

ISSN 1829-2003

ՎԱՐԴԶԻԿ



ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ՇԱՐՏԱՐԱԴԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ՈՒՄՈՒՄԼԱՍՏԻՐՈՂ ԳԻՒՆԱԴՐԱՄ
RESEARCH ON ARMENIAN ARCHITECTURE

VARDZK

№4 2011



Raffi Kortoshian

WHAT IS CONCEALED IN THE TURKISH INFORMATION BOARDS OF HISTORICAL MONUMENTS IN WESTERN ARMENIA?



p. 1

Ashot Hakobian

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AND RESTORATION OF MONUMENTS IN WESTERN ARMENIA



p. 13

Emma Abrahamian

TWO NEWLY-FOUND CRYPTOGRAMS IN RSHTUNIK



p. 25

Samvel Karapetian

TZARAKAR MONASTERY



p. 29

Samvel Ayvazian & Gagik Sargissian

THE RESULTS OF THE EXCAVATIONS AND STUDIES OF THE MONASTIC COMPLEX OF CHAREKTAR VILLAGE



p. 48

Raffi Kortoshian

THE POPULATION OF KESAB BETWEEN 1906 AND 2006



p. 58



4 ՄԱՅԻՍ - ՀՈԿՏԵՄԲԵՐ 2011
MAY - OCTOBER 2011

**ԳԼԽԱՎՈՐ ԽՄԲԱԳԻՐ
ՍԱՄԿԵԼ ԿԱՐԱՊԵՏՅԱՆ**

Editor-in-chief
SAMVEL KARAPETIAN

**ԽՄԲԱԳՐԱԿԱԶՄ
ԷՄՄԱ ԱԲՐԱԴՅԱՆՅԱՆ**

ԽՄԲԱԳԻՐ Editor
EMMA ABRAHAMIAN

ՀԱՍՄԻԿ ՀՈԿՀԱՆՆԻՍՅԱՆ
ԽՄԲԱԳԻՐ-ՄԻԲԱԳՐԻԳ

Proof-reader (Armenian text)
HASMIK HOVHANNISSIAN

ԳԱՅԱՆԵ ՄՈՎՍԻՍՅԱՆ

ԹԱՐԳՄԱՆԻԳ Translator
GAYANE MOVSISSIAN

ԱՐՄԵՆ ԳԵՎՈՐԳՅԱՆ

ՀԱՄԱԿԱՐԳՉԱՅԻՆ ՁԵԿԱԿՈՐՈՂ
Designer
**ARMEN GEVORGIAN
LIANA HOVHANNISIAN-
KORTOSHIAN**

ԼՐԱՏՎԱԿԱՆ ԳՈՐԾՈՒՆԵՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ ԻՐԱԿԱՆԱՏՄՈՂ
ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ԸՆԴՏԱՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
ՈՒՄՈՒՄՆԱՍԻՐՈՂ ՀԻՄՆԱԴՐԱՄ

RESEARCH ON ARMENIAN
ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION
Engaged in informational Activity

ՎԿԱՅԱԿԱՆ N 03Ա089223

ՏՐԿԱԾ 13.10.2010

Certificate No. 03Ա089223
Given 13.10.2010

**ՀԱՄԱՐԻ ԹՈՂԱՐԿԱՆ ՊԱՏԱՍԽԱՆԱՏՈՒ
ՍԱՄԿԵԼ ԿԱՐԱՊԵՏՅԱՆ**

Responsible for this issue
SAMVEL KARAPETIAN

ՏՊԱԳՐԿԵԼ Է

«ՏԻԳՐԱՆ ՄԵԾ» ՀՐԱՏԱՐԱԿՉԱՏԱՆԸ
Printed by
TIGRAN METZ Publishing House

ՏՊԱԶԱՆԱԿԸ՝ 1000

Number of copies: 1000

ԵՐԵՎԱՆ, ԲԱԴՐԱՄՅԱՆ 24/4

24/4 Baghramian Ave., Yerevan, RA

<http://www.armenianarchitecture.am>

<http://www.raa.am>

✉ raayer@sci.am

📘 RAA Armenia

☎ 010 52 15 25

© ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ԸՆԴՏԱՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
ՈՒՄՈՒՄՆԱՍԻՐՈՂ ՀԻՄՆԱԴՐԱՄ

© Research on Armenian Architecture

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AND RESTORATION OF MONUMENTS IN WESTERN ARMENIA

by Ashot Hakobian

Parallel with the destruction of Armenian cultural heritage ongoing in Western Armenia since 1915, in recent years the Turkish authorities have started restoring a number of Armenian monuments guided by political considerations.

