limits upon the possibility of decontextualisation; and person-deixis, like certain kinds of modality, introduces an ineradicable subjectivity into the semantic structure of natural languages” (2008, 69).

<sup>4</sup> There are a handful of other studies on Armenian deixis: Jungmann’s (1964) synchronic analysis takes readers through various biblical passages to discuss the syntax and semantics of the forms; Meillet’s (1962) work similarly provides a synchronic study with several examples from the Gospels as well as brief discussions of etymology and origin of the forms; Klein (1996) can be seen as a comprehensive expansion of Jungmann’s and Meillet’s works. Although his project is extremely thorough and invaluable, the focus is necessarily monolingual, and attention is only seldom paid to the Greek original and its relationship to the Armenian translation. Similarly, Weitenberg (1994) takes a philological approach to the deictic forms in the Gospel of Luke and explicitly ignores the Greek original: “I consider the Armenian text, the translation itself, as a given entity and I shall ignore the fact that this text is translated from Greek. Therefore, I shall not treat the question whether the presence or absence of the article in the Armenian text has any relation to the Greek facts” (Weitenberg 1994, 97). For a brief survey of scholarship on Armenian translation generally, see *infra* footnote 10.

## 2 Medial Deixis in Armenian

The medial deictic is strongly associated with the second person. It can express second person possession [tab. 2], something associated with the second person – or addressee – of the speech act [tab. 3], or ascribe pejorative or negative value to the referent [tab. 4].

**Table 2** Medial deictic *-d-* expressing second person possession<sup>5</sup>

with second person possessive pronoun	<i>et'e akn k'o ařat ē, amenayn marmind lusawor etic'i</i>	'if your eye is simple, <b>your</b> whole body will be radiant' (Mt 6:22)
without second person possessive pronoun	<i>arı ařmanukd ew zmayr iwr</i>	'come, take the child ( <b>of yours</b> ) and his mother' (Mt 2:13)

**Table 3** Medial deictic *-d-* expressing something associated with the addressee

<i>mı umek' asic'ēk' ztesild</i>	'do not relate to anybody <b>the vision (that you saw)</b> ' (Mt 17:9)
<i>i bāc' gnac'ēk' zi oč' et'e merēal ē atjikd ayt nnjē</i>	'move away, for <b>that girl (among you)</b> is not dead but is sleeping' (Mt 9:24)

**Table 4** Medial deictic *-d-* expressing something pejorative<sup>6</sup>

<i>hayhoyē da dok'a yetink'd mi řam gorcec'in, ew hasarakords mez ararer zdosa, or zcanrut'ıwn awurn barjak' ew ztawt'</i>	' <b>this man</b> is blaspheming' (Mt 9:3) ' <b>these last men</b> worked only one hour, and you've made <b>them</b> equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the heat' (Mt 20:12)
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<sup>5</sup> All translations are by the Author.

<sup>6</sup> In Mt 9:3, manuscript M has *ov ē sa or ew zmels t'olu* 'who's this man, who absolves his sins?', with 'his' referring to the paralysed man whom Jesus had just cured. This paper takes the Armenian text from Künzle's (1984) edition of manuscripts M and E. It is worth repeating Künzle's characterisation of the two manuscripts: "Je l'ai déjà signalé, le ms E peut être considéré comme un manuscrit 'bon et correct'; il est très bien conservé et, en outre, d'un intérêt certain pour l'histoire de l'art. En revanche, le ms M, qui offre peut-être un texte plus ancien et sans doute important pour l'établissement d'une édition critique des Évangiles, fut copié avec négligence et doit, pour cette raison, être apprécié avec circonspection en ce qui concerne la langue arménienne classique" (I have already pointed out that MS E can be considered a 'good and correct' manuscript; it is very well preserved and certainly of interest for art history. On the other hand, MS M, which is perhaps an older text and undoubtedly important for the establishment of a critical edition of the Gospels, was copied with negligence and therefore must be approached with caution with regards to the classical Armenian language) (Künzle 1984, 52).

