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RESEARCH ON ARMENIAN ARCHITECTURE

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NEWLY-REVEALED DATA REGARDING THE FOUNDATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF KHATRAVANK

by Samvel Karapetian

Khatravank is one of those well-known monastic complexes in Artsakh the constituent buildings of which were erected and reconstructed in different periods.

It comprises several chapel-churches, a narthex, a refectory, a burial chamber, a double-floor funerary memorial and some other annexes. Perhaps, of no special architectural value as taken separately, they are of great interest as parts of the monastic complex, their history showing the stages of its construction.

In Khatravank, as well as in other monuments, the chronology of the construction of its buildings is partly revealed through the study of their junctures, which abut on each other with their walls. Fortunately, it also abounds in construction inscriptions which cast light on the history of its foundation.¹

It should be noted that the earliest dated monuments of the monastic complex are not its architectural buildings, but cross-stones of 1104,² 1167 and 1179, the surviving remnants of its destroyed cemetery.

A cross-stone of 1167 is outwardly preserved beneath an east-looking window opening from the main apse of the church, which was rebuilt in the 17th century:

«ԹՎ(ԻՆ) ՈՒԺԶ (1167), զՍԴԻԻԹԱՐ | ՄԵՂԱՄՆՐ յԻ-
 ԶԵԳ(Է)Ք»:

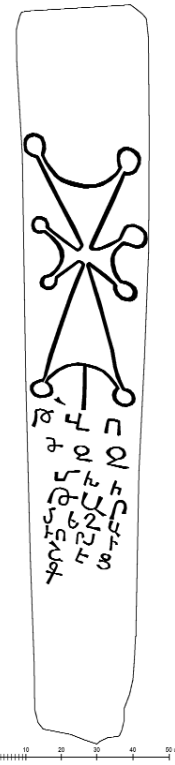
Transl.: *In the year 616 (1167). May you remember sinner Mekhitar.*

The second cross-stone is about 100 metres south of the main structures of Khatravank, in its ruined cemetery:

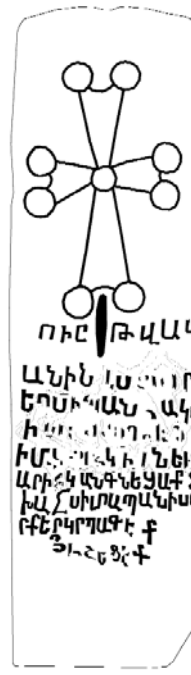
«ՈՒԸ (1179) ԹՎԱԿԻԱՆԻՆ ... | ... | ԻՄ... | ...ԿԱՆՈՒՆ-
 ԳԱՐ զՍԱՍՅՍ Ի ՄԱՍԿԱՆԻՍ, ՈՂՔ ԵՐԿՐԱԿԱՂԷՔ | յԻԶԵ-
 ԳԷՔ»:

Transl.: *In the year 628 (1179)... my... erected this cross[-stone] over this grave. May you remember [us] in your prayers.*

These two cross-stones attest that before the construction of the oldest preserved building of Khatravank, its small uni-nave church (below we shall substantiate that it was erected not in 1204, as is generally stated in specialised literature, but 22 years earlier, in 1182), a cemetery of cross-stones used to extend



Khatravank. A cross-stone of 1167 (photo 2011)



Khatravank. A cross-stone of 1179 (photo 2011)

1 Khatravank underwent blanket research between 1978 and 2011 thanks to the visits of a number of researchers.

2 This cross-stone was set in the tympanum of the church erected in 1204 (for further information, see the part of the article devoted to this church).



Khatravank as seen from the north-west and south-east (2011)

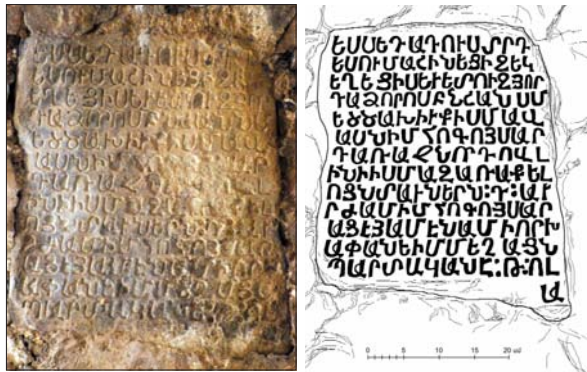
in this site. Part of its khachkars and tombstones were used as simply building material in the periods of cultural decadence that generally followed the establishment of foreign domination.