The programme of restoration includes both secular (castles, bridges and palaces) and religious buildings. Excavations and research are conducted in certain archaeological sites.

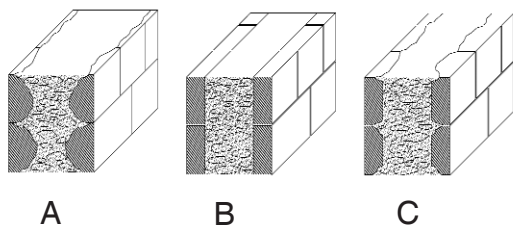
Between 2005 and 2007, Sourb Khach (Holy Cross) Church of Aghtamar was restored, and in 2007 Arakelots (Apostles') Church of Kars was renovated.

As a rule, excavations are carried out neatly and accurately being mostly followed by conservation. As for the archaeological finds, the publications relating to them give us grounds to state that they are not presented with scientific objectivity.

Indeed, the restoration of Armenian monuments should be welcomed as it secures their further existence, but these restoration or renovation activities are often marked with poor quality being carried out without any scientific basis.

It is praiseworthy that the restoration and overhaul of monuments are done with mortar, but those involved in this work have no knowledge of the traditional finely-finished Armenian stonework¹ called *midis*, and for this reason, stones are not laid correctly (drawing A: the traditional stonework of *midis*).

Turkish restorers mainly do masonry with stones regularly cut in modern quarries which are smoothly-dressed both inwardly and outwardly (drawing B).



¹ In the traditional stonework called *midis*, which is typical of medieval Armenian architecture, the outer surface of revetment stones has smooth trimming, while the undressed bulging surface of their rear parts secures maximum adhesion and junction of the stone and mortar. The stones forming rows are placed on one another by touching only a small part of each other's narrow lateral sides, with no mortar between their junctures. In this way, the filling of mortar becomes the main mass of the wall.

Sometimes they trim the edges of the inner surface of the stone, thus trying to imitate the old stonework (drawing C). In the last two cases, we merely deal with outer imitations of the old masonry which are devoid of the advantages typical of it. In essence, they represent examples of simple revetment, for a very tiny surface of the stones mixes with the mortar, and instead of resting upon it, they are merely put on one another to bear each other's weight, as a result of which, they fall off it in the course of years and tumble down.

While replacing the fallen stones, Turkish restorers do not usually bother themselves to find their exact equivalents in terms of colour and kind, which is a disregard of restoration norms.

Sometimes the restoration of certain monuments is carried out without the slightest scientific substantiation just as was the case with the towers of the ramparts and Paron's Palace of Ani, as well as Arakelots Church of Kars. Below follow a number of monuments which have been excavated and restored in recent years.

1. **Haykaber** (nowadays: Chavushtepe) is situated at the eastern extremity of Astvatzashen (present-day Chavushtepe) Village, Hayots Dzor District, Armenia Maior.

According to the oldest cuneiform inscription unearthed in the course of excavations, the castle was erected by Urartian King Sardur II (764 to 735 B.C.). Since 1961 archaeological excavations have been conducted there every year (their results have been published in a number of articles and works).²

The excavations unclosed the citadel ramparts and temples together with some palatial buildings and annexes. However, no conservation was carried out in Haykaber, in consequence of which, the upper rows of its walls, which remained exposed to the open air for many years, are in continual corrosion and may even collapse in certain parts.

2. **Andzav Castle** is located near Andzav (present-day Youmakle) Village, Van-Tosp District, Armenia Maior. The excavations which are still going on (as of 2011) have unearthed the exterior fortified wall of the monument and some annexes. Their quality is satisfactory.