### 3 Medial Deictic Forms in Matthew

#### 3.1 Data

Tables 5-6 provide an overview of the number of medial forms that occur in the Latin and Armenian translations of Matthew [tabs 5-6].<sup>7</sup>

**Table 5** Armenian medial forms and their counterparts in Greek and Latin found in Matthew

	Greek		Latin		
	proximal οὗτος	distal ἐκεῖνος	proximal <i>hic</i>	medial <i>iste</i>	distal <i>ille</i>
Arm. - <i>d</i> -	30	0	25	5	0

**Table 6** Latin medial forms and their counterparts in Greek and Armenian found in Matthew

	Greek		Armenian		
	proximal οὗτος	distal ἐκεῖνος	proximal - <i>s</i> -	medial - <i>d</i> -	distal - <i>n</i> -
Lat. <i>iste</i>	28	0	22	5	1

The Armenian medial forms appear 30 times, each translating Greek οὗτος ([tab. 5], first cell).<sup>8</sup> However, only five out of these 30 are matched with the medial *iste* in the Latin text (fourth cell), and the rest correspond to proximal *hic* (third cell). Of the 28 instances of Latin *iste* translating Greek οὗτος ([tab. 6], first cell), one corresponds to the Armenian distal *n*-deictic (fifth cell), and 22 to the proximal *s*-deictic (third cell). It is remarkable that both the Latin and Armenian medial forms always translate a Greek proximal οὗτος and never the distal ἐκεῖνος ([tabs 5-6], first and second cells).<sup>9</sup> More

<sup>7</sup> In the collection of these data, all instances of Greek οὗτος and ἐκεῖνος were collected first, and the corresponding form in the Armenian and Latin translations were then noted. Since the primary focus was on the issues of translation, instances of Armenian and Latin deictic forms appearing elsewhere (i.e., not with Greek οὗτος or ἐκεῖνος) were not counted.

<sup>8</sup> The Armenian medial form appears much more frequently than 30 times; to reiterate fn. 7 above, I emphasise that the 30 instances counted here are those that appear specifically beside a Greek deictic element, all of which happens to be a form of οὗτος (as opposed to that of ἐκεῖνος).

<sup>9</sup> As an anonymous reviewer points out, this distribution can straightforwardly be explained by the translators' knowledge of both NT and classical Greek: οὗτος can have proximal value in NT Greek or medial value in the grammar of classical Greek, with which the translators must have been familiar. Therefore, οὗτος was always ambiguous, leaving the translators to choose the deictic value that seemed more appropriate

importantly, however, the Latin and Armenian translations agreed on the use of a medial form only five out of the nearly 30 possible instances (fourth cell).

If we zoom out and consider all deictic forms (which includes adverbs in addition to pronouns and adjectives) in Matthew (**tab. 7**), this rate drastically decreases: if we consider each occurrence of the Greek proximal deictic as a possible locus for Latin and Armenian medial forms, we find that the Armenian and Latin translators agreed on their choice of medial deixis only five times out of a possible 155. More generally, of the 246 collected Greek deictic forms, the Latin and Armenian translations used the same correspondent 168 times, which is a 68.3% rate. Of the 168 instances, 159 showed the *expected* correspondent for each language - that is, there was a three-way agreement across all three languages - which means that nine of the 168 agreements occur where Latin and Armenian deviate from the Greek in the same way. We may be tempted to assume that, in the five instances where Greek proximal deictic forms are translated with both Latin *iste* and Armenian *-d-*, Latin and Armenian translators are in agreement on what relationship within the context should be emphasised with the medial deictic form. However, because of the relative paucity of instances where Latin and Armenian agree in their deviations, we must attribute these agreements to simple coincidence.

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to them. ἐκεῖνος, on the other hand, presented no such ambiguities and was invariably translated by a distal form in Latin and Armenian.

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**Table 7** Greek, Latin, and Armenian correspondences of all deictic forms in Matthew

	<b>Greek original</b>	<b>Latin translation</b>	<b>Armenian translation</b>	<b>Total occurrences</b>
Three-way agreements	proximal	proximal	proximal	72
	distal	distal	distal	87
				total: 159
Two-way agreement with one (Arm.) deviant	proximal	proximal	medial	27
	proximal	proximal	distal	22
	proximal	proximal	∅ (no form used)	3
	distal	distal	∅	1
			total: 53	
Two-way agreement with one (Lat.) deviant	proximal	medial	proximal	22
	distal	∅	distal	2
			total: 24	
Agreement in Lat./ Arm. deviations	proximal	medial	medial	5
	proximal	distal	distal	2
	proximal	∅	∅	2
			total: 9	
No agreement	proximal	medial	distal	1