Thus, the oldest building of the monastic complex of Khatravank is its uni-nave church standing in the north, as revealed by its construction inscription outwardly set on its southern wall. Strange as it is, all the former

researchers failed to notice this 14-line inscription, which is preserved intact, revealing that the oldest known church of Khatravank was founded in 1182³ by Desum's daughter Seda. She also made some contribution to it, a fact showing that the newly-erected monument was not the first of the monastic structures: on the contrary, presumably, the place was already well-known as a spiritual centre although it did not have a prior yet.

The construction inscription of Seda's church reads:

Ես Սեդա դուստր Դեսումսա շինեցի զեկեղեցիս եւ ետու զՅորդաձորոս սուրբ նշանս ս՛նեծ ծախիւք ի սմա, վսան իմ հոգոյս, արդ առաջնորդ ով լինի սմա զԱռաքելոցն տաւներն :Դ: (4) աւր ժամ իմ



հոգոյս արւացէ յամէն ամի, որ խափանէ իմ մեղացն | պարտական է, ք(վ)ին) :ՈԼ/Ա: (1182):

Transl.: I, Desum's daughter Seda, built this church and gave Sourb Nshan of Hordadzor to it, spending large amounts of money in perpetuation of my soul. May he who becomes Father Superior of this [monastery] annually conduct a four-hour divine service for my soul on the Apostles' feasts. May those who hinder this atone for my sins. In the year 631 (1182).

Published for the first time.

Another inscription casting light on the construction of the monastic complex dates from 1204. Although it has been known to the scholarly circles since 1858⁴ and was later republished twice,⁵ it still

needs some clarification. The point is that in the 1960s the members of the special expedition which was engaged in collection of inscriptions moved the fragments of the broken inscription to Yerevan without reporting any information regarding the place whence they had collected them. Nor did its first publisher say a word about the place of its location, while the second one wrote that it used to be outwardly engraved on the eastern facade of the church.⁶

Probably, S. Barkhudarian, the head of the scientific expedition which worked on the spot in the 1960s, meant the broken and already scattered pieces of the inscription when later stating that the removed inscription had been found as outwardly carved high on the central part of the eastern wall⁷ of the church.

The eastern facades of the northern⁸ and central churches of the monastery are preserved thoroughly intact, whereas that of the southern one (especially its part above the window) misses certain revetment stones so that we can conclude that the inscription in question used to belong to this very church.

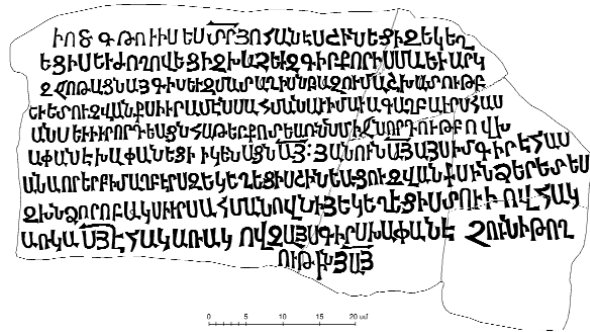
The 10-line inscription, the contents of which divide it in two parts, is engraved on a stone slab of a slightly rough surface (it has been broken into five pieces). It commemorates the construction of the second church of Khatravank by Father Hovhannes, at the same time emphasizing that it was a spiritual centre, namely a monastery:

Ի ՌԾԳ (1204) բուխս ես տ(է)ր Յոհանէս շինեցի զեկեղեցիս եւ ժողովեցի զխաչ եւ զգիրք որ ի սմա եւ արկ | զՏոբացն այգին եւ զՄատաղիսն բազում աշխատութեամբ | եւ ետու զվանքս իւր ամէն սահմանաւ իմ աագ աղբարս Հասխնա եւ իւր որդեացն Հաբերթո տեսանն միջնորդութեամբ, ով խափանէ խափանեցի ի կենացն ա(ստուծոյ) : Յանուն ա(ստուծոյ) այս իմ գիր է Հասխնա, որ երբ աղբերս գեկեղեցիս շինեաց ու զվանքս ինձ երես, ես | զԽնձորբակս իւր սահմանովն ի յեկեղեցիս տուի, ով հակառակս կա ա(ստուծոյ) է հակառակ, ով զայս գիրս խափանէ, չունի թողութի(ւ)ն յա(ստուծոյ):