² See **Afif Erzen**, Çavuştepe [Chavushtepe] (Ankara, 1988), 4.

3. Newly-Found Funerary Chapels in Ani. During the excavations of 2004, a number of adjacent mortuary chapels (their direction is north-southward) were unearthed very close to the eastern wall of the Cathedral. One of them had inscribed tombstones belonging to clergymen.

In 2007 we found these gravestones turned upside down, with the remains of the deceased thrown out and scattered here and there. Evidently, the acts of vandal-



ANI. The funerary chapels unclosed east of the Cathedral during the excavations (2004) and after their destruction by “gold diggers” (2007)

ism perpetrated by those searching for treasure beneath them are the result of the connivance of the security guards of the city site-museum, who are appointed by the authorities of the country; moreover, they may be directly involved in these barbarities.³

The houses and annexes unclosed near the principal street of Ani have been conserved, thanks to which, the monuments located there—they represent residential and commercial buildings of the Bagratids’ times, but

the Turks represent them as Seljuk structures—are save from corrosion.

4. Paron’s Palace, Ani. The entire palatial complex has been restored—its tumbled walls have been re-laid without any scientific substantiation, being erected to a level which is a major deviation from their original appearance.

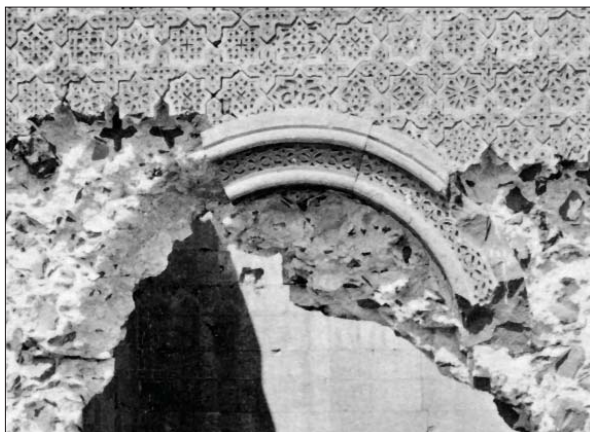
The restored inner doors of the palace are higher than they used to be; the coloured star-shaped masonry



ANI. Paron’s Palace from the south-east before and after its “restoration”

has been replaced with equally-cut stones, whereas the upper part of the inner decorative arch has been laid with unproportional stones. Deviation from the original forms is also observed in the portal arch, while the ruined wall on its left side has been erected at full height, without any openings. The exterior destroyed wall of the vaulted ground floor of the palace, extending on the steep slope, has been thoroughly re-erected at the height of 2 floors (the ground floor excluded): on the first storey, windows opening at varying heights have been added, while on the second one, rows of small rectangular windows can be seen, all placed at the same height. A small narrow door has been made at the edge of this facade. All this has been carried out without any scientific grounds and is alien to medieval Armenian architecture.

³ The city site has the status of a museum where admission is acquired with tickets until 6 p.m.; therefore, we may state that the act of destruction was committed inside a museum and remained unpunished. We are convinced that there would have been no such injustice if the damage had been caused to the minaret of the only Islamic monument of Ani—the mosque of Manuche...

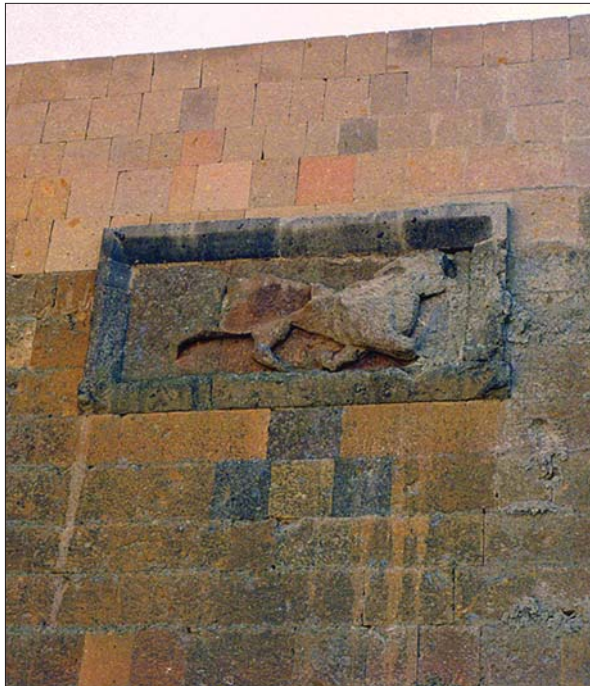


ANI. Paron's Palace from the south before and after its "restoration"



(in other words, the cross was the protector of Ani). There were 2 windows on each of the right and left sides of the emblem.