### 3.2 Analysis

Although it is unfortunate that any relationship between the Latin and Armenian translations in this context is unlikely, the few deviations do offer a window into the syntax and translation technique of the individual languages. Of the different types of divergences in translation throughout Matthew, the insertion of medial deixis is one of the most difficult to reconcile. From a Translation Studies perspective, we may ascribe the Armenian and Latin use of medial deixis to linguistic idiom and permit – or simply expect – its insertion. To take it one step further, to disallow the use of *iste* or *d*-forms on the grounds that there is no Greek equivalent would cause the forms to disappear entirely from any literal translation<sup>10</sup> of a Greek

<sup>10</sup> Scholarly opinion on the nature of the Armenian Bible translation is divided. In contrast to the philosophical and scientific works translated by the Hellenising School of the 6th to 8th centuries, the Bible is often considered less literal: “a philosophical text meant for students, for example, may need to be translated in a manner closer to the original, and thus more ‘slavishly’, than a religious text meant for the general public, where accessibility and comprehensibility are of greater importance than textual fidelity” (Meyer 2018, 73); “the Armenian literary heritage of the sixth to eighth centuries is comprised for the most part of a vast corpus of translations from Greek, which, unlike biblical and theological translations of the Golden Age (fifth century), maintains the Greek word order or syntax” (Terian 1982, 175). However, as Meyer (2018, 76) demonstrates through

text and render this study useless. One might say that the insertion of medial deixis in the two languages is unproblematic; they might argue that the translators are simply observing the idioms and style of their own language and that no new meaning is introduced as a result. And they might further assert that the reference to the second person of the speech-act or to a negatively perceived referent is implicit, that the translators were simply expressing what was inexpressible but implied in the Greek. There are two significant issues with these arguments.

The first is that the implicit information contained in the Greek is variable and up to interpretation; if there were a clear and unambiguous implication in the Greek text, we would expect the Armenian and Latin versions to agree on when and where they insert the medial deixis. Evidently, this is not the case. For example, in Mt 23:36 the Latin focused on the second person referent of the pronoun and used *istam* for ‘upon *this generation [of yours]*’, but the Armenian translator did not pick up on the relationship, evidenced by its retention of the proximal deictic in *azgis aysorik* from proximal τὴν γενεὰν ταύτην:

ἦξει ταῦτα πάντα ἐπὶ τὴν γενεὰν ταύτην  
*venient haec omnia super generationem istam*  
*ekec’ē ayn amenayn i veray azgis aysorik*  
‘all these things will come upon *this generation* [Lat.: *of yours*]  
(Mt 23:36)

Conversely, in Mt 3:17, where Latin uses a proximal deictic with Greek οὗτος, the Armenian translation introduces a medial form:

οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός  
*hic est filius meus dilectus*

his examination of Greek and Armenian relative clauses of the New Testament, the Armenian Bible is “far closer to its Greek Vorlage than is commonly presumed”. Coulie also notes the preservation of Greek features in the Armenian Bible, concluding that “les traductions arméniennes d’œuvres grecques ne doivent pas faire l’objet seulement d’analyses morphologiques, lexicales, ou syntaxiques; elles peuvent également être mesurées à l’aune d’un critère stylistique” (Armenian translations of Greek works should not only be analysed for morphological, lexical, or syntactic criteria, but for stylistic features, as well) (Coulie 1994, 57; see also Cowe 1990-91). As Meyer (2018) describes, this has significant implications for the stratification of the Armenian language, particularly with regards to the relationship between the languages of the Bible and of the (pre-) Hellenising School. The apparent reliance of the Armenian on Greek syntax and word order also raises questions about the characterisation of Biblical Armenian as an accurate representation of 5th-century Armenian. An in-depth exploration of these issues is outside the scope of this paper, but this author wishes to suggest that, while the Armenian Bible may rightly be labelled as a ‘literal’ translation based on its close adherence to Greek syntax, the application of the medial deictic pronouns, as discussed below, may call for a reassessment of our definition of ‘literal’.