Transl.: In the year 653 (1204), I, Father Hovhannes, built this church and collected crosses and books here, planting the garden of Jot through hard efforts. And I gave the monastery, together with its grounds, to my elder brother Hasan and his sons, the masters of Haterk, by the grace of God. May those who hinder this have their lives destroyed by God. In the name of God, this was written by Hasan: when my brother built this church and gave the monastery to me, I donated Khendzorobak and its grounds to it. Those opposed to this

3 It is on the basis of this very inscription that so far specialised literature has ascribed the foundation of Khatravank to 1204 (see Մկրտչյան Շ., Լեռնային Ղարաբաղի պատմամաշխարհագրական հուշարձանները [Sh. Mkrtchian, The Historical and Architectural Monuments of Nagorno Karabakh] (Yerevan, 1985), 48; Ուլուբաբեան Բ., Հասրաբեան Մ., Խադավանք-Խաթրավանք [B. Ulubabian, M. Hasratian, "Khadavank-Khatravank"], «Հայկազեան հայագիտական հանդես» [Haykazian Armenological Journal] 10 (Beirut, 1984), 23-24; Thierry J.-M., Eglises et couvents du Karabagh [The Churches and Convents of Karabakh] (Antelias-Lebanon, 1991), 89-90).
4 The first publisher of the inscription is S. Jalalians, whose decipherment contains certain distortions (see Ջալալեանց Մ., Դանապարհորդութիւն ի Մեծն Հայաստան [S. Jalalians, A Journey to Greater Armenia], vol. 2 (Tprghis, 1858) 230-231).
5 Բարխուտարեանց Մ., Արցախ [M. Barkhutariants, Artsakh] (Baku, 1895), 194. Also see Դիվան հայ վիմագրութեան [A Corpus of Armenian Inscriptions], vol. 5 (Yerevan, 1982), 121-122.

6 Barkhutariants, *ibid.*
7 Corpus, vol. 5, 121.
8 Besides, this inscription cannot refer to the northern church for the simple reason that it has its own construction inscription (1182) on its southern facade. As for the eastern facade of the central church, it was thoroughly rebuilt in the 17th century.



will oppose the Lord. May those who damage this inscription never receive atonement for their sins.

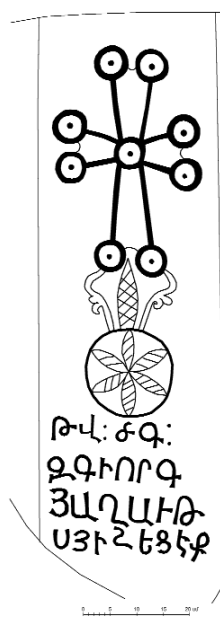
A four-line inscription is engraved on a cross-stone of a simple composition which is horizontally set in the only (western) entrance to the same church, serving as a tympanum for it:

ԹՎ(ԻՆ) (Շ)ԾԳ (1104), | ԳԳԻՐԳ | ԵՄՈՒՅԻՍ ԵՄՈՒՅԻՍ ԵՄՈՒՅԻՍ ԵՄՈՒՅԻՍ

Transl.: In the year 553 (1104). May you remember Giorg in your prayers.

Published for the first time.

Note: Judging from the writing and stylistic peculiarities of the inscription, we think that the hundred omitted by the scribe is «Շ» (600); therefore, the year is 1104.



Khatravank. A cross-stone of 1104 (photo 2005)

That the cross-stone was made in 1104 seems more plausible to us: the church was erected in 1204, and therefore, a cross-stone of the same year could not have been set in its facade as a tympanum.

Another inscription which has been restored on the basis of M. Barkhutariants' decipherment commemorates the construction of an arch in 1215. In the early 1890s, it represented just a fragment that had fallen off its original place.⁹ In the 1960s, this broken piece, which contained only part of the inscription, could not be found at all so that the compilers of the *Corpus of Armenian Inscriptions* simply had to republish it on the basis of its previous publication, which was the only existing one. In 1999 we found two pieces of this inscription, at the same time also revealing that it missed at least two other fragments.