Prior to the renovation, only the lion relief and the lower half of the frame were preserved, whereas after the restoration, the relief was placed within a simple



ANI. The emblem of the city in the early 20th century and after its "restoration"



ANI. The towers adjoining the Principal Gate before and after their "restoration"; a partial view of a "restored" tower

5. **Ramparts of Ani.** The restored parts of these walls seem to conform with the original ones, but certain bad mistakes are observed here. Thus, the emblem of Ani is placed on the rampart adjoining the Principal Gate of the city (named *Avag Door* in Armenian): according to the available old photographs, it represented a cross, depicted through the play of black and orange tuff stones, which protected the coat-of-arms of the city formed of a lion relief enclosed within a frame

rectangular frame, and the fortified wall was laid without the cross and windows.

The semi-ruined tower on the right side of the principal entrance was restored after a similar one located on its left side, namely, it was completed with outwardly finely-finished stonework, while inwardly, it was re-built with roughly-hewn stones, instead of finely-dressed ones.

6. **Castle of Baberd (Bayburd).** Its ramparts have been entirely restored: the old ones, which were laid with dark-colour stones, have been replaced with light-colour thin ones generally used in revetment. The local people have already spoiled the restored fortified wall



BABERD. Partial views of the “restored” castle ramparts

with painted scribbles. Unfortunately, the damaging of monument walls with writings of varying contents is rather wide-spread in Armenia as well.

7. **Church of Sper Castle.** It was partially restored with flagrant mistakes—the original finely-finished masonry of large stones of dark colour has been replaced with others of light colour which are twice as narrow as the old ones. The space between their junctures, the existence of which is not justified at all, has been covered with negligently-done plaster as a result of which, the actual scale of the stone rows has been distorted, and the exterior of the church changed.



SPER. Views of the partially “restored” church of the castle

8. **Castle of Seleucia, Cilicia.** Its rampart towers have been mainly restored, their old corroded stones having been replaced with new ones.



SELEUCIA. One of the restored towers of the castle; partial views of the “restored” fort ramparts

9. **Castle of Korikos, Cilicia.** It consists of two strongholds one of which stands on the sea shore and the other on the opposite island. The latter has been cleared of wild vegetation and thoroughly excavated, as a result of which, the foundations of a Roman structure with a mosaic floor were unclosed near its church (oil cloth was used for their temporary preservation). The corroded outer and inner surfaces of the ramparts have been partially restored with new rows of thin stones of revetment.



KORIKOS. The eastern tower of the castle before and after its restoration



As for the castle on the sea shore, the part adjoining its entrance and the upper section of the arch overlooking the sea have been restored in the same way.

10. **Castle of Anamur, Cilicia.** Restoration has been carried out in the entrances to the stronghold: the upper part of one of them has been restored not with stone, but with a layer of plaster. While restoring the upper section of the stone frame on the entrance tympanum, they should have preserved its original form, which resembled the one enclosing the emblem of Ani,