*dá ē ordi im sireli*  
'this is my beloved son' (Mt 3:17)

It is important to emphasise that what is implied is not always without ambiguity; all statements contain implicit information, and certainly more than one piece of implicit information is contained in each statement. As long as translation is a human endeavour, translators will naturally choose to focus on different parts of what is implied. Clearly the translators' decisions are not based on anything specifically indicated in the Greek, but on non-regularised personal interpretations of the relationships described in the text.

The second issue is that there are instances where the inserted medial form *does* in fact add significant meaning to the text, particularly in the Armenian version. One classic example of this occurs at Mt 16:18:

καὶ γὰρ δέ σοι λέγω ὅτι σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν

*et ego dico tibi, quia tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam*

*ew es k'éz asem, zi du és vēm, ew i veray áydr vimi šinec'ic' zekelec'i im*

'and I say to you that you are Peter/stone, and on *this* stone, I will build my church' (Mt 16:18)

The subtle wordplay with Peter's name and the 'rock' in the original Greek famously becomes the basis for the Roman Catholic tradition that St Peter's Basilica was built over his burial site.<sup>11</sup> In the Armenian version, however, because the word 'rock' (*vēm*) does not sound like Peter's name, the pun cannot be replicated. Instead, the Armenian uses *vēm* and creates wordplay with the second person medial deictic adjective. Jesus tells his disciple that "you are a rock" (*du es vēm*), as opposed to Greek and Latin "you are Peter". By calling Peter a rock, Jesus makes very explicit the connection between the two clauses: the Armenian says, "you're a rock; and on *this* rock - name-

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**11** "This line has been the object of much heated debate and much wasted ingenuity. 'This rock' has been identified variously with Peter's faith or confession, with his preaching office, with the truth revealed to him, with the twelve apostles, with Jesus, with Jesus' teaching, and even with God himself. All this is special pleading. The most natural interpretation of the Greek is that of Roman Catholic tradition: the rock is Peter" (Davies, Allison 2005, 269).

ly you, the rock - I'll build my church".<sup>12</sup> The connection is less obvious in Greek and Latin: "you're Peter; and on this rock I'll build my church". The changes made in Armenian, although the text remains very nearly lexically identical to the Greek,<sup>13</sup> is able to add exegetically significant meaning that was only weakly implied in the Greek.

The overwhelming pejorative values of *d*-deixis pervasive throughout Jesus' trial, condemnation, and crucifixion, however, are not explicit in the Greek text. In Mt 27:41-9, Armenian uses *d*-deixis six times. Three of them correspond with Greek anaphoric αὐτός,<sup>14</sup> one with proximal οὗτος, and twice with no correspondent in Greek. Only once does the Latin version agree with the Armenian in its use of a medial form (Mt 27:47). The text and translations are replicated below:

ὁμοίως καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ἐμπαίζοντες μετὰ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων ἔλεγον· (42) Ἄλλους ἔσωσεν, ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται σῶσαι· βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ ἐστίν, καταβάτω νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ ϑ, καὶ πιστεύσομεν ἐπ' αὐτόν. (43) πέποιθεν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ῥυσάσθω ϑ νῦν, εἰ θέλει αὐτόν· εἶπεν γὰρ ὅτι Θεοῦ εἰμι υἱός. (44) τὸ δ' αὐτὸ καὶ οἱ λησταὶ οἱ συσταυρωθέντες σὺν αὐτῷ ὠνείδιζον αὐτόν. [...] (47) τινὲς δὲ τῶν ἐκεῖ ἐσθηκότων ἀκούσαντες ἔλεγον ὅτι Ἥλιαν φωνεῖ οὗτος. (48) καὶ εὐθέως δραμῶν εἷς ἐξ αὐτῶν καὶ λαβὼν σπόγγον πλήσας τε ὄξους καὶ περιθεὶς καλάμῳ ἐπότιζεν αὐτόν. (49) οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ ἔλεγον· Ἄφες ἴδωμεν εἰ ἔρχεται Ἥλιος σῶσων αὐτόν.