(Կաման աստուծոյ) ես Հասան եւ | [մայր իմ] Շուշիկ շինեցալ [ք զտորք կամար] Պետր(ո)ս հար իմո՝ Խ | ...զթամբար | ...տեղն | ...տապանախորուն ի [տարին]... ...պատարագ | առնեն իմ հայր ..., | ով զգրեալս իս[ափանել ջանա] | որոշեալ եղիցի ...|ութենէն, ի թ[վին] Ո[ԿԴ] (1215):

Transl.: By God's will, my mother Shushik and I, Hasan, built this holy arch... my father Petros... burial chamber... hold a divine service... Those who try to damage this text... in the year 664 (1215).

Published in: Barkhutariants, 194; Corpus, vol. 5, 129.



It is difficult to decide to what particular building of the monastic complex this arch belonged: it could be the double-floor funerary memorial standing in the north of the complex as its first storey is just a simple vault (the

9 Barkhutariants, 121-122.

second one used to retain two adjoining cross-stones from which only the pedestals are preserved with the remnants of the crumbled cross-stones).

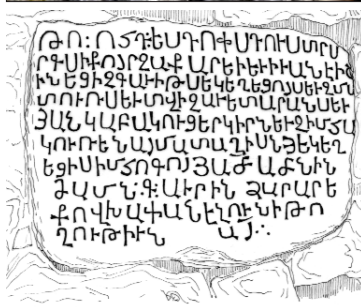
It was in 1225 that particularly large-scale construction activity was carried out in Khatravank: in the same year, it was decided to build a narthex in the unoccupied space between the churches of 1182 and 1204 (they are so small in dimensions that they can be named chapels). It was constructed by Dop, the sister of the well-known Armenian princes Zakare and Ivane who also built a chapel in the same year. Her building activities are commemorated in a ten-line inscription engraved on the northern facade (near the western corner) of the newly-erected monument:

Թռ(ւիւն) ՈՆԳ (1225). Ես Դոփս դուստր Ս(ա)րգ- սի, քոյր Չաքարեի եւ Իւանէի շիւնեցի զգաւիթս եկե- ղեցոյս եւ զմատուռս եւ սվի զաւետարանս եւ / յԱնկարակոց երկիրն եւ զիմ Հակուռենայ մատա- ղիսն յեկեղեցիս իմ հոգոյ յԱ(ստուա)ծածնիմ. / ժամն :Գ: (3) ար ինձ արարեթ, ով խափանէ չունի քոյրոթիւն Ա(ստուծոյ):

Transl.: In the year 674 (1225), I, Dop, the daughter of Sargis and sister of Zakare and Ivane, built the narthex of this church together with a chapel. I gave a Gospel as well as the land of Hankabak and my newly-planted orchard in Hakuren to the church for the salvation of my soul. May you remember me for three hours during divine services on the feast of the Holy Virgin... May those who hinder it never receive atone- ment from the Lord.

Published in: **Շահխատունաց Յ.**, Ստորագրութիւն Կաթու- ղիկէ Էջմիածնի և իննգ զաւառացն Արարատայ [Bishop Hovhan Shakhhatunians, A Description of Echmiatzin Cathedral and Five Districts of Ararat], vol. 2 (Echmiatzin, 1842), 363-364; **Jalalians**, A Journey, vol. 1 (Tpkhis, 1842), 207; Corpus, vol. 5, 127.

Note: Jalalians' publication of the inscription contains the same errors which are found in Shakhhatunians' (for instance, the omission



of the word «եկեղեցոյ» (this church), «Հա- կուռիայ զիմ մատա- ղիս» (...my newly-planted orchard in Hakuren...), etc.), which suggests that he merely confined him- self to republishing it. The compilers of the *Corpus of Armenian Inscriptions* did not decipher the toponym correctly (*Haku- den*) and their tracing does not correspond to the inscription. As for the site of Hakuren, at present its form of Hekorán is well-known to the inhabitants of Vaghuhas and Khunku- tala, Martakert District, Republic of Artsakh. Stone dimensions: 35 x 47 cm.

The narthex mentioned in the inscription is the one which is still preserved standing. As for the phrase *the narthex of this church*, perhaps, it implies the sanctuary built east of the narthex and reconstructed in 1691, its construction, in fact, marking that of the central church of the monastic complex between its two churches. The chapel mentioned in the inscription is probably the annexe stand- ing in the north-western corner of the monastery.