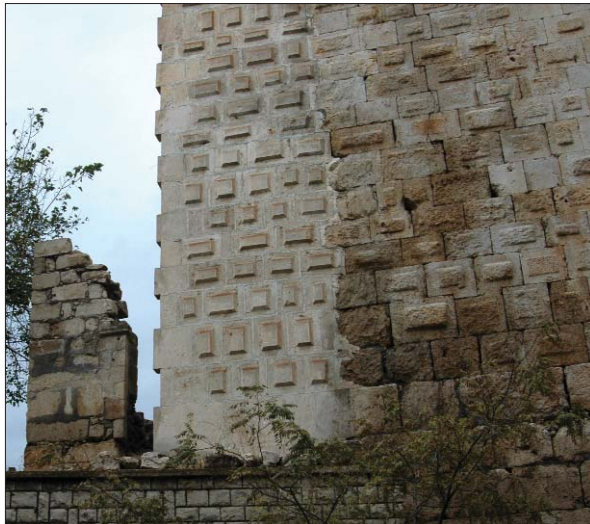


ANAMUR. A general view of the castle and its entrance tympanum after its "restoration"

whereas in fact, now it has a pentahedral ending, which cannot be justified at all.

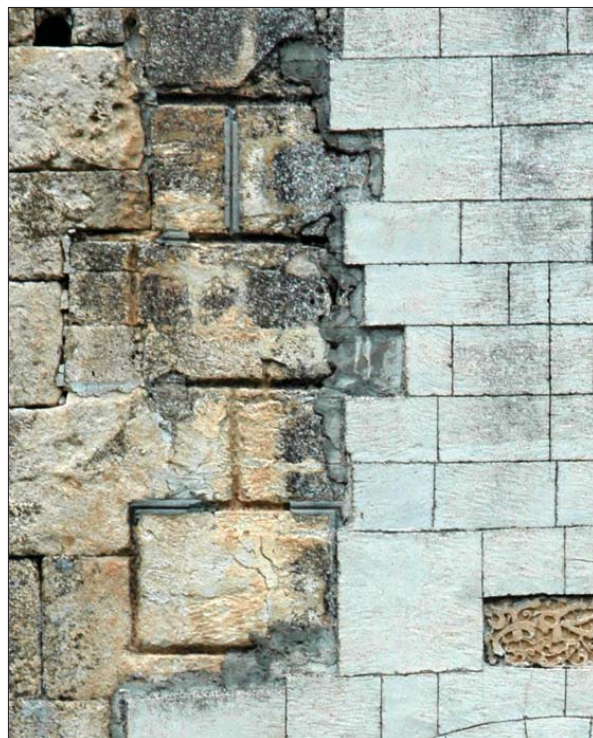
11. **Castle of Tigranakert (nowadays: Silvan).** One of its towers has been restored, with its left corner filled up with old-styled thin revetment stones with juts.

12. **Bridge of Malabade.** This single-span bridge is situated near Malabade Village, Diarbekir District, Diarbekir Province. The walls of its two piers have been covered with plaster on which scribbled lines



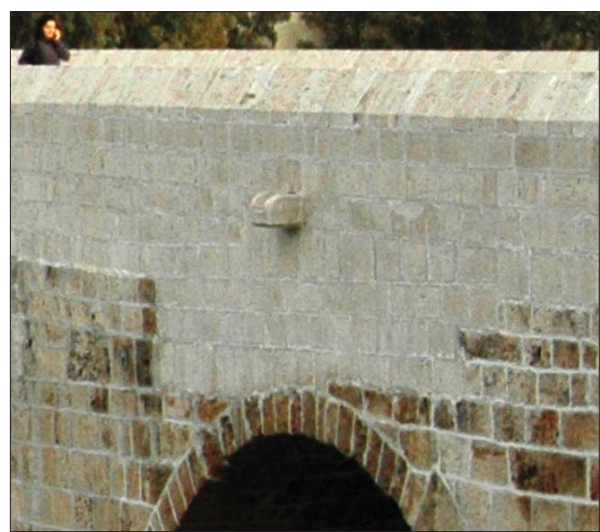
TIGRANAKERT. A partial view of the “restored” ramparts of the castle

have been made to create resemblance to stonework. During the preparation of the plaster ground, the workers dug into the walls to some extent, which damaged the outer surface of the old stones.



MALABADE. General and partial views of the “restored” bridge

13. Multi-Span Bridge of Adana. Its upper part has been carefully restored, with stone drain-pipes placed in the main walls of the passageway: even today they secure the hydro-insulation of the bridge which is still used.