(41) *similiter et principes sacerdotum inludentes cum scribis et senioribus dicentes* (42) *alios salvos fecit, se ipsum non potest salvum facere, si rex Israhel est, descendat nunc de cruce ϑ et credemus ei* (43) *confidet in Deo, liberet nunc eum, si ϑ vult, dixit enim quia Dei Filius sum* (44) *id ipsum autem et latrones qui fixi erant cum eo inproperabant ei [...]* (47) *quidam autem illic stantes et audientes dicebant Heliam vocat iste* (48) *et continuo currens unus ex eis acceptam spongiam implevit aceto et inposuit harundini et dabat ei bibere* (49) *ceteri vero dicebant sine videamus an veniat Helias liberans eum.*

<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, in the following line, MS E follows the Greek use of the anaphoric αὐτός with *na*: καὶ πύλαι ἕδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς is translated as *ew drunk' džoxoc' zna mi yalt'aharesc'en* 'and the gates of Hades will not overpower it [the church]' (the Latin also has *et portae inferi non praevallebunt adversus eam*). In MS M, however, *zna* is replaced by *zk'ez*, the second person singular accusative pronoun, which further continues the wordplay in the first half of the verse.

<sup>13</sup> πέτρος does mean 'rock', and the only other difference is the use of the second person deictic adjective *aydr*.

<sup>14</sup> The Classical Greek use of αὐτός in the oblique cases as a third person pronoun (Smyth 1956, § 1204) continues in New Testament Greek (Funk 1961, § 277; Moulton 1998, 3: 40). See also Manolesou 2001.

(41) *noynpēs ew k’ahanayapetk’ jalēin handerj dprōk’n ew cerovk’ ew asein* (42) *zayls aprec’oyc’, zink’n oč’ karē aprec’uc’anel, et’e t’agawor ē ĪĒĪ, ijč’ē ayžm i xač’ēd, ew hawatasc’uk’ dma* (43) *et’e yu-sac’aw yĀĀ, p’rkesc’ē ayžm zda, et’e kami zda. k’anzi asac’ et’e ĀY ordi em* (44) *znoyn ew awazakk’n or xač’eal ein ənd nma naxatēin zna [...]* (47) *omank’ yagnc’anē or andn kayin ibrew luan asein, zĒĒlia karday da<sup>15</sup>* (48) *ew vałvałaki ənt’ac’aw mi omn i noc’anē. ar’ spung li k’ac’axov hareal yełegan. et əmpel nma* (49) *ew kēsč’n asein, t’ot, tesc’uk’ et’e gay ĒĒia p’rkel zda*

(41) In the same way, the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked [him] and said (42) He saved others; he can’t save himself; if he is the King of Israel, let him descend from *that* cross, and we will believe *him* (43). If he trusted in God, let God deliver *him*, if he desires *him*. For he said “I am the son of God” (44) and in the same way the robbers who were crucified with him reproached him [...] (47). Some of those who were there, when they heard [him], said, “*This man* is calling Elijah” (48) and immediately one of them ran, took a sponge full of vinegar, sticking it on a reed, [and] gave it [to him] to drink (49) and the others said, ‘Leave [him], let us see if Elijah comes to save *him*’. (Mt 27:41-9)

The derogatory and negative connotations of this passage begin with the verb *jalēin* ‘they mocked’ and are first picked up by the enclitic *-d* with *i xač’ēd* ‘from *that* cross’. Greek has no deictic marker with the prepositional phrase ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ ‘from the cross’; this is the first major Armenian innovation of the passage, where pejorative value is ascribed to not only Jesus, but to his cross, as well. The mockery and ridicule are overt: a loose English translation that incorporates some of the emotional colouring provided by the Armenian might be something like, “he can’t even save himself! If he really is the King of Israel, shouldn’t he be able to come down from the damned cross? If he did, we’d believe the guy”. Each subsequent reference to Jesus, excluding those of the narrative, is also made with a pejorative form in *-d-*. Apart from the verb of mockery in the participle ἐμπαίζοντες ‘mocking’, however, there is no obvious indication of any negative connotations in the Greek, and even in Latin, the pejorative *iste* is used only once in verse 47. It is true that some of the *d*-forms with Jesus are governed by deictic consistency and may therefore be considered coincidental.<sup>16</sup> However, the second *d*-pronoun in verse 42,

15 The pronoun *da* is omitted in MS M.

16 Deictic consistency is the principle by which deictic forms are retained throughout a discourse fragment so long as no change in discourse perspective intervenes (Klein 1996, 57-9). For example, in Mt 26:27-9, Jesus’ cup is first introduced with a me-

as well as the enclitic with the cross, are most certainly Armenian embellishments that attach pejorative value to Jesus. The use of the pronoun *da* in verse 47 also reveals the deliberate choice of the Armenian (and Latin) translators to insert disparagement, given that it appears in a new discourse fragment that is not bound by deictic consistency. What is remarkable is that Armenian is able to add such a blatant layer of ridicule and scorn while still adhering to the vocabulary and word order of the Greek. Therefore, the Armenian version is extraordinary in its ability to translate nearly word for word while simultaneously providing a subtle interpretation of the text.