The chapel roof retains two ornate cross-stones of 1219 and 1220 which form its ornamentation: they were probably placed there either in 1225 or a short time later.

The cross-stone of 1219 (148 x 72 cm) bears the following 8-line inscription:

Թ(վիւն) ՈՆԿ(Լ (1219) | Ես Հասան որդի Գրիգորոյ կանգնեցի զխաչս եղբար իմոյ Շասնադինիմ, սվի տիրիցորոյ տունն, զԹողակերտն ի Խաղարի վանս ծառգարիար(ի) արն եկեղեցի...:

Transl.: In the year 668 (1219), I, Grigor's son Hasan, erected this cross in memory of my brother Shamsadin. I also gave a house to the priest's son and



Khatravank. Cross-stones of 1219 and 1220 (photos 1999)

Toghakert to the monastery of Khadar on Palm Sunday...church...

Published in: Corpus, vol. 5, 126.

Note: The *Corpus of Armenian Inscriptions* does not have the passage «ծառաբարիար(ի) արքն եկեղեցի...» (...on Palm Sunday...church...).

The cross-stone of 1220 (132 x 68 cm) is engraved with the following 10-line inscription:

ԹՎ(ԻՆ) | Ո՛ՎԹ (1220) | ԵՍ ԳՐԻԳՈՐ ՈՐՈՂԻ ՎԱՐ-
ԽԱՍՄԱՅ | ՍՎԻ ՉԱՐԵՆՇԱՏԱՆԳ ԵՐԿԻՐԱՆ, ԳՈՐԱՏԱ-
ՓԻՆ ԱՅԳԻՆ ՍՎԻ ԽԱՊԱՐԻ ՎԱՆՍ, ՍԱՐՈՒՄՆ :Ե: (5)
ԱՐ ԺԱՄ ԻՄ ԽՈՂՈՅՍ ԱՐԱՐԱՅՔ Ա(ՈՐ)Ք ԳՈՐԳԻՆ:

Transl.: *In the year 669 (1220), I, Varham's son Grigor, gave the land of Arevshatants and the garden of Goratap to the monastery of Khadar. May a divine service be held for my soul for five hours on the feast of St. Gorgi.*

Published in: Corpus, vol. 5, 126.

Note: The *Corpus of Armenian Inscriptions* erroneously presents the toponym in the form of *Arevhatants* («ՉԱՐԵՆՇԱՏԱՆԳ»). The toponym *Arevshatants* is also mentioned in another inscription found in *Khatravank* as well as in one of the lapidary inscriptions of *Sorpen*, a smooth site situated east of *Chapar Village*, *Martakert District*, *Artsakh*.

A 6-line inscription, carved between the cross wings and on the lower part of a small cross-stone (65 x 32 cm) inwardly set in the western facade of the narthex commemorates the construction of the sanctuary of the narthex-church (1225):

ՈՉԸ (1239) | ԵՍ ՎԱՐԽԱՍ ՉԻՆԵՑԻ | ՉԽՈՐԱՆՍ ԵՍ
ՍՎԻ | ՀԱԿՐՈՒՆԵՆ :Ա: (1) | ԽԱՍՄԱՆԿԻ ԽՈՂ:



Transl.: 688 (1239). I, Varham, built this sanctuary and gave it a hamadik of land in Hakuren.

Published for the first time.

This sanctuary underwent major reconstruction about four and a half centuries later, in 1691, when a great number of cross-stones and tombstones (including inscribed ones) were set in its walls both inwardly and outwardly. The fact that these funerary memorials were used as simply building material speaks of the

general cultural decadence marking the Late Middle Ages. Not only were they casually set in the walls of the rebuilt sanctuary (mostly horizontally), but they were also used as “raw material” for getting new architectural pieces: thus for instance, a tombstone of the 12th to 13th centuries, perpetuating Prince Hasan’s memory, changed to fit the part above the window opening from the sanctuary.