ADANA. General and partial views of a restored bridge

14. Residential buildings in Adana. The old Armenian houses of Adana, which were erected before the Great Genocide of 1915, were built of brick. They, however, have been restored without consideration of



ADANA. A restored house

their original appearance and peculiarities—the cornices and the slanting supports of the balconies have been altered (the simple supports of wood have been replaced with ornamental ones), as a result of which, these dwellings have undergone exterior changes.

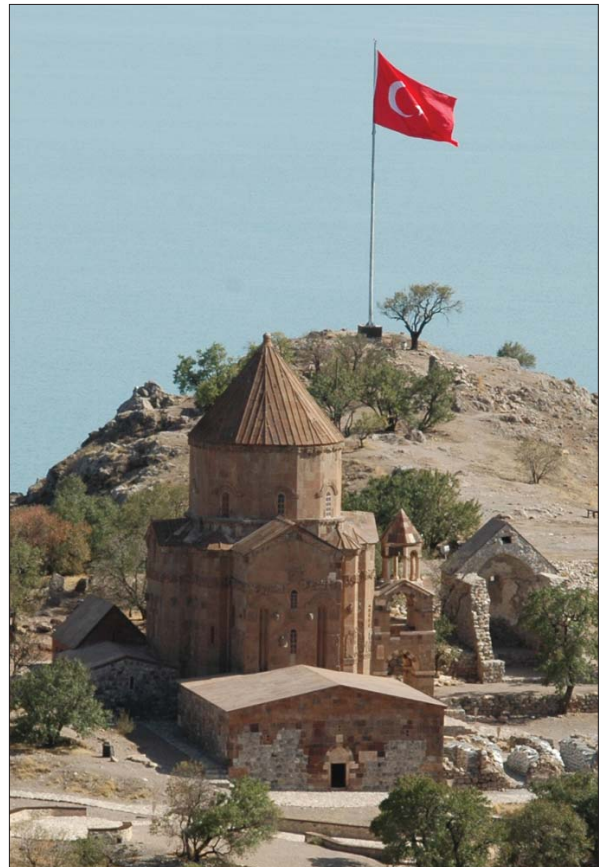
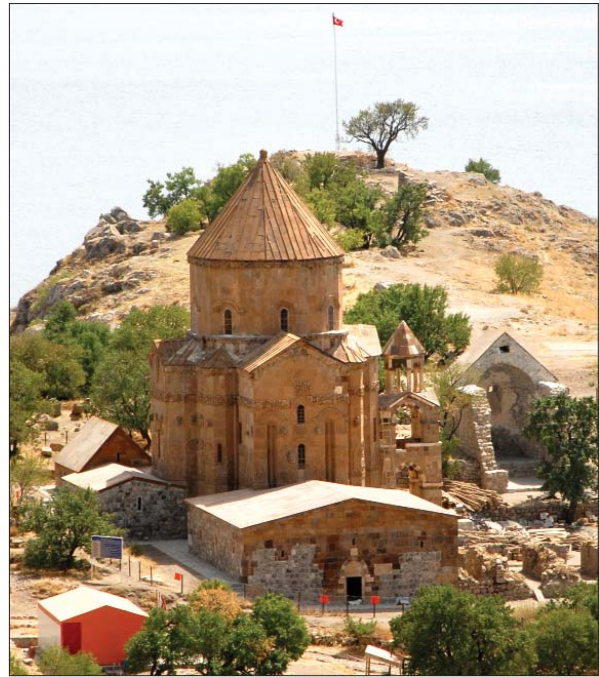
15. Sourb Khach (Holy Cross) Church of Aghtamar. Its restoration started in 2005, following the decision of the Prime Minister and Ministry of Culture of Turkey (the restoring organisation was Kartalkaya Proje İnşaat Sanayi ve Tic. Ltd. Şti. ve Er).