This all must answer to the rebuttal, however, that, although there is no explicit suggestion of a negative context at Jesus' crucifixion or of a second person reference in the *petros* passage in the Greek syntax, one could certainly argue that it is *implied* in the Greek text overall. In modern translation theory, this is referred to as "explication" and is a common feature of translation (Pym 2009, 13).<sup>17</sup> The Armenian language allows the translator to assess and express aspects of the narrative where the Greek is unable to do so, and the translation is therefore based on the interpreter's decision of how best to render the text as a whole. From this standpoint, one could easily argue that, for example, the Greek verb of mockery in Mt 27:41 and the larger context of Jesus' condemnation and crucifixion serve to clearly indicate the negative connotations of the passage, and that the Armenian rendering is in fact no different from the original. However, the Latin language offers the same option to the translator, and yet Jerome rarely makes the same choices as the Armenian translator. This seems to suggest that, even if the translators are interpreting with an eye to the relational values that Greek is unable to express, the urge to explicate them is felt on an individual basis with no incontrovertible or tangible foundation in the Greek text.

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dial deictic form: *arbēk' i dmanē amenek'in* 'drink from *that* (which I give to you), all of you'. In its next occurrence, the *d*-form is retained, despite the presence of the first person possessive *im*: *zi ayd ē ariwn im noroy uxti* 'for *this* is my blood of a new covenant'. The use of the *d*-form persists into the following verse: *yoržam arabic' zda and jez nor yark'ayut'ean hawr imoy* 'when I drink it with you anew in my Father's kingdom'. Armenian adheres to deictic consistency so strictly that it can risk ambiguity. In Mt 27:32 (*ew ekeal artak's gtin ayr mi Kiwrenac'i anun Simovn, zna kalan pahak zi barjc'ē zxač'n nora* 'and having come out they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; they forced him to bear his cross'), *zna* refers to Simon, but the following *n*-form *nora* refers to Jesus, to whom reference had been made continuously with the *n*-deictic in the preceding verses (Mt 27:27 *nora*; 27:28 *zna, znovaw*; 27:29 *nora*; 27:30 *na, nora*; 27:31 *zna, nmanē*).

**17** However, it is often risky to impose modern theory on ancient practices: "it's not always possible for the models provided by translation studies to be applied on the ancient world without some adaptation" (McElduff, Sciarrino 2011, 2). Pym also notes as a "universal of translations", for example, that unique linguistic elements of a target language that cannot be replicated in the source language tend not to appear in translations, which of course we have found not to be the case.

## 4 Conclusions

It is an unavoidable fact that the linguistic means at one's disposal must govern the nature and contents of one's translation. The use of different pronouns alters the text not only on a lexical level but on the psychological level, as well. Given that the three-way system in Armenian differs from the two-way system in Greek, the translator had available the stylistic option of adding psychological meaning. We have found that the Armenian translation at times provides extra context or commentary that goes beyond what is explicitly or implicitly indicated in the Greek. At the same time, however, it also remains extremely faithful; Rhodes (1977, 180) quotes Lyonnet and Lagrange (1935, 351), who write,

The differences are quite minimal and very definite. If they are kept in mind, the model followed by the translator can be reconstructed: for the same care which he took in rendering precisely the nuances of an expression prevented him from ignoring details, and also led him to model his sentence structure on that of his exemplar whenever possible. This is what makes the Armenian version so valuable for the exegete, and what makes it possible to identify clearly the nature of his exemplar.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the systems of deixis in Armenian with the hope that the translation of the Greek deictic forms may reveal something about the techniques of the translator. We have found that, by employment of a medial deictic rather than a proximal to render the Greek forms of οὗτος, the Armenian translator successfully produces a lexically faithful translation that also functions occasionally as a commentary.

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