The initial part of its epitaph, which can be easily read at present, says:

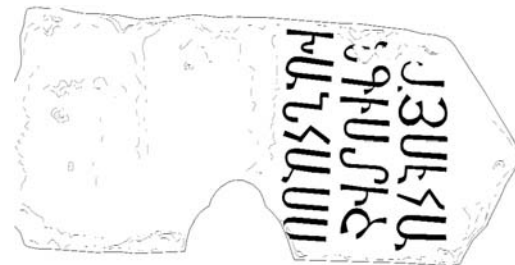
Այս է ԽԱՆԳԻՍՍ ԻՉԻՍԱՆ ՀԱՍԱ(ՆՍ)...

Transl.: *In this grave reposes Prince Hasan...*

Published for the first time.

Another inscription of 7 lines, engraved on the bema facade, commemorates the reconstruction of 1691:

ԹՎ(ԻՆ) ՌՃԽ (1691), | շՆՈՐԻԽԻ ԱՄԵՆԱՎՈՐ(Ի)Ն
Ա(ՍՏՈՒԾՈՅ), մԵՔ Ա(Ն)Ա(Ս)ՍՆ(Ա)Գ(ԵԱ)Լ Ժ(Ա)Ն(Ա)ՅՔ
Ք(ՐԻՍՏՈՍ)Ի | ՈՒ(Ա)Ն(Ե)Ս, Բ(Ա)ՅԱ(Ե)Ղ, ԱՔ(Ա)Ն(Ա)Ս,
Ղ(Ա)Գ(Ա)Ր Վ(Ա)ՐՊ(Ա)ՍԿ(ԵՍ)ՔԱ, ՈՐՈՅ ՍԵՆ | ՉՈՂ(Ն)Վ
մԵԾԱՓ(Ա)Ն ԻՉԻՍ(Ա)ՆԻՆ Հ(Ա)ՍԱՆԱ Չ(Ի)Ն(Ե)Գ(Ա)ՅՔ



qu(n)րք տաճ(ա)րս Ա(ստոս)ծ(ա)ծնի եւ ս(ուր)ք
Ան(ա)ք(ե)լ(ն)ցն, յ(ա)ջ(ա)կ(ն)ղմ(եա)ն :Բ: (2) Խ(ն)-
ր(ա)նս, :Գ: (3) մեծ | կամ(ա)րօքն մինչ ի տտեն(ի)
հին կամ(ա)րն կց(եա)լ ք(ա)զ(ու)մ երկամբք | եւ աշ-
խ(ա)տ(ա)նօք ի դ(ա)ռն ժամ(ա)նակի աղօթս յ(ի)-
չ(ե)լ աղ(ա)չ(ե)մք:

Transl.: *In the year 1140 (1691), thanks to the Almighty Lord, we, the humble servants of Christ, Archimandrites Vohanes, Barsegh, Atanas and Ghazar, descending from great prince Hasan, built this holy church of the Mother of God and Holy Apostles together with two sanctuaries on the right and three large arches up to the older arch of the middle part of the space between the sanctuary and prayer hall... with hard efforts in bitter times. We pray to remember us in your prayers.*

Published in: *Jalalians*, A Journey, vol. 2, 231; *Corpus*, vol. 5, 126.



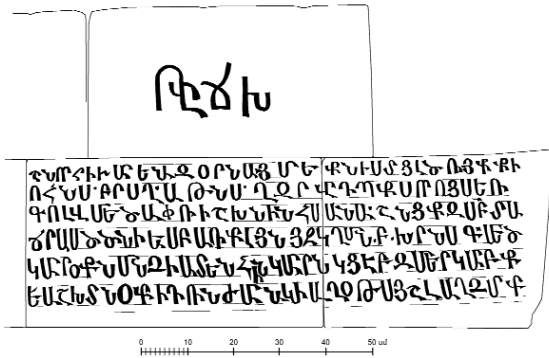
Note: Apart from certain minor misreadings, the *Corpus of Armenian Inscriptions* erroneously decipheres the word «աղ(ա)չ(ե)մք» (*We pray*) as «Լազար ք(ա)հանայն» (*Priest Ghazar*), which led to further distortion of facts: according to it, Ghazar was the person who engraved the inscription.

This lapidary record is first of all noteworthy as it reveals the names of two of the churches of the monastic complex, Sourb Astvatzatzin (Holy Virgin) and Sourb Arakelots (Holy Apostles). It also reports important details regarding the renovation of the two sanctuaries and three new arches reaching the older arch of the middle part of the space between the sanctuary and prayer hall.