Zakaria Mildanoghlu, an Armenian architect from Constantinople who participated in the restoration of the monument throughout its process, says:

Before the renovation, it was agreed that no novelties were to be introduced, and the church was to be preserved in its original appearance. The broken covering slabs of its upper part were replaced with new ones, and this section was cleared of plants. The facade cracks were covered with a solution composed of the crumbled stones of the church and hydrolic mortar. The wonderful reliefs of its facades have

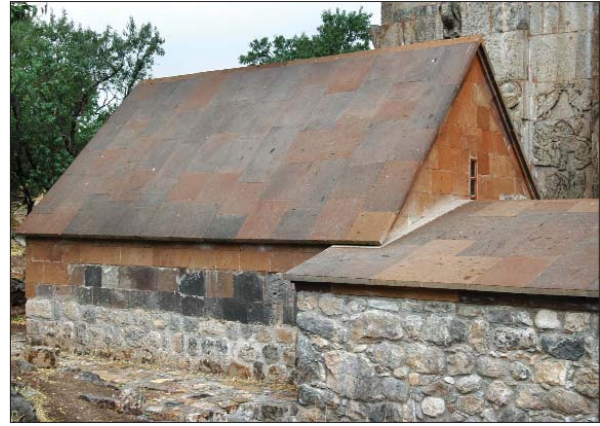


remained intact as only their broken and missing fragments have been replaced. Eventually, the church was washed with clean water of high pressure: no chemical substance or gel, no sand and comb-like tools (he means the metal brushes generally used for the cleaning of buildings - translator) were used for this purpose. The whole stones of the pavements were left in their places, while the empty parts were filled up



AGHTAMAR. Sourb Khach Monastery during and after its restoration, with the new huge flag that replaced the previous one in the background

with multi-coloured natural stones. The frescoes of the church were in a very poor state: they were broken to pieces, loosened off the walls and even obliterated in certain sections. The specimens of these mural paintings, taken from different parts of the monument, were subjected to laborato-



AGHTAMAR. The chapel located near the north-eastern corner of Sourb Khach Monastery: a partial view of its old indented covering slabs with cylindrical endings; the chapel roof after its revetment with smooth slabs

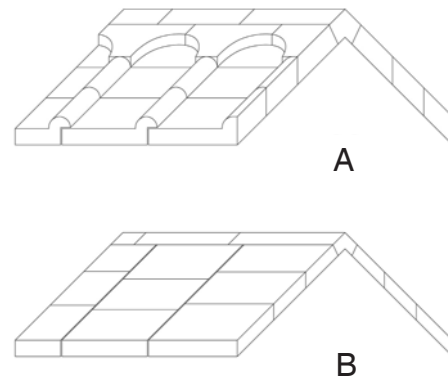
ry analysis, which helped determine the way of their recovery. First of all, the restorers tried “curing” their tiny edges, and after positive results, this method was applied to all their parts. In order to strengthen the parts of the frescoes attached to the walls, a special substance was injected and their surfaces were cleaned. The blue paint and all the dirt covering them were removed. In the course of the excavations carried out around the church, the kitchen, refectory and school of the monastic complex, as well as its rooms for work and rest, its administrative buildings and warehouses were unearthed.⁴

A photograph of the chapel, adjoining Sourb Khach Church from the north-east, clearly shows that it was formerly covered with serrated slabs, whose upper rows were preserved until the early 20th century and could serve as good grounds for the restoration of the monument in accordance with its original composition. Instead, however, the restorers gave preference to a mode of renovation carried out in a later period in a most primitive way. In fact, the same mistake was also committed during the restoration of certain parts of the slopes of the church roof; for this reason, the monument was not restored in an appearance typical of its construction time and reflects the approach manifested during the poor overhaul carried out with scanty means almost 1,000 years after its erection.

As for the niche where the font of the northern chapel used to be located, it has been adapted into a place where candles are lit now.

The earthen roof of the narthex has been replaced with smooth covering slabs of stone, under which hydro-insulation has been carried out with a hydro-insular package layer.

The missing part of the cross relief (it symbolises the scene of the Ascension of the Cross), decorating the section beneath the window of the western facade and



deliberately broken in the 1980s, has been filled up with a piece of dressed stone.

The sculptured stone banisters of the second floor of the southern apse, which had been destroyed prior to the renovation, have been replaced with a glass-covered retaining wall fastened to metallic bars.

The frescoes have been diligently cleaned of dirt and the blue paint which was added to them later: the old murals, which were unclosed from beneath them with their vivid colours thoroughly preserved, underwent conservation.