There is another four-line inscription carved (probably, in commemoration of some building activity) on two rows of finely-finished or hewn stone on the considerably weathered outer revetment of the southern wall of the narthex-church:

...նորոգ ի :ՂԵ: (95) ...որոգ շր... / ստեղծման բարեացս ի տ(եառն)է ամէն / ...ազատ չորեքտասան...
 ...եւ ձեռնտութ(եամ)ք... / [դուստր Հասս]նա Դովեան:

Transl.: ...repairs... with the support of Hasan's daughter Dop.



Published in: *Corpus*, vol. 5, 125.

Note: The inscription, which traces back to the 13th century, is remarkable for its splendid large-size letters (18 cm). As compared to its publication in the *Corpus of Armenian Inscriptions*, our decipherment is more complete.

An inscription left by Princess Aspa celebrates the placing of the altar stone (in the 1960s it disappeared without any trace):

Շնորհին Թրիստոսի եւ Ասփե դուստր արքայաշուք իշխանին Տարսայիճին, քազազարմ մօրն իմոյ Մինախաթունին նպաստ եղեալ քրիստոսապսակ զլխոյ իմոյ մեծափառ իշխանին Գրիգորի ի շինութիւն լուսանուէր սուրբ եկեղեցոյս՝ կամեցաւ ի ձեռն քահանայապետին մեծի տ(եառ)ն Յօհաննիսի, զիս յարդար ընչից կանգնեցի բնի սեղան ի զեմմանն Թրիստոսի, զի ամենայն կիրակէ և շաբաթ տօն ծննդեան և տեստընդառաջին, զատկին, վարդավառին և ա(ստուա)ծածնին և ս(ուր)ք խաչին ինձ կատարի պատարագ զամէն եկեղեցիքս, որ և տվի զմեր խասս հողն, բլրի հանդի կապն Ա (1) բահի ջուր, թէ որ ի մերոց կամ յօտարաց զայս՝ այս եկեղեցոյս հանէ, կամ զպատարագն խափանէ՝ ի փառաց որդւոյն ա(ստուծո)յ որոշեալ եղիցի:



Transl.: *By Christ's will, I, Aspe, the daughter of majestic Prince Tarsayij and Minakhatun of royal descent, supported ...great prince Grigor in the construction of this holy church of light. Supreme Father Hovhannes had an altar stone placed in the bema with my honestly-earned means..., for which every Saturday and Sunday, on Christmas and the Presentation of the Lord, on Easter, Vardavar and on the feasts of the Holy Virgin and Holy Cross, divine service should be held in all churches. I also donated our fertile plot of land... May those from our or aliens' midst who take them away from this church or hinder the conduct of divine service be stripped of the grace of the Son of God.*

Published in: **Shakhhatuniants**, A Description, vol. 2, 362; **Jalaliants**, A Journey, vol. 1, 205-206; **Barkhutariants**, 194; Corpus, vol. 5, 129.

Note: The publishers of the *Corpus of Armenian Inscriptions* righteously state that this inscription cannot be found on the bema facade of the church so that its actual place is still to be clarified.

Another construction inscription which cannot be found at present used to be engraved on the small left vestry, reporting that the left of the monastic churches, which was consecrated after St. Procopius, was built by Father Superior Hovhannes:

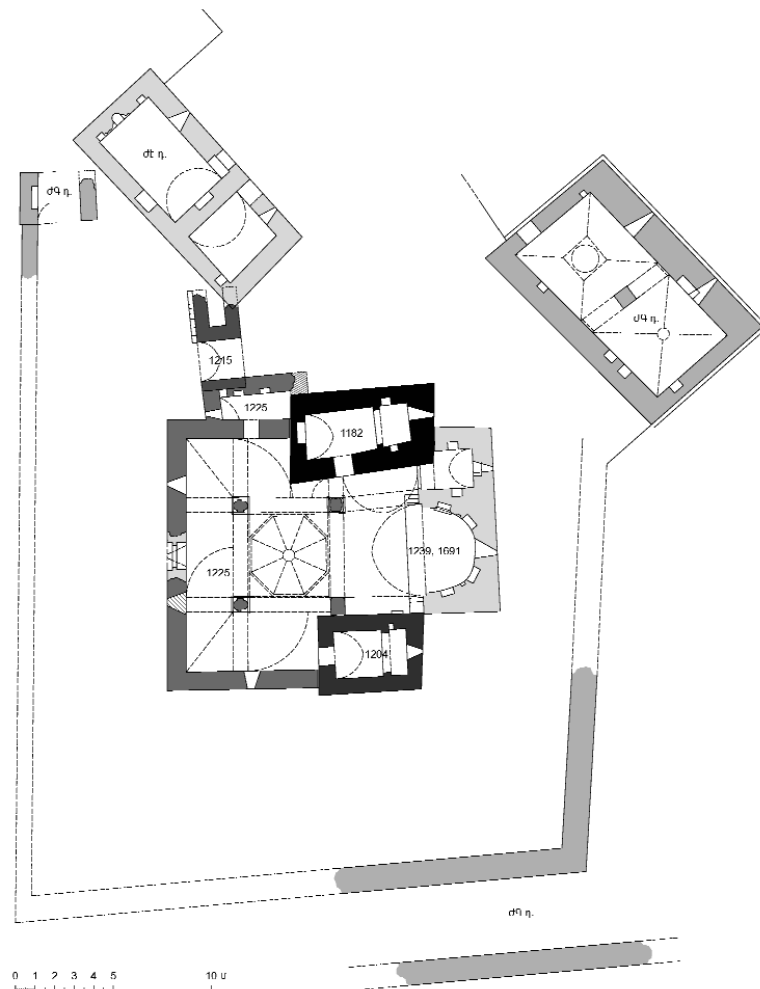
Այս ճախակողմ խորանի սուրբ Պրոպիուսիսու է, զմեծ տէր Յովհաննէս շինող եկեղեցոյս որդի Դասփին, եղբայր մեծ իշխանին Հասանայ, աղաթս յիշեցէր:

Transl.: *This left sanctuary, named after St. Procopius, was built by Father Hovhannes, the son of Dop, the brother of great prince Hasan. May you remember him in your prayers.*

Published in: **Shakhhatuniants**, A Description, vol. 2, 362-363; **Jalaliants**, A Journey, vol. 1, 206; **Barkhutariants**, 195; Corpus, vol. 5, 128.

To summarise the stages of the construction activities unfolded in Khada Monastery or Khatravank, we want to underline that its oldest church was founded not in 1204, but in 1182. The monastic complex was finally completed in the course of building initiatives that lasted for almost six decades (1182 to 1239). It was partially reconstructed after an interval of four centuries and a half.

In order to provide a clearer picture of these building stages, below we are presenting the plans of the monastery as reflecting all the changes it has undergone.



The general plan of Khatravank (measurement by E. Abrahamian and S. Karapetian, 2005; prepared for publication by architect A. Hakobian, 2012)

NEW RAA PROJECTS

In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Great Armenian Genocide of 1915 and in token of deepest respect of the memory of its innocent victims, RAA intends to complete its decades-long research in Western Armenia in 2015 and present the history of its over 70 districts in 36 volumes.



The members of RAA are also preparing a series of publications on the history and material culture of the towns and villages of Artsakh.



NOTIFICATION

The year 2013 marks the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the renowned monastery of Teger (1213 to 2013), Aragatzotn Region, Republic of Armenia. In commemoration of this, RAA Foundation is planning to dedicate one of the forthcoming "Vardzk" issues of 2013 to this monastic complex, which, regretful as it is, has not been properly studied so far.



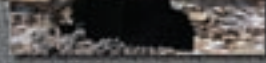
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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OBITUARY

We regret to inform our readers about the death of our senior friend, master **SEPUH SAGHATELIAN**, a man of great patriotic feelings, who died at the age of 92 on 27 February 2012 in his birthplace Akhalktskha.





This brief research into the monuments, and particularly, cathedral of Mren is first and foremost an **SOS** to the proper international bodies, primarily UNESCO, to urgently draw their attention to the issue of the preservation or, better to say, salvation of this pearl of architecture consigned to total annihilation. For already many decades, the watch base of Turkish border-guarding forces, stationed in the neighbourhood of the ghost city, has been giving entry permit to only the inhabitants of the adjacent villages who visit it simply for searching for gold there. Unlike them, architects, culturologists and tourists are absolutely denied access to the ghost city



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