The chapel of St. Stepanos, situated south-east of Sourb Khach Church, has gone through partial restoration—its roof has been covered with flat slabs, but beneath the cornice of the northern and southern facades, two rows of thin facing stones were laid.

The lower stonework of the walls of a multi-dwelling structure, the Catholicosate and other buildings located in the south of the church have been unclosed: for the purpose of their preservation, white sandbags, arranged on one another, have been attached to them from two sides. This mode of preservation can serve its purpose for a very limited period of time, for

⁴ **Zakarya Mildanoğlu**, Uyuyan güzeli uyandırmak [“Waking up the Sleeping Beauty”], *The Gate*, no. 77 (September 2006), 28-30.



the sacks will inevitably corrode, after which the sand will sully the church surroundings. Besides, the rows of white sandbags are a damage to the aesthetic image of the church.

After the restoration activities, the small Turkish flag hoisted at one of the extremities of the island in 2006, was replaced by an incomparably larger and higher one which competes with the monument complex inappropriately.

16. **Arakelots (Apostles’) Church of Kars** (turned into a mosque named Kumbet since 1998). The restoration of the monument started in July 2007 and was planned to be completed in December of the same year. The work was carried out by Damarci İnşaat Construction Company under the control of Kürşat Genç Company.

The roof of the church was cleaned of grass, and the corroded parts of its covering slabs were restored. However, a flagrant mistake was committed during this work—the partly-corroded semi-cylindrical projections of the old indented covering slabs of all the sec-

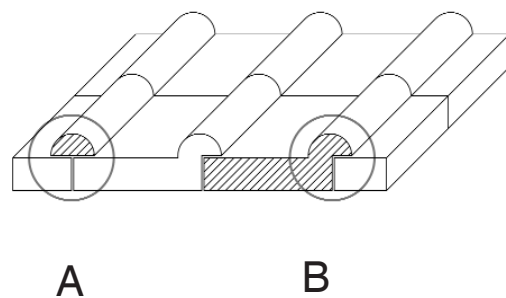


KARS. Arakelots Church before and during its “restoration”



tions of the church, except the dome spire, were trimmed and flattened, being replaced with newly-dressed long projections of separate stones. These resembled the old, single-piece covering slabs outwardly, but in fact, they were fixed in the place of the old ones with mortar, as a result of which, these newly-invented covering slabs are merely decorative and cannot perform a hydro-insular function.

To summarise, we may state that the newly-initiated restoration of Armenian monuments ongoing in Turkey should be welcomed as it prevents them from



KARS. The covering slabs of Arakelots Church as already “restored” (A) and as they should have been restored (B)

further corrosion. At the same time, however, it should be mentioned that they are restored with evident omissions and mistakes, as those carrying out the work have absolutely no knowledge of the building principles typical of medieval Armenian architecture. Guided by the

strong desire of seeing historical Armenian monuments restored as flawlessly as possible, in order to hand them down to the coming generations intact, we think that the collaboration of Armenian and Turkish restorers should be of immense use and contribution to this field.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RAA Foundation expresses its gratitude to the Ohanians for their donation of over 200 books on Armenian Studies and art history to the RAA library.

Apart from its great value and usefulness in our everyday work, that collection is also of special significance to us as it will keep our senior friend and great patriot Aram Ohanian's (Karmir Aram) memory ever living in our hearts.

Our thanks are also due to artist Arthur Khachatrian, who made another donation of over thirty books on Armenian art and culture history to the RAA library.

The members of RAA extend their cordial thanks to linguist Artem Sargissian, the editor-in-chief of the Dictionary of the Dialects of the Armenian Language (in Armenian), for presenting our library with its first 6 volumes.

We are very grateful to Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, and particularly, the Head of its Armenian Department, Dr. Zaven Yegavian, for sponsoring the publication of the present issue of the Vardzk periodical.



SPONSOR OF
PRE-PUBLICATION WORK
RA MINISTRY OF CULTURE

SPONSOR OF THE
PUBLICATION



FUNDAÇÃO CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN



RESEARCH ON
ARMENIAN
ARCHITECTURE

YEREVAN – 